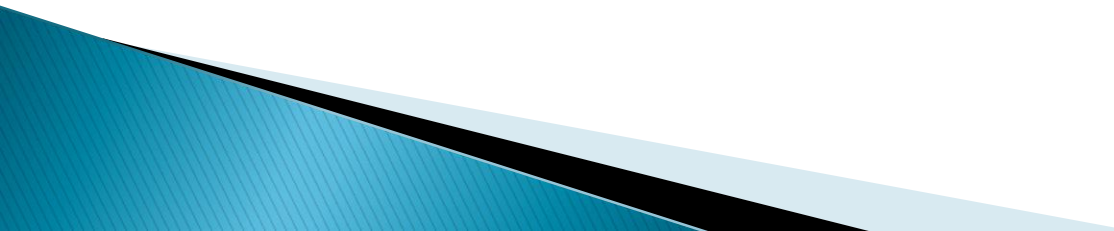


# Tip the Testing Scale in Your Favor

Answering Multiple Choice Questions

# Establish a purpose for reading

- Preview text features: Look at the title, pictures, captions, subtitles
  - Read the first paragraph
  - These will help you establish the main idea or a purpose for reading
  - Why is this important?
  - This will help you determine which facts are important in the article.
- 

# Text features

## GROWING UP

What does the headline and picture at the right tell the reader about the article that follows?



# First Paragraph

*After learning from the title and picture that the article will be about a boy growing up who sold newspapers, look at the first paragraph. What additional information does the first paragraph provide about the boy?*

With my load of magazines, I headed toward Belleville Avenue. That's where the people were. There were two filling stations at the intersection with Union Avenue, as well as a grocery store, a fruit stand, a bakery, a barber shop, Zuccarelli's drugstore, and a diner shaped like a railroad car.

For several hours I made myself highly visible, shifting position now and then from corner to corner, from shop window to shop window, to make sure everyone could see the heavy black lettering on the canvas bag that said THE SATURDAY EVENING POST. When the angle of the light indicated it was suppertime, I walked back to the house.

“How many did you sell, Buddy?” my mother asked.

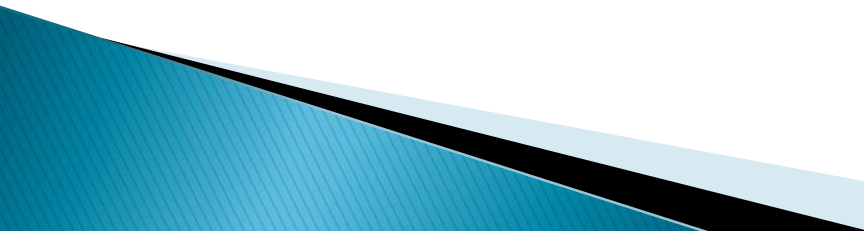
“None.”

# The Introduction

*So, the reader knows from the title, picture, and first paragraph that the boy sold newspapers, **but he wasn't very good at it.** What **additional information** is provided by the introductory comments to the article.*

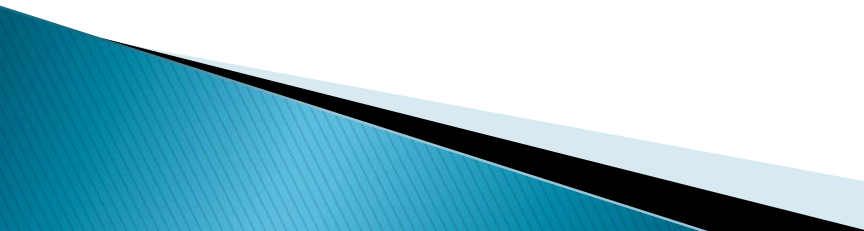
RUSSELL BAKER began his **career in journalism** in 1947, when he was hired by the *Baltimore Sun*. In 1954 he joined the *New York Times*, for which he covered the White House, Congress, and national politics....He received the 1983 Pulitzer Prize for biography for *Growing Up*.

# So how can the reader use this information?

- ▶ From the title, picture, introduction and first paragraph, the reader knows that the article will be about a young boy who sold newspapers, but wasn't very good at it. Instead of a career in sales, he ended up with a very successful career as a journalist or writer.
  - ▶ Any details in the article that show how and/or why the boy ended his newspaper sales career and became a writer instead will be important.
- 



# How do I know what is important?

- This same idea can be applied to all the articles you read.
  - Establish a purpose for reading by previewing the title, pictures, captions, subtitles and first paragraphs. If the information relates back to this purpose, it is important.
  - Paragraphs usually contain only one or two important details. They are the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the story.
  - These details add up to the central or main idea of the paragraph. They answer a central question, like in the game of Jeopardy.
  - The main ideas of all the paragraphs add up to the main idea of the entire passage.
- 

# Main Idea / Important Details

*No  
failure*

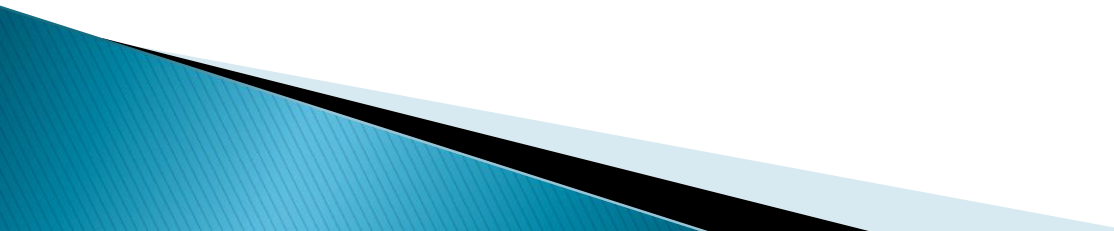
I told my mother I'd changed my mind about wanting to succeed in the magazine business.

