

The ONLY book you need to ace the GMAT Critical Reasoning

GMAT® Critical Reasoning Grail 2018

In-depth coverage of all CR Question Types tested on the GMAT

Practice set of 100 questions with 30% NEW content

QR codes to access 40 + 'Expert Speak' videos and exclusive Vlogs NEW

Dedicated chapter on 'Provide a Logical Conclusion' Questions—a new question type increasingly being tested on the GMAT

References to the 2018, 2017 and 2016 editions of the Official Guide for GMAT® Review and the Official Guide for Verbal Review



Praise for the CR Grail

"The best thing about the CR Grail is that it focuses on understanding the meaning of arguments rather than on mere tricks to identify the conclusion, evidence, etc. The book is also written in a very student friendly manner with short chapters and to-the-point content. I found the fifth section of the book that talks about Causality and Representativeness the most useful."

— Glen Wozniaski, GMAT 770 (MIT Sloan – Class of 2016)

"I endorse this one as well. Explains each question type really well. The division of SWAFE (strengthening, weakening, assumptions, flaw, and evaluate) and non-SWAFE questions is a good way to categorize things. The question bank is pretty impressive as well."

— Jhumsumtak, Moderator, gmatclub.com, GMAT 770 (v-44,q-51)

"The CR Grail is a terrific book for Critical Reasoning. I used to think that Critical Reasoning was my strong area but the book still ended up teaching me some new things such as Passive Assumptions. I really like the book's focus on assumptions and on avoiding jargon and diagrams. The best CR book out there!"

— Prerana Sharma, GMAT 740 (London Business School – Class of 2016)

"The best thing about the CR Grail is that it doesn't use diagrams and unlayers Critical Reasoning concepts in a great way. Makes it easy to master Critical Reasoning."

— Rishi Raj, beatthegmat.com Global Moderator, GMAT 760

"Being weak at Critical Reasoning, I pretty much referred to almost all the CR books out there and I can say without any doubt that CR Grail is the best and the most comprehensive of the lot. The best part about the book is the manner in which it covers all the concepts without getting verbose or using too many lines. The book is crisp and covers everything needed to ace the CR questions on the GMAT. A special mention for the practice question set that I found very useful."

— Kevin Lee, GMAT 770 (Harvard – Class of 2016)

"The unique aspect of all Aristotle books is the easy and flowing manner in which they are written, and the CR Grail is no exception. It makes its point without getting dense or complex and one can understand all the concepts very easily. More importantly, one can actually understand how and where to apply these concepts. The third section of the book is really helpful and the question bank is also very useful. All in all, a great buy."

— Bai Wong, GMAT 720 (Stanford - Class of 2017)



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ISBN 978-81-265-6975-5

Contents

Introduction	vii	
Section 1 – About the GMAT	01	
Section 2 – Diagnostic Test	09	
Section 3 – Basics of Critical Reasoning	29	
Section 4 – Critical Reasoning Question Types	35	
4.1 Find the Assumption Questions	39	
4.2 Evaluate the Argument Questions	47	
4.3 Strengthen the Argument Questions	53	
4.4 Weaken the Argument Questions	59	
4.5 Identify the Flaw Questions	65	
4.6 Inference Questions	71	
4.7 Explain the Paradox Questions	77	
4.8 Provide a Logical Conclusion Questions	81	
4.9 Miscellaneous Questions	87	
1. Bold Face questions	88	
2. Main Point questions	90	
3. Parallel Reasoning Questions	92	
Section 5 – Common Argument Structures	95	
5.1 Causality	97	
5.2 Representativeness	99	
5.3 Arguments with Numbers	101	
5.4 The Importance of Terminology on GMAT Critical Reasoning	103	
Section 6 – Sentence Correction Practice Set	107	
Questions $1 - 100$	109	
Answers and Explanations	150	
Section 7 – Quick Recall	231	
Index—QR Codes	238	

Introduction

Critical Reasoning (CR), even though part of the verbal section, does not really test you on your grasp of the English language. As the name suggests, this section is actually a test of your reasoning skills. The only verbal knowledge you need is that you have to be able to understand the meaning of the arguments and answer choices given to you. The critical part of Critical Reasoning is that you have to read the question stem and the answer choices very carefully. If you miss even a single word such as *some*, you could end up with an incorrect answer.

To most students, Critical Reasoning is the easiest of the three question types tested on the verbal section of the GMAT. Even if this is indeed so, it makes sense to maximize your accuracy in this section in order to compensate for the slightly lower accuracy rate you may end up with in the Sentence Correction and Reading Comprehension questions. This book will help you do just that.

Unlike Sentence Correction, Critical Reasoning will not require you to go through myriad rules and exceptions to the rules and further exceptions to these exceptions! Critical Reasoning involves the use of just a few basic concepts and approaches to different question types. This book will take you through all of these, after which it will all boil down to practice.

Sections in this book

Section 1

Gives you a broad **overview** of the GMAT—test format, duration, scoring, etc.

Section 2

Administers a diagnostic test that will help you assess your competence level in Critical Reasoning before you go through the various concepts and strategies in this book.

Section 3

Takes you through the **basics of Critical Reasoning** and discusses how arguments are constructed.

Section 4

Covers the different **Critical Reasoning question types** that are tested on the GMAT.

Section 5

Takes you through some **common argument structures** and some red herring terms that you should look out for to eliminate incorrect answer choices.

Section 6

Contains a 100-question CR Practice Set to help you test your understanding of the concepts learnt in the this book and your ability to apply those concepts on CR questions based on the GMAT pattern.

Section 7

Provides a Quick Recap of all the important concepts and rules covered in this book. This section saves you the trouble of taking notes so you can concentrate on understanding the concepts. Go through this section before every practice test that you take.

One thing we have consciously tried to avoid is making the entire process of understanding arguments too mechanical by the use of symbols/diagrams. Instead our emphasis throughout this

book will be on understanding the **meaning of the arguments** by looking for different **signalling words** and latching on to **subtle hints** provided in the arguments.

References to GMAT OG and GMAT Verbal Review 2018, 2017 and 2016

For most of the concepts covered in this book, you will also find **OG question references** that will provide you with the question number of similar questions present in the OGs 2016, 2017 and 2018 and also in the OG Verbal Review (VR) 2016, 2017 and 2018. As a result, you can see how the concepts explained in this book are actually tested on the GMAT.

Access videos using QR codes

You will see **QR codes** printed at different places in the book. By scanning these **QR** codes using your smartphones, you will be able to access videos relevant to the concept being discussed on that page. This will further help reinforce your understanding of that concept.

Clearing your Doubts/Queries

The purchase of this book provides you direct access to the experts who have written this book. So, in case there is any concept or question discussed in this book that you don't understand, please put up the same on the Forums section of our website: www.aristotleprep.com. Our experts will respond to you within 48 hours and help clear all your doubts.

To sum it up, we have tried to make the Aristotle Critical Reasoning Grail 2018 as comprehensive and, at the same time, as student friendly as possible. We are sure you will find this book useful in your prep.

Good Luck & Study Hard!

The Aristotle Prep Team

How to Access your Videos

This book contains 'Expert Speak' videos and other exclusive training content that you can easily access through an app—on your smartphone or tablet—using the QR codes provided at various places throughout the book.

Step 1 - Download and Install the App on your Smartphone/tablet

To access the videos and other content, you will need to download the 'Wiley Test Prep' App from either Apple's App store (iTunes) or Google play store and install it on your Smartphone or tablet.

For Apple devices:

Go to iTunes and search for 'Wiley Test Prep'. Locate the app from the displayed results and click on Install.

For Android devices:

Go to Google Play Store and search for 'Wiley Test Prep'. Locate the app from the displayed results and click on Install.

While installing the app, you will be asked to key in the unique registration code provided in a sealed envelope at the end of this book. This registration code will work only once and on only one device.

Step 2 – Scan the QR codes and access your training content

Once you have installed the app, you can access the videos and training content on your mobile device by scanning the QR codes provided throughout this book.

- Open the app and click on the 'Scan QR Code' menu option available under the top right corner menu. This will start the scanning activity for that particular QR code.
- Focus the camera of your mobile device over the desired QR code given in the book and
 wait for a few seconds till you hear the 'tick' sound. Once the QR code has been scanned
 and found valid, you will be directed to the associated video/content.
- Repeat the process for all other QR codes to access their associated videos/content.

Note:

- 1. The app login will be valid for 12 months from the date of activation.
- 2. The app login is valid only for one device.
- 3. In case of any difficulty, please reply to the confirmation email that you received in your inbox/junk email folder after registering on the app.

SECTION 1 About the GMAT

What is the GMAT?

The GMAT stands for Graduate Management Admission Test. It is an exam required for admissions to MBA programs in the US and in other top business schools across the world. It is also required for admission to a few Masters and PhD courses.

It is very important for you to know that the GMAT is a computer adaptive test. This means that the difficulty level of the next question in a section is determined by your performance on the previous questions. Therefore, as you progress through the test, the software continuously tries to evaluate your performance and adapts the difficulty level of the next questions to your performance on the previous ones. For this reason, you cannot skip or go back to questions on the test.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing why one shouldn't approach the GMAT very academically.

