

# Strategies for Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ's)

(c)C. (Cassidy) McNeil

A. Philpot

H.S.C. 1998-1999

# Instructions

- ➔ To move from slide to slide, click the left hand mouse button.
- ➔ If a blank slide appears, click the button again.
- ➔ Go at your own pace. Read each screen carefully before going on to the next.

# In school Multiple Choice Questions are used in...

Science

History

Geography

Math

French

English

and other subject areas



# MCQ's aren't just used in school!

They are also used in some really important places such as...

- ✓ your driving test
- ✓ Bronze Cross Lifesaving
- ✓ SCUBA certification
- ✓ Pilot's licence
- ✓ And TOEFL, LSAT and GMAT tests are entirely MCQ's



**Multiple Choice**

**Or**

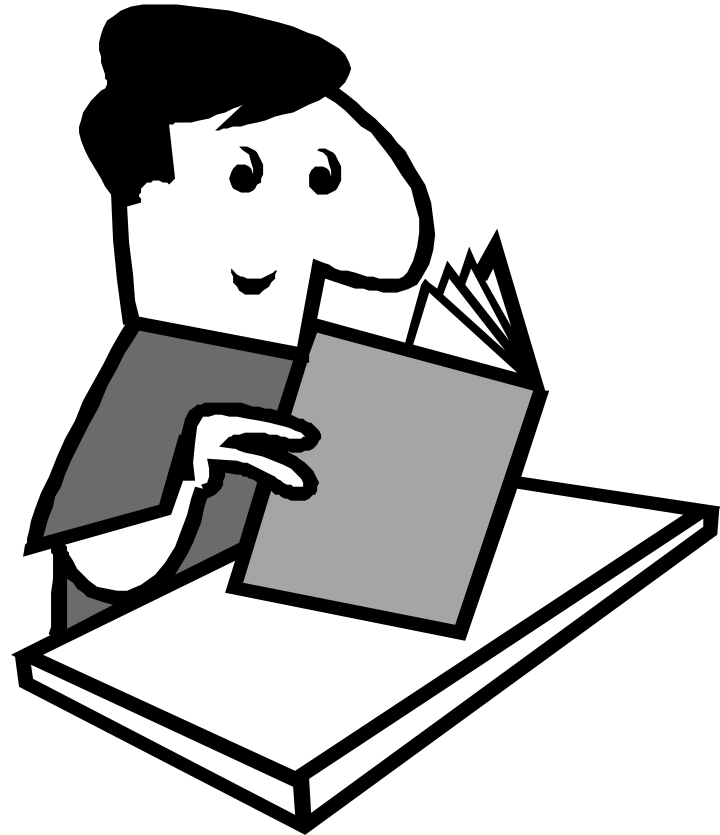
**Multiple Guess**



**We tend to guess  
the answers to  
Multiple Choice  
Questions rather  
than actually  
answering them  
properly!**



So first you  
must READ  
the question!



**Only then can  
you CHOOSE  
an answer!**

**eg. A**

**B ✓**

**C**



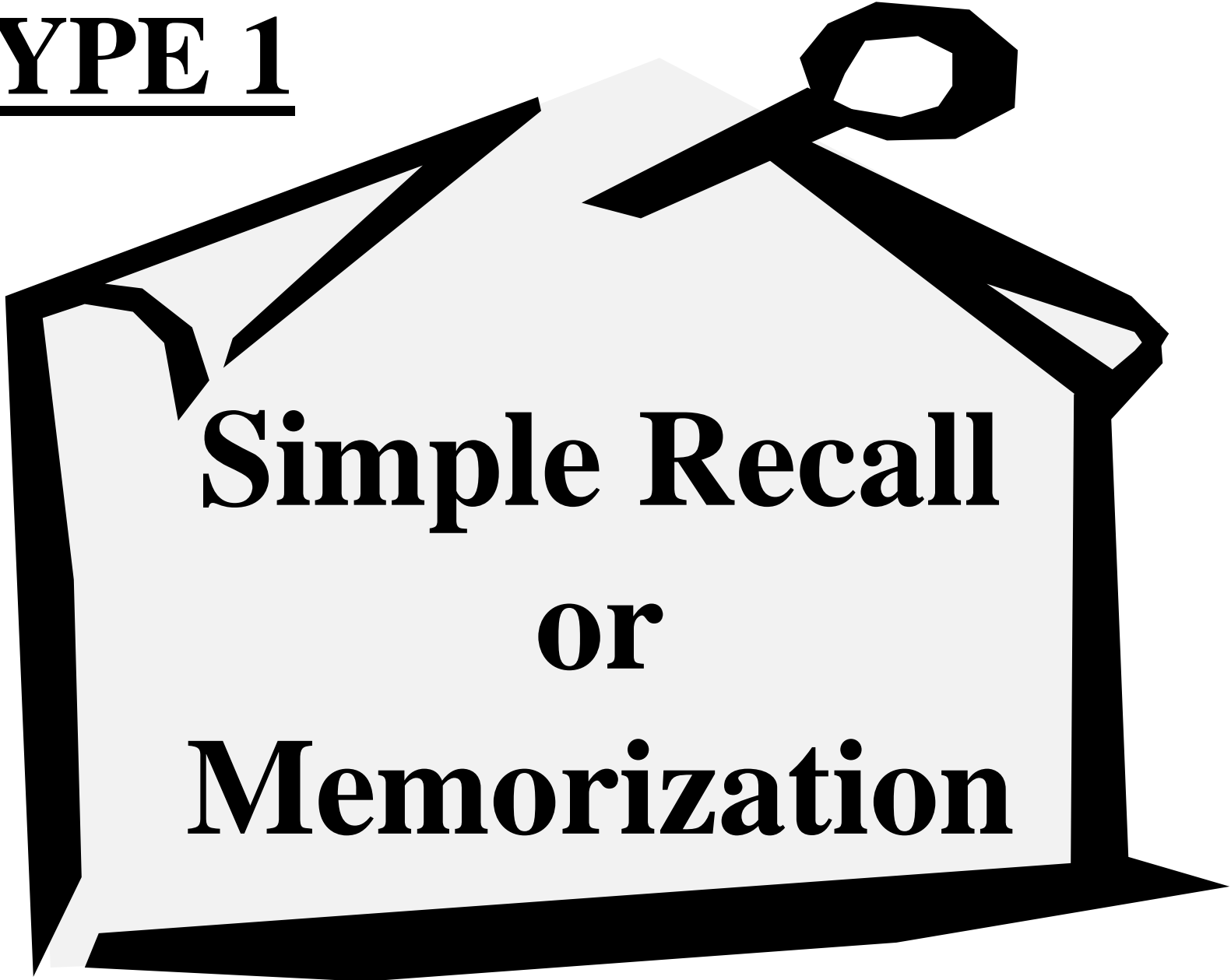
**There are  
different types  
of Multiple  
Choice Questions.**

