

The 240 Tutoring Testing Approach

Did you know that last year 21,000 test takers failed their exam by 10 points or less?

That's only a matter of 3-5 questions!

That's another lock-out period before they can re-test.

That's more hard-earned money spent on testing fees.

That's another lost opportunity to interview for a teaching job.

So, now you're thinking... **how can I avoid that failure?**

When you take your test, you **MUST** have a plan of action for answering each question.

We can't emphasize this enough.

We know you are busy studying content, so we created a plan for you:

The 240 Tutoring Testing Approach

This will help you eliminate incorrect answers, understand each question, and prepare you mentally and physically for the test.

We are going to walk you through some studying and test-taking techniques that will help you increase your score by up to 10 points.



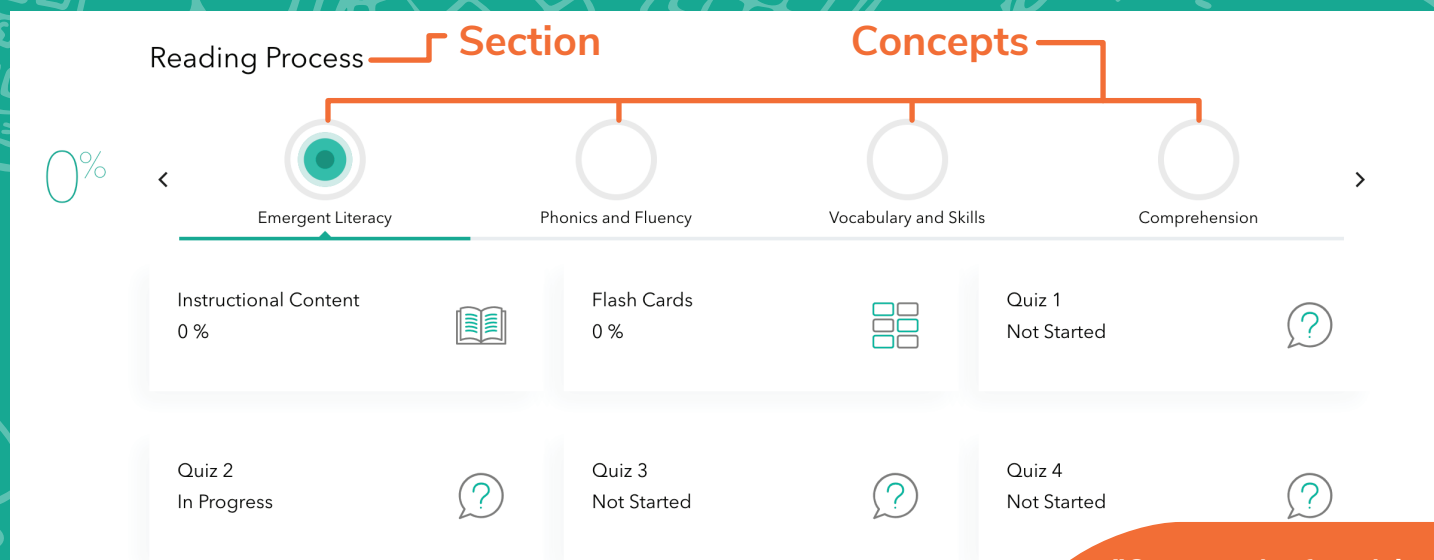
Mental and Physical Prep

FIRST: Remember Your Goal

Teacher tests are pass/fail. No future employer sees your score. Your goal is not to get a perfect score, but a passing score. To be successful on the exam, you will need to answer between 60% and 70% of the questions correctly.

2-3 Months Before

Going into the exam knowing you have prepared yourself is the single most important thing. **Confidence** - a product of quality preparation - will help you pass the exam. Try your best to begin preparing 60-90 days before the exam. This will help you identify what you don't already know and give you plenty of time to work on those areas. The 240 Tutoring Study Guides break your exam down by sections and then by concepts. You can plan out your study time to help build your confidence in each section.



Mental and Physical Prep

The Week Before

FACT: Studies show that individuals who eat a balanced diet the week before an exam achieve higher test scores. Try to avoid fast food, greasy meals, and sugary foods.

The Night Before

Make sure you get a good night's sleep.