What does the GMAT consist of?

The GMAT consists of four sections, which appear in the fixed order given below.

Section	Time
Analysis of an Argument Essay	30 minutes
Integrated Reasoning	30 minutes
Quantitative	75 minutes
Verbal	75 minutes

You will get 12 questions in the Integrated Reasoning section, 37 questions in the Quantitative section and 41 questions in the Verbal section.

There are two optional 8-minute breaks during the GMAT. The first one is after the Integrated Reasoning section and the second one is after the Quantitative section.

Note: From July 11 2017, the GMAT provides you the option of choosing the order of the four sections from three possible choices as below:

Option I: AWA, Integrated Reasoning, Quant, Verbal

Option II: Quant, Verbal, Integrated Reasoning, AWA

Option III: Verbal, Quant, Integrated Reasoning, AWA

Integrated Reasoning questions can be further divided into the following four question types:

- Graphics Interpretation
- Two-Part analysis
- Table Analysis
- Multi-Source Reasoning

Quantitative questions can be further divided into the following two question types:

- Problem Solving
- Data Sufficiency

Verbal questions can be further divided into the following three question types:

- Sentence Correction
- Critical Reasoning
- Reading Comprehension

How am I scored on the GMAT?

The GMAT scores range from 200-800. A score of 200 is the lowest you can get and a score of 800 is the highest. For each section, you get something called a scaled score and there is also a percentile score corresponding to a scaled score.

- **AWA** This section is scored on a scale of 0-6 in half-point increments.
- Integrated Reasoning This section is scored on a scale of 0-8 in one-point increments
- Quantitative and Verbal These two sections are scored on a scale of 51. The GMAC does not reveal how exactly this score is calculated, but we do know for sure that the difficulty level of the questions you get correct/incorrect plays a big role in determining your final score on the test.

When can I take the GMAT? How many times is it conducted in a year?

The GMAT can be taken at any time of the year. You sign up to take the exam INDIVIDUALLY, whenever you are free. Yes, that's right. The only thing to consider is whether the date, on which you want to take the exam, is available at the test centre of your choice. This is important in cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Beijing, New Delhi, etc., where the number of test takers is quite high and you may have to book a slot usually a month or two before your exam date.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing interesting tidbits from **GMAT** test day.

How do I register for the GMAT and how much is the exam fee?

You can register for the GMAT by logging on to http://www.mba.com/ and then going to the registration page. The GMAT exam fee is \$250, as of 2017.

What should I do after taking my GMAT?

If your actual GMAT score is lower than what you would like it to be, you can always retake the test. However, if you feel you have got a satisfactory score, it is time to start working on your business school applications. You will need to start off by shortlisting schools based on criteria such as your desired field of study, your GMAT score, the country or region you want to be in, etc. At Aristotle Prep, we have a full-fledged counselling division that can assist you with the business school application process. You can go through our website for details.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing your GMAT retake strategy.

How do I prepare for the GMAT?

As with any other test, you start off by going through the basic quant and verbal concepts that are tested on the GMAT. Books such as the one you are holding in your hands right now are one of the best ways of doing so.

Once you have completed your basics, it's time to apply all that learning on actual GMAT questions. At this point, you will want to get your hands on the *The Official Guide for GMAT Review* (OG) set of books as these are the only source of actual GMAT questions.

Once you have completed all the questions in the OG, you need to start taking a few timed online practice tests. The GMAC provides you two of these tests (called the GMATPrep) for free on the official GMAT website: www.mba.com. You can access four more of these tests by purchasing them separately.

Once you start scoring within 20-30 points of your desired score in the GMATPrep tests, it is time for you to book your test date and take the real GMAT.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing the qualities you should look for in a GMAT coach.

While you need to work hard to get a good GMAT score, you also need to work smart. The following are some test-taking strategies for the smart test taker:

Always try to narrow down your choices to two options.

On a lot of questions, especially the high difficulty ones, you will often end up eliminating wrong answer choices rather than selecting the correct one. There is nothing wrong with this approach. In fact, we encourage students to start by eliminating wrong answer choices. The first time you read through the options, try to eliminate two or three that make absolutely no sense to you or that you are certain are wrong. This shouldn't be very difficult because it is not very easy for the test makers to provide you with four or five equally confusing choices.

So, the first time you go through the options, try to come down to two possible answers. Once you do this, you have increased your chances of getting the answer correct from 20% to 50%, which are very good odds. Once you have narrowed down to two possibilities, go through each of these options and try to identify the one that better answers the question asked. It might also be a good idea to re-read the question once again at this stage, as students often tend to misread questions on the test.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing the importance of change as part of your GMAT prep strategy.

Time management will be the most important factor on the day of the test.

A good way of pacing yourself on the GMAT is to follow what we, at Aristotle, call the **8/15 rule**—for every 8 questions, you should take around 15 minutes, irrespective of the question-type mix. So, look at your watch after the first 15 minutes on the test—if you have completed more than 8 questions, then you are going too fast and probably need to slow down.

Similarly if you have completed fewer than 8 questions, you are going too slow and need to pick up your pace. Depending on how far behind you are on your timing, guess on 1 or 2 questions in the next lot of 8 questions to catch up on the time. Do not leave this guesswork for the end, as most students do, because this can have disastrous consequences on your overall score.

The strategy of leaving the guesswork till the end will put too much pressure on you towards the end of the test. You will invariably end up with a situation in which you have 6-7 questions left with 7-8 minutes to go, that is, a minute for each question. Given that there will most likely be an RC passage amongst these last questions, there is no way you can complete these questions in the remaining time.

What will eventually happen is that you will end up guessing on most or all of these questions. The problem with guessing is that, unless you are making intelligent guesses (which will not be the case at the end of the test with you under intense pressure), you can easily get most or even all of these questions wrong. If you get so many questions wrong in a row, your score will fall drastically. So, all your good work in the rest of the test could be undone by this lack of attention to pacing yourself on the test.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing how you should manage your time while taking the GMAT.

How to guess intelligently?

If you follow the 8/15 rule, you should not have to guess on too many questions at the end of the test. However, in case you still end up having to guess on the last 5-6 questions, here is an intelligent way of doing so that will ensure that your score does not fall by too much.

Let's start by assuming that you are on Question number 36 in the section (that is, you have 5-6 questions remaining), and your current scaled score is 34 (of course you'll have no way of knowing this but let's just assume this to be the case). Now, assuming that you have six minutes remaining on the test, how would you approach these last six questions?

Most of you would immediately see that you have one minute left for each question, so you would spend that minute on each question and if you could not arrive at the answer in a minute you would guess something and move to the next question.

By following this approach, there is a very high possibility that you will get all or most of these questions wrong, since it'll be very difficult to attempt questions in a minute at the end of the test, especially CR and RC ones. Your concentration levels will be very low and stress levels very high, which means you will need to read the question two or three times just to understand what it is stating.

The problem is that by this time your one minute will already be up, so you will end up making a random guess and moving on. If you get most of these last questions wrong, your score will fall from 34 to somewhere around 27-28. Remember, your score falls drastically if you get several questions incorrect in a row.

Here is a smarter way of approaching the same situation, that is, six questions to be attempted in six minutes with your scaled score on 34—guess quickly on question 36, and by quickly we mean take five seconds at most, so mark any random option and move. Now for question 37, take two minutes and try to get it right.

Since you've most probably got the last question wrong, this should in any case not be a very high difficulty question. Now, again guess quickly on question 38 and take two minutes for question 39, guess quickly on question 40 and take two minutes for the last question.

Did you notice what we did?

We divided those six minutes over three questions instead of six, thereby maximizing our chances of getting at least three of these six questions correct. If one of your guesses also proves to be right, your score will not come down below 31-32. It is for this reason that you should always guess on alternate questions—to ensure that your scaled score does not fall by much.

However, we still suggest that you follow the **8/15 rule** so you don't have to bother with any of this at the end of the test.



Scan this QR code to watch a video by the author on how you should structure your GMAT prep.

SECTION 2 Diagnostic Test

Diagnostic Test

The purpose of this diagnostic test is to give you an idea of your competence level in **Critical Reasoning** before you start working through this book. Among other things, this will help you assess the improvement in your performance once you have completed this book.

We have tried to make this test as GMAT-like as possible. You are likely to see around 11-12 Critical Reasoning questions on the GMAT—this test also contains 12 CR questions of different difficulty levels. While it should ideally take you around 24 minutes to complete this test, do not worry too much about timing at this stage. Complete the test in however much time it takes you and then go through the part at the end that will help you evaluate your performance.

Instructions

Each of the following Critical Reasoning questions is based on a short argument, a set of statements, or a plan of action. For each question, choose the correct answer from the multiple-choice list.