"If you think I'm going to raise a good-for-nothing," she replied, "you've got another thing coming." She told me to hit the streets with the canvas bag and start ringing doorbells the instant school was out next day. I bowed to superior will and entered journalism with a heavy heart.

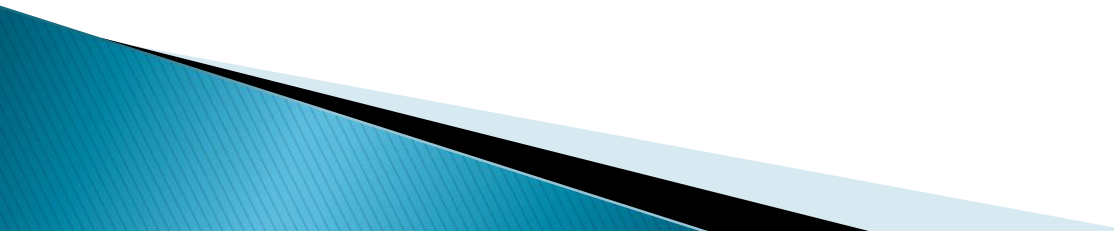
My mother and I had fought this battle almost as long as I could remember. It probably started even before memory began, when I was a country child in northern Virginia and my mother, dissatisfied with my father's plain workman's life, determined that I would not grow up like him. In my mother's vision of the better life ...



# To Skim or not to skim?

- Skimming the article does not work
  - Looking at the questions first and then searching for the answers does not work
  - So what does work?
  - Read the article once, understanding it thoroughly
- 

# Concentrate and understand what you read

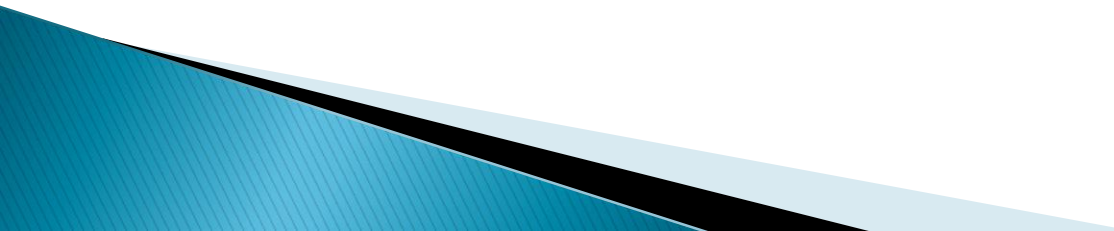
- Write in your book. People who write in their books score higher
  - Many students maintain their concentration by underlining important details and writing short one or two word summaries in the margins.
  - Doing this also improves comprehension and helps to answer the questions later.
- 

# Underlining and summarizing

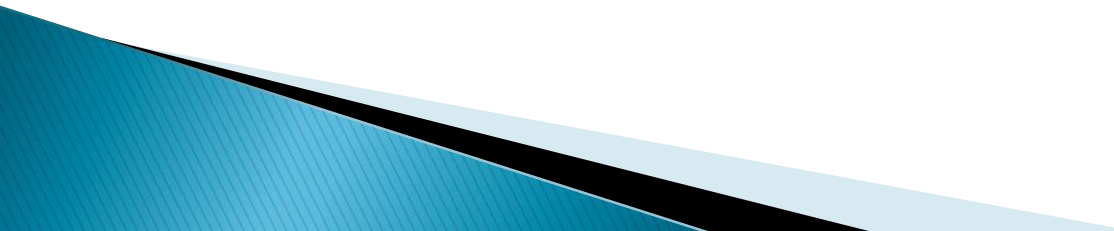
success=  
writer

- ▶ One evening when I was eleven I brought home a short “composition” on my summer vacation which my teacher graded with an A. Reading it with her own schoolteacher’s eye, my mother agreed that it was top-drawer seventh grade prose and complimented me. Nothing more was said about it immediately, but a new idea had taken life in her mind. Halfway through supper she suddenly interrupted the conversation.
- ▶ “Buddy,” she said, “maybe you could be a writer.”

# Answering questions

- Read each question thoroughly, making sure you understand what it is asking. Circle key words that will help you make the right choice.
  - When you are unsure of an answer, go back in the article and look up the answer
- 

# Use the Process of Elimination (POE)

- Read each answer
  - Rate each answer as yes, no, or maybe
  - This way you can eliminate the answers that are clearly wrong before you make your choice
  - This process works because sometimes you may not be sure which answer is correct but you know that certain answers are definitely wrong
- 

# Answering the Questions

**Why** did the author's mother **urge** her son to **sell magazines**?

?

