

PTE Academic Lesson Plan Ideas: Test Taking Strategies

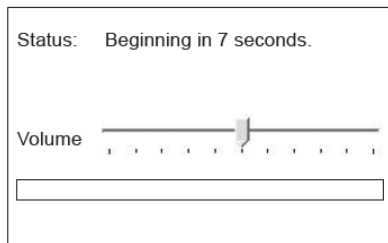
Lesson 14 – Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers

Time allocated: 40 minutes

Step 1: Introduce the Item Type

This is a multiple-choice item type that assesses listening skills. It requires test takers to listen to, analyze, understand and assess a short recording on an academic subject and choose more than one correct response.

Listen to the recording and answer the question by selecting all the correct responses. You will need to select more than one response.



What happened as a result of the arrival of colonists?

- ☐ Huge areas were deforested.
- ☐ Old farming methods were abandoned.
- ☐ Large expanses were planted with new species.
- ☐ Stone quarries were depleted.
- ☐ Sections of land were delineated with stones.

Step 2: Present the Item Type Strategies

Strategy 1

Draw on your background knowledge of the topic to help you focus your attention before you listen.

Strategy 2

Focus your listening on the information you need to listen for. Identify the “direction” of both the question and response options, and listen out for redundant information that can be ignored.

Strategy 3

If the topic of the listening passage is unfamiliar to you, concentrate on what you understand rather than worrying about words that are new to you. Open your mind to the general gist of what is being said rather than focusing on individual words and phrases.

Step 3: Explain and Practice Each Strategy

Strategy 1

Explain to your students that using their background knowledge of a topic can help them focus their attention before a listening activity and predict what they might hear.

To practice this strategy, ask your class to do the following activities:

- Show students the question and response options for Item 1. Have them identify the topic and the focus of the question (e.g., *colonial arrivals in foreign countries; changes that occurred in colonized countries after the arrival of colonial people*).
- Ask students to work in groups to brainstorm countries that have been colonized and people who have been colonizers (e.g., *India, Australia, various countries in South America, various countries in Asia, etc.; the Spanish, the British, the Portuguese, etc.*).
- Have students think about the changes that various colonizers have brought about in the countries that they colonized (e.g., *wiped out populations, destroyed wildlife and flora, exploited resources, built railways, built farms, etc.*).
- Once students have discussed their ideas, have them look at the response options to see which ones best match their ideas, and to see whether they can already make a guess at which options might be correct.

Strategy 2

Remind your students that they must focus their listening on the information they need to listen for as some of the information they will hear in the recordings will not be relevant to the question. Once students have identified the “direction” of both the question and response options, they can also listen out for redundant information that can be ignored. Being able to identify redundant information is a skill we use to help us quickly understand the gist of what we hear in our everyday lives.

To practice this strategy, ask your class to do the following activities:

- Ask students to look again at the question and tell you what cues or words they might hear in the recording that will indicate the information that follows is relevant (e.g., *When the colonizers arrived ..., After the arrival of the colonists..., As a result..., From that point on... etc.*).
- Tell students that they will now listen to the recording. Tell them to listen carefully for language cues that signal what follows is relevant to the question.
- Play the audio [L14_Multiple-choice_choose_multiple_answers_1]. Ask students to raise their hand when they think they hear a cue. When a student raises his/her hand, stop the recording and ask him/her to identify the cue he/she heard (i.e., *... one of the first things that happened as increasing waves of colonists arrived was...*). Explain that this signals the point from which students should pay careful attention to the details that follow.

Strategy 3

Tell your students that if the topic of the listening passage is unfamiliar to them, or they hear a lot of unfamiliar words, they should remain focused and concentrate on the information they do understand rather than worrying about individual words and phrases that are new to them. Explain that staying calm will help them understand the general gist of what is being said.

To practice this strategy, ask your class to do the following activities:

- Tell students that they are going to listen carefully to the remaining part of the recording. Explain that they should try to concentrate on the gist of what they hear, and at the same time mark down a small question mark on a piece of paper each time they hear a word or phrase that they are unsure of.
- Play the remaining part of the audio [L14_Multiple-choice_choose_multiple_answers_1] (from *Certainly one of the first things that happened as increasing waves of colonists arrived was...*).

- Have students show how many question marks they have all written.
- Explain that although many of them probably heard some unfamiliar words or unclear information, they are still likely to have understood the gist of what they heard.
- Ask students what they can tell you about the gist of the passage. If necessary, ask prompt questions such as *What was the first thing that happened after the colonizers arrived?* (they cleared land) *Why did they clear land?* (for farms), etc. Confirm the gist or main points of the passage with the class (i.e., the colonizers cut down trees to clear land for farming, the wood was used for building, and the colonizers built stone walls).
- Ask students to look at the response options and identify those that are correct. After they have done this, provide the explanations and discuss any queries.

Step 4: Respond to a (Listening) Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers Item

Explain to your students that they will now respond to a test item simulating the test conditions. Remind them of the three strategies covered in this lesson and ask them to apply these strategies.

Give out copies of Item 2 and play the audio [L14_Multiple-choice_choose_multiple_answers_2].