- 1. The Starbeans cafe has recently hired a new manager. The manager, within a few days of joining, made some drastic changes as a result of which the number of people visiting Starbeans every day fell by almost 40%. However, the revenue during this same period almost doubled.
 - Which of the following, if true, most helps to explain how the revenues of Starbeans increased despite the falling footfalls?
 - (A) The manager appointed a new coffee bean supplier who charges much lower rates than did the earlier supplier, resulting in substantial cost savings.
 - (B) The manager changed the interior of the cafe, making the seats much more comfortable than the earlier seats and adding more color to the walls.
 - (C) The manager's monthly salary is directly linked to the revenue; the more the revenue the more salary he gets.
 - (D) The manager increased the average price of every item on the menu, in some cases even doubling the original price.
 - (E) The manager fired some of the staff, thereby cutting down Starbean's salary cost by half.
- 2. With less than 20 per cent market share, Cherico Airline has been steadily losing ground to other competing airlines. However, the recent addition of the Dreamliner aircraft to its fleet might just turn the tide for Cherico. The Dreamliner claims 15 per cent more fuel efficiency than competing similar aircrafts and cheaper maintenance costs. With the induction of these planes, Cherico will get a competitive advantage over its more aggressive rivals, which will be saddled with older aircrafts and get deliveries of their own Dreamliners only after one year.
 - Which of the following would be most useful to determine in order to evaluate the argument?

- (A) Whether it is possible for Cherico to cut costs even more by reducing the number of stewards in the air plane
- (B) Whether it is possible for Cherico to improve the Dreamliner's fuel efficiency even further by restricting the amount of luggage passengers can carry
- (C) Whether Cherico can increase its revenues by charging for the meals it serves in its aircrafts
- (D) Whether the Dreamliner's maintenance costs will be substantially lower than those of Cherico's rivals' aircrafts
- (E) Whether it will be possible for Cherico's rivals to somehow get deliveries of their own Dreamliners expedited
- 3. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

When mobile phone companies, used to reporting several million new customers in a month, do the opposite and report a sharp fall in that number, you know that the country's most dynamic industry has entered a new, more troubled phase. However, this statistic may not necessarily be as much of a cause for concern as it looks because

- (A) mobile phone companies have huge cash reserves so they will not face the problem of cash flow for a few months at least
- (B) inflated claims about new customer acquisition have been very much a part of the industry story so far
- (C) the sales of mobile phone handsets hasn't fallen down appreciably
- (D) other competitors have not entered the market in huge numbers
- (E) mobile phone companies are making huge investments in widening their network coverage
- 4. The prime principle of economics is that prices are determined by supply and demand, not by costs. Some products may cost 90 cents and sell for a dollar, while others go for a dollar yet cost only a cent to make. The second producer is neither a profiteer nor an exploiter, and the first producer is neither a benefactor nor a patron. Both producers merely respond to market signals based on supply and demand.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) How much it costs to manufacture a product is not the primary determinant of its selling price.
- (B) A product with a low manufacturing cost is more likely to succeed than a product with a high manufacturing cost.
- (C) A manufacturer who sells a product with a low manufacturing cost at a high price to the customer is deceiving the customer.

- (D) If a product costs a lot to manufacture then its manufacturer must ensure that he does not sell the product at a high price.
- (E) A manufacturer who uses manufacturing costs of a product as a basis to determine the selling price of the product is bound to fail.
- 5. The country has recently been shaken by the increase in incidents of corruption amongst the political class and the bureaucracy. The solution clearly is to appoint an independent investigating body headed by a person of repute who can investigate such cases of corruption and punish those found guilty.

The conclusion above would be more reasonably drawn if which of the following were inserted into the argument as an additional premise?

- (A) The appointment of the independent body is the only way to combat corruption.
- (B) The independent agency will itself not fall prey to corruption.
- (C) Corruption is not present outside the political class and the bureaucracy.
- (D) The punishment meted out by the investigating agency will not act as a deterrent for people/agencies susceptible to corruption.
- (E) If not controlled immediately, the problem of corruption can spiral out of control.
- 6. Switzerland's national rail company has accused Apple of stealing the iconic look of its station clocks for Apple's new operating system. According to the rail company, both designs have a round clock face with black indicators except for the second hand, which is red.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument above?

- (A) Apple has never been accused of copying by any other person or organization in the past.
- (B) Apple is known the world over for its unique product designs.
- (C) The designer who created the watch design for Apple's operating system has never visited Switzerland or, for that matter, any other European country.
- (D) All round face clocks across the globe are created out of the same design philosophy.
- (E) The Switzerland National Rail Company has itself been accused in the past of copying the platform design of a neighbouring country's rail platform.
- 7. The Langova National park is a breeding ground for several migratory birds. Of late, the Spot-breasted Laughing Thrush, an extremely rare species of bird, has been sighted only in the Langova National park. The people who have sighted this bird in the park have claimed that it is possible to sight this bird only through the use of binoculars. Barry is visiting the Langova National Park next week and he will be carrying an extremely powerful pair of binoculars with him. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that, as long as Barry has his binoculars on him, he will most definitely manage to sight the Spot-breasted Laughing Thrush.

Which of the following indicates a flaw in the reasoning above?

- (A) It fails to take into account the possibility of sighting the Spot-breasted Laughing Thrush at places other than the Langova National Park.
- (B) It mistakes a necessary condition for a sufficient condition.
- (C) It is based on a series of assumptions, rather than on facts.
- (D) It does not take into account the possibility that Barry could lose or damage his binoculars on the way to the park.
- (E) It does not take into account the possibility that Barry may sight some other equally rare species of bird.
- 8. I do not agree that wage disparity still exists between men and women. Almost all salaried individuals today are paid based on their qualification and experience and not their sex. It is only the lower labour class where the disparity still exists, but this is justified because there are certain tasks requiring physical strength, such as carrying heavy construction material, that can only be performed by men.

If the above statements are true, which of the following is an example of a wage disparity on the basis of gender?

- (A) A company pays its management trainees, most of whom are females and have just passed out from business schools, a lower salary than it pays to its senior partners, most of whom are males.
- (B) A male labourer who does not do any physically taxing work is paid a lower wage than a male labourer who does physically taxing work.
- (C) A female employee at a managerial level in a company gets a lower salary than a female employee who has joined the company as a trainee but whose uncle is a partner in the company.
- (D) A male labourer who does not do any physical work is paid a higher wage than a female labourer who does not do any physical work.
- (E) A male manager working for Company X gets paid a higher salary than does a female manager with similar experience working for Company Z.
- 9. The government has recently been severely criticized for its decision to block access to a few websites on which malicious information and photographs were being posted. The government has responded to this criticism by stating that while it believes in freedom of speech and expression, this was an emergency and in such situations, you have to cut off the source of the problem.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first describes a reaction to an action and the second describes an action taken in response to this reaction.
- (B) The first is a criticism that the argument disagrees with; the second is the point of view that the argument supports.

- (C) The first is the point of view of a group of people and the second attacks this point of view.
- (D) The first provides a counterpoint to the argument's conclusion; the second is that conclusion.
- (E) The first provides the criticism of an action and the second provides justification for the necessity of taking that action.
- 10. There has been a sudden spurt in the cases of suicide amongst teenagers in Tango city. On investigation, a public interest group discovered that all of these teenagers had been listening to songs by an alternative rock group, The Demons, at the time of committing suicide. When the public interest group listened to the songs by this rock group, they were aghast to hear lyrics that encouraged people to kill themselves. Accordingly, the city mayor has decided to ban the sale and download of all alternative rock band albums in Tango city with immediate effect.

Which of the following, if true, would most strongly support the position above?

- (A) Songs with lyrics that encourage people to kill themselves can actually lead to people killing themselves.
- (B) Alternative rock groups other than The Demons also contain lyrics that encourage people to kill themselves.
- (C) It is not required to impose a similar ban on movies containing large scale violence and bloodshed.
- (D) If people don't listen to songs by The Demons, they will not kill themselves.
- (E) It is the responsibility of a mayor to protect the citizens of his city.
- 11. Historical data for all the elections held in Gangnam City shows that all winning candidates have canvassed for at least 100 hours. In fact, candidates who have canvassed for fewer than 100 hours have never ever won. Out of all the candidates contesting in the upcoming elections in Gangnam City, Candidate A has canvassed for 120 hours, Candidate B has canvassed for 150 hours, and Candidate C has canvassed for 90 hours.

If the statements above are true, which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by them?

- (A) Candidate B will most likely win the election.
- (B) Candidate C will most likely lose the election.
- (C) The winner of the election will either be Candidate A or Candidate B.
- (D) The results of an election cannot be solely dependent on how many hours a candidate canvasses for.
- (E) If no other Candidate has canvassed for more than 150 hours, then Candidate B will win the election.

12. Most people erroneously believe that airplanes are dangerous modes of transport. Statistics clearly reveal that more people are killed every year in road accidents than in air crashes. So traveling by airplanes is in fact safer than traveling by a car or a bus.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the above explanation?

