



# Reading Comprehension 1

Reading comprehension questions make up about half the questions in the Verbal Reasoning section. They will take up the majority of your time, and they are the most important verbal questions for you to master.

The majority of the passages will be one paragraph in length, and you'll face one or two longer passages that can be up to four or five paragraphs long. Each passage will have one to six associated questions and will relate to one of three subject areas: humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. At the beginning of the passage, you are told how many questions will be associated with that passage.

## Reading Comprehension Lessons to Come

**In this lesson**, I'll discuss GRE reading comprehension in general and talk about optimal **reading strategies** that put you in the best possible position to answer any and all types of questions that come your way.

**Over the next three lessons**, you'll practice additional passages while breaking down and discussing in detail each of the different **question types** that you might encounter.

Let's start by looking at a couple of sample passages and their associated questions. Please read through and try to answer them before I continue this discussion.

# Sample Passage 1

## 3 Questions

Although human exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMFs) has become more prevalent since the advent of human-made EMF producers, such as home appliances, mobile phones, and power grids, exposure to electromagnetism has always been a part of life. After all, Earth and the Sun both generate their own EMFs. However, some evidence suggests that extended exposure to high-frequency EMFs can cause physical and even mental illnesses in humans. Although the science behind these claims remains controversial, EMF exposure has been associated with depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, fatigue, and difficulty with focus. In fact, some scientists believe that the ubiquity of EMFs is at least partially to blame for the increasing worldwide rates of mental illness. Although this hypothesis might seem far-fetched at first, you may recently have personally experienced the mental effects of EMFs. Many people report feelings of unease and heaviness when a severe thunderstorm is rolling in, which could be explained by the high levels of EMF emitted by lightning.

1. The passage is primarily concerned with

- (A) an urgent need to reduce our exposure to high-frequency EMFs.
- (B) a controversy surrounding whether Earth's electromagnetism is affecting our bodies.
- (C) comparing the EMFs emitted by power grids to those emitted by lightning.
- (D) presenting the hypothesis that human-made EMFs affect our mental health.
- (E) dispelling myths surrounding the safety of home appliances and mobile phones.

2. It can be inferred from the passage that the author would agree with which of the following statements? Select all that apply.

- (A) It is impossible to avoid all EMF exposure.
- (B) High-frequency EMFs cause most mental issues, such as depression and anxiety.
- (C) We should ban home appliances and electronics that emit high-frequency EMFs.

3. The author includes the last two sentences of the passage to

- (A) prove that EMFs are dangerous to physical health.
- (B) demonstrate that EMFs could indeed affect our mental well-being.
- (C) point out that EMFs are a natural, harmless part of life on Earth.
- (D) suggest that people living in storm-prone areas are at a high risk of mental illness.
- (E) hypothesize that some people are more sensitive to the effects of EMFs than others.

# Sample Passage 2

## 4 Questions

For the past 80 years, students of economics have learned about the “paradox of thrift”: the idea that individuals who act responsibly and save money actually harm the economy by suppressing consumer demand and economic growth. Perhaps now we can add another paradox to economic textbooks: the “paradox of toil.” First formulated by the Icelandic economist Gauti Eggertsson, the paradox of toil asserts that if too many people want to work too many hours, the resulting increased competition among workers can have dire consequences for the economy, including declining wages and demand and increased unemployment. The worst part is that the marketplace has no self-correcting mechanism for this situation. In fact, the usual market mechanism for dealing with unemployment—lower wages—would lead to a vicious cycle of lower demand and more unemployment. In a very real sense, an overzealous work ethic can become a formidable economic villain.

Of course, Eggertsson realized that the paradox of toil can occur only under a narrow range of circumstances. Most notably, interest rates must effectively be zero. When interest rates are positive, lenders are willing to expand credit, thereby propping up demand for goods and services. However, when interest rates are near the zero bound, credit cannot be offered on favorable terms for borrowers. At this point, at least according to Eggertsson, the paradox of toil comes into play. Traditionally, economists have viewed zero interest rates as nothing more than a theoretical possibility. However, in our decidedly abnormal economic times, zero interest rates are very close to reality. As we look at the current state of the economies of industrialized nations, we see stagnant wages despite very low unemployment rates, indicating that the paradox of toil may be all too real.

1. The author of the passage indicates that economists such as Eggertsson believe that

- (A) workers in modern industrialized nations are too productive.
- (B) the paradox of thrift remains a greater threat than the paradox of toil.
- (C) the free market always leads to high unemployment rates.
- (D) working too much may damage the economy.
- (E) interest rates should be kept as high as possible to prevent the paradox of toil.