It is not helpful to cram the night before. The best way to ensure a good night's sleep before the test is to spend time studying 60-90 days before the exam. You'll be able to relax and rest better before the test, confident that you know what you need to pass instead of panicking. Do not sacrifice sleep in order to study.

If you want to review the night before, that's great. We recommend reviewing flashcards to keep key terms fresh in your mind.

2 OF 89

Muscular System

2 OF 89



moves body parts working with the skeletal system (ex: leg) or materials (ex: food via intestine, blood via heart)

bicep muscle

An example flashcard from a 240
Tutoring Study Guide

Need to brush up on your skills?

240 Study Guides walk you
through everything you
need to pass!

Mental and Physical Prep

The Morning of Your Exam

Stick to your normal daily routine as much as possible.

Do not drink an extra cup of coffee. The added caffeine will wear off and leave you feeling drowsy.

Avoid sugary breakfasts. A healthy breakfast with both carbs and protein, like oatmeal and eggs, is great because it will digest slowly.

During the Exam: Don't Panic!

If at any point during the exam you begin to feel overwhelmed, take a five-minute break to relax. Activities that clear your mind, such as deep breathing, meditation or prayer, have proven helpful to calm and refocus individuals.

A calm mind is a clear mind. Clear minds pass tests.

If you do panic, it's ok and normal. Pause and try your best to collect yourself before continuing the exam.



How to Answer a Question

Did You Know?

240 Tutoring offers a money-back guarantee if you don't pass your exam!

Remember: The goal is not to get a perfect score, but a passing score. This is very important.

The following strategies might seem tedious or strange, but they are proven to help achieve your goal: a passing score.

Single-Select Multiple-Choice

This type of question is what most people think of when they hear the phrase, “multiple-choice question.” A single-select multiple-choice question will provide a list of possible answers to choose from, but only one answer choice is correct. While two choices might make sense, only one is the best answer. Each answer choice is usually identified by a letter, such as “A, B, C, D, etc.” or by a selection bubble.

This type of question might also include “none of the above” as a possible answer choice, meaning that none of the answer choices are the correct response.

On the other hand, this type of question might also include “all of the above” as a possible answer choice, indicating that all of the answer choices are correct.

Process

Read the question. Then, re-read the question.

Make sure you clearly understand what the question is asking. It's easy to pick the wrong answers when you aren't aware of what is being asked. Do not get ahead of yourself in the question-reading process and make the mistake of moving on to the answers before you completely understand the question.

Formulate an answer to the question in your head.

Don't spend too much time on this, but formulate what you believe to be a reasonable answer. Do this without looking at the answer choices. This step is important, yet rarely practiced. It can save you time because once you recall the answer from your memory, you can more quickly identify that answer from the other wrong answer choices, select it, and move on. This banks some valuable time for future questions that you might be less likely to read and readily formulate a response to.

How to Answer a Question

Process (cont.)

Review answer choices.

You can often identify at least one answer that is clearly wrong. Usually, an answer that is the exact opposite of the correct answer is presented to throw you off track. If you've done step #2, then you can hopefully avoid second-guessing yourself on the "obviously wrong" answer. The psychological pressure that comes with a high-stakes exam can make anyone second-guess something that they otherwise would normally recall without hesitation.

Eliminate the answer(s) you believe to be "obviously wrong."

Can't find an answer that you believe to be "obviously wrong?" Then don't eliminate any answers yet. Instead, read the question again.

Compare the remaining answers to the answer in your head.

Consider if any of the answer choices match up with what you believed the answer could be when you formulated an answer in your head (remember step #2?). Does one of the answer choices more closely resemble the answer you created than the others? If yes, then select that answer. If no, move on to step #6.

Make your best guess.

If you're stuck between several answers, choose the best answer and don't be afraid to mentally, or physically, mark that question to come back to if you have the time. Most computer-based tests allow you to mark or flag skipped questions to review again before the test is submitted or time runs out. If you have a blank notes page, you can also jot down the question number to return to later.

**Did you know?
The 240 Tutoring
study guide has
HUNDREDS of
practice questions
for your exam!**

How to Answer a Question

Multiple-Select Multiple-Choice

This type of question is similar to the single-select multiple-choice, but more than one answer choice may be correct. This type of question often uses phrases like, “Choose all answer choices that apply” or “Select all choices that are correct” in the prompt.