**Each requires  
a different  
approach!**



**Before you start,  
you must decide  
on what type  
of question is  
being asked.**

# TYPE 1



**Simple Recall  
or  
Memorization**

**You must use your memory to  
come up with the answer.**

- Think about what answer you would give if the possible answers weren't given to you.

**What is the  
home of the  
Tiger Cats?**



**Toronto? No!**

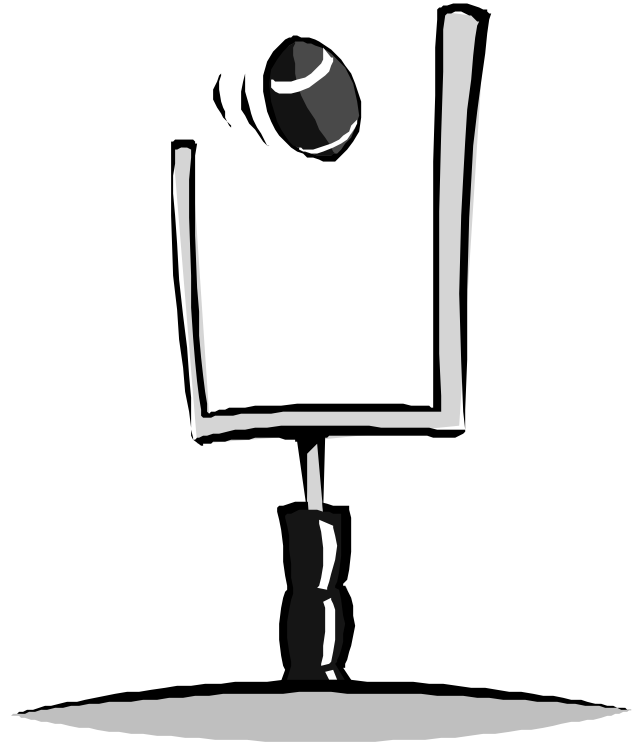
**Vancouver? No!**

**Hamilton! Yes!**



# And the possible answers are...

- A.** Toronto
- B.** Hamilton
- C.** Winnipeg
- D.** Calgary







**Let's try**

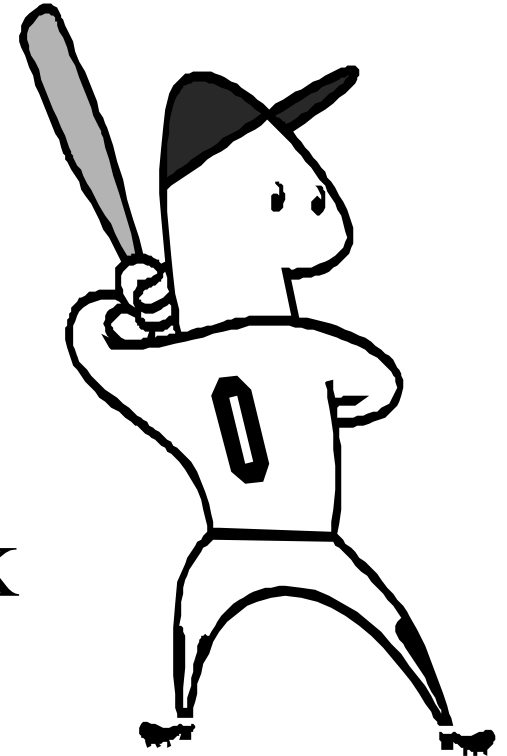
**another recall**

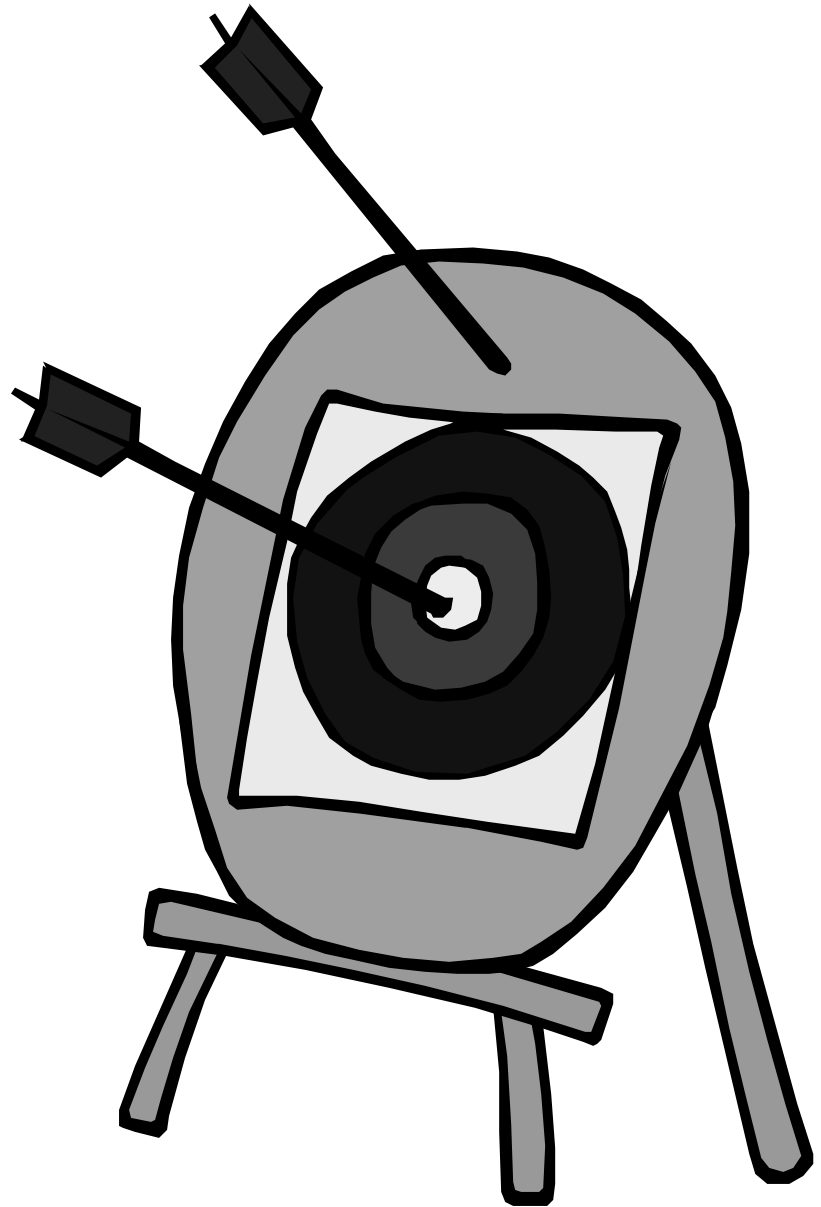