- (A) Airlines across the globe spend significant amounts of money every year on adding new safety features to their airplanes.
- (B) There is no country in the world in which the number of people killed in air crashes exceeds the number of people killed in road accidents.
- (C) In a recently conducted survey by an independent agency, a majority of the respondents stated that they felt safer while traveling by air than while traveling by road.
- (D) The number of people who travel by airplanes every year is roughly equal to the number of people who travel by road.
- (E) The technology used in modern aircrafts is much more sophisticated than that used in most forms of road transport.

Answers and Explanations

Question no.	Answer	Question no.	Answer
1	D	7	В
2	Е	8	D
3	В	9	E
4	A	10	В
5	В	11	С
6	D	12	D

How to Evaluate your test

What we have provided below is a very simplistic evaluation based on your current accuracy rate. Do keep in mind that your performance on the actual GMAT will be based on several factors other than your accuracy rate such as the difficulty level of the questions you get correct and incorrect, the manner in which you get these questions incorrect, that is, all together or spread throughout the test, etc.

If you got 10 or more correct – Excellent

If you got 8-9 correct – Good

If you got 5-7 correct – Average

If you got fewer than 5 correct – Below Average



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining how you should analyze your CATs.

The Starbeans cafe has recently hired a new manager. The manager, within a few days of
joining, made some drastic changes as a result of which the number of people visiting
Starbeans every day fell by almost 40%. However, the revenue during this same period
almost doubled.

Which of the following, if true, most helps to explain how the revenues of Starbeans increased despite the falling footfalls?

- (A) The manager appointed a new coffee bean supplier who charges much lower rates than did the earlier supplier, resulting in substantial cost savings.
- (B) The manager changed the interior of the cafe, making the seats much more comfortable than the earlier seats and adding more color to the walls.
- (C) The manager's monthly salary is directly linked to the revenue; the more the revenue the more salary he gets.
- (D) The manager increased the average price of every item on the menu, in some cases even doubling the original price.
- (E) The manager fired some of the staff, thereby cutting down Starbean's salary cost by half.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The only way in which revenues can increase despite a fall in the number of visitors is if the price per item were to be increased. D states this and is the correct answer. This also explains why the number of customers visiting Starbeans has gone down.

- (A) Low rates for coffee beans will reduce the cost and increase the profit, but it cannot increase the revenue.
- (B) If anything, this fact should have helped increase the number of customers coming to Starbeans.
- (C) This still does not explain how sales can increase despite a fall in the number of customers.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) Same as A.
- 2. With less than 20 per cent market share, Cherico Airline has been steadily losing ground to other competing airlines. However, the recent addition of the Dreamliner aircraft to its fleet might just turn the tide for Cherico. The Dreamliner claims 15 per cent more fuel efficiency than competing similar aircrafts and cheaper maintenance costs. With the induction of these planes, Cherico will get a competitive advantage over its more aggressive rivals, which will be saddled with older aircrafts and get deliveries of their own Dreamliners only after one year.

Which of the following would be most useful to determine in order to evaluate the argument?

- (A) Whether it is possible for Cherico to cut costs even more by reducing the number of stewards in the air plane
- (B) Whether it is possible for Cherico to improve the Dreamliner's fuel efficiency even further by restricting the amount of luggage passengers can carry
- (C) Whether Cherico can increase its revenues by charging for the meals it serves in its aircrafts
- (D) Whether the Dreamliner's maintenance costs will be substantially lower than those of Cherico's rivals' aircrafts
- (E) Whether it will be possible for Cherico's rivals to somehow get deliveries of their own Dreamliners expedited

Answer: E

Explanation

The whole argument is based on the assumption that Cherico's competitors will not be able to get the Dreamliner before 2014. If there was some way in which the competitors' could also get their hands on the Dreamliner earlier, then Cherico's competitive advantage will get neutralized. E mentions this point and is the correct answer.

- (A) It is possible that other airlines could also reduce the number of stewards in their airplanes. The argument is only concerned with the competitive advantage accruing due to the Dreamliner.
- (B) This may be an added advantage but the whole point of the argument is that the competitors will not be able to get their hands on the Dreamliner before 2014.
- (C) This has no bearing on the competitive advantage accruing due to the Dreamliner.
- (D) The argument clearly states that this will be the case so this basically repeats what is already stated in the argument.
- (E) The correct answer.
- 3. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

When mobile phone companies, used to reporting several million new customers in a month, do the opposite and report a sharp fall in that number, you know that the country's most dynamic industry has entered a new, more troubled phase. However, this statistic may not necessarily be as much of a cause for concern as it looks because

⁽A) mobile phone companies have huge cash reserves so they will not face the problem of cash flow for a few months at least

⁽B) inflated claims about new customer acquisition have been very much a part of the industry story so far

⁽C) the sales of mobile phone handsets hasn't fallen down appreciably

⁽D) other competitors have not entered the market in huge numbers

(E) mobile phone companies are making huge investments in widening their network coverage

Answer: B

Explanation:

We have to somehow show that the statistics are not a sign for worry. B does this best by stating that the original statistics were most likely inflated so the fall in numbers may not actually be as steep as it looks.

- (A) But what about after a few months? This would still be a worrying sign for the companies.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) There is no real connection between the sale of mobile phone handsets and how many subscribers join mobile phone companies every month.
- (D) If despite this fact the numbers are going down, then there must be some problem.
- (E) Irrelevant to the argument.
- 4. The prime principle of economics is that prices are determined by supply and demand, not by costs. Some products may cost 90 cents and sell for a dollar, while others go for a dollar yet cost only a cent to make. The second producer is neither a profiteer nor an exploiter, and the first producer is neither a benefactor nor a patron. Both producers merely respond to market signals based on supply and demand.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) How much it costs to manufacture a product is not the primary determinant of its selling price.
- (B) A product with a low manufacturing cost is more likely to succeed than a product with a high manufacturing cost.
- (C) A manufacturer who sells a product with a low manufacturing cost at a high price to the customer is deceiving the customer.
- (D) If a product costs a lot to manufacture then its manufacturer must ensure that he does not sell the product at a high price.
- (E) A manufacturer who uses manufacturing costs of a product as a basis to determine the selling price of the product is bound to fail.

Answer: A

Explanation

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at all the options and eliminate.

- (A) **The correct answer**. This can be clearly inferred from the first sentence of the stimulus.
- (B) This may not necessarily be true on the basis of the information in the stimulus.

- (C) The argument clearly says that this is not the case. As long there is demand for the product at that price, the manufacturer is doing no wrong in selling it at that price.
- (D) No such conclusion can be arrived at from the argument. If there is a high demand for the product, then it can be sold at a high price.
- (E) Extreme option. The manufacturer may or may not fail but doesn't necessarily have to fail.
- 5. The country has recently been shaken by the increase in incidents of corruption amongst the political class and the bureaucracy. The solution clearly is to appoint an independent investigating body headed by a person of repute who can investigate such cases of corruption and punish those found guilty.

The conclusion above would be more reasonably drawn if which of the following were inserted into the argument as an additional premise?

- (A) The appointment of the independent body is the only way to combat corruption.
- (B) The independent agency will itself not fall prey to corruption.
- (C) Corruption is not present outside the political class and the bureaucracy.
- (D) The punishment meted out by the investigating agency will not act as a deterrent for people/agencies susceptible to corruption.
- (E) If not controlled immediately, the problem of corruption can spiral out of control.

Answer: B

Explanation

The question is asking you to identify an additional premise that is not stated in the argument, which is the same as the assumption. So you basically need to identify the assumption in the argument. The assumption in the argument has to be the fact that the investigating agency or the person heading it will itself/himself not fall prey to corruption. B states this and is the correct answer.

- (A) This does not necessarily have to be the case. There could be other ways of fighting corruption but they are outside the scope of the argument.
- (B) The correct answer. If you negate this, the argument will fall apart.
- (C) This may or may not be true but doesn't have to be true for our conclusion to be true.
- (D) In fact the idea should be the opposite—that the punishment meted out would act as a deterrent for others.
- (E) This is a general statement and not the assumption of the argument.
- 6. Switzerland's national rail company has accused Apple of stealing the iconic look of its station clocks for Apple's new operating system. According to the rail company, both designs have a round clock face with black indicators except for the second hand, which is red.
 - Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument above?

- (A) Apple has never been accused of copying by any other person or organization in the past.
- (B) Apple is known the world over for its unique product designs.
- (C) The designer who created the watch design for Apple's operating system has never visited Switzerland or, for that matter, any other European country.
- (D) All round face clocks across the globe are created out of the same design philosophy.
- (E) The Switzerland National Rail Company has itself been accused in the past of copying the platform design of a neighbouring country's rail platform.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The Swiss rail Company has sued apple because of a similarity in the design of their respective clocks. D weakens this by suggesting that Apple may not have copied the design of the Swiss Rail Company. It's just that the source of design for the Rail Company and for Apple may have been the same.