Questions like these usually have a checkbox next to each answer choice. Keep in mind that these questions may occasionally only have one correct response, but this is rare.

Recognize that multiple-select multiple-choice questions are inevitably time-consuming. You don’t have the luxury of time when working through these types of questions. Clear your mind of any distractions and do not allow your thoughts to wander when evaluating each choice.

Process

Start by identifying the question as a multiple-select multiple-choice question.

This type of question is more difficult as your odds of getting it correct (when guessing) are less than 25%. You can readily identify a multiple-select multiple-choice type of question since it generally includes the statement, “select all that apply.” This usually means more than one answer choice is correct.

Read the question completely. Then, re-read the question.

Make sure you are clear on what the question is asking. Again, do not move forward in the question-reading process and make the mistake of reading the answer choices before completely understanding the question.

Formulate an answer or answers to the question in your head.

Formulate what you believe to be a reasonable answer, without looking at the choices given to you.

Review answer choices.

Approach each answer choice as a simple “true” or “false” statement as it relates to the question being asked. Eliminate any answer choice that is not “true” or does not correlate with the question being asked. If you view each choice like this, you are less likely to be overwhelmed.

Eliminate the answer(s) you believe to be “obviously wrong.”

Can’t find an answer choice that you believe to be “obviously wrong?” Then don’t eliminate any answers yet.

How to Answer a Question

Process (cont.)

Compare the remaining answers to the answer in your head.

Consider if any of the answer choices match up with what you believed the answer could be when you formulated an answer or answers in your head. Do any of the answer choices closely resemble the answers you created? If yes, then select those answers. If no, move on to step #7.

Make your best guess.

If you're still stuck choosing from the provided options, choose the best answer(s) and try to revisit the question if you have time.

What do you need to do in order to be a good test-taker?

- ☒ Relax
- ☒ Re-Read Questions
- ☒ Study



Study Tips

While studying, look for potential test questions in your notes and reading material. When you consider a topic (e.g. a historical war), think about the things you should know about it. Who were the parties involved? When did the war start? Why did it start? When did it end? Why did it end?

If you are reading a story, consider these questions while reading: Why did the author write this piece? What is the writer trying to convey? Does the reader have a clear stance on the topic? Think like a test writer while you are studying.

Prepare, and practice, like you will perform. What does that mean? Reading this guide is intended to prepare you for a test. So, after learning these strategies, apply them to practice tests. The more habitually you practice test-taking strategies, the more intuitive those strategies will become.

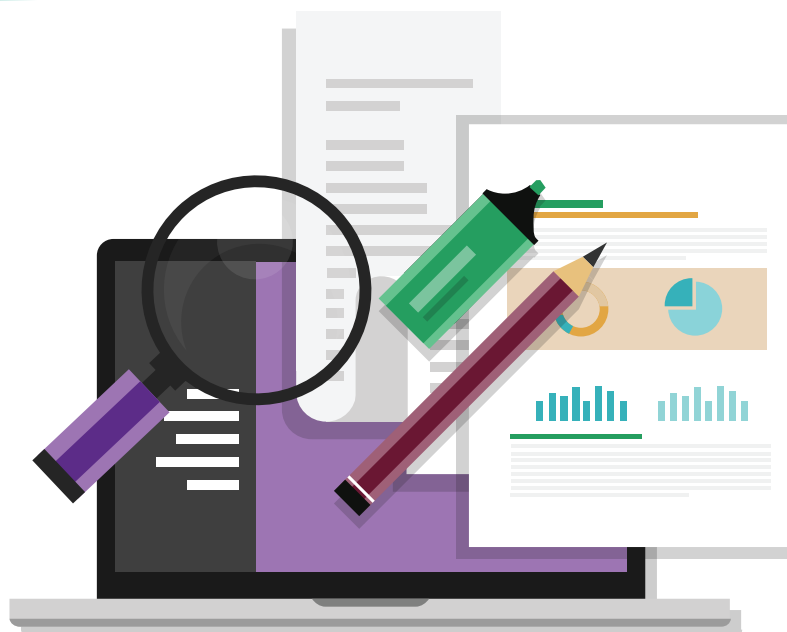
Avoid distractions. Tend to sing along to every word of the music you listen to while studying? Distraction. Turn it off. On top of distracting, it doesn't mimic the environment you will actually take the test in. Do you tend to notice the color of the cars or what people are wearing when they walk by you? Reorient yourself to face a wall instead. Distractions will only delay your progress. Spending more time eating the chips you brought than actually studying? Try snacking before you study. Maybe you've always had your television or other devices on while studying. Stop. Multiple studies reveal that students asked to perform cognitive functioning tasks while being subjected to disruption by irrelevant speech performed at a lower standard than those asked to complete the same task in silence (Alley et al., 2008). In fact, unnecessary sound interference has been demonstrated to negatively impact both short-term and long-term memory (Norris et al., 2004).