2. When interest rates are NOT at or near zero, which of the following can be inferred to be true? Select all that apply.

- (A) It is unlikely that the paradox of toil will occur.
- (B) Borrowers can usually increase credit to increase demand.
- (C) Unemployment will remain at acceptable levels.

3. According to the passage, which of the following is an assumption that underlies Eggertsson’s theory?

- (A) Governments recognize the limits of free-market solutions.
- (B) Interest rates have typically been positive in the past.
- (C) Workers are incapable of understanding that their behavior is paradoxical.
- (D) Lenders will not expand credit when interest rates are zero.
- (E) Higher wages will lead to increased interest rates.

## Sample Passage 2 Continued

For the past 80 years, students of economics have learned about the “paradox of thrift”: the idea that individuals who act responsibly and save money actually harm the economy by suppressing consumer demand and economic growth. Perhaps now we can add another paradox to economic textbooks: the “paradox of toil.” First formulated by the Icelandic economist Gauti Eggertsson, the paradox of toil asserts that if too many people want to work too many hours, the resulting increased competition among workers can have dire consequences for the economy, including declining wages and demand and increased unemployment. The worst part is that the marketplace has no self-correcting mechanism for this situation. In fact, the usual market mechanism for dealing with unemployment—lower wages—would lead to a vicious cycle of lower demand and more unemployment. In a very real sense, an overzealous work ethic can become a formidable economic villain.

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4. Which of the following best describes the structure of the passage?

- Ⓐ A hypothesis about the economy is presented and then debunked.
- Ⓑ An economic theory is outlined, and the likelihood of a situation it predicts is discussed.
- Ⓒ Two paradoxes are compared, and one is discarded in favor of the other.
- Ⓓ A self-correcting mechanism is questioned, and a dire prediction for the economy is made.
- Ⓔ A new economic problem is outlined, and possible solutions are evaluated.

## Reading Strategy

Now that you've had a little taste of what GRE reading comprehension is like, let's discuss the ideal strategy for approaching the passages and questions.

Although we all read daily, we may rarely read in a self-aware manner, nor may we *try to read well*. You also aren't used to being tested on your reading ability. Therefore, the pressure of being tested can make it difficult to achieve the calm, receptive state you need to read at your best.

Reading well versus reading poorly depends upon the communication between the author's intent and the reader's focus. You read well when you are interested in the text and aligned with the author in some way. You read poorly when you don't understand why the author wrote a passage or when your mind is elsewhere—when your focus does not connect with the content of the text.

If your goal is to read well, your best strategy should be to read with empathy. You should approach every passage with the mindset of wanting to understand not just what the passage is about but, more fundamentally, why the author decided to write it, and, more specifically, why she wrote the passage the way she did.

One challenge of GRE reading comprehension questions, especially the trickiest ones, is that they require you to see both “the forest” and “the trees”—that is, they require you to have a clear and accurate understanding of the big picture regarding the passage as a whole, as well as a nuanced mastery of specific details within the passage. In response to this challenge, test takers often overextend themselves and try to memorize everything in the passage or accomplish too many different tasks simultaneously as they read.

**This is unnecessary and counterproductive.** I recommend you focus on the big-picture understanding during your initial reading and check all specific details as needed when it comes time to evaluate them while answering individual questions. I'll model this in many ways in the lessons ahead, but for now, the key takeaway is to maintain a simple, clear focus during your reading of the passage: work to understand why the author wrote the passage and why each part of the passage exists relative to the overall purpose. Focusing on just this task will prevent you from getting lost and distracted during your reading, and it will put you in an optimal position to answer both general and specific questions.

**Read with empathy. Focus on why the author chose to write the passage, and worry less about capturing every detail as you read. As you read, consider how the passage is structured and the purpose of each component of the passage relative to this overall purpose.**

## What Not to Do

In reading, focus is key. You can do more harm than good by trying to do too many different things at once. Scattered focus makes it harder to answer questions correctly.

Here are practices you should **avoid** because they might hold you back during reading comprehension.

### 1. Evaluating Subjectively

Certain questions may require you to subjectively evaluate certain parts of the passage, but otherwise, it's not your job to form an opinion about the author or the passage. In fact, it's a waste of time and a harmful distraction to do so. Your job is to be objective and to seek to understand the information presented as accurately as possible without coloring it with your own experiences or opinions.