- (A) Irrelevant since if something hasn't happened till now does not mean it will never happen in the future.
- (B) But there is clear evidence of similarity between Apple's design and that of the Swiss Rail company's.
- (C) The designer may have seen the photo of the design in a magazine or somewhere else.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) The fact that the Swiss Rail company has itself been accused of copying is irrelevant to the argument.
- 7. The Langova National park is a breeding ground for several migratory birds. Of late, the Spot-breasted Laughing Thrush, an extremely rare species of bird, has been sighted only in the Langova National park. The people who have sighted this bird in the park have claimed that it is possible to sight this bird only through the use of binoculars. Barry is visiting the Langova National Park next week and he will be carrying an extremely powerful pair of binoculars with him. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that, as long as Barry has his binoculars on him, he will most definitely manage to sight the Spot-breasted Laughing Thrush.

Which of the following indicates a flaw in the reasoning above?

- (A) It fails to take into account the possibility of sighting the Spot-breasted Laughing Thrush at places other than the Langova National Park.
- (B) It mistakes a necessary condition for a sufficient condition.
- (C) It is based on a series of assumptions, rather than on facts.
- (D) It does not take into account the possibility that Barry could lose or damage his binoculars on the way to the park.
- (E) It does not take into account the possibility that Barry may sight some other equally rare species of bird.

Explanation:

The argument states that the bird cannot be sighted without the use of binoculars so the use of binoculars is a necessary condition for sighting the bird. However, this does not mean that just because one has a pair of binoculars, he will be able to spot the bird. The argument never states that everyone with binoculars spots this bird but that everyone who spots the bird has binoculars. B states this point and is, therefore, the correct answer.

- (A) The argument is only concerned with the chances of spotting the bird inside the Langova National Park.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) The argument is in fact based on facts—it is a fact that people have spotted the bird using binoculars.
- (D) The argument clearly states that as long as Barry has his binoculars on him he will be able to spot the bird. If he loses or damages his binoculars, then it's outside the scope of the argument.
- (E) Other species of birds are outside the scope of the argument.
- 8. I do not agree that wage disparity still exists between men and women. Almost all salaried individuals today are paid based on their qualification and experience and not their sex. It is only the lower labour class where the disparity still exists, but this is justified because there are certain tasks requiring physical strength, such as carrying heavy construction material, that can only be performed by men.

If the above statements are true, which of the following is an example of wage disparity on the basis of gender?

- (A) A company pays its management trainees, most of whom are females and have just passed out from business schools, a lower salary than it pays to its senior partners, most of whom are males.
- (B) A male labourer who does not do any physically taxing work is paid a lower wage than a male labourer who does physically taxing work.
- (C) A female employee at a managerial level in a company gets a lower salary than a female employee who has joined the company as a trainee but whose uncle is a partner in the company.
- (D) A male labourer who does not do any physical work is paid a higher wage than a female labourer who does not do any physical work.
- (E) A male manager working for Company X gets paid a higher salary than does a female manager with similar experience working for Company Z

Answer: D

Explanation:

The argument concludes that wage disparities on the basis of gender do not exist anymore. It also provides an explanation for an apparent disparity in the wages of male and female labourers. D weakens the argument by stating that even though the male and female workers are not doing any physical labour, the male is still being paid higher wages.

- (A) The wage disparity is on the basis of experience or seniority and not gender. The gender is just a coincidence.
- (B) The comparison between two male labourers is irrelevant to the argument about gender disparity.
- (C) Again, the comparison between two female employees is irrelevant to the argument about gender disparity.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) While this may look good initially, it may very well be the case that the two companies in question have different wage standards. You can only do a correct comparison if you compare employees working for the same company.
- 9. The government has recently been severely criticized for its decision to block access to a few websites on which malicious information and photographs were being posted. The government has responded to this criticism by stating that while it believes in freedom of speech and expression, this was an emergency and in such situations, you have to cut off the source of the problem.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first describes a reaction to an action and the second describes an action taken in response to this reaction.
- (B) The first is a criticism that the argument disagrees with; the second is the point of view that the argument supports.
- (C) The first is the point of view of a group of people and the second attacks this point of view.
- (D) The first provides a counterpoint to the argument's conclusion; the second is that conclusion.
- (E) The first provides the criticism of an action and the second provides justification for the necessity of taking that action.

Answer: E

Explanation

The argument describes a criticism of an act of the government and the government's justification of the same. The first bold part describes why the government has been criticized and the second provides the government's explanation of the same.

- (A) While the first part is correct, the second is not an action taken in response to this. In fact the second bold part is not an action at all, it's just an explanation.
- (B) The argument never takes a stand on the issue so we don't know what it agrees or disagrees with.
- (C) The first is a criticism which cannot exactly be described as a point of view. Even if this were the case, the second just provides an explanation for this; it doesn't attack this.
- (D) The stimulus does not have any conclusion.
- (E) The correct answer.
- 10. There has been a sudden spurt in the cases of suicide amongst teenagers in Tango city. On investigation, a public interest group discovered that all of these teenagers had been listening to songs by an alternative rock group, The Demons, at the time of committing suicide. When the public interest group listened to the songs by this rock group, they were aghast to hear lyrics that encouraged people to kill themselves. Accordingly, the city mayor has decided to ban the sale and download of all alternative rock band albums in Tango city with immediate effect.

Which of the following, if true, would most strongly support the position above?

- (A) Songs with lyrics that encourage people to kill themselves can actually lead to people killing themselves.
- (B) Alternative rock groups other than The Demons also contain lyrics that encourage people to kill themselves
- (C) It is not required to impose a similar ban on movies containing large scale violence and bloodshed.
- (D) If people don't listen to songs by The Demons, they will not kill themselves.
- (E) It is the responsibility of a mayor to protect the citizens of his city.

Answer: B

Explanation:

There is a disconnect between the evidence and the conclusion in this argument. The evidence only talks about *The Demons* but the conclusion generalizes this for all alternative rock groups. The assumption then clearly has to be that what applies to *The Demons* will also necessarily apply to other alternative rock groups. If this is not so then the argument will get weakened. B states that this is indeed the case and, hence, strengthens the argument.

- (A) Doesn't affect the connection between *The Demons* and other alternative rock groups.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) Movies are outside the scope of the argument.
- (D) This is not relevant to the argument.

- E. What constitutes the mayor's responsibility is outside the scope of the argument.
- 11. Historical data for all the elections held in Gangnam City shows that all winning candidates have canvassed for at least 100 hours. In fact, candidates who have canvassed for fewer than 100 hours have never ever won. Out of all the candidates contesting in the upcoming elections in Gangnam City, Candidate A has canvassed for 120 hours, Candidate B has canvassed for 150 hours, and Candidate C has canvassed for 90 hours.

If the statements above are true, which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by them?

- (A) Candidate B will most likely win the election.
- (B) Candidate C will most likely lose the election.
- (C) The winner of the election will either be Candidate A or Candidate B.
- (D) The results of an election cannot be solely dependent on how many hours a candidate canvasses for.
- (E) If no other Candidate has canvassed for more than 150 hours, then Candidate B will win the election.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- (A) The argument never states that the candidate who canvasses for the maximum number of hours wins the election. The argument only states that the winning candidates always canvass for more than 100 hours, so A could also win the election.
- (B) **The correct answer**. This has to be true based on the information in the stimulus. Candidate C has canvassed for fewer than 100 hours and no one with such a track record has ever won the election, so it can be safely concluded that C will most likely lose the election. Note that *most likely* does not mean *definitely*.
- (C) The argument never states that A, B and C are the only candidates standing for the election; there could be other candidates as well who could have canvassed for more than 100 hours.
- (D) This can be a logical opinion but cannot be inferred from the information in the stimulus.
- (E) Again the stimulus never states that the candidate who canvasses for the maximum number of hours will win the election, so this inference need not be true.
- 12. Most people erroneously believe that airplanes are dangerous modes of transport. Statistics clearly reveal that more people are killed every year in road accidents than in air crashes. So traveling by airplanes is in fact safer than traveling by a car or a bus.
 - Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the above explanation?

- (A) Airlines across the globe spend significant amounts of money every year on adding new safety features to their airplanes.
- (B) There is no country in the world in which the number of people killed in air crashes exceeds the number of people killed in road accidents.
- (C) In a recently conducted survey by an independent agency, a majority of the respondents stated that they felt safer while traveling by air than while traveling by road.
- (D) The number of people who travel by airplanes every year is roughly equal to the number of people who travel by road.
- (E) The technology used in modern aircrafts is much more sophisticated than that used in most forms of road transport.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The argument states that in absolute terms, more people are killed in road accidents every year than in airplane crashes. So the argument concludes that traveling by air is safer than traveling by road. However this can only be the case if the number of people traveling by airplanes were the same as the number of people traveling by road. D states this and is the correct answer

For example say 500 people die in plane crashes every year and 10000 people in road accidents. But what if only 1000 people travel by planes every year while 100000 travel by road. Then 50% of the people traveling by air die every year as against 10% of those traveling by road.

- (A) Just because airlines spend a certain amount of money on safety does not necessarily mean that they are safer than road transport.
- (B) This may very well be true but can only be judged in light of how many people travel by airlines and by road every year.
- (C) The perception of travelers is extra information. We need to strengthen the connection between the evidence provided in the argument and its conclusion.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) Sophisticated technology does not necessarily make airplanes safer than road transport.