Study Tips

Study purposefully. If you are reading a chapter on the Citric Acid Cycle, make sure you aren't just breezing through it, but are fully understanding the big picture. What is its purpose? Is it part of a bigger process? Are there processes which lead up to it or follow it? Are there steps involved in the process? What is the purpose of each step? Study with the intention of retaining the information by memory. A lot of students think the extent of studying is reading assigned material. That is not the case. It often takes repetitive exposure to the material and taking practice exams over and over to really master the art of test-taking.

Despite what you have probably heard, studies have shown that answer-changing on multiple-choice exams is correlated with increased scores (Fischer et al., 2005). Don't be afraid to go back and change an answer.

Practice, practice, practice! The more practice tests you take, the more comfortable you will be when you sit down to take the big test. Don't let the big test be your first time to sit down and take a timed test. Testing has a powerful impact on learning. A study from 2008 showed that repeated retrieval practice enhanced long-term retention, where repeated studying alone produced virtually no benefit (Karpicke et al., 2008).



Making Educated Guesses

Overall, answer questions you consider to be “easy” first.

If your test is timed, it is best to work through the easy questions before attempting the more difficult ones. The more questions you complete on a timed test, the better your score will be. So, budget your time and focus on answering as many questions as possible.

If you’re stuck between several answers, consider this:

- Answers with “always”, “never” or “must” tend to be too specific to actually be correct.
- Answers with forgiving and widely applicable words like “usually” and “sometimes” are often clues to the right answer. Look for these qualifying words.
- Just because you are familiar with an answer choice does not make it the correct answer choice. Recall what you know about the familiar answer choice, and then determine its applicability to the question being asked.

Constructivist and Student-Centered

Some questions will require you to demonstrate pedagogical knowledge – how to best engage students in the classroom. On these questions, you must know that the test is a constructivist, student-centered learning exam. This means the test wants you to answer pedagogical questions a certain way.

Characteristics of constructivist, student-centered learning include:

- Students actively participate in the class activity
 - ✗ Lecture-based answers are generally wrong
- Priority is placed on students interacting with peers, ideally in small, heterogeneous groups
 - ✗ Individualized worksheet activities are generally wrong
- Students should use age-appropriate Bloom’s Taxonomy
 - ✓ Students in 6th grade and above should be using higher-order thinking skills
- Teachers should promote community in the classroom
 - ✓ Each student should feel valued and accepted

Unlimited Time and Resources

Some questions will require you to demonstrate action plans – how to react to student issues. On these questions, you must know that the test is always assuming the “ideal situation.” Answer as if you had unlimited time and resources as a teacher.



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the next step?**

**Subscribe to 240
Tutoring TODAY!**

Putting This All Into Action

Here are a few example questions. These are meant to demonstrate the steps of working through a test question using the 240 Tutoring Testing Approach. While these questions may not apply to your specific exam, the strategies work for any subject.

Question #1: English Example

Mr. Everett is having his students research a historical figure and present their research to the class in a 10-minute presentation. Which of the following resources would be the best primary resource to begin with?

- A. A current newspaper
- B. A biography
- C. A textbook
- D. An autobiography

READ THE QUESTION AND FORMULATE AN ANSWER IN YOUR HEAD

Here's the question again, with some key terms in bold.

Mr. Everett is having his **students research a historical figure** and **present** their research **to the class** in a 10-minute presentation. Which of the following resources would be the **best primary resource to begin with**?

Therefore, the correct answer has to be a primary resource. Before we even look at the choices, let's remember what that is.

