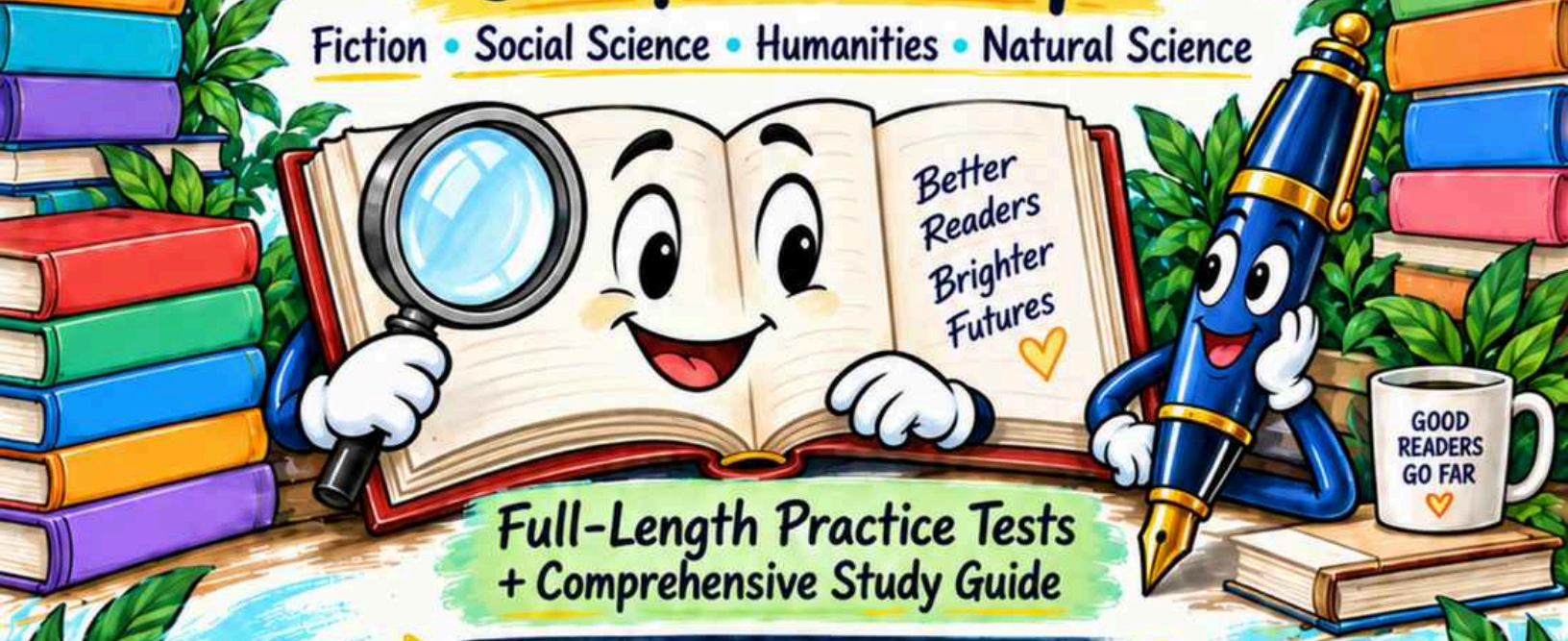
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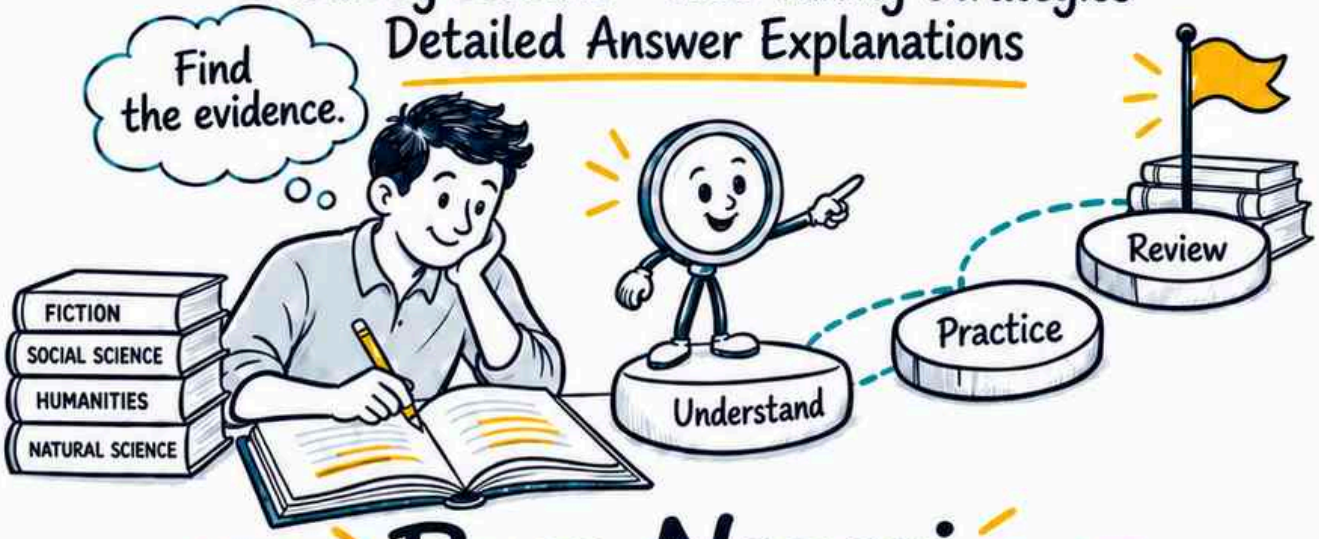
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The lessons, illustrations, and original practice material in this book support ACT Reading preparation. Uncredited lesson scenarios, people, studies, quotations, and data are invented for instructional use. Historical material identified within a test is distinguished from hypothetical research and fictional narratives.