SECTION 3 Basics of Critical Reasoning

Basics of Critical Reasoning

Every Critical Reasoning question that you see on the GMAT will have three parts to it:

- 1. **The Stimulus:** This is the main body of the argument.
- 2. The Question Stem: This is the one or two lines below the stimulus that actually tell you what you need to do-find the assumption, strengthen, weaken, etc. In Provide a Logical Conclusion question type, this tends to be above the stimulus.
- 3. The Answer choices—Each question will have five answer choices from which you will need to identify the correct one.

The stimulus will usually appear in two forms—as an argument or as several statements of facts. To understand the difference between the two, let's look at what makes up an argument. Most arguments will have the following three parts—Conclusion, Evidence, and Assumption.

Conclusion, Evidence, and Assumption

Let's try to understand these terms with an example:

People don't like to visit the Evergreen Wildlife Park in the rainy season. This year, the park authorities have reconstructed all the roads inside the park. Therefore, people will like to visit the Evergreen Wildlife Park in the rainy reason this year.

Conclusion

This is the point of the argument and answers the question What, that is, what is the argument basically stating—that people would like to visit the Evergreen Wildlife Park in the rainy season this year.

Conclusions usually follow signalling words such as thus, so, hence, therefore, etc. In case there are no such words in the argument, try to paraphrase the entire argument in one line. This line would almost always be the conclusion of the argument.

Evidence

While the Conclusion tells you What the argument is saying, the Evidence tells you Why the argument is concluding what it is concluding. In the above argument, why does the author conclude that people will like to visit the Evergreen Wildlife Park this year? Because the park authorities have reconstructed all the roads inside the park. So, this becomes your evidence.

Evidence usually follows signalling words such as because, since, as a result of, etc.

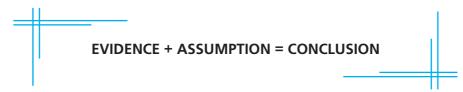
Thus, the conclusion tells you the what of the argument and the evidence tells you the why of the argument. Another way of looking at conclusion and evidence is that a conclusion will almost always be an opinion whereas the evidence will almost always be a fact. In the above argument, it is a fact that the roads inside the park have been reconstructed but it is the author's opinion that people will like to visit the park this year.

Assumption

Let's take another look at the above argument. You may now realize that, from the given evidence, we cannot necessarily arrive at the stated conclusion. The argument only states that people don't like to visit the Evergreen Wildlife Park during the rainy season; it never states why people don't like to do so. So the author *assumes* that the only reason people don't like to visit the park in the rainy season is the poor condition of the roads within the park. If this is not assumed then the argument will fall apart.

For example, if the real reason why people do not visit the Evergreen Wildlife Park during the rainy season was the fact that it was impossible to see animals during this season, then even if the roads were made of velvet, people would not visit the park because bad roads was not the reason for people not visiting the park in the first place. Therefore, for the author to conclude that people will want to visit the park this year, he has to assume that the only reason people did not visit the park earlier was the poor condition of the roads inside the park.

So, now that you know what components make up an argument, let's look at the relation among these. All arguments will have the following structure:



You can think of the assumption as unstated evidence or as a bridge between the evidence and the conclusion. If this bridge collapses, then you cannot arrive at the conclusion from the given evidence.

Here, it is very important to note that the assumption is always *unstated* evidence, that is, it will never be written in the argument. It has to be assumed in the mind. So, in a *find an assumption* question, if one of the options restates what is already mentioned in the argument, then this cannot be the assumption.

To summarize, with reference to the argument we saw earlier:

The Conclusion: People would like to visit the Evergreen Wildlife Park in the rainy season this year.

The Evidence: The park authorities have reconstructed the roads within the park.

The Assumption: The only reason people did not visit the Evergreen National park in the rainy season was the poor condition of the roads within the park.

One mistake students make is to assume that the last sentence of an argument will always be the conclusion. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The conclusion can be at the beginning of the argument, in the middle of the argument, or at the end of the argument.

Argument with Conclusion at the Beginning:

The Wind Wane project is an excellent one for Sihora County. The project will generate employment for the local population and also provide the residents with energy at low costs. In addition, it will also lead to the opening up of new schools and colleges in Sihora County.

Argument with Conclusion in the Middle:

The Wind Wane project will generate employment for the local population in Sihora County and also provide the residents with energy at low costs. Thus, the Wind Wane project is an excellent one for Sihora County. In addition, the project will also lead to the opening up of new schools and colleges in Sihora County.

Argument with Conclusion at the End:

The Wind Wane project will generate employment for the local population in Sihora County and also provide the residents with energy at low costs. In addition, it will also lead to the opening up of new schools and colleges in Sihora County. Thus, the Wind Wane project is an excellent one for Sihora County.

If the conclusion can be anywhere in an argument, how do you identify it? The answer is simple—by applying the What and Why method we discussed earlier.

What is the author saying (Conclusion)

The Wind Wane project is an excellent one for Sihora County.

Why is the author saying so (Evidence)

Because the Wind Wane project will generate employment for the local population in Sihora County, provide them with energy at low costs, and also lead to the opening up of new schools and colleges in Sihora County.

So, there you have your conclusion and evidence. The What and Why method is especially useful because it will actually force you to understand the meaning of the argument as a whole.

Stimulus with a Set of Facts

As stated earlier, some question stimulus' will contain arguments but some may just contain statements of facts without any conclusion.

For example:

The sale of automobiles in Vino city has increased by more than 100% in the last one year. Out of this increase, more than 70% are Multi utility vehicles and Sports utility vehicles. Hatchbacks comprise the remaining 30% of the increase.

As you can see, the above stimulus just gives you some facts without arriving at any conclusion as such.

So, a stimulus can be in the form of an argument or it may just comprise a set of facts. This will to a large extent be determined by the question type that you get. For example, in a Find the Assumption question the stimulus will always be in the form of an argument and in an Explain the Contradiction question the stimulus will almost always contain facts.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing the importance of Comprehension on GMAT Critical Reasoning.

Initial Steps to Approach Critical Reasoning Questions on the GMAT

- Always start by reading the stimulus. Some students prefer reading the question stem first but
 to us it's a waste of time because you'll read the question stem, then read the stimulus, and then
 read the question stem again.
- **Read the stimulus critically**. Pay attention to every word. In the end, summarize everything in your own words. If the stimulus is in the form of an argument, be clear on *What* the stimulus is stating and *Why* it is stating so.
- Read the Question stem and use the strategy to tackle that particular question type, as described in the subsequent chapters of this book.
- Take an average of two minutes to answer each Critical Reasoning question. This is an average
 figure, so some questions may take you longer and some may be completed in less than two
 minutes.

To Sum it up

- Assumption + Evidence = Conclusion
- Conclusion
 - o Gives the answer to *What* the author is saying
 - Almost always an opinion
- Evidence
 - o Gives the answer to Why the author is saying what he is saying
 - Almost always contains facts
- Assumption
 - Is unstated evidence
 - Must be true for the argument to be true
- Approach to Critical Reasoning
 - Start by reading the stimulus and not the question stem
 - Read the stimulus critically and summarize in your own words
 - o Read the Question stem and use the strategy to tackle that particular question type
 - o Take an average of two minutes to answer each CR question

SECTION 4 Critical Reasoning Question Types

The CR questions tested on the GMAT can be broadly divided into the following types:

GMAT Critical Reasoning Question Types

- 1. Find the Assumption Questions
- 2. Useful to know/evaluate the Argument Questions
- 3. Strengthen the Argument Questions
- 4. Weaken the Argument Questions
- 5. Identify the Flaw Questions
 - a. Vulnerable to the objection/criticism Questions
- 6. Inference Questions
 - a. Must be true Questions
- 7. Explain the Paradox Questions
- 8. Provide a Logical Conclusion Questions
- 9. Miscellaneous Questions
 - a. Bold Face Questions
 - b. Main Point Questions
 - c. Parallel Reasoning Questions

We will take a look at each of these question types in detail over the next few chapters.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining the two major groups that each of the above question types can be divided into.

4.1 Find the Assumption Questions

Assumption Questions

Assumption is the most important of all the Critical Reasoning concepts/question types. This is because assumption will give you the answer to five question types—Find the Assumption questions (but of course), Evaluate the argument questions, Strengthen questions, Weaken questions, and Flaw questions. We will see the connection between assumptions and each of these question types in subsequent chapters but first let's take a look at assumption itself.

As we discussed in the previous chapter, an assumption is basically the unstated evidence that must be true for the argument's conclusion to be true. The most important thing to keep in mind while trying to arrive at the assumption is that the author's conclusion is true, even if it is the most absurd of conclusions. A lot of the times the problem students face is that they end up questioning the logic or validity of the author's argument. Set aside that thought process for Weaken or Flaw questions. For Assumption questions, you must take the author's conclusion to be absolutely one hundred percent true.