### 2. Jumping Ahead to Look at Questions

Before you read the passage, glance at the information supplied at the top. You'll learn how many questions will be asked about the passage. If there is just one question, it doesn't hurt to read that question before reading the text of the passage. However, if there are several questions associated with the passage, it's both counterproductive and a waste of precious time to scroll through and review these questions before reading the passage.

### 3. Taking Passage Notes

If you love taking notes and they improve your reading, please feel free to do so. However, I've found that notes do not aid overall comprehension (and, in fact, may hinder it) for most students. Note-taking most often slows students down, and notes are generally not helpful in answering questions.

#### **4. Memorizing Details**

I have mentioned this already, but it's important enough to mention it again.

Because some questions require you to access details from the passage, you may think you must memorize the content of the text as you read. However, you don't! Trying to master every detail can make it harder to see the big picture as clearly as you would otherwise. Give yourself a little breathing room, focus on the author's purpose, and you may be surprised to see how much easier it is to understand the passage as a whole.

Of course, you know yourself best, so feel free to disregard this advice. For most students, however, avoiding these strategies will prove critical to their success.

Let's go back to the sample passages and model the reading process. Afterward, I'll walk through how you should answer the questions. (Again, I'll have further discussion of the different question types in the lessons ahead.)

# Sample Passage 1 Solutions

Here are solutions to the passages introduced earlier in this chapter.

Although human exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMFs) has become more prevalent since the advent of human-made EMF producers, such as home appliances, mobile phones, and power grids, exposure to electromagnetism has always been a part of life. After all, Earth and the Sun both generate their own EMFs. However, some evidence suggests that extended exposure to high-frequency EMFs can cause physical and even mental illnesses in humans. Although the science behind these claims remains controversial, EMF exposure has been associated with depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, fatigue, and difficulty with focus. In fact, some scientists believe that the ubiquity of EMFs is at least partially to blame for the increasing worldwide rates of mental illness. Although this hypothesis might seem far-fetched at first, you may recently have personally experienced the mental effects of EMFs. Many people report feelings of unease and heaviness when a severe thunderstorm is rolling in, which could be explained by the high levels of EMF emitted by lightning.

.....  
**Background information about main topic: human exposure to EMFs.**

.....  
**Main point: some evidence suggests extended exposure can cause physical and even mental illness.**

.....  
**Support.**

## Comments

The passage begins by giving you background information about the topic. It then moves to the main point: there is some evidence suggesting that extended exposure to high-frequency EMFs can cause physical and even mental illness. It then moves on to several different types of support for this theory.

1. The passage is primarily concerned with

- (A) an urgent need to reduce our exposure to high-frequency EMFs.
- (B) a controversy surrounding whether Earth's electromagnetism is affecting our bodies.
- (C) comparing the EMFs emitted by power grids to those emitted by lightning.
- (D) presenting the hypothesis that human-made EMFs affect our mental health.**
- (E) dispelling myths surrounding the safety of home appliances and mobile phones.

2. It can be inferred from the passage that the author would agree with which of the following statements? Select all that apply.

- [A] It is impossible to avoid all EMF exposure.**
- [B] High-frequency EMFs cause most mental issues such as depression and anxiety.
- [C] We should ban home appliances and electronics that emit high-frequency EMFs.

3. The author includes the last two sentences of the passage to

- (A) prove that EMFs are dangerous to physical health.
- (B) demonstrate that EMFs could indeed affect our mental well-being.**
- (C) point out that EMFs are a natural, harmless part of life on Earth.
- (D) suggest that people living in storm-prone areas are at a high risk of mental illness.
- (E) hypothesize that some people are more sensitive to the effects of EMFs than others.

**(D) matches our solution, and it is correct.**

(A) and (B) go well beyond what is stated in the text, and (C) and (E) do not represent the primary concern of the passage.

For the second question, you're asked to select all the answers that apply. For [A], you were told in the passage that EMF exposure has always been a part of life and that Earth and the Sun both generate their own EMFs, so **yes, you can infer that the author would agree with [A].**

For [B], you don't have nearly enough evidence to support the idea that EMFs cause *most* mental illnesses; this is a great example of how a single word can make an answer choice wrong. For [C], the author takes no position in this passage regarding whether the devices should be banned. You can't infer that the author would agree with either [B] or [C].

These last two sentences are used to demonstrate that EMFs could indeed affect our mental well-being, so **(B) is the correct answer.**

(A) discusses physical health, which isn't the focus here, and the word *prove* is much too strong. (C) contradicts the point being made.