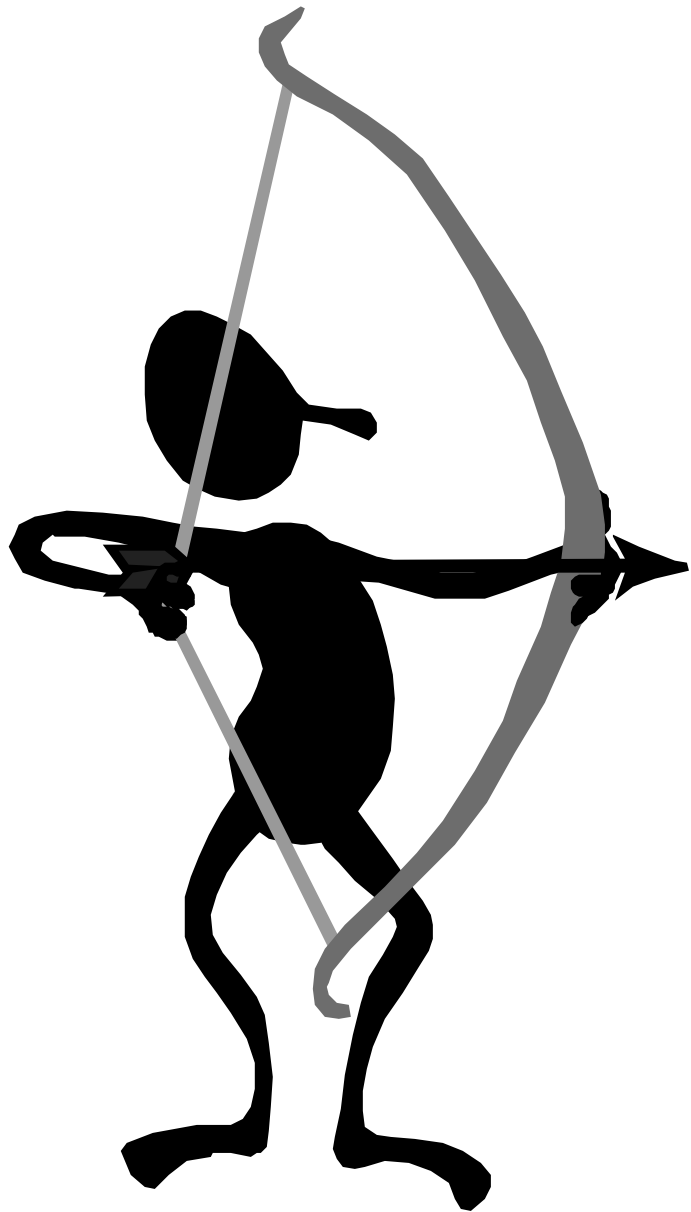
**example!**

# How many years in a row did the Blue Jays win the World Series?

➔ I know it was more than once but not more than three times.

➔ Therefore it must be two or three but I rather think only twice in fact.





# How many years in a row did the Blue Jays win the World Series?

A. 1

B. 2 

C. 3

D. 4

# **What if you have no idea of what the answer is??!!**

- Then, and only then look at the list of choices.
- Seeing the list may jog your memory.

**Or you may have to  
guess!**



# Which Spice Girl left the group first?



# and the Spice Girls are...

Nasty?

Nice?

Big?

Little?