The full-length forms model the enhanced Reading format of 40 minutes and 36 questions. Short lesson sources isolate particular skills; they are not full-length test units. Practice scores are raw scores out of 36 and do not provide a validated conversion to the ACT score scale.

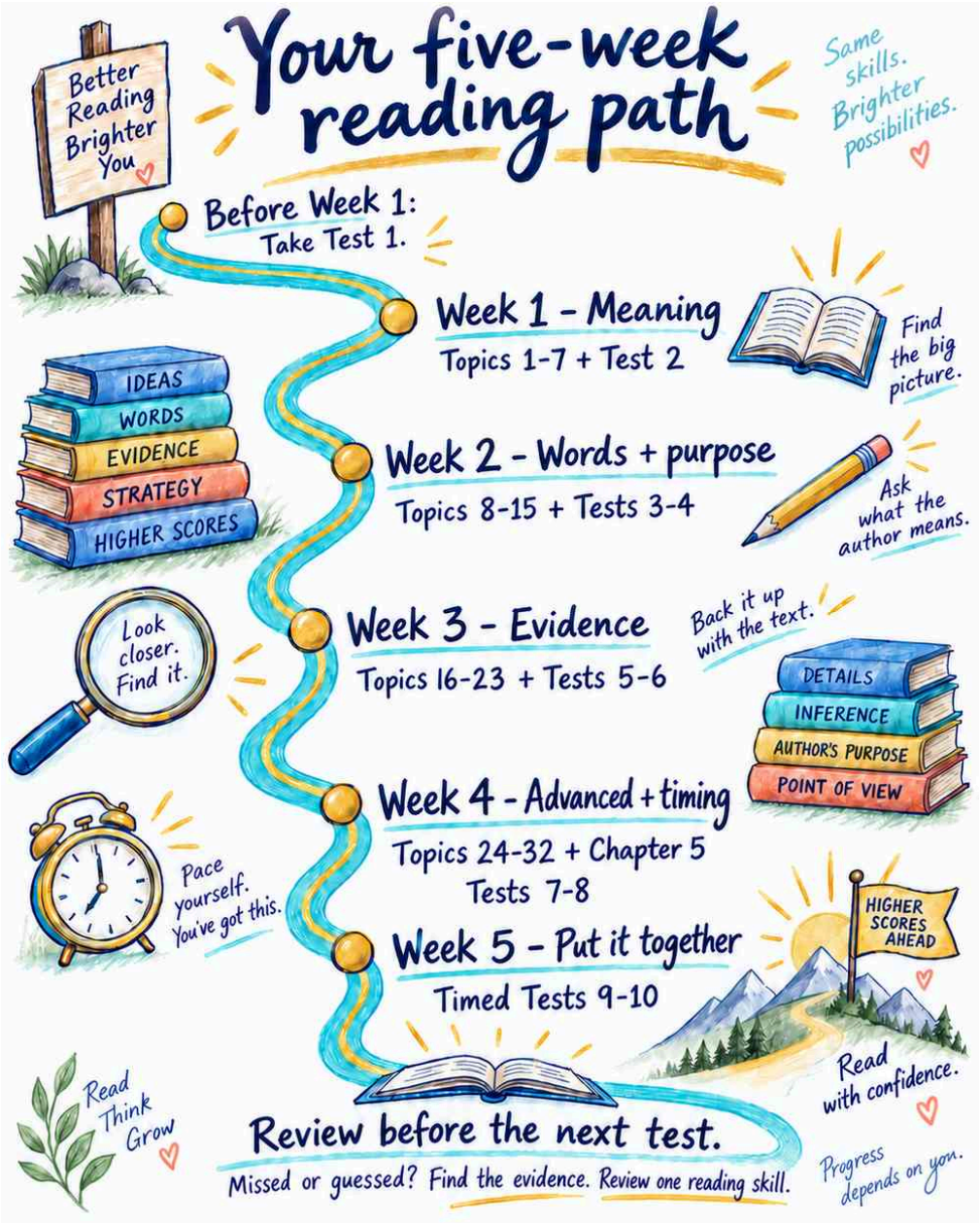
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Printed lesson answers and explanations appear at the back of the book.

A Five-Week Study Plan

Take Test 1 before your first study week. Its result gives you a starting point. Leave enough time after each later test to review missed and uncertain answers. Work through an error before testing the skill again.



Expanded Week 4: Use separate sessions: Lessons 24–26 for precision and narrative access; Lessons 27–29 for tone, structure, and literary pairs; Lessons 30–32 for cross-text arguments and graphics; then the Chapter 4 mixed review and Chapter 5 timing practice. Keep test review on a separate session. Spread these groups across additional weeks when your schedule needs it. Use the skill index (page 298) to prioritize your gaps.