Therefore, if the author concludes that aliens will arrive next week then you must agree with this fact; only then will you be able to arrive at the assumption correctly. For example, in this case, one assumption may be that the shiny object in the sky is a space ship commanded by aliens. While it is extremely unlikely that the GMAT will give you such an *outlandish* argument, the reason we picked such an extreme argument is to drive home the point that whatever the author states has to be taken as the unquestioned truth. **Never question the conclusion**; instead focus your energies on identifying what else needs to be true for the author's conclusion to be true and you would have arrived at the assumption.

Let us take a look at an example:

Over the past six years, most of the students in Tupac city have regularly attended colleges in the neighbouring Mekon city to pursue their graduate degrees. However, according to a recent change in the education policies of Mekon city, the colleges in Mekon city are expected to increase their fees to almost the same level as those charged by colleges in Tupac city. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that colleges in Tupac city will see a surge in the number of students enrolling with them to pursue their graduate degrees.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) The teachers at colleges in Mekon city are generally considered better than those at colleges in Tupac city.
- (B) Tupac city does not have good quality colleges.
- (C) The low fees charged by colleges at Mekon city is the primary reason why students from Tupac city move to these colleges.
- (D) Students who study at colleges in Tupac city do not perform better than those who study at colleges in Mekon city.
- (E) Mekon city does not have more colleges than Tupac city.

Always start an assumption question by paraphrasing the conclusion and the evidence.

Conclusion (What is the author saying): There will be a surge in the enrolments at colleges in Tupac city.

Evidence (why is the author saying this): Students in Tupac city who earlier used to move to Mekon city to pursue their graduate degrees will now not do so as the colleges in Mekon city will charge them the same fees as the colleges in Tupac city do.

Note that the **conclusion** is an **opinion** of the author but the **evidence** is a **fact**—the colleges in Mekon city are definitely looking at increasing their fees.

The Importance of Predicting the Assumption

On assumption questions, it always helps if you already have a rough answer in mind before you look at the options as this can prevent you from getting confused between or among very close choices.

For example, given the above conclusion and evidence, in order to arrive at the conclusion from the given evidence, what must the author of the argument be assuming?

The author must be assuming that the low fees charged by colleges in Mekon city is the single most important factor why students from Tupac city have been moving to colleges in Mekon city. If we don't assume this, the argument will fall apart.

For example, if students have been shifting to Mekon city because the teachers in Mekon city are better than those at Tupac city then, even if the fees at the colleges in Mekon City go up, students will keep on moving to Mekon city because the reason for the shift is the better quality of teachers.

So, for the author's conclusion to be true, he has to assume that the only reason students have been shifting to colleges in Mekon city is the low fees charged by colleges in Mekon city. Option C states this best and, hence, is the correct answer.

However, just to get more clarity, let's take a look at the other options as well:

- (A) This fact actually weakens the argument because in this case the students will keep on shifting to colleges in Mekon City.
- (B) Quality of colleges is outside the scope of the argument because the argument is only concerned with the fees charged by colleges. In fact, just like option A, B could also weaken the argument by suggesting that lower fees is not the reason why students have been moving to colleges in Mekon city.
- (C)The correct answer.
- (D) This may or may not be the case but doesn't have to be the case for the author's conclusion to be true.
- (E) The number of colleges in each city is of no consequence to the argument.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining how to predict the assumption using an official GMAT question.

The Denial/Negation Rule for Assumption Questions

On **Assumption Questions**, in case you are confused between two or more answer choices, an effective way to eliminate incorrect choices is by applying the **Negation Rule** to the answer choices. The Negation or Denial rule is based on the principle that the assumption has to be true for the argument's conclusion to be true. As a corollary to this, if the assumption is denied or negated, then the argument must fall apart.

Hence, under the Negation rule, all you do is try to deny or negate each answer choice and check whether the argument's conclusion can still be true. If it can be true then this option is not the assumption. Likewise, if denying an answer choice makes the conclusion fall apart then this option has to be the assumption.

Let's try the denial rule with each of the answer choices in the Tupac city vs. Mekon city question discussed above:

- (A) The teachers at colleges in Mekon city are generally NOT considered better than those at colleges in Tupac city.
 - Negating this option does not help in any way because the argument is never about the quality of teachers in the first place. In its original wording, this option was weakening the argument, now it is not doing anything.
- (B) Tupac city does not have good quality colleges.
 - Since this option already contains the word *not*, the ideal way to negate this is to remove the *not*. Again, this does not explain why students have been shifting in the first place and quality of colleges is never the issue anyway.
- (C) The low fees charged by colleges at Mekon city is NOT the primary reason why students from Tupac city move to these colleges.
 - Negating this option definitely makes the argument fall apart because in this case the students will keep on shifting to colleges in Mekon City even after the increase in fees. Then, there will be no surge in enrolments at colleges in Tupac city. So, this option has to be the assumption.
- (D) Students who study at colleges in Tupac city do not perform better than those who study at colleges in Mekon city.
 - Again strike out the *do not* from this option to negate it. Like option B, if this were to be the case then the students wouldn't have been shifting from Tupac city to Mekon city in the first place
- (E) Mekon city does not have more colleges than Tupac city.
 - The number of colleges in either city is of no consequence to our argument.

So, you can see that the denial or negation rule can come in very handy when you are confused between answer choices. However, *don't apply this rule on all the five answer choices* and waste your time. Two or three options can usually be eliminated easily; apply this rule to the remaining options and only if you are confused between them.



Scan this QR code to watch a video showing how the Negation Rule works in practice.

Active and Passive Assumptions

Active Assumptions are those assumptions that actively support the argument. These are the assumptions you come up with when you are trying to predict an assumption. Active assumptions must be true for the argument to be true.

However, do notice the fact that the moment you assume that something must be true in an argument, you automatically assume that the other possibilities must NOT be true. It is these other possibilities that we call **Passive Assumptions**.

For example, in the Tupac city vs. Mekon city argument discussed earlier, the moment the author assumes that the primary reason students have been moving to colleges in Mekon city is the low fees charged by these colleges, he automatically assumes that other factors (such as better quality of teachers or better infrastructure) cannot be the reason for this shift. So, the following can also be assumptions in that argument:

- The better quality of teachers at colleges in Mekon city is *not* the primary reason why students have been shifting to colleges in Mekon city.
- The better infrastructure at colleges in Mekon city is *not* the primary reason why students have been shifting to colleges in Mekon city.
- The large number of clubs and entertainment centres in Mekon city is *not* the primary reason why students have been shifting to colleges in Mekon city.

Notice that denying any of the above assumptions will make the original argument fall apart.

As you can see, we can keep on making as many passive assumptions as we want. This is the biggest difference between active and passive assumptions. There can only be one active assumption in an argument but there can be several passive assumptions. This is precisely the reason that you cannot predict a passive assumption whereas you can predict an active assumption.

You may have noticed that all the passive assumptions written above contain the word *not*. This is the best way to identify passive assumptions since by definition they will always contain some negating word, most often not.

Let's look at one final example to understand active and passive assumptions.

It takes four hours to cover the distance between Aston and Torin cities by bus. John has boarded a bus at Aston city that is scheduled to depart for Torin city at 10:00 a.m. If the bus departs on time, John will reach Torin city well in time to attend his interview scheduled for 4:00 pm that afternoon.

Active Assumption: The bus will not get delayed on the way from Aston to Torin.

Passive Assumptions:

- The bus will not have a flat tire or all four flat tires.
- The bus will not be struck by lightning.
- The bus will not be attacked by gunmen.
- The bus driver will not decide to go to some other city, etc.

So the active assumption gives you one general assumption while the passive assumption gives you several, each of which refutes the possibility of the active assumption not being true.

Do not get unnecessarily confused between active and passive assumptions since, on the GMAT, nobody will ask you to distinguish between or identify the two. Just know that there is something like a passive assumption so that when you see it on a question you don't end up eliminating it immediately.

Now, let us try another question:

Eating unhygienic food always results in cases of stomach infection or food poisoning. Dominic is currently suffering from food poisoning, so he must have eaten unhygienic food in the last few days.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) Eating unhygienic food will most definitely lead to food poisoning.
- (B) Dominic does not have a weak immune system that makes him prone to food poisoning.
- (C) Dominic can identify the difference between hygienic and unhygienic food.
- (D) Eating unhygienic food is the only way to get food poisoning.
- (E) Unhygienic food contains harmful bacteria and other pathogens that lead to food poisoning.

The Conclusion

Dominic must have eaten unhygienic food in the last few days.

The Evidence

Eating unhygienic food always leads to food poisoning and Dominic is currently suffering from food poisoning.

The Assumption

The argument states that eating unhygienic food will always lead to a person getting food poisoning.

There can be no question about this fact since this is given to us as evidence. However, the argument never states that this is the *only* way to get food poisoning. There could also be other ways of getting food poisoning such as drinking impure water or eating hygienic food with dirty hands.

Therefore, for the author's conclusion to be true, he has to assume that the only way to contract food poisoning is by consuming unhygienic food. D states this best and should be the correct answer.

