

# Steps for English Problem-Solving

1) Read the underlined portion(s). Annotate!

- Take an inventory – what types of words/punctuation do you see?
- Look for patterns – verbs, pronouns, modifiers, parallelism, run-on sentences, tricky words?
- Try the pattern – match verbs to subjects, pronouns to antecedents, modifiers to nouns, etc.
- Decide within 20 seconds whether to continue or to skip.

2) Here are some indicators to look for:

- Commas – if you see several commas, think “list” (parallelism)
- Comma – if you a single comma in the underlined portion, look for a misplaced modifier phrase or a run-on sentence (no verb)
- Pronouns – if you see a pronoun in the underlined portion, check its antecedent – plural/singular mismatch? Wrong verb tense?
- Verb – if you see a verb in the underlined portion, match it with its subject. Plural/singular mismatch? Wrong verb tense?

3) Answer it if you can. Otherwise, guess and move on.

**Think about working the English sections in two passes.**

- First pass: do the easy ones (that will be most of the questions)
- Second pass: do the ones you marked as “possible”
- Don’t get “stuck” – spending minutes on tough problems that you never complete.