(D) doesn't accurately represent the passage, which doesn't single out or emphasize people who live in storm-prone areas—and it doesn't indicate that anyone is *at a high risk of mental illness*.

(E) makes a mistake similar to the one made in answer choice (D)—the text doesn't differentiate some people from others or suggest that certain individuals are more sensitive to EMFs.

# Sample Passage 2 Solutions

For the past 80 years, students of economics have learned about the “paradox of thrift”: the idea that individuals who act responsibly and save money actually harm the economy by suppressing consumer demand and economic growth. Perhaps now we can add another paradox to economic textbooks: the “paradox of toil.” First formulated by the Icelandic economist Gauti Eggertsson, the paradox of toil asserts that if too many people want to work too many hours, the resulting increased competition among workers can have dire consequences for the economy, including declining wages and demand and increased unemployment. The worst part is that the marketplace has no self-correcting mechanism for this situation. In fact, the usual market mechanism for dealing with unemployment—lower wages—would lead to a vicious cycle of lower demand and more unemployment. In a very real sense, an overzealous work ethic can become a formidable economic villain.

Of course, Eggertsson realized that the paradox of toil can occur only under a narrow range of circumstances. Most notably, interest rates must effectively be zero. When interest rates are positive, lenders are willing to expand credit, thereby propping up demand for goods and services. However, when interest rates are near the zero bound, credit cannot be offered on favorable terms for borrowers. At this point, at least according to Eggertsson, the paradox of toil comes into play. Traditionally, economists have viewed zero interest rates as nothing more than a theoretical possibility. However, in our decidedly abnormal economic times, zero interest rates are very close to reality. As we look at the current state of the economies of industrialized nations, we see stagnant wages despite very low unemployment rates, indicating that the paradox of toil may be all too real.

## Comments

The author wrote the passage to (1) explain to us the paradox of toil, (2) discuss the unlikely characteristics (namely zero interest rates) that would make the paradox of toil possible, and finally, (3) show us that these characteristics exist in our modern age and that perhaps we may be experiencing the paradox of toil today.

**Background: economics students learn of paradox of thrift.**

**Main topic: economist Eggertsson—paradox of toil—too many people working too many hours could = bad consequences for the economy.**

**Further elaboration: no self-correction, but rather vicious cycle that gets worse.**

**Eggertsson knew the paradox of toil is unlikely to actually happen; will only occur when interest rates are effectively at zero.**

**Explanation of why.**

**Traditionally, economists have viewed zero interest rates as very unlikely.**

**But currently, this is very close to reality.**

**The paradox of toil may currently be all too real.**

1. The author of the passage indicates that economists such as Eggertsson believe that

- Ⓐ workers in modern industrialized nations are too productive.
- Ⓑ the paradox of thrift remains a greater threat than the paradox of toil.
- Ⓒ the free market always leads to high unemployment rates.
- Ⓓ working too much may damage the economy.**
- Ⓔ interest rates should be kept as high as possible to prevent the paradox of toil.

2. When interest rates are NOT at or near zero, which of the following can be inferred to be true? Select all that apply.

- Ⓐ It is unlikely that the paradox of toil will occur.**
- Ⓑ Borrowers can usually increase credit to increase demand.**
- Ⓒ Unemployment will remain at acceptable levels.

**Answer choice (D) matches the definition of the paradox of toil well, and it is the correct answer.**

(A) is attractive, but *modernized industrialized nations* and *too productive* are not exact matches for what the passage tells you Eggertsson believed.

(B) The passage doesn't compare the paradoxes, so you can quickly eliminate this answer choice.

In (C), the word *always* makes this claim far too strong to be correct; the answer choice does not reflect Eggertsson's beliefs described in the passage.

(E) You haven't read any information in the passage that would enable you to infer that Eggertsson thought *interest rates should be kept as high as possible*.

You are told that the paradox of toil can occur only when interest rates are effectively at zero, **so you can infer [A]**.

You are also told that when interest rates are positive, lenders are willing to expand credit, propping up demand for goods and services, so you can infer that borrowers can usually increase credit to increase demand, and **you can select [B] as well**.

However, the passage contains no information to indicate that when interest rates are NOT at or near zero, unemployment will remain at acceptable levels—there could be any variety of reasons why unemployment levels might run amok at any given time regardless of interest rates. Therefore, you can't select [C].