Let's look at the other options as well:

- (A) This is clearly stated in the argument so cannot be the assumption. In fact, this is part of the evidence. Remember that an assumption will never be stated in the argument; it is always assumed.
- (B) This option is a trap because it has been worded in the form of a passive assumption (notice the use of the word *not*). However, even if Dominic does have a weak immune system, he may still have contracted food poisoning from some source other than unhygienic food.
- (C) Whether Dominic is able to identify the difference is irrelevant. In fact, it is possible that he could not identify the difference, which is why he ended up having unhygienic food in the first place.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) How unhygienic food leads to food poisoning is not the concern of the argument.

The Following can be Passive Assumptions in the Argument:

- Drinking impure water cannot lead to food poisoning, (because if it can then maybe this is how Dominic contracted food poisoning and not by consuming unhygienic food)
- Eating with dirty hands cannot lead to food poisoning, (because if it can then maybe this is how Dominic contracted food poisoning and not by consuming unhygienic food)



Scan this QR code to watch a video describing Passive Assumptions in detail.

The Wording of Assumption Questions

Assumption questions most often directly ask you to identify the assumption in the argument. However, sometimes they can be worded in the form of *must be true* questions.

Here is an example:

Which of the following must be true for the above argument to be true?

This shouldn't come as a surprise because conceptually an assumption must be true for an argument to be valid.

You'll see a variation of this 'must be true' question when we discuss *Inference Questions* later in this book.

How to Approach Assumption Questions

- 1. Read the argument and be clear on the evidence and the conclusion.
- 2. Know that, since this is an assumption question, there has to be some piece of evidence missing from the argument.
- 3. Try to **predict this missing piece of evidence**. In a *Find the Assumption* question, you must try to have an answer in mind before you look at the options.
- 4. **Eliminate two or three options** that look definitely incorrect. Possible wrong answer choices can be those that are outside the scope of the argument, that repeat what is stated in the argument, or that can be inferred from the argument.
- 5. If stuck between two or more options try the **denial or negation rule**.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the GMAT Official Guide

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(OG 2018 – Q 555, 580, 584, 590, 607, 608, 614, 628, 635, 637, 645, 650, 655, 657)
(OG 2017 – Q 552, 581, 585, 590, 607, 608, 616, 628, 635, 642, 650, 657)
(OG 2016 – Q 8, 37, 40, 41, 47, 49, 52, 70, 84, 90, 95, 101, 109, 114, 116)
(OG VR 2018 – Q 119, 144, 156, 166, 172, 180, 184)
(OG VR 2017 – Q 121, 153, 161, 174, 181, 184)
(OG VR 2016 – Q 17, 32, 57, 69, 75, 76, 80)
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To Sum it up

- Assumption will never be written in the argument
- Never question the argument's conclusion, however absurd
- Always predict the assumption before looking at the answer choice
- Try the Denial/Negation Rule if confused between answer choices
- Active Assumptions
 - Actively support the argument
 - Can be pre-phrased or predicted in advance
- Passive Assumptions
 - Cannot be predicted because there can be several in an argument
 - Always use some negating word such as *not*
- Assumption Questions can also be worded as must be true questions

4.2 Evaluate the Argument Questions

Evaluate the Argument Questions

Evaluate the Argument questions will ask you to identify the option that can best help you verify whether what is stated in the argument is true or not. Since all arguments contain assumptions, the only way to evaluate an argument is to verify whether its assumption is true or false. If the assumption is true, then the argument is definitely logical; otherwise, it is not.

So, in an Evaluate the Argument question, you are still being tested on Assumptions, though in an indirect manner.

Let's look at an example:

A recent nationwide survey of dementia patients revealed an interesting fact—almost all of the patients surveyed were more than 70 years of age and watched more than six hours of television every day. So, in order to avoid getting afflicted with dementia, people who are more than 70 years of age should not watch more than six hours of television in a day.

Which of the following would be most useful to determine in order to evaluate the argument?

- (A) Whether people less than 70 years of age can also get afflicted with dementia
- (B) Whether there are some visible symptoms of dementia, thereby making it easier to identify such cases
- (C) Whether being afflicted with dementia makes people want to watch more television
- (D) Whether regular therapy and medicines can reverse the onset of dementia
- (E) Whether there can be some other cause of dementia, apart from watching more than six hours of television every day

Since the stimulus is in the form of an argument, let's break it down into its components.

Conclusion (What is the author saying)

People who are more than 70 years of age should avoid watching more than six hours of television in one day.

Evidence (Why is the author saying this)

According to the results of a survey, most dementia patients were more than 70 years of age and watched more than six hours of television every day.

Thus, the study basically concludes that the presence of two things together (dementia and watching more than six hours of television every day) implies that one is the cause of the other.

However, it is also possible that this may just be a coincidence and that there actually could be some other cause of dementia. Or, it is also possible that being afflicted with dementia makes people want

to watch more than six hours of television every day. Getting the answer to these questions will help us evaluate the argument.

Do notice that both of the scenarios mentioned above are actually assumptions in the argument so, in order to evaluate the argument, all you need is to identify whether the assumption being made in the argument will be true or not.

Assumption (The unstated premise)

There can be two assumptions in this argument—first that the correlation described in the stimulus is actually a cause and effect relation and second, that even if this correlation is indeed a cause and effect relation, it is watching TV that is the cause of dementia and not vice versa, that is, dementia is not the cause and watching TV the effect. C states the second assumption and should be the correct answer.

Let's also look at the other answer choices for more clarity:

- (A) The question is not the age at which people get dementia but whether there is a causal link between watching television and getting afflicted with dementia.
- (B) Again, the symptoms of dementia are irrelevant to the connection between dementia and watching television for a certain number of hours.
- (C) The correct answer. If true, this fact will strengthen the argument and, if false, it will weaken the argument.
- (D) The cure for dementia is not relevant to the argument.
- (E) This doesn't help us ascertain whether there is a causal link between watching television and getting afflicted with dementia.

In this way, Evaluate the argument questions will ask you to check whether the assumption in the argument is true or not. The options for these questions will usually either be in the form of questions or will start with the word whether. The correct answer will be the option that will strengthen the argument one way and weaken it the other way.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining a simple trick you can use to decide whether you have arrived at the correct answer to an Evaluate question.

Now, let's try this question:

Company X and Company Y are in the business of manufacturing memory cards. Company X sells twice as many memory cards as does Company Y and Company X also has fewer employees than Company Y does. So Company X must be making more profits than Company Y.

Which of the following options best helps to evaluate the argument?

- (A) Whether there are any other companies that manufacture memory cards in addition to Company X and Company Y.
- (B) Whether both the companies pay similar average salaries to their employees.
- (C) Whether Company X will be able to sustain its high sales in the future.
- (D) Whether the memory cards of the two companies have similar storage capacities.
- (E) Whether Company X is likely to hire more employees in the near future

The Conclusion

Company X must be making more profits than Company Y.

The Evidence

Company X sells many more memory cards than does Company Y. Also, Company X has fewer employees (so, its overall salary cost will be lower than that for Company Y).

The Assumption

For this question, one can come up with several assumptions as follows:

- The selling price of the memory cards of the two companies is the same.
- The salaries that the two companies pay to their employees is the same.
- Company X does not incur any extra expenditure on advertising, sales promotion, etc.

So the knowledge of any of the above listed points will make it easier for us to evaluate the given argument. B points out one of these (the average salaries at the two companies) and should be the correct answer.

Let's also look at the other options:

- (A) The conclusion only talks about the relative position of Company X with reference to Company Y. The existence of other companies (who could be better or worse than these two) is irrelevant.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) The conclusion talks about the present so what may happen in the future is irrelevant.
- (D) The storage capacities of the memory cards do not matter because the final sales figure will not change because of this fact.
- (E) Like option C, the conclusion talks about the present, so what may happen in the future is irrelevant.

How to Approach Evaluate the Argument Questions

1. **Read the argument** and be clear on the evidence and the conclusion.

- 2. Know that an Evaluate the Argument question is indirectly asking you to identify the assumption, so try to **predict this assumption**. You may be able to come up with several of them.
- 3. Look at each option and eliminate. Remember that the correct answer will strengthen the argument one way and weaken the argument the other way.



Scan the QR code below to watch a video tackling a difficult Evaluate the Argument question from the OG 2016.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the GMAT Official Guide

(OG 2018 – Q 554, 559, 571, 573, 579, 585, 632, 636, 638, 643, 644, 663) (OG 2017 - Q 553, 558, 570, 579, 586, 631, 632, 634, 637, 641, 662) (OG 2016 – Q 9, 15, 27, 35, 42, 56, 86, 87, 89, 92, 100, 120) (OG VR 2018 - O 111, 120, 146, 149, 162, 163, 178) (OG VR 2017 - Q 117, 150, 155, 178) (OG VR 2016 - Q 8, 46, 52, 61, 73)

To Sum it up

- Stimulus will be in the form of an Argument
- Will indirectly require you to identify the Assