

So here are 7 strategies to help you sort through the sea of correct answers to choose the MOST correct answer in nursing school.

1. Don't over analyze the question

Forget about alllll of your past experience, your work experience, your personal experience and your clinical experience. Forget all of it and take the question at face value. **Never make an assumption that something is true if it is not written in the question.**

“Oh yeah, I had a patient like that just last week! We did this treatment...” or “I think my sisters best friends grandma had that a few years back...They gave her this medication...” No, no, no. None if that here, my friend.

Remember, all of the information you need is in the question. If you don't feel like you have all of the information you need in order to answer the question, read the question again...and again...and again. But whatever you do, do not draw on your past experience.

2. Imagine you are in a perfect world NCLEX® is a perfect world.

You should treat each question like it's a textbook case, meaning that the patient has the perfect signs and symptoms you saw listed in your textbook.

And unless it's indicated in the question, they don't have any other disease, disorder, or problem. So treat each question like it is a textbook case of that ONE problem.

3. Eliminate answers that use global words

These are words like “never,” “none,” “always,” “only,” “must,” or “all”.

You know how mad you get when someone tells you that you “never” or “always” do something?

But for the most part, “always” and “never” statements usually have an exception to them. **Meaning they will be wrong in the question.**

4. Look for the answer that contains pieces of other answers

It's usually one of the longer answers and contains parts of one or two other answers. **This answer is often the correct one.**

5. Look for 2 answers that are generally the same

You can't choose 2 answers. That's testing strategy 101. So if you can't choose 2 answers and there are 2 answers that you can't distinguish between, bid them adieu and move along. **Both of them are likely wrong.**

6. Treat the answers as a True or False question

When you answer those famous “select all that apply” questions, go through each answer individually as if you were answering it as a true or false question.

So for each one, read the question and look at the answer, and decide if that answer is true or false. And then select it or discard it based on what the question is asking.

7. Prioritize, prioritize, prioritize!

Prioritization questions will ask you what your “first,” “best,” “most important,” “priority,” or “initial” response would be.

There are 3 principles that you should always consider when answering prioritization questions:

The first is the ABC’s, meaning airway, breathing, circulation. Always use the ABC principle first. Making sure the patient has a clear airway should always be your top priority. Followed by helping them breathe, and keeping their blood circulation flowing.

The second principle you should think about is Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. In this principle, physiological needs come first (meaning food and water), followed by safety needs (such as feeling secure), and then the need to belong, self esteem needs, and finally self-actualization. Obviously, you are going to be more worried about if your patient is breathing rather than worried if they feel loved or not.

And the third principle you should consider is the nursing process. The nursing process follows these steps: Assessment, Diagnosis, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation. You should always assess your patient before you can make a nursing diagnosis, establish and implement a plan, and evaluate the process.