## Sample Passage 2 Solutions Continued

3. According to the passage, which of the following is an assumption that underlies Eggertsson's theory?

- (A) Governments recognize the limits of free-market solutions.
- (B) Interest rates have typically been positive in the past.
- (C) Workers are incapable of understanding that their behavior is paradoxical.
- (D) Lenders will not expand credit when interest rates are zero.**
- (E) Higher wages will lead to increased interest rates.

According to the passage, an important component of Eggertsson's theory is that *when interest rates are near the zero bound, credit cannot be offered on favorable terms to borrowers*. That is a nice match for answer choice **(D)**, **which is the correct choice**.

(A) and (C) are not discussed in the passage. Even if (B) is true and discussed, it is not something that underlies Eggertsson's theory. (E) is not discussed, nor can it be inferred from the text. Therefore, all these choices can be eliminated.

4. Which of the following best describes the structure of the passage?

- (A) A hypothesis about the economy is presented and then debunked.
- (B) An economic theory is outlined, and the likelihood of a situation it predicts is discussed.**
- (C) Two paradoxes are compared, and one is discarded in favor of the other.
- (D) A self-correcting mechanism is questioned, and a dire prediction for the economy is made.
- (E) A new economic problem is outlined, and possible solutions are evaluated.

With answer choice (A), *a hypothesis* isn't a great match, but by itself, perhaps it isn't bad enough to eliminate the answer choice; however, *debunked* is—the paradox of toil is not debunked in the passage, so you can eliminate this answer choice.

With answer choice (B), both the first and second parts align with the passage, so let's leave it for now and review the other choices.

The passage doesn't compare the two paradoxes or choose one over the other, so you can quickly eliminate answer choice (C).

With (D), no self-correcting mechanism is questioned, and *a dire prediction for the economy is made* is too dark and dramatic to describe the tone of the passage, so you can eliminate this choice as well.

Finally, you aren't given a problem and possible solutions, so you can eliminate (E).

(B) is the only viable answer. It accurately describes the structure of the passage: the first paragraph outlines a theory, and the second discusses the likelihood of the situation it predicts. **Therefore, (B) is correct.**

# Practice Passage

Let's try one final three-question passage together to finish the chapter.

Nineteenth-century Prussian general and military philosopher Carl von Clausewitz famously claimed that “war is the continuation of politics by other means.” In this pronouncement, Clausewitz challenged the common assumption that war is akin to a sporting competition between nations in which one side “wins” by achieving battlefield victory over a “loser” who waves a metaphorical, if not literal, white flag of surrender. For Clausewitz, the purpose of war was far more complicated. In his estimation, countries go to war to achieve economic and political goals that they have failed to achieve by other methods. However, while battlefield defeat does not imply the impossibility of achieving those goals, battlefield victory does not assure success in attaining them, either.

To choose what, at first glance, might appear a shocking example of this principle, consider Japan in 1945. From a military standpoint, few countries have ever been more thoroughly defeated: Japan faced complete destruction of its military and industrial capabilities, millions of military and civilian casualties, and the national humiliation of virtually unconditional surrender. Yet, Clausewitz might argue, Japan achieved its war aims nonetheless. Japan's primary goal in the 1930s was to create the “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere”: a strong, Japan-dominated East Asian economy. Although early 20th-century Japanese attempts to achieve this aim brought it into disastrous military conflict with the United States, after the American occupation of Japan ended, Japan began its economic domination of most of East Asia, leading to its emergence as one of the wealthiest countries on the planet.

1. Which of the following best describes the primary purpose of the passage?

- (A) To criticize conventional views of warfare
- (B) To illustrate the validity of a view that is at odds with conventional wisdom
- (C) To argue that victory and defeat are meaningless concepts when discussing warfare
- (D) To explain the motives behind Japan's involvement in World War II
- (E) To analyze the assumptions underlying a prevalent theory of warfare

2. The author uses the phrase “white flag of surrender” to achieve which of the following goals?

- (A) To illustrate a common viewpoint with a concrete image
- (B) To illustrate the idea that formal surrender is a necessary component of military defeat
- (C) To indicate that surrender is often a more complicated process than civilians typically imagine
- (D) To show how wars typically ended in Clausewitz's time
- (E) To illustrate the sense of deep humiliation experienced by defeated countries

3. Which of the following regarding Japan is NOT mentioned by the author?

- (A) One reason for the military conflict between the United States and Japan
- (B) The magnitude of Japan's military losses
- (C) How Japan was able to economically dominate East Asia after World War II
- (D) Japan's current economic position in the world
- (E) The psychosocial consequences of Japan's defeat

# Practice Passage Solutions

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## Comments

This is a more challenging text to understand, especially at the beginning. It helps to read through to the end and then reread to more fully understand the substance and purpose of the first parts of the passage. Specifically, it may have been difficult to understand what exactly was meant by Clausewitz’s quotation, but when you’re given further elaboration in the latter parts of the passage and the example of Japan post-WWII, it becomes much clearer.

