

Writing Complete Sentence Answers

Students are encouraged to write answers to questions as completely as possible. The rationale for this practice is given following the steps below.

The steps we cover in class include:

- 1) Read the question.

What is the largest city in the Northeast?

- 2) Identify the **question word** (or words) and eliminate. Also eliminate the **question mark**.

What is the largest city in the Northeast?

- 3) Identify the **verb**; you may need to move it elsewhere.

is the largest city in the Northeast

- 4) Read what is left. This is the beginning of your complete answer! You can also decide now if you need the verb placed elsewhere.

the largest city in the Northeast is

The largest city in the Northeast is New York City.

Why should students answer in complete sentences?

- Complete sentence answers ensure that students answer the correct question. Often students misunderstand what is being asked; if responding completely, this confusion is often cleared up.
- Complete answers imitate the questions themselves; they teach students the “language” of textbooks, a skill which will help students greatly throughout their school years.
- Complete ideas aid in retention of material. Whole ideas and phrases are remembered, single words are not.
- Complete answers are easier to defend when discussing with a partner. And, if needed, complete answers provide more key words which can be scanned for in the text.
- Students are less likely to make poor guesses. In a complete sentence, the incorrect answer often “sounds wrong,” and can be self-corrected by student.
- Complete answers provide valuable practice in reading, writing, and spelling.