

## Prepping for the Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills Section of the MCAT

### Overview

- 53 Questions spread across 9 passages (5-7 Qs per passage)
  - Skills tested are comprehension (1), reasoning (2), and extrapolation/incorporation (3)
- 90 minutes to complete the section
  - Goal should be 10 mins per passage/Q set (~4 minutes reading, ~6 minutes on Qs)
    - Pacing checks should be every 2-3 passages
  - Master a way to keep track of passage information (e.g. highlighting, note-taking)
- Passages take subject matter from diverse topics (23 AAMC topics is NOT exhaustive)
  - Humanities (Art, Ethics, Literature, Philosophy, Pop Culture and more)
  - Social Sciences (Anthropology, Economics, History, Psychology, and more)

### Required Coursework

- No required knowledge – but abstract reasoning and critical thinking is a must-have
  - Courses which emphasize abstract thinking (philosophy), logical reasoning (law, debate), literature analysis (upper-level humanities)
- Creative writing courses and thesis development can also help master CARS reasoning
- Courses with labs components or Research Skills courses can help with extrapolation and incorporation questions

**Practice AND Review is the only way to improve** – Practice without thorough review and explanations will not yield better scores.

### Next Step Resources

- FREE MCAT Diagnostic ( ½ Scored Section)
- FREE MCAT Full Length (1 Full Scored Section)
- Next Step Full Length MCATs 2-10 (9 Full Scored Sections)
- Next Step MCAT Verbal Practice (108 Practice CARS Passages)
- Next Step CARS Strategy and Practice Book (42 Practice CARS Passages)
- Next Step CARS Office Hours
- Next Step AAMC CARS review video series
- Next Step CARS Lesson Videos

### Free CARS Resources

- Khan Academy – 34 CARS Passages with 3-5 Questions (Not in Test Format)
- College-level Opinion pieces – Wall St. Journal, Atlantic Monthly, Trade Publications in disciplines relevant to CARS topics of interest