

# Mr. Kersey's Super Useful, Universally Awesome, Cover Sheet of Goodness

## Common Test Directions

**Analyze:** Take apart a concept or a process, and explain it step by step. You could encounter analysis questions in any discipline, from science to history.

**Compare:** Show likenesses and differences when you compare two events, theories, or processes.

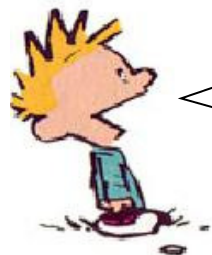
**Contrast:** Explain the differences between two ideas or topics.

**Diagram:** Demonstrate your answer by drawing a chart or other visual element to illustrate your points.

**Explain:** Provide an answer that gives a "why" response. Provide a complete overview of the problem and solution for a particular issue or process.

**Examine:** Use your own judgment to explore a topic and comment on significant elements, events, or acts. Provide your opinion and explain how or why you came to your conclusions.

**List:** Give a series of answers. Usually further explanation is not required.



"If it was completely different, school would be great."

## Commonly Misspelled or Misused Words on Tests and Some Rules to Remember

**a and an** - If the word following begins with a vowel sound, the word you want is "an": "I want an apple pie." When the following word begins with a consonant sound, you need "a": "He jumped into a tank of acid." You should use "an" before a word beginning with an "H" only if the "H" is not pronounced: "an honest effort."

**affect and effect** - When taking a test, *affect* is usually used as a verb meaning "to influence," as in: "The French and Indian War affected the British economy." On a social studies test, *effect* is usually used as a noun meaning "a result" or "a consequence." "One effect of the Great Depression was massive unemployment."

**a lot** is always two words. It is never written "alot." Better yet, try using other expressions like "a great deal" or "a large number."

**all right** is always two words. It is never "alright."

**Aloud** means "out loud." **Allowed** means "permitted."

**Capitalization** - proper names are always capitalized. Always. I promise. Examples: "Britain, France, Germany, Ohio, Iroquois, Lake Erie, George Washington, General Cornwallis."

The past tense of *lead* (to show the way, guide) is *led*. "Golem led Frodo and Sam into Mordor."

**there, their, they're** - *there* is a place, *their* is the possessive of they, and *they're* is a contraction for they are.

**to, too, and two** - *To* means "in a direction toward" as in: "I went to the grocery store." *Too* means "in addition, or more than enough" as in: "I have too much food for the cookout." *Two* is the number 2.

**"ie" words** - Generally a good rule to remember is "i before e, except after c, or when sounded like *ā* as in neighbor or weigh." This rule is good for words like *receive* or *deceive*. Unfortunately, there are numerous exceptions to this rule that you just have to remember. This is one of the reasons English is such a whacky language. Some common "ie" words that don't follow the rule above are: *their, foreign, being, either, neither, weird, vein, seize, and leisure*.

**weather and whether** - *weather* is part of the climate, *whether* it is nice out depends on *whether* it is raining or not.

### Test Taking Tips

1. Keep a positive attitude throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed.
2. Keep your eyes on your own paper. Don't get yourself in trouble.
3. When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test so that you know how to efficiently budget your time. Also, you can often get help on tough questions from some other part of the test.
4. Do the easiest problems first. Don't linger on a problem that you are stuck on especially when time is a factor.
5. Don't rush but pace yourself. Read the entire question and look for keywords.
6. Make sure to answer the question being asked. Watch out for two part questions. Answer each question as completely as you can.
7. If you don't know an answer, skip it. Go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later. Again, other parts of the test may have some information that will help you out with that question.
8. If you have time left when you are finished, go back and look over your answers. Look for mistakes like misspelled words or skipped questions.
9. Make sure you have your first and last name on your test, as well as any other information the teacher may have requested.
10. Neatness counts. Neater papers usually earn higher marks.

### More Test Taking Tips

*Word Banks* – If the teacher gives you a word bank, then make sure you spell the terms included in that list correctly. Words banks are meant to help you. Use them.

*Essays and Short Answer Questions* – Before you start writing, make a little outline of your answer in the margin of your paper. It will help you organize your thoughts. Make sure that you write down everything that is asked of you and more. The more details and facts that you write down, the higher your grade is going to be. Focus on one main idea per a paragraph. For essay questions, as well as short answer questions, try not to leave an answer blank. Show your work/write down your thoughts, even if you don't get the exact answer, partial credit is usually awarded.

*Document-Based Questions (DBQ's)* - Make sure to use the evidence in the document to support your answer.

Some simple steps that students should follow when answering my test questions (or really any essay question) are:

1. Start off by answering the question (i.e. stating your main idea, or argument) clearly.
2. Next, state several specific facts that support your answer or argument. A good rule of thumb is to use three facts to support each idea.
3. End your paragraph with a “clincher” sentence that sums up your argument.

### Area Measure (U.S.)

144 square inches =1 sq ft.  
9 square feet =1 sq yd = 1,296 sq in.  
301/4 square yards =1 sq rd = 2721/4 sq ft.  
160 square rods =1 acre = 4,840 sq yds  
= 43,560 sq ft.  
640 acres =1 sq mi.  
1 mile square =1 section (of land)  
6 miles square =1 township = 36 sections  
= 36 sq mi.

### Linear Measures (U.S.)

12 inches (in.) =1 foot (ft.)  
3 feet =1 yard (yd)  
5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> yards =1 rod (rd), pole, or perch (16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> ft.)  
40 rods =1 furlong (fur) = 220 yds = 660 ft.  
8 furlongs =1 statute mile (mi.) = 1,760 yds = 5,280 ft.  
3 land miles =1 league  
5,280 feet =1 statute or land mile  
6,076.11549 feet =1 international nautical mile