Step 5: Provide Feedback

Ask your students if they were able to use the strategies. Which one was the most difficult to apply? Which one do they think was the most useful?

Ask students to compare and evaluate each other's responses in pairs or groups.

After they have done this, show the answers for Item 2 and provide the explanations. Discuss any queries.

Item 1

Listen to the recording and answer the question by selecting all the correct responses. You will need to select more than one response.

What happened as a result of the arrival of colonists?

- ☐ Huge areas were deforested.
- ☐ Old farming methods were abandoned.
- ☐ Large expanses were planted with new species.
- ☐ Stone quarries were depleted.
- ☐ Sections of land were delineated with stones.

Item 1: Transcript, Answer Key and Explanations

We are led to believe that basically much of eastern North America was heavily cloaked in mature forest, forest that today we covet as old growth, and yet at one time it was the sort of ancestral, um, botanical blanket that covered much of certainly Massachusetts and New England.... Certainly one of the first things that happened as increasing waves of colonists arrived was the need to clear the land, um, and this clearing of the land is something that started, um, really in the form of small, subsistence farms, uh, the timber was used for building houses, um for building ships, for firewood, for all manner of things. The boulders the erratic, ah, the glacial erratic stones that were so much a part of the New England landscape, um, are today sort of ah what we find in the latticework of stone walls that one can find practically anywhere in the landscape, ah, if it's in a relatively untouched condition. ... By the early part of the ah, nineteenth century, ah, it's thought that generally the zenith of clearing had taken place, ah, sometime in the 1830s 1840s ... and the trees and the forests were essentially clear-cut, ah, to an extent that is almost unbelievable.

QUESTION: What happened as a result of the arrival of colonists?

Correct Answer: Huge areas were deforested.

Explanation: This response is correct. The speaker says that one of the first things that happened as increasing waves of colonists arrived was the clearing of the land. The speaker also says that sometime in the 1830s and 1840s, the trees and the forests were essentially clear-cut.

Incorrect: Old farming methods were abandoned.

Explanation: This response is incorrect. Abandonment of old farming methods is not discussed in the recording.

Incorrect: Large expanses were planted with new species.

Explanation: This response is incorrect because new species are not mentioned in the recording.

Incorrect: Stone quarries were depleted.

Explanation: This response is incorrect. The speaker does not mention stone quarries in the recording.

Correct Answer: Sections of land were delineated with stones.

Explanation: This response is correct. The speaker says that the glacial erratic stones that were so much a part of the New England landscape are today "sort of" what can be found in the latticework of stone walls that one can find practically anywhere in the landscape. This implies that stones were used to delineate sections of land.

Item 2

Listen to the recording and answer the question by selecting all the correct responses. You will need to select more than one response.

The purpose of this talk is to _____

- ☐ suggest ways to make indoor lighting more economical.
- ☐ encourage listeners to think creatively about mundane items.
- ☐ illustrate how an everyday object could inspire new technology.
- ☐ describe an artistic exhibition using familiar items.
- ☐ persuade listeners to participate in a scientific study.

Item 2: Transcript, Answer Key and Explanations

If you think about light bulbs, they're an enormous infrastructure. They're in every building in the world, more or less, they have kind of a privileged position above us, around us, they can see, if you think about it, you know, most parts of any room. The kind of key was to say, well, what if we consider a light bulb not to be a light bulb, but actually to be a digital projector. It just happens to be really low resolution. In fact, it's a one by one pixel digital projector. You turn on the wall switch and a giant pixel comes out and paints your room. OK, well, that's ludicrous, but what if you put a higher resolution projector inside that same familiar glass bulb? Well, now you have a device that can illuminate. If you turn on all the pixels the same color you still have a light bulb in the usual sense. But if you turn on the pixels different amounts and different colors, then you're kind of projecting information out into the world. And if at the same time that you're doing that, you put a little tiny camera inside the bulb, then not only is information flowing out of the glass, but you're collecting optical information. So screw one of those into every one of these fixtures and suddenly you have a means potentially to put display and interaction everywhere throughout the world.

QUESTION: The purpose of this talk is to _____

Incorrect: suggest ways to make indoor lighting more economical.

Explanation: This response is incorrect. The speaker asks listeners to think about light bulbs and what could be done with them but does not discuss this in terms of money.

Correct Answer: encourage listeners to think creatively about mundane items.

Explanation: This response is correct. The speaker invites listeners to think about light bulbs then talks about their use in an unusual way. The speaker goes on to discuss the light bulb in ways most people don't think about: "they're an enormous infrastructure," "they have a kind of privileged position above us," and that each light bulb projects one giant pixel that "paints" the room.

Correct Answer: illustrate how an everyday object could inspire new technology.

Explanation: This response is correct. The speaker begins by considering a light bulb and what it does and then imagines what could be done with it. As the speaker adds features to this imaginary light bulb, it changes from a low resolution projector, to a high resolution projector, to a device that projects and collects optical information.

Incorrect: describe an artistic exhibition using familiar items.

Explanation: This response is incorrect. Art, art galleries, museums and exhibitions are not discussed in this recording.

Incorrect: persuade listeners to participate in a scientific study.

Explanation: This response is incorrect because the speaker does not mention a scientific study.