Primary - first-hand account

Secondary - a retelling of the event

READ THE ANSWER CHOICES, ELIMINATE WRONG CHOICES, AND COMPARE REMAINING CHOICES TO THE ANSWER IN YOUR HEAD

Here's the choices again, with thoughts in bold.

A. A current newspaper - **A newspaper can be both a primary and a secondary resource; however, a current newspaper is highly unlikely to have first-hand knowledge of a historical figure. MAYBE.**

B. A biography - **This is a secondary resource. WRONG.**

C. A textbook - **This is (usually) a secondary resource. WRONG.**

D. An autobiography - **The author is writing about their own life: primary. This is the best starting point as the student will be exposed to the closest source about events in the figure's life. BEST.**

Since D is the best primary resource to use, the correct choice is D.

Putting This All Into Action

Question #2: Mathematics Example

$1/4$, $1/\sqrt{4}$, n , $\pi/3$, $21/8$

The five numbers shown above are listed in order from least to greatest. What are all of the possible values for n given in the answer options provided below? (Select all that apply)

- A. $\sqrt{4}/5$
- B. $3/\pi$
- C. $11/5$
- D. $2/3$

IDENTIFY AS MULTIPLE-SELECT AND READ THE QUESTION

Here's the question again, with some key terms in bold.

The five numbers shown above are listed in order from **least to greatest**. What are all of the possible **values for n** given in the answer options provided below? (Select **all that apply**)

The term “all that apply” should always stand out. This means that, most likely, more than one choice will be correct.

Therefore, we need to find all of the options that are greater than $1/\sqrt{4}$ but less than $\pi/3$. Since these numbers are hard to work with they should first be simplified. Since $\sqrt{4}$ equals 2, $1/\sqrt{4}$ is the same as $1/2$ or 0.5 in decimal form.

Because $\pi \approx 3.14$, $\pi/3 \approx 3.14/3$. Therefore, $\pi/3$ is a fraction with a numerator slightly larger than its denominator, so its value is slightly greater than 1.

So, we really need to identify all of the options greater than 0.5 but equal to or less than 1.

READ THE ANSWER CHOICES, APPROACH EACH AS TRUE/FALSE, AND ELIMINATE WRONG CHOICES

Plan to use estimation to answer correctly. Here's the choices again, with thoughts in bold.

We're going to break down each choice to determine if it is between .5 and 1.

A. $\sqrt{4}/5$ - Since $\sqrt{4}$ simplifies to 2, this fraction is $2/5$, which is less than 0.5. **FALSE.**

B. $3/\pi$ - Since π is about 3.14, the numerator is slightly smaller than the denominator. This value falls between 0.5 and 1. **TRUE.**

C. $11/5$ - Since the numerator is greater than the denominator, the value is more than 1. This value does not fall between 0.5 and 1. **FALSE.**

D. $2/3$ - This is about .66, so it falls between 0.5 and 1. **TRUE.**

Since B and D make a true statement, the correct answers are B and D. Remember, **ALL** correct answers need to be selected since this is a multiple-select item.

Putting This All Into Action

Question #3: Social Studies Example

Mrs. Dickinson, a new eighth-grade history teacher, is working with her students to compare and contrast the contributions of two individuals - Thomas Jefferson and George Washington - during the Revolutionary Period. Mrs. Dickinson wants to use a “concrete” strategy to help students make comparisons both now and in the future. Which of the following would be most helpful for Mrs. Dickinson to use for this purpose?

- A. Have a class discussion about the two individuals
- B. Put students in pairs and have one student read about Washington and the other read about Jefferson, and then discuss with each other
- C. Have students list all the important words from reading about both Washington and Jefferson
- D. Teach and model how to develop a Venn diagram of Washington and Jefferson

READ THE QUESTION AND FORMULATE AN ANSWER IN YOUR HEAD
Here's the question again, with some key terms in bold.

Mrs. Dickinson, a new **eighth-grade history teacher**, is working with her students to **compare and contrast** the contributions of two individuals - Thomas Jefferson and George Washington - during the Revolutionary Period. Mrs. Dickinson wants to use a “**concrete**” **strategy** to help students make comparisons both now and in the future. **Which of the following would be most helpful for Mrs. Dickinson to use for this purpose?**

READ THE ANSWER CHOICES, ELIMINATE WRONG CHOICES, AND COMPARE REMAINING CHOICES TO THE ANSWER IN YOUR HEAD

Here's the choices again, with thoughts in bold.

