

Review these strategies. When you feel you understand them, take the sample test that follows. Good luck.

The **Nursing Entrance Test** is a test of critical reading. It helps to determine if you will be able to effectively and efficiently read the materials presented to you in the nursing program. When taking this test, you will need to read for both **literal information**, which requires you to locate information found directly in the passage, or **critical reading information**, which requires you to infer information or “read between the lines.”

Reading for Literal Information

To understand and comprehend the **literal information** asked for in test questions, you must be able to locate that information in the passage. When reading, pay close attention to the details and facts contained in the passage. Names, dates, places, numbers, and statistics are examples of information test makers focus on when writing tests.

Reading for Critical Reading Information

To understand and comprehend the **critical reading information** asked for in test questions, you must be able to infer or “read between the lines.” You are asked to “figure out” the answer by considering the facts. You also may be asked to “predict outcomes” based on reading and understanding the entire passage.

Preparing for the NET

To help you be successful when taking the NET, the following explanation of the type of test questions and suggested strategies for answering these questions have been provided.

Establishing a Central Theme

Establishing a **central theme** or topic is one focus on the NET test.

On the NET, the following type questions are asking you to identify the theme or topic. Focus on these stems to know how to answer the question.

- **The central theme of paragraph A – F is.**
- **Identify the central, unifying theme of paragraphs G – I:**
- **Based on paragraph G – I, which of the following is a statement of the central theme?**
- **Paragraph A focuses on which major theme?**
- **Based on this article as a whole, what is the central theme?**
- **What is the common theme of this article?**

- **Which would be a statement of the theme for this paragraph?**

To identify a central theme, remember a theme is only a phrase not a sentence. It is similar to a title which is based on the topic, subject matter. You may need to identify a theme for one paragraph, more than one paragraph, or the complete article.

To identify the appropriate theme, use the following central theme strategies.

- Step 1 If possible, look at your choices first. Keep them in mind.
- Step 2 Read through the paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article.
- Step 3 Ask yourself, what words come up over and over again that match the choices.
- Step 4 Select the theme you feel is referred to throughout the whole paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article.
- Step 5 Make sure your choice is not **too broad** – covers information which is beyond the information mentioned or not mentioned in the paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article.
- Step 6 Make sure your choice is not **too narrow** – limited to one fact from the paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article.
- Step 7 Make sure your choice is discussed in the paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article.

[Central Theme 1](#)

[Central Theme 2](#)

Understanding the Main Idea

Another main focus on the NET is finding the main idea. Reading for the “Main Idea” requires that you understand what is the author’s reason for or central point of the passage: What is the entire paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article about?

On the NET, the following questions are asking you to identify the main idea.

Look for these type of questions and apply the main idea strategies.

Focus on these stems to identify how to answer the question.

- **Which states the main idea of this paragraph?**
- **Which is the best statement of the main idea for the paragraph?**
- **Select the main idea of this paragraph.**
- **The main idea for this paragraph is best revealed by which statement.**

- **Identify the main idea for this paragraph.**

To find the main idea, use the following strategies.

- Step 1 Understand what is the central theme or topic, the subject matter. Ask yourself, “What is the central theme or topic?” To find the topic, look for what words are repeated over and over again.
- Step 2 Understand what is the main idea, the most important or central point the author is trying to make. Once you know the central theme or know the topic ask yourself “What is the passage all about?”
- Step 3 Look for the topic sentence which states the main idea.

The topic sentence can be found in three places. It is usually the first sentence . However, if it is not the first sentence, the next place to check is the last sentence. If neither the first nor the last sentences are the topic sentence, check the remaining sentences.

A Word of Caution

Also when selecting the main idea statement do not select the statement which is too general. This type statement is too broad. It includes much more information than the information stated in the paragraph. This statement would need additional information added to the paragraph to be adequately explained.

When selecting the main idea statement, do not select the statement which is too narrow - only one fact mentioned. Just because you can find this statement in their in the paragraph does not mean it is the main idea.

When selecting the main idea, select the statement which is the central point of the “whole” paragraph.

[Main Idea 1](#)

[Main Idea 2](#)

[Main Idea 3](#)

Discovering the Purpose

Discovering the purpose of a paragraph is still another important focus on the NET.

On the NET, the following questions are asking you to determine the purpose of the paragraph on several paragraphs.

Focus on these stems to know how to answer the questions.

- **Identify the purpose of paragraph A.**

- **What is the purpose of paragraphs A - C?**
- **Which is the best statement of purpose for paragraph W?**
- **Which is a statement of purpose that can be supported by paragraphs L - M?**

To determine the purpose, understand that to recognize the purpose you must determine the reason behind the writer's writing. In other words, why did the writer write this passage. What did she/he want to do for the reader? Did she/he want to explain a method, define a concept, introduce a topic, identify key ideas, describe a process, or provide important details?

To identify the purpose of a paragraph or several paragraphs, use the following identifying the purpose strategies.

- Step 1 If possible, look at your choices first. Look for key action verbs such as explain, define, introduce, reveal, identify, provide. Keep the choices in mind.
- Step 2 Read through the paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article.
- Step 3 Ask yourself? Why did the author write this passage? What did the author want the reader to really understand after reading the passage?

Making an Inference

Making an **inference** is another focus of the NET.

On the NET, the following questions are asking you to make an inference.

Look for these type of questions and apply the inference strategies.

- **Identify an inference that can be delivered from the paragraph.**
- **Which is an inference based on the paragraph?**
- **Which statement is true based on the paragraph?**
- **Based on this paragraph, which statement is true?**
- **Identify a conclusion that can be drawn from this paragraph.**

To make an appropriate inference, use the following inference strategies.

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| Step 1 | Read through the entire paragraph and locate all the facts. |
| Step 2 | Mentally separate the facts into major details, important points that support the main idea, and minor details, points that support the major details. |
| Step 3 | Understand the details to determine what is the “hidden message” the author is inferring. |
| Step 4 | Read each choice and decide if the author has stated this point. <u>If it was stated in the paragraph, it is not an inference.</u> If the choice <u>is true based on the other facts presented, it is an inference.</u> |

[Inference 1](#)

[Inference 2](#)

[Inference 3](#)

Predicting Outcomes

The final focus on the NET is **predicting outcomes** which means drawing conclusions.

On the NET, the following type of questions are asking you to predict outcomes or draw conclusions.

Focus on these stems to know how to answer the questions.

- **Which would be an outcome from paragraph A?**
- **Which is an outcome resulting from paragraph B?**
- **Which statement is true about these three passages?**

- **What would be a conclusion based on paragraph J?**

Predicting an outcome is drawing a conclusion based on the facts in the paragraph. What is the end result? An outcome is not directly stated. However, it is supported by information within the paragraph.

To predict an outcome use the following predicting outcomes strategies.

- Step 1 If possible, look at your choices first. Keep them in mind.
- Step 2 Read through the paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article.
- Step 3 Determine the main idea.
- Step 4 Identify all the facts.
- Step 5 Decide, based on the main idea and facts, which outcome statement is supported by that proof.
- Step 6 Test your answer by asking yourself, “Does the paragraph, group of paragraphs, or article prove this outcome?” If not, try again.

[Drawing Conclusions 1](#)

[Drawing Conclusions 2](#)

[Drawing Conclusions 3](#)