

What Is An Analogy?

In its simplest form, an analogy is a stated likeness between two things that are otherwise unlike.

The embarrassed girl's **face** turned **as red as a beet**.

Such a comparison is made to explain something vividly or to make it easier to understand.

Analogies that look like little word puzzle are often used to test vocabulary and reasoning ability. These analogies require the use of logic to identify the relationships between words and ideas.

Here are some common types of analogies.

characteristics

emerald : green

lemon : sour

joke : funny

synonyms

error : mistake

remark : comment

doctor : physician

antonyms

never : often

comedy : tragedy

clumsy : graceful

association

fork : knife

Jack : Jill

rock : roll

whole / part

alphabet : letter

flower : petal

shirt : sleeve

object / movement

hammer : pound

kangaroo : leap

eye : blink

There are many different types of analogies. Your task in these lessons will be to select the word or words that correctly complete each analogy.

How Do You Read An Analogy?

Notice the special notation used in analogies.

cow : tame ::

cougar : wild

lead : pencil ::

ink : pen

hand : finger ::

foot : toe

The single colon (:) stand for the words is to. The double colon (::) stands for the word as. So, in sentence form, the analogies read

Cow is to tame as cougar is to wild.

Hand is to finger as foot is to toe.

Lead is to pencil as ink is to pen.

How Do You Solve An Analogy?

In analogies used for testing, only the first pair of words is provided. Your first step, then, is to determine the relationship between these two words. To complete the analogy, you must select word(s) that have a **parallel relationship** to the pair.

1. empty : full ::

- a. tan : brown
- b. correct : right
- c. short : tall
- d. shirt : pants

2. apple : fruit ::

- a. banana : peel
- b. dinner : lunch
- c. chew : swallow
- d. celery : vegetable

You know that empty and full are opposites. Among the choices, which pair of words are also opposites? Pay close attention as you look for possibilities among the choices. The answer you will circle is c., short and tall.

Now look at the second example analogy. How are the words apple and fruit related? An apple is a kind of fruit. What words among the choices show a parallel relationship? A banana isn't a kind of peel. A dinner isn't a kind of lunch, and chew isn't a kind of shallow. The parallel relationship is completed with answer d. Celery is a kind of vegetable.

Most analogies, of course, are more challenging than these simple examples. To come up with the right answer, you will have to search for clues. This means looking for characteristics and associations that link the words. That's why analogies are such popular testing tools: they require careful, logical reasoning.