We're going to break down each choice. Is it a concrete compare/contrast activity?

A. Have a class discussion about the two individuals – **This is just a discussion with nothing concrete added. ELIMINATE.**

B. Put students in pairs and have one student read about Washington and the other read about Jefferson, and then discuss with each other – **While the idea of a discussion sounds tempting, there is no structure to ensure compare and contrast occurring. MAYBE.**

C. Have students list all the important words from reading about both Washington and Jefferson – **Listing vocabulary does not offer any comparisons about the two individuals. ELIMINATE.**

D. Teach and model how to develop a Venn diagram of Washington and Jefferson – **Using a Venn diagram allows the students to concretely view the similarities and differences between Washington and Jefferson. Remember, a Venn diagram uses circles to demonstrate the relationship between two things, with the overlapping section representing shared commonalities. BEST.**

Therefore, the correct choice is D.

Putting This All Into Action

Question #4: Science Example

A fourth-grade class built a model of the solar system. Each student group was responsible for building a representation of one planet, moon, or other object from a list. When considering the solar system model, which limitation is the greatest concern for the class?

- A. Lack of movement
- B. Atmosphere cannot be represented
- C. Student groups will want to build the same parts of the solar system
- D. Planet sizes will not be built to scale

READ THE QUESTION AND FORMULATE AN ANSWER IN YOUR HEAD

Here's the question again, with some key terms in bold.

A **fourth-grade** class built a model of the solar system. Each student group was responsible for building a **representation of one planet, moon, or other object from a list**. When considering the solar system model, which limitation is the **greatest concern** for the class?

So we have fourth-graders working in a jigsaw method to make one solar system model. We are looking for a concern. Since this is vague, this could be safety issues or content knowledge. In science, you should be on the lookout for misconceptions.

READ THE ANSWER CHOICES, ELIMINATE WRONG CHOICES, AND COMPARE REMAINING CHOICES TO THE ANSWER IN YOUR HEAD

Here's the choices again, with thoughts in bold.

A. Lack of movement – **The movement can be simulated with a correctly constructed model. MAYBE.**

B. Atmosphere cannot be represented – **The atmosphere of each planet is generally more advanced than what fourth-graders need to know. MAYBE.**

C. Student groups will want to build the same parts of the solar system – **Student choice was eliminated. The objects were assigned. ELIMINATE.**

D. Planet sizes will not be built to scale – **If every group builds their own representation, the parts of the solar system might not be accurate proportions when put together. In addition, some objects are very large compared to others, making scale tricky even with proper teacher planning. Lastly, the relative size of planets is commonly misunderstood. BEST.**

Therefore, the correct choice is D.

Want more practice questions?

Every 240 Study Guide has hundreds of questions specifically aligned to YOUR exam!

So What's Next?

Now that you have worked through the examples, you should understand how to apply the 240 Tutoring Testing Approach to any problem.

One of the most important steps of this approach is deciding why each choice is wrong or right. Did you know that every question in each study guide 240 Tutoring offers does this for you?

Mr. Kirby is working with his team to develop a lesson for his eighth-grade language arts class. One colleague recommends using scaffolding to help students better access the information. Which of the following strategies best uses this approach?

A reviewing the previous day's lesson before beginning the new lecture



This is a manner of using scaffolding, but it is more effective when students are given a visual or tangible aid to connect ideas.

B providing students with a graphic organizer to fill in as they read material and listen to lectures

As students work throughout the unit to connect ideas, this allows them to scaffold and assimilate the information in a comprehensive manner, since the graphic organizer can be completed and referred to throughout the unit.

C using an exit ticket at the end of each lesson to guide the next day's instruction

D giving students skeleton notes that correspond to each lecture to fill in

So What's Next?

Practice Makes Perfect

Practice using the 240 Tutoring Testing Approach on EACH question as you work through the study guide.

It will seem **TEDIOUS** and **SLOW...** at first.

But after time...

It will get easier.

Your career depends on passing the exam.

Remember Your Goal

The goal is not a perfect score, but a passing score. To be successful on the exam, you only need to answer between 60% and 70% of the questions correctly. Using all of these strategies will maximize your ability to answer each question correctly and get the score you need to pass.



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