- A. Posh?**
  - B. Sporty?**
  - C. Ginger?**
  - D. Baby?**
- So pick one!**



**TYPE 2**



**Carefully read the question  
and identify the rules for  
selection.**

**MARK key words  
and special instructions  
such as  
NOT, ALL or MOST.**

**From the following list, select the city which is nearest to an ocean.**

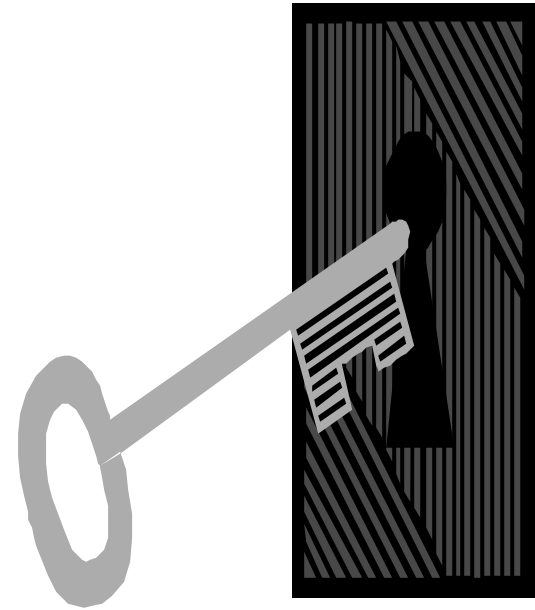
**A. Toronto**

**B. Calgary**

**C. British Columbia**

**D. Montreal**

**Note the key  
words in the  
question!**



**From the following list, select  
the city which is nearest to an  
ocean.**

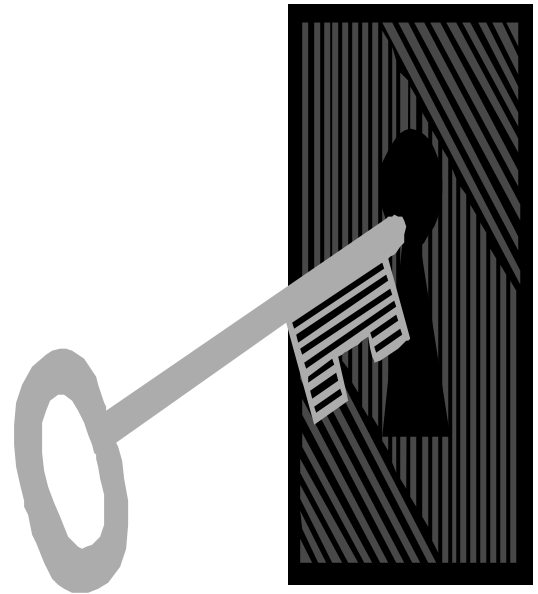
**A. Toronto**

**B. Calgary**

**C. British Columbia**

**D. Montreal**

**Apply the key  
words when  
selecting your  
answer.**







~~A. Toronto~~

~~B. Calgary~~

~~C. British Columbia???~~

~~D. Montreal~~



**Which of the following lists  
contains names of only capital  
cities of countries:**

- A.** New York, Ottawa, London
- B.** Paris, Tokyo, Lima
- C.** Beijing, Toronto, Cairo
- D.** Sydney, Madrid, Pretoria

# **Read each list carefully.**

- Think about what country each city is in.
- Do you know the capital?



**If you know the city  
is a capital, mark  
it clearly on the  
paper.**



**Which of the following lists  
contains names of only capital  
cities of countries:**

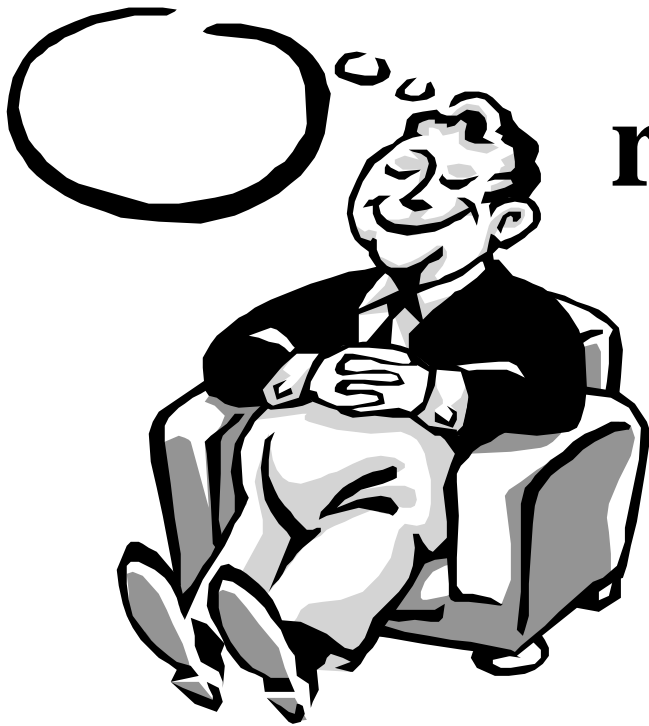
- A.** New York, Ottawa✓, London✓
- B.** Paris ✓, Tokyo ✓, Lima
- C.** Beijing ✓, Toronto, Cairo
- D.** Sydney, Madrid, Pretoria

*Time and effort are both  
wasted if you have to keep  
going back and trying to  
remember what you decided  
the first time around.*

**Use your brain to think about  
how to work out answers.**

- Don't use it to store things you have just remembered.
- As you think of things, **write them down** before you forget them!

**Think about what  
you DO know  
rather than worrying  
about what you  
DON'T know!**





# **So for this question... think about...**

- ❖ Where in the country is the city located?
- ❖ What other major cities are there in the country?
- ❖ What do you remember about the various cities?

