The Simple Digital SAT® Reading & Writing Information and Ideas Cheat Sheet

Domain Overview & Workflow

What's Tested

Info & Ideas: ~26% of R&W → 12–14 of 54 Qs. 1 short text (25–150 words) + 1 Q each.
Texts: literature, history/social studies, humanities, science. Some add a table or graph.

Skill	Stem clue	Task
Central Ideas	"main idea"	Sum up text
Details	"according"	Find a fact
Textual Evid.	"support"	Pick a finding
Quant. Evid.	"data"	Graph → claim
Inferences	"logically"	Finish logic

4-Step Workflow

1. Read the Q first: know your job.
2. Read the text: mark the claim, evidence + pivot words (but, however, yet, recently).
3. Predict: your own answer before choices.
4. Eliminate: cut too broad, too narrow, off-topic, or contradicts text → keep the survivor.

Timing

Pace: 2 modules × 32 min, 27 Qs each → ~71 sec/Q (graph and quote Qs run long).
Mark & move: flag hard Qs in Bluebook (the test app). No guessing penalty → never leave a blank.
Adaptive: strong Module 1 → harder Module 2 → higher score possible; accuracy early matters.

✓ Every right answer is provable from the text. Can't point to the line? It's wrong.

⚠ Outside knowledge never decides an answer — even a true fact loses if the text doesn't say it.

Central Ideas & Details: Main Idea

Find the Central Idea

Central idea (main point) = what the WHOLE text claims. Not 1 detail; not just the topic.
Formula: topic + author's point. e.g., "bees" × → "bees dance to share food sites" ✓.
Where it lives: after a pivot (However, But, Yet, Recent research...) or in the last sentence.
Structure cue: old view → new finding → central idea = new finding (not the old view).
Two views: "Some argue X... but Y" → author's side (Y) is the main idea, not the X it rejects.

Answer Choice Filter

Trap	Why wrong
Too narrow	Only 1 detail
Too broad	Goes beyond text
Distortion	Twists text's words
Old view	Author rejects it
Off-topic	True, but not in text

Prove It

Check test: does every sentence in the text fit the choice? If even 1 sentence clashes → cut.
Extremes: always, only, proves, all → usually too strong vs. hedged text (may, suggests).
Paraphrase: right answer restates the text in new words; traps reuse its exact words.

✓ Sum up the whole text in 1 sentence first; pick the choice closest to your summary.

⚠ "Scientists once believed X" is setup — the central idea is what they found instead.

Central Ideas & Details: Details & Lit Texts

Detail Questions

"According to the text" → stated answer, often reworded; find the keyword, read its line.
Character Qs: find the line that describes the character directly; ignore how you'd feel.
Pronouns: track who "she," "they," "this" mean — many wrong choices swap the subject.

Literary Texts

Genre	Read for	Tip
Prose	Character	Note actions
Poetry	Speaker	Read past breaks
Drama	Dialogue	Who → whom?

Intro blurb (line before the text): gives work, author, date, situation. Always read it first.
Old language: slow down; restate each sentence in modern words (1800s–early 1900s texts).
Tone words (author's attitude): wistful, ironic, earnest → match to words in text.

Detail Traps

Right words, wrong link: joins 2 real details into a false cause → effect that the text never states.
Reversal: swaps who did what, or flips more/less.
Half right: 1st half matches, 2nd half adds something unsupported → wrong.

⚠ Poems: speaker ≠ poet. Give feelings to "the speaker.", not to the poet who wrote it

✓ Read literally — the answer is in the lines, not hidden symbolism or secret themes.

Command of Evidence: Textual (Support/Weaken)

Claim → Evidence

Task: pick the finding that would **support** or **weaken** a claim (often a hypothesis).
Step 1: find the claim; mark its variables (who or what, what changes, which direction).
Step 2: predict: "if X causes Y → group w/ X shows more Y than the group w/o X."

Q asks	Answer shows
Support	Same vars, same way
Weaken	Same vars, opposite
Illustrate	Example of claim

Hypothesis Logic

Cause claim "A causes B" → support: A present → B ↑; A absent → B stays flat or low.
Comparison claim: needs data on BOTH groups.
Scope match: claim about wild wolves → evidence about wild wolves, not dogs or zoo wolves.

Elimination

Off-variable: true-sounding finding about a different factor → cut, even if accurate.
Wrong direction: shows the opposite of what the Q asks → cut Re-read the verb in the Q.
Restates claim: no new data → cut.

⚠ "Weaken" Qs: don't pick the supporting choice by reflex or habit. Re-check the verb.

