Test-Wise Clues to Avoid

PAIRED OPTIONS

- Paired/similar options clue the key as one of those options
- Examinees have 50/50 chance of answering correctly

HINTS:

- ✓ Create two pairs in an option set to remove the clue
- ✓ A pair of options that does <u>not</u> include the key is acceptable

REPEATED WORDS

- A word/phrase appearing once or more in the stem and also in one option clues that option as the key

HINT:

- ✓ Include the repeated word in more than one option to remove the clue

CONTENT/GRAMMAR AGREEMENT

- Options that do not follow the lead-in question are easily ruled out as incorrect
- Options that are easily ruled out increase examinees' chance of guessing correctly

LONGEST, MOST DETAILED OPTION

- The correct answer is clued if it has more words and more details than the other options
- Examinees can choose the correct answer without reading <u>any</u> of the item

HINT:

- ✓ To remove the clue, move some details from the correct answer into the stem

CONVERGENCE

- Repetition of terms in an option set clues the correct answer as the option containing the terms that are repeated most often
- Examinees can guess the correct answer based on only repeated terms in the options

HINTS:

- ✓ Revise the options so no terms are repeated to remove the clue
- ✓ Convergence that points to a <u>wrong</u> answer is acceptable

NUMERIC OPTIONS

- The key is clued if it is in the middle option position (option C in a 5-option set)
- The key is clued by unequal numeric intervals before and after that option

ABSOLUTE TERMS IN OPTIONS

- Options that include absolute terms are easily ruled out as incorrect
- Each option that is easily ruled out increases examinees' chance of guessing correctly

HINTS:

- ✓ Replace absolute terms with terms that better reflect possibilities to remove the clues
- ✓ Change "will cause" to "may cause" and "never" to "rarely," etc.