**TYPE 3**

# Calculations



**First, perform the calculation,**  
*preferably on*  
*paper,* as if  
you hadn't  
been given  
any answers.

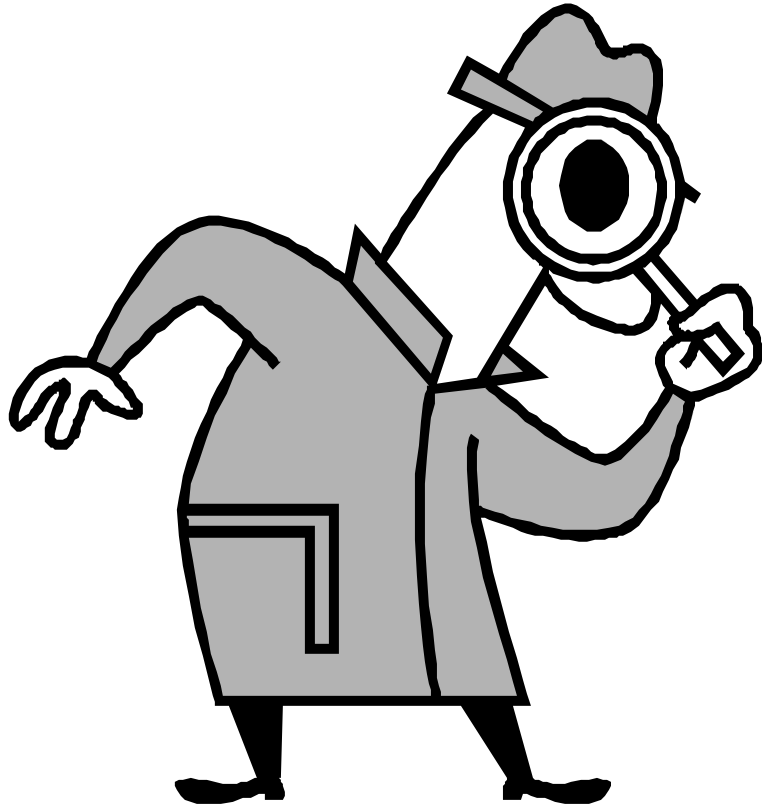


What is the value of Y if

$$2Y + 12 = 6Y - 4$$

**Perform the calculation.**

**NOW look at the  
answers given!**



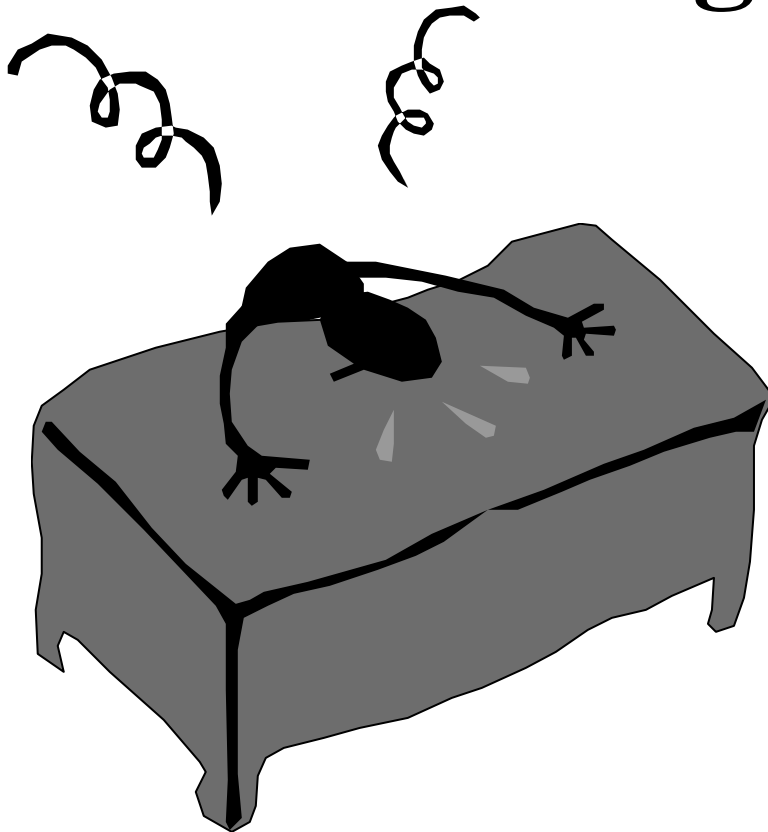
**A. 1**

**B. 2**

**C. 3**

**D. 4**

**What if your answer doesn't  
agree with any of the answers  
given?**



**Check your  
work!!!**

$$2Y + 12 = 6Y - 4$$

$$(2 \times 4) + 12 = (6 \times 4) - 4$$

$$8 + 12 = 24 - 4$$

$$20 = 20$$

$$Y = 4$$

**That's a relief!!!**

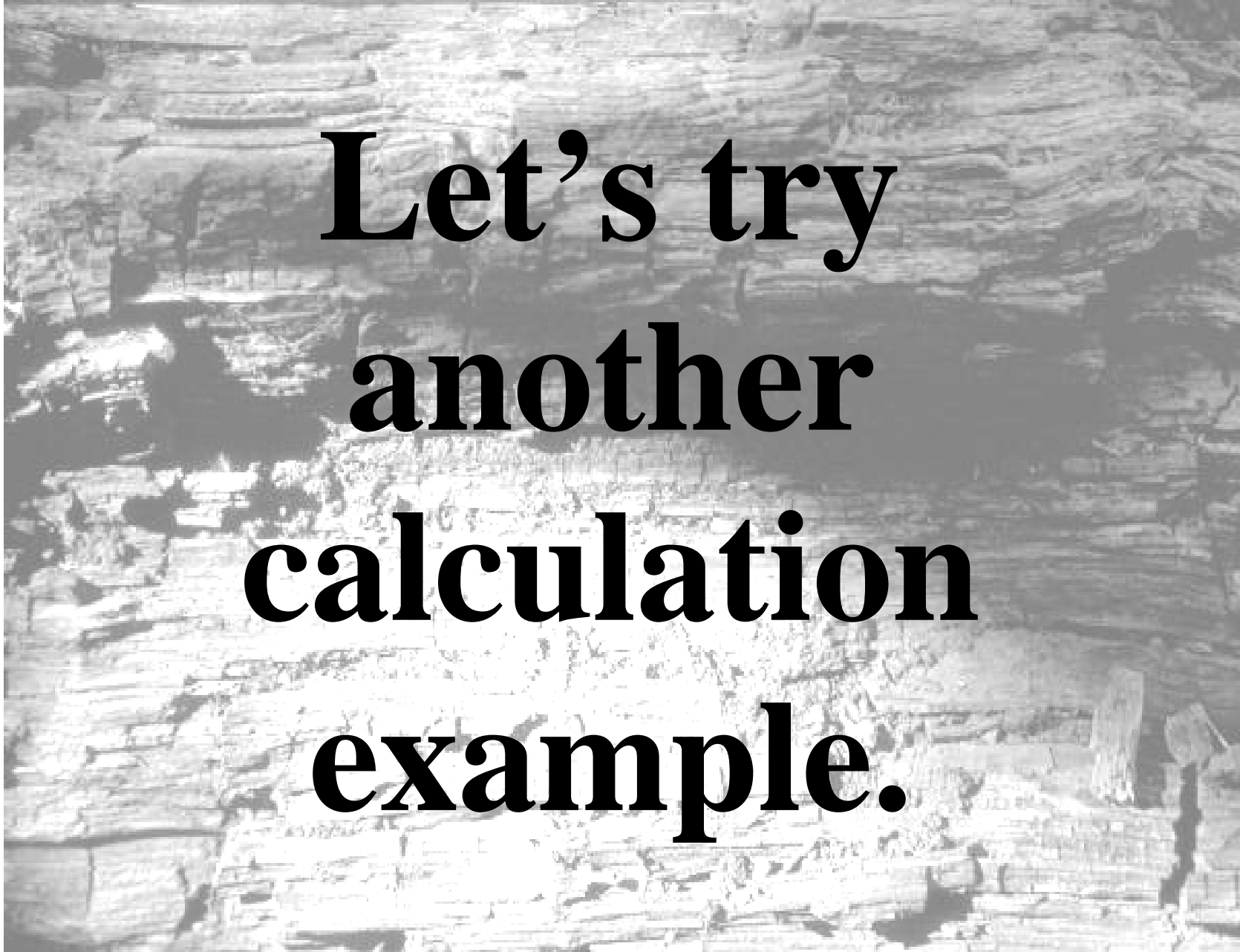
**A. 1**

**B. 2 ✓**

**C. 3**

**D. 4**



A grayscale photograph of a rocky, layered cliff face. The rock shows distinct horizontal strata and some vertical fissures. A faint grid pattern is overlaid on the image, suggesting a coordinate system or a measurement grid. The text is centered over the image.

**Let's try  
another  
calculation  
example.**

**What is the  
area of a  
circle with  
a radius of  
4 cm?**



**Once again, perform the calculations as if you were not given any answers.**

$$A = \pi r^2$$

$$A = 3.14 \times 4^2$$

$$A = 12.56 \text{ cm}^2$$

**Now look at the answers...**

**A. 6.28 cm<sup>2</sup>                      No!**

**B. 10.56 cm<sup>2</sup>                      No!**

**C. 25.12 cm<sup>2</sup>                      No!**

**D. None of these                      Yes!**

**What if your  
answer does  
not agree with  
those given?**



# Don't just go for the “none of these” answer!

- ❑ Redo the calculation.
- ❑ If you get the same as before and it still doesn't match any of those given, **THEN** chose “none of these”!

# TYPE 4



**Questions  
requiring some  
reasoning.**

# Read *all* the answers.

- ❖ Consider **each one** carefully in terms of the question.