.....  
**Seems to start with main point—war is just another means of politics—Carl von Clausewitz.**

.....  
**Contrasts with the assumption that war is like a competition where one side wins and the other side loses.**

.....  
**Further explanation—for Clausewitz, war is more complicated—war is a way to achieve goals, but victory and defeat don’t guarantee success or failure in the achievement of the goals.**

.....  
**The second paragraph serves as an example of the main point: Japan was defeated in war but achieved its desired goals after the war.**

1. Which of the following best describes the primary purpose of the passage?

- (A) To criticize conventional views of warfare
- (B) To illustrate the validity of a view that is at odds with conventional wisdom**
- (C) To argue that victory and defeat are meaningless concepts when discussing warfare
- (D) To explain the motives behind Japan’s involvement in World War II
- (E) To analyze the assumptions underlying a prevalent theory of warfare

2. The author uses the phrase “white flag of surrender” to achieve which of the following goals?

- (A) To illustrate a common viewpoint with a concrete image**
- (B) To illustrate the idea that formal surrender is a necessary component of military defeat
- (C) To indicate that surrender is often a more complicated process than civilians typically imagine
- (D) To show how wars typically ended in Clausewitz’s time
- (E) To illustrate the sense of deep humiliation experienced by defeated countries

None of the answer choices for the first question may jump out as ideal, but (B) is the one you can’t find fault with and by far the best available. **(B) must therefore be the correct choice.** The passage uses the first paragraph to present you with a view that is at odds with conventional wisdom (a loose synonym for *common assumption*) and the second to illustrate the validity of that view.

The passage doesn’t offer criticism of conventional views of warfare, so you can eliminate (A). The author also doesn’t claim that victory and defeat are meaningless concepts, so you can easily eliminate (C) as well. (D) While the passage does mention Japan’s motives for entering WWII, explaining these motives cannot be described as its primary purpose. These *war aims* are mentioned for the first time at the end of the second paragraph. You can eliminate that choice.

(E) is perhaps the most tempting of the incorrect answer choices, but the passage doesn’t provide an analysis of Clausewitz’s underlying assumptions; rather, it gives you an explanation of the theory and an example of it playing out in the world, so you can eliminate (E) as well.

**For the second question, the best available answer choice is (A).** You know that this is a part of the *common assumption*, or viewpoint, and the white flag does provide a *concrete image* to illustrate the point.

You have no clues to suggest that the author intends to illustrate with the white flag that surrender is a *necessary component of military defeat* or indicate that surrender is *often a more complicated process than civilians typically imagine*, so you can eliminate both of those choices.

(D) is somewhat tempting, but you only know that this was a typically held assumption, not that this is how wars *typically ended* in Clausewitz’s time, so you can eliminate this choice.

(E) overly infers the meaning of the white flag—while the passage does discuss the humiliation of defeat, it does so in a completely separate context from the white flag of surrender. You can eliminate this answer choice.

# Solutions Continued

3. The author does NOT mention which of the following with regard to Japan?

- Ⓐ One reason for the military conflict between the United States and Japan
- Ⓑ The magnitude of Japan's military losses
- Ⓒ **How Japan was able to economically dominate East Asia after World War II**
- Ⓓ Japan's current economic position in the world
- Ⓔ The psychosocial consequences of Japan's defeat

To answer this question correctly and confidently, you must not only choose the one answer not mentioned but also find the four answer choices that are mentioned in the passage. One small advantage is that you know that the subject matter is narrowly focused on Japan, so you can focus on just the second paragraph.

(A) is discussed in the passage—we are told that Japan's primary goal and its attempts to achieve this aim put it into military conflict with the United States—so you can eliminate (A).

Multiple parts of the second paragraph discuss (B), so you can eliminate it as well.

(C) does not seem to be discussed, so let's leave it for now.

*Japan's current economic position* is discussed in the final sentence, so you can eliminate answer choice (D).

Finally, (E) is discussed in terms of *national humiliation*, so you can eliminate it as well.

Returning to (C), you are told that Japan was able to dominate East Asia after WWII, but the passage doesn't give you any information, directly or indirectly, about how. **Therefore, (C) was not discussed and is the correct answer.**