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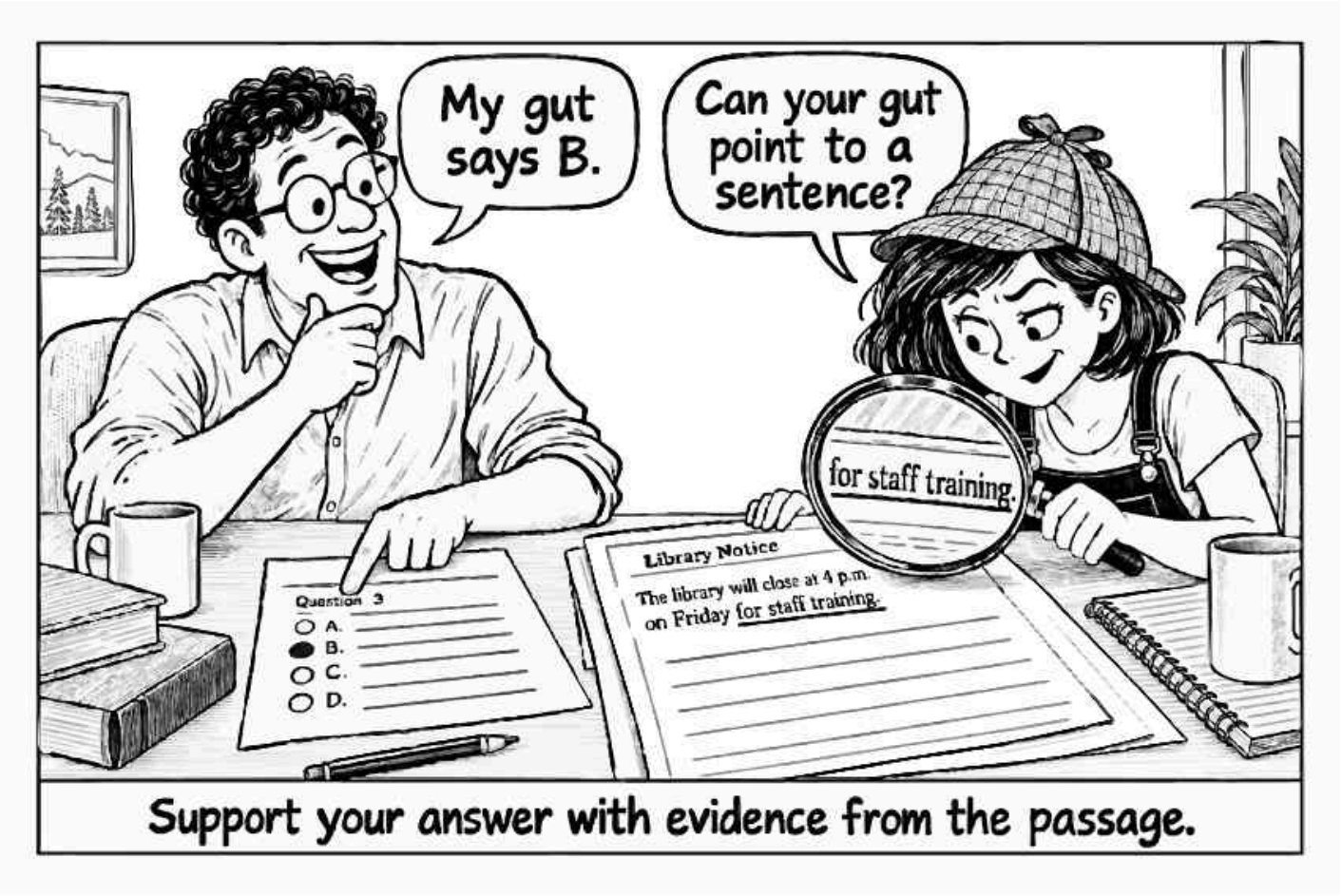
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Scan Me

CASE NOTES

Your gut needs a witness

A good hunch starts the search. A sentence earns the answer.



Case file: The locked library

A notice reads, "The library will close at 4 p.m. on Friday for staff training." One reader blames building repairs. Another blames a shortage of books. Both have supplied a story the notice never tells.

The decisive clue: "For staff training" gives the stated reason. "At 4 p.m." gives the time. Evidence must answer the question being asked.

Detective's habit: Before choosing an answer, finish this sentence in your head: "I can defend it with these words: _____." If you cannot fill the blank, return to the passage.

ACT-Style Question 3A

Which statement best summarizes the passage?

A. The festival returned every lost object after volunteers published detailed photographs.

B. Volunteers abandoned numbered tags because owners rarely knew their possessions' numbers.

C. The festival replaced scattered collections with a traceable desk and register, refining the system while acknowledging limits.

D. The community center took over the festival because volunteers could not secure valuable items.

Start with the scattered objects, then follow the desk, descriptions, and final recommendation. C is correct because it keeps that development and the limits of the service. The desk can trace objects volunteers received without accounting for everything visitors lost. B removes tags that remain in use. A promises complete recovery and public photographs, both contrary to the account. Moving unclaimed objects to the center is a storage transfer, so D wrongly turns it into a takeover of the festival.