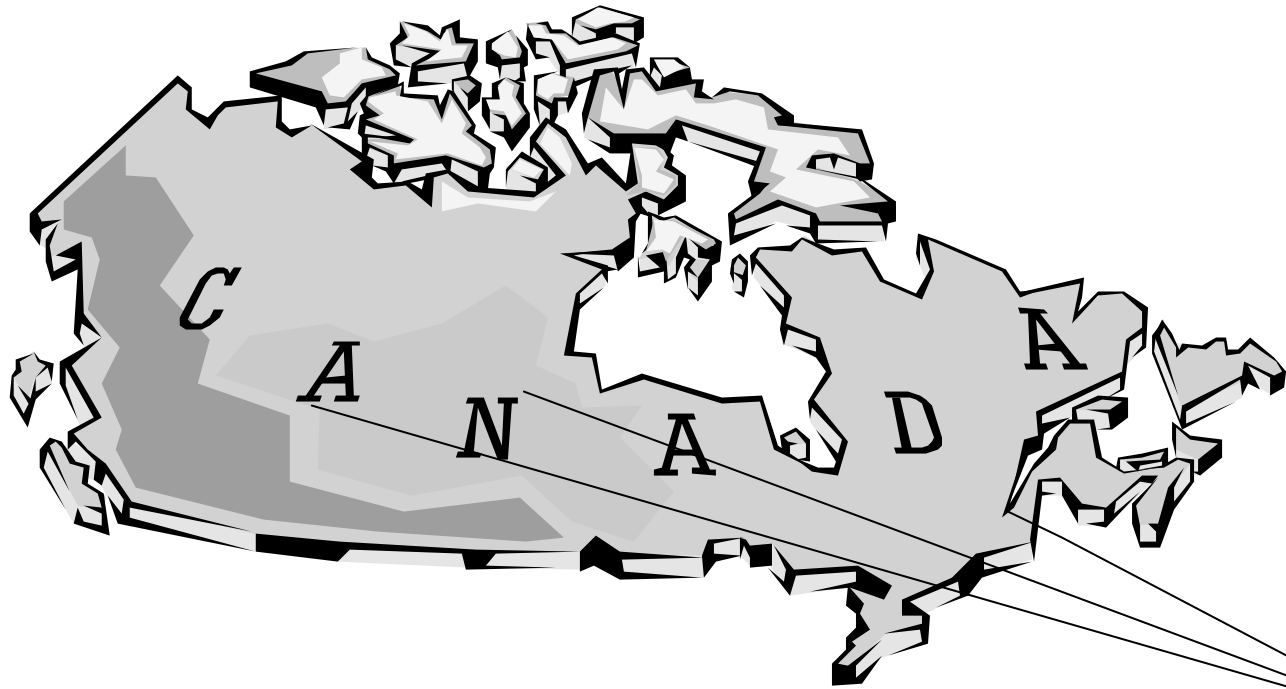


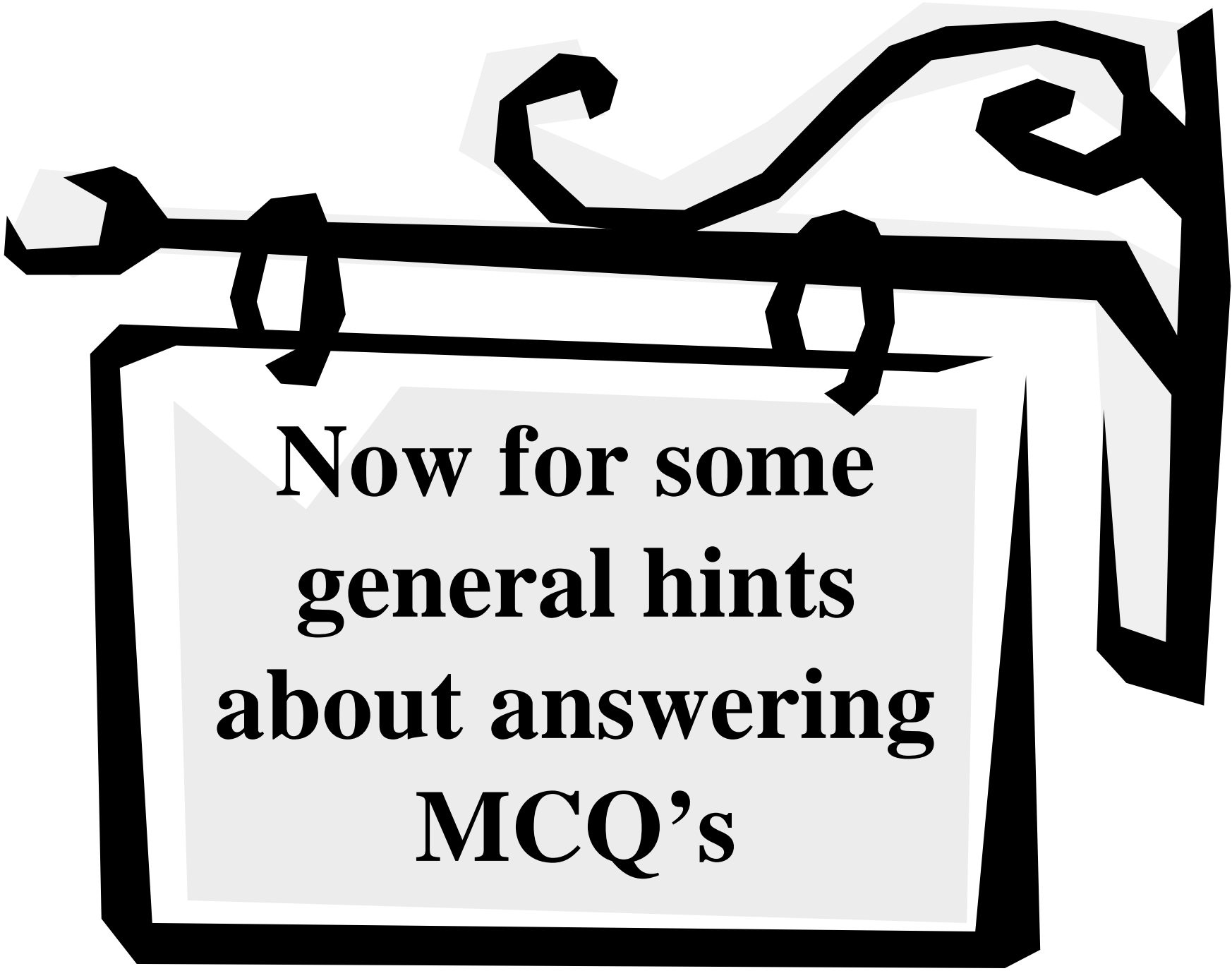
# Once again...

- Make sure you have marked all the key words in the question.

Which of the following statements  
is **true**?

- A.** Calgary is the capital of Alberta.
- B.** Manitoba is situated between Ontario and Saskatchewan.
- C.** Ontario has a coastline on all of the Great Lakes.
- D.** It is impossible to drive from Hamilton to Nova Scotia without passing through Quebec.

