

Test-Taking Strategy

USING KEYWORDS

Questions on tests often contain keywords. A **keyword** is a word that helps you find the correct answer by giving you an important detail. Keywords are often words that express time, such as *first*, *last*, *before*, *after*, or *during*. Keywords can also be words that compare two or more things, such as *larger*, *smallest*, *better*, *best*, *tallest*, or *heavier*. Any word that helps you find the correct answer to the question is a keyword.

Read the chart below.

<i>LARGE EARTHQUAKES (selected)</i>		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Magnitude</i>
1906	San Francisco, CA	8.3
1923	Kwanto, Japan	8.2
1960	Chile	9.5
1964	Prince William Sound, AK	9.2
1976	Tangshan, China	8.0
1985	Mexico City, Mexico	8.1
1990	Iran	7.7
1995	Kobe, Japan	6.9
2000	Indonesia	7.9
2001	India	7.7

Use the chart to answer the question.

1. Which earthquake happened after 1995?

- A. The earthquake in San Francisco
- B. The earthquake with a magnitude of 8.0
- C. The earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9
- D. The earthquake with the same magnitude as the earthquake in Iran

How to find the answer:

The keyword in the question is *after*. You know the correct answer choice must have a date *after* 1995, not before or during that year.

- Find the year in the same row with San Francisco on the chart. The San Francisco earthquake happened in 1906. 1906 is not after 1995, so answer **A** is not correct.
- Find the year listed in the same row as 8.0. This earthquake happened in China in 1976. 1976 is before, not after, 1995. Answer **B** is not correct.
- Find the year that is in the same row with 6.9. This earthquake took place in Kobe, Japan, in 1995. That is the same as the year in the question, not after. Answer **C** is not correct.
- To find the year of the earthquake in answer **D**, you have to find the magnitude of the earthquake in Iran. You can see that the earthquake in Iran had a magnitude of 7.7. The other earthquake with a magnitude of 7.7 was in India in 2001. Answer **D** is correct.