A. She needed her son to earn additional income.

No

B. She recognized salesman-like qualities in her son.

No

C. She wanted her son to follow in the footsteps of his father.

Yes

D. She thought her son needed business skills to earn a good living.



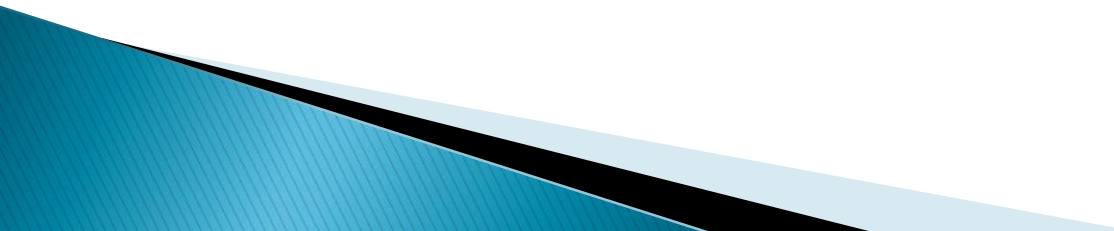
# Look up the answer in the article

I told my mother I'd changed my mind about wanting to succeed in the magazine business.

"If you think I'm going to raise a good-for-nothing," she replied, "you've got another thing coming." She told me to hit the streets with the canvas bag and start ringing doorbells the instant school was out next day. I bowed to superior will and entered journalism with a heavy heart.

My mother and I had fought this battle almost as long as I could remember. It probably started even before memory began, when I was a country child in northern Virginia and my mother, dissatisfied with my father's plain workman's life, determined that I would not grow up like him. In my mother's vision of the better life ...

# Vocabulary in Context Questions

- Before answering vocabulary in context questions, read the sentences before and/or after the word you are asked to define
  - Underline words in the sentence that signal or hint at the meaning of the word.
- 

# Vocabulary in Context

Read this sentence from the passage.

**My mother reached into her bottomless supply of maxims and told Doris, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”**

What does *maxims* mean?

- A. explanations**
- B. ideas**
- C. sayings**
- D. stories**

# Vocabulary in Context

*Look at the sentences before and/or after the vocabulary word*

My mother reached into her bottomless supply of **maxims** and told Doris, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

By the time I was ten I had learned all my mother’s maxims by heart. Asking to stay up past normal bedtime, I knew that a refusal would be explained with, “Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.”

# Vocabulary in Context

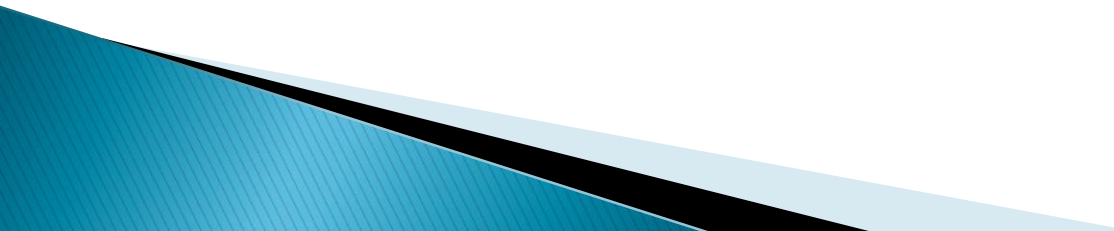
Read this sentence from the passage.

My mother reached into her bottomless supply of maxims and told Doris, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

What does *maxims* mean?

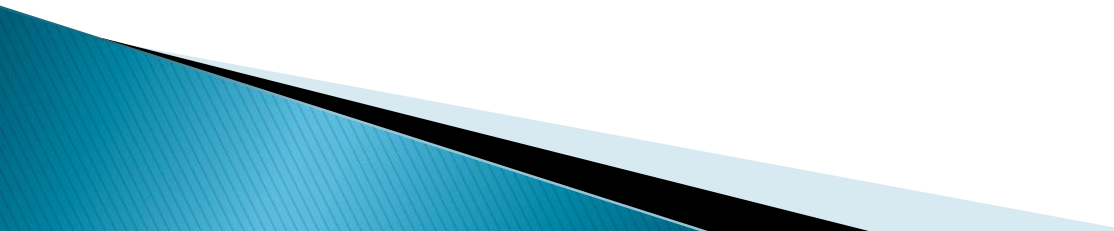
- A. explanations
- B. ideas
- C. sayings
- D. stories

# Time

- Avoid spending too much time on any one question, especially if you are a tenth grader and your test is timed
  - Skip a question that is too difficult and come back to it later
- 



# Quessing

- When possible, eliminate as many choices as you can before guessing.
  - Don't leave any answers blank even if you randomly guess.
  - There is no penalty for guessing.
- 

**Success:**

**Our mission is your success**

Following these tips will help you  
to succeed on FCAT

And that is your mission,

**Success**