ACT-Style Question 3B

Which statement best summarizes paragraph 3?

A. Owners were required to remember tag numbers before collecting any object.

B. Public photographs replaced tags so volunteers could identify coats immediately.

C. Internal descriptions improved searches while some identifying details remained private.

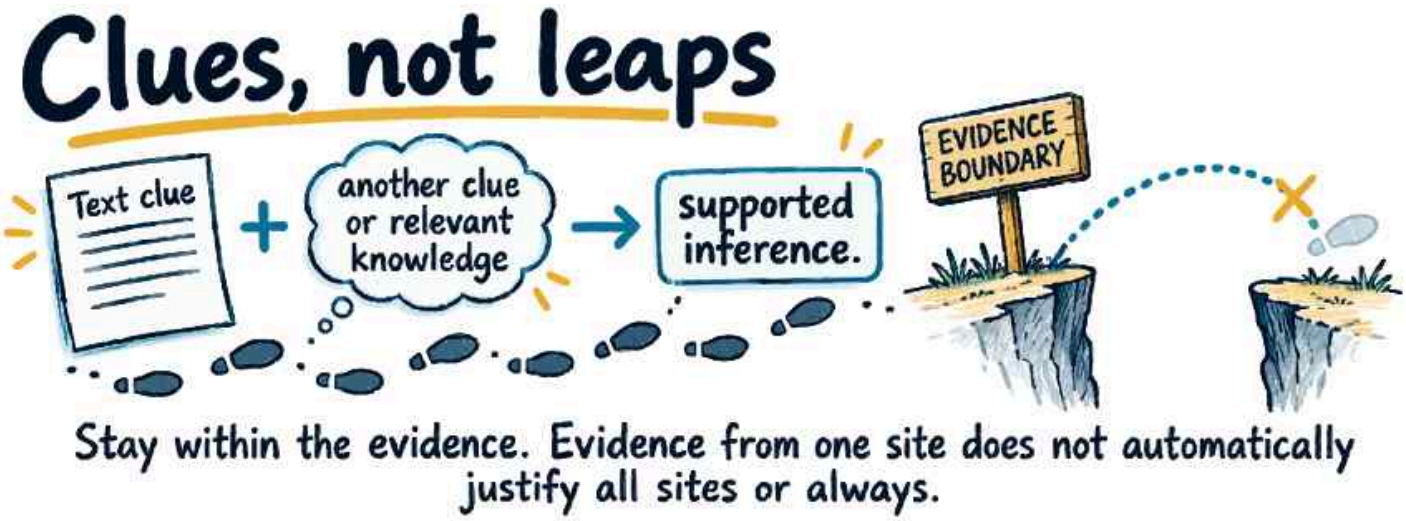
D. Volunteers stopped recording objects that resembled other lost belongings.

Paragraph 3 begins with the difficulty of searching by tag number when an owner knows only what an object looks like. Internal descriptions solve that problem while personal contents stay private. C is correct. Tags remain in the system, so B cannot describe their replacement by photographs. A would require the number that the owner may not know. Similar coats make descriptions useful, which is why D's decision to stop recording them does not fit the paragraph.

4: Inferences and Conclusions

Connect the clues, and stop where the evidence stops.

If an answer is suggested rather than stated, you will need to make an **inference**. Find the clues first, then use everyday knowledge to explain what they suggest. A character who keeps checking the clock may be anxious about the time. That clue alone gives you little reason to say the character is always impatient. A **generalization** draws a broader conclusion from several details.



Check the strength of the answer's wording. A clue about one visit can support a conclusion about that visit, but it cannot establish what someone always does.

Some questions ask you to combine more than one main idea or apply a passage's idea to a new situation. Use the same rule: every step in your conclusion must be supported by the source.

Read more precisely. An inference may combine details far apart in the passage. Name each clue before linking them. For a character's feeling, use speech and behavior together, and distinguish a temporary reaction from a permanent trait. For a generalization, check whether the described cases actually represent the wider group. A plausible explanation that the passage leaves unresolved should remain a possibility in the answer.

