



SHIFT WITH SADIE • NEXTGEN NCLEX COACHING

The Reversal Method

Your free cheat sheet

The simple thinking shift that helps my students stop second-guessing and start eliminating wrong answers with confidence — the way the test writers actually think.

WHY THIS WORKS

You don't have a content problem. You have a reading problem.

The NCLEX writes questions to lead you astray — long stems, answers that are all “technically true,” and one little word in the last line that changes everything. Read top to bottom and you'll pick the answer that *sounds* the most nursing. The fix is to flip the order you attack the question. Four moves, every item.

THE METHOD

The four moves

01 Bottom first.

Read the last line — the actual question — before you read the story.

“Which action *first*?” and “which finding to *report*?” are completely different jobs. Know the job before the paragraph.

02 Predict.

Cover the options and answer it in your own words first.

Now you're matching the choices to *your* answer — instead of being sold on theirs. That habit is worth points immediately.

03 Reverse-check.

Uncover the options. Test what would have to be true for each one.

Ask: “If this were right, what would have to be true about this patient?” Nine times out of ten, that condition isn't in the stem. Eliminate with confidence, not a gut feeling.

04 Reverse the rationale.

In review, learn why every *wrong* answer is wrong.

Don't just confirm the right one. Ask what kind of patient *would* have made each wrong answer correct. One well-reviewed question teaches you four or five.

Run the method on a real question.

Post-op patient, a list of vital signs, and this ask:

THE QUESTION

“Which finding requires immediate follow-up?”

BOTTOM FIRST

The word is **“immediate follow-up.”** You’re hunting the **dangerous** finding — not the reassuring one. This is a reversal item.

PREDICT

Before looking, you expect something in the **airway / breathing / circulation** lane, or a sharp change from baseline.

REVERSE-CHECK

Uncover the options. A **rising respiratory rate with a dropping O₂ sat** jumps out — it matches your prediction. The low-grade temp never had a chance.

REVERSE RATIONALE

In review, ask: what patient *would* have made “low-grade temp” the right answer? That’s where the real learning lives.

The shift: you never asked “which one is correct?” You asked “which one is unsafe?” — and the trap answer lost its power.

REVERSAL WORDS — CIRCLE BEFORE YOU READ A SINGLE CHOICE

needs further teaching · requires follow-up · intervene · contraindicated · except · avoid · incorrect · unsafe · would be inappropriate

KEEP GOING WITH SADIE

You just felt the shift. Let’s make it automatic.

This is one technique. Inside my coaching, you get the full clinical-judgment framework, a move for all six question types, and a plan that stops the second-guessing for good — direct, warm, zero fluff.

FREE NEXT STEP

Take the 100-question diagnostic — find out if you have a content problem or a reading problem.

COACHING

Pass with Sadie — a 4-week live NextGen NCLEX cohort with a coach, a plan, and a community.

FIND ME

shiftwithsadie.com · @Shiftswithsadie

You’ve got this. ♥

© 2026 Shift with Sadie. For personal study use. NCLEX® is a registered trademark of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. Shift with Sadie is not affiliated with or endorsed by NCSBN. This guide is a study aid and not a guarantee of any exam result.