

TEAS 7 · READING

8 reading stems and what each is really asking

Reading is 39 questions in 55 minutes. The stem tells you where in the passage to look.

Every one of these asks for something specific, and the wrong answers are usually true statements that simply do not answer the question that was asked.

1	“the main idea is”	the whole passage, not the first sentence. An option that is true of one paragraph only is wrong.
2	“the author’s purpose”	why it was written: to inform, persuade, entertain or explain. Match the verb, not the topic.
3	“it can be inferred”	not stated, but forced by what is stated. If you need outside knowledge, it is the wrong option.
4	“as used in the passage”	the meaning <i>here</i> , not the dictionary’s first entry. Reread the sentence with each option in place.
5	“which is a fact/opinion”	a fact can be checked; an opinion carries judgement — best, should, worst.
6	“the tone is”	the author’s attitude. Look at adjectives and verbs, not the subject matter.
7	“according to the passage”	it is written down somewhere. Find the line; do not reason.
8	“the next paragraph would”	follow the direction the last sentence points in.

Read the stem first, then the passage with that question in mind. You are looking for one thing, not reading for pleasure.