✓ Findings in choices can be hypothetical — they just need to hit the claim's exact variables.

Command of Evidence: Textual (Quotations)

Quotation Qs

Setup: text makes a claim about a poem, play or novel; pick the quote that best shows it.
Break the claim down: speaker + feeling or trait + object. Quote must hit ALL 3 parts.
Predict: what would a line showing that feeling say? e.g., alone, apart, unseen, distant.

Choice type	Verdict
Hits whole claim	✓ Keep
Right mood only	× Partial
Opposite feeling	× Contradicts
Vivid, unrelated	× Decoy

Decoding Old Lines

Restate each quote first: "thou art" → you are; "'tis" → it is; "ere" → before; "hath" → has.
Metaphors (comparisons) still mean something literal: "winter of my heart" = sadness.
Context: who is "he"/"she" in the quote? Check the intro blurb and the claim itself.

Two-Part Claims

Contrast claims ("shifts from hope to doubt"): quote must show BOTH sides, not one.
Speaker vs character: claim about the narrator → quote must be the narrator's own line.

⚠ The most dramatic line ≠ the answer. Pick the one that states the claim's idea.

✓ Cover the quotes, write a 3–5 word "ideal line," then find its match among the 4.

Command of Evidence: Quantitative (Reading Data)

Read the Graphic First

Quick scan: **title**, **axes**, **units**, **legend** (color key).

Graphic	Check
Bar graph	Groups compared
Line graph	Trend over time
Table	Row vs column
Scatterplot	+/− relationship

Units: %, thousands, per capita, mean vs total — a choice w/ the wrong unit is wrong.
Scale: y-axis may not start at 0 → small gaps look big. Read the numbers on the axis itself.

Data Vocabulary

Increase/decrease = change over time. **Greater than** = a comparison at 1 point in time.
Trend: overall direction; 1 dip ≠ reversal.
Correlation: A & B move together ≠ A causes B.
Proportion vs count: 40% of a small group can be fewer people than 20% of a big one.

Data Traps

True but irrelevant: reads the graph right but doesn't address the text's claim → cut.
Wrong group/year: right number, wrong row or column → cut, even though it's accurate.

⚠ Wrong choices often have accurate numbers. Accurate ≠ relevant to the text's claim.

✓ Check each choice against the graphic itself, not your memory of a bar's height.

Command of Evidence: Quantitative (Claim + Data)

"Completes the Example"

Stem: "Which choice most effectively uses data from the table to complete the example?"
Step 1: read the last sentence — what must the data show? Find the variable + direction
Step 2: locate that exact comparison in the table or graph; ignore other rows, columns or years.
Step 3: pick the choice that's (a) accurate AND (b) makes the text's exact point for the blank.

Worked Example

Claim: e-bike sales grew faster than standard bike sales, 2019–2022. **Data** (units sold): e-bikes 1.2M → 2.9M; standard 4.1M → 3.8M.
Right: e-bikes ↑, standard ↓. **Wrong**: "standard outsold e-bikes" — true, but not growth.

Claim word	Data must show
Increase	Later > earlier
Outpaced	Faster growth
Most/least	Extreme value
Similar	Close values

Weaken w/ Data

Weaken Qs: find where the claim predicts X but the graphic shows the opposite.

⚠ Need accurate AND on-claim. Accurate but off-claim = wrong Both must be true.

✓ Cut choices w/ any misread number first, then test the rest against the claim.

Inferences (Logical Completion)

The Task

Stem: "Which choice most logically completes the text?" Text ends in a blank you must fill.
Goal: the conclusion the evidence forces — not the most interesting or broadest one.
Read for logic: fact 1 + fact 2 → conclusion. Watch signal words: thus, so, suggests.

Logic Patterns

Text gives	Inference
A → B; A happened	B likely happened
Expected X, saw Y	Other factor
Old view + new data	Old view lacking
Rules out cause 1	Cause 2 likelier

Hedging: right answers often say may, could, some; "proves, all, never" overreach.
Bridge the gap: right answer ties the last fact back to the text's open question or puzzle.

Traps

Too far: needs extra assumptions → cut.
Repeat: restates a given fact → cut.
Reverse: flips cause and effect → cut.
Off-scope: adds a new group, place, or time the text never mentions → cut, even if plausible.
Lit inference: must come from a character's own words or actions, not your guess about them.

⚠ The answer must follow from ALL the info, not just the sentence right before the blank.

✓ Predict the blank first; pick the choice needing the fewest new assumptions (least leap).