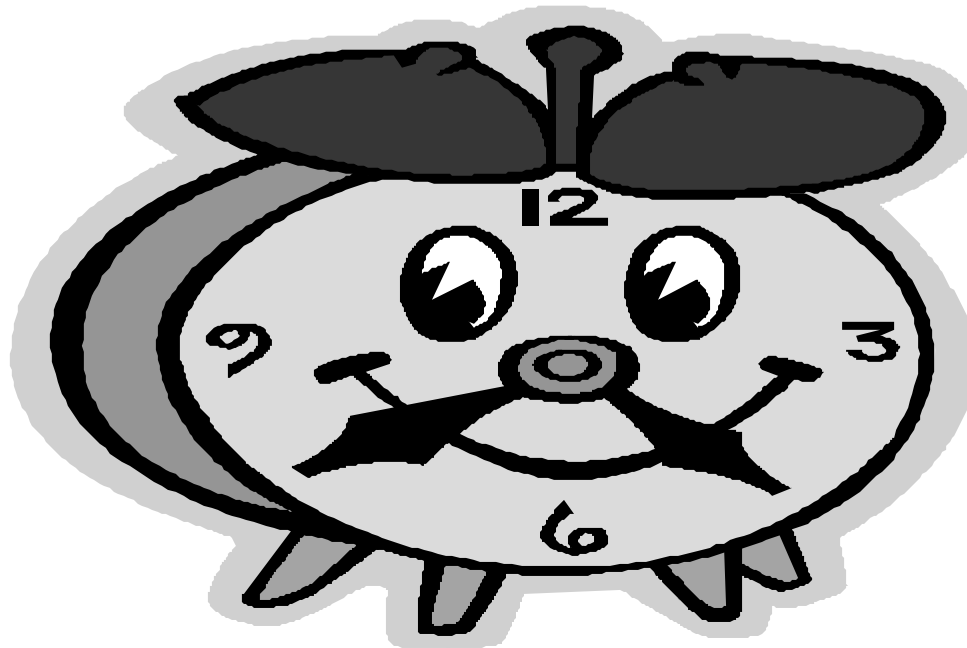




**Now for some  
general hints  
about answering  
MCQ's**

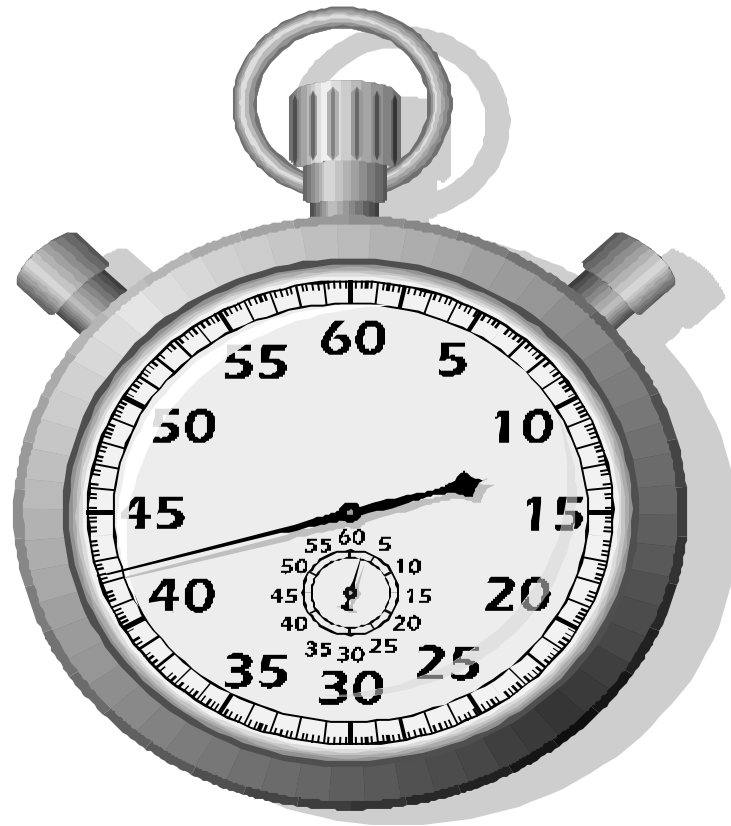
# Hint 1 - Timing

In a timed test involving MCQ's, you  
will have about  
1 minute per question  
on average.



Some questions will  
take you more time,  
**some less!**

**A minute is quite a long  
time!**



**Try watching the next slide  
for a whole minute without  
taking your eyes off the  
screen.**

**>You will have time to yourself?**





## **Hint 2 - Indicating answers**

Carefully read the  
instructions about how to  
indicate the answer you  
have chosen.

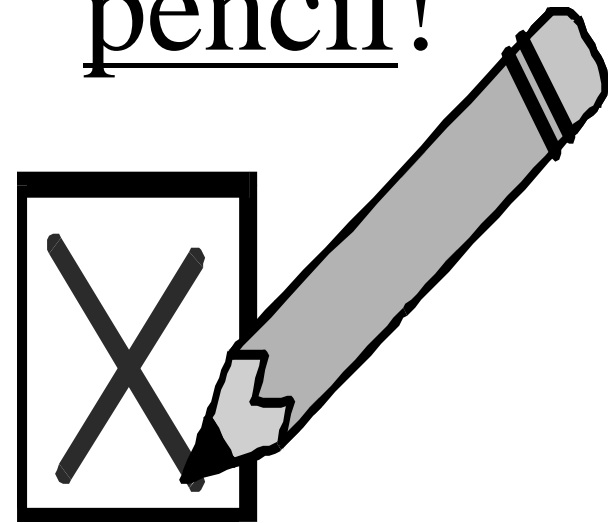
# **Follow the instructions exactly**

- If you mark your chosen answers using the wrong method, you may get marks deducted.

# If it says....

X use a pencil, use a pencil!

X mark with an X,  
mark with an X!



**If the test is marked  
by a computer,  
you could end up  
with a zero  
if you ignore  
the instructions!**



**Take your time to pick the  
right answer first time around.**



# Hint 3 - Starting the exam



When you are  
told to start the  
exam...

• • •

- ❖ Make sure you read all the instructions carefully. Highlight any really important points.  
Avoid losing marks carelessly.
- ❖ Look over the paper. Get a feel for the exam as a whole.



**Start at the beginning and work your way through. Don't skip around.**

☐ Try not to leave questions out. You'll waste time finding them at the end and then re-reading them all over again.

**Don't think in terms of a quick guess now and them coming back later and giving the questions more thought.**

**You may run out of time!**

**If you really don't have a clue  
about a question, go on to  
another, BUT...**

- mark the question clearly so you can find it again,
- come back to it when you've finished all the ones you can do.

# Hint 4 - Reality check

Remember...



**If you have done your work during the course properly, you should be able to answer the questions. Teachers don't ask impossible or trick questions. Difficult maybe!**

If you haven't worked during the course...

**Don't stress  
yourself!**



**You are only as good as you  
are right now!**

- ❖ Don't sit there thinking "if only"!
- ❖ Don't worry about anything except answering the question in front of you.

# Read each question carefully!

- Think about what you DO know rather than worrying about what you DON'T know.
- You aren't expected to know the answer to every question.
- **You are expected to be able to work out the answer from what you have learned.**



**If you feel very stressed out, take  
a 1 minute break.  
Close your eyes and relax.**

- But don't stop in the middle of a question.
- This doesn't mean however, you can take a break between every question!!!



**If you have a “system” that works for you, don’t change it!**

However, if your “system” doesn’t seem to work very well, think about changing it and using the ideas in this program.

**Change can be a pain, but  
sometimes it's necessary for  
*success.***



**Good Luck!**  
**Bonne Chance!**



- We would like to thank tutorials 1005 and 1101 of 1998/1999 for their help in preparing this presentation.
- We would also like to thank Mr. Beaver, Ms. Zimmerman & Mr. Grewal for their thoughtful input.
- Thank you to Ms. Ciparis for the revisions.

Ms. C. McNeil

Mr. A. Philpot

Revised July 2003