Choose the smallest warranted conclusion. At an interview, a pianist asks to try the unfamiliar instrument before discussing the program. This supports concern about its feel or sound; it does not establish stage fright or distrust of the host. Combine the request with the surrounding actions before inferring a motive. General knowledge can help interpret ordinary actions, but the decisive clues must come from this passage.

Read: The Small Key

Original literary fiction; narrator, school, people, and events are invented.

Use this source for guided questions 4A–4B below and questions 1–6 in the Topic 4 chapter practice group. Paragraph numbers identify evidence.

[1] The key on the envelope was small enough to hide beneath my thumb. My mother had written FOR THE WEST ROOM, although everyone in the school called it the old music room. On Monday I would become the evening caretaker. She had held that job for nineteen years. At dinner she had explained the alarm, the heating controls, and which doors swelled after rain. About the west room she had said only, "Leave the curtains until last."

[2] I reached the room after the other classrooms, carrying a bucket that knocked against my knee. The shelves were empty except for a cracked metronome. Someone had rubbed away the labels on the instrument cupboards but left pale rectangles where they had been. I pulled one curtain aside and saw the courtyard, with new lines for a basketball game painted across the place where my class had once stood to sing. Behind me, the second curtain remained closed.

[3] A sheet of paper lay on the piano. It was not music but a list of names, written in several different hands. I recognized my mother's neat capitals halfway down. Beside her name someone had added "Tuesday, if I can get away early." I put the sheet back without turning it over. The room would host a free language class on several evenings each week starting next month, with each participant choosing one session. My mother had mentioned the class, but I had assumed she meant a class for other people.

[4] I phoned her to ask where the spare bin liners were. She told me, then asked whether I had found the west room. "The piano's still there," I said. "For the moment," she answered. I waited for an explanation of the list, but neither of us supplied one. Through the window I could see a basketball moving from hand to hand, bright orange against the darkening courtyard. My mother asked whether the back door still stuck. I said it did.

[5] After the call, I opened the other curtain. The room looked larger with both windows uncovered, although I knew its walls had not moved. I wiped the piano lid and straightened the list so the next person could read it. Then I found a pencil in my bag and wrote my own name below my mother's. I added Wednesday, my evening off, because my Monday shifts would overlap the class once it started.

[6] Outside, I checked the back door twice. The job required that; I was not leaving it unlocked for anyone. Yet when I returned the keys to my pocket, the little one felt different from the others. I had come to learn which rooms I must close each night. In this room, I had also found something I wanted to enter.

ACT-Style Question 4A

What does the narrator's reaction to the list most strongly suggest?

A. The narrator had expected the class to be reserved for school employees.

B. The narrator is surprised that the mother intends to participate in the language class.

C. The narrator believes the list records people who once performed in the room.

D. The narrator is disappointed that the mother will continue working as caretaker.

The narrator recognizes the mother's name beside a Tuesday note, then admits assuming the class was for other people. B is correct because those clues explain the surprise at her intended participation. The new language class gives the list its context, so C's past performers do not fit. Nothing restricts the class to employees, as A claims. D also adds continued employment, although the narrator is taking over the mother's caretaker job.

ACT-Style Question 4B

What does the narrator's treatment of the class list after the phone call most strongly suggest?

A. The narrator wants to erase the room's former musical use.

B. The narrator has been told to recruit the mother's replacement.

C. The narrator expects the class to excuse required closing duties.

D. The narrator is beginning to see the class as a personal possibility rather than only an activity for others.

Watch what the narrator does after the call. The second curtain opens, the list is made easier to read, and the narrator adds a name. D is correct because those actions suggest the class is becoming a personal possibility. A turns the room's new use into a wish to erase its past. There is no recruiting instruction for B. The careful door check rules out C. Joining these actions supports an inference beyond the explicitly stated Wednesday schedule.