Rhetorical synthesis: using notes to meet a goal

A rhetorical-synthesis question gives bullet-point notes and a specific goal, such. . .



Lesson `rw.synthesis.S1`

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The idea

A rhetorical-synthesis question gives bullet-point notes and a specific goal, such as to introduce a topic to an unfamiliar audience, to emphasize a contrast, or to present a measured finding. The correct sentence uses the RELEVANT notes to accomplish exactly that goal.

What is the specific GOAL? Which notes are relevant to that goal?

Restate the goal as a test ('the sentence must ...'). Choose the option that performs that action using the relevant notes; reject options that are merely accurate, off-goal, incomplete, or unsupported.

Watch every step

Notes: A new app teaches coding through games. It is designed for children ages 8 to 12. Early testers improved their problem-solving scores. Goal: present the app's measured benefit.

Which choice most effectively accomplishes this goal?

- **A.** In early testing, children using the app improved their problem-solving scores.
- **B.** The app teaches coding through games. ✗ *incomplete-for-goal*
- **C.** The app is designed for children ages 8 to 12. ✗ *irrelevant-detail*
- **D.** The app guarantees that every child will become a programmer. ✗ *distorts-notes*

Why **A** — "In early testing, children using the app improved their. . . ." Select the sentence that accomplishes the goal.

Now a harder one

Notes: Honey never spoils if it is sealed properly. Archaeologists found still-edible honey in 3,000-year-old Egyptian tombs. Its low moisture and acidity prevent bacterial growth. Goal: illustrate honey's remarkable longevity with a concrete example.

Which choice most effectively accomplishes this goal?

- ✓ **A.** Archaeologists have found still-edible honey in Egyptian tombs more than 3,000 years old.
- **B.** Honey's low moisture and acidity prevent bacterial growth. ✗ *goal-mismatch*
- **C.** Honey never spoils as long as it is sealed properly. ✗ *goal-mismatch*
- **D.** Honey is a sweet food made by bees. ✗ *irrelevant-detail*

Why A — "Archaeologists have found still-edible honey in Egyptian. . . ." Select the sentence that accomplishes the goal.

The method, in one line

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Restate the goal as a test ('the sentence must ...'). Choose the option that performs that action using the relevant notes; reject options that are merely accurate, off-goal, incomplete, or unsupported.

Does my choice DO what the goal asks (not just state a true fact)? Does it use the relevant notes, include what the goal requires, and avoid claims the notes don't support?

Watch out: two traps to dodge

goal-mismatch
Selects a sentence that is accurate but does not accomplish the stated rhetorical goal.

irrelevant-detail
Selects a sentence built on notes that are not relevant to the goal, or that adds off-target information.

Name the trap before you pick — most wrong answers are one of these two.

Try it, then watch the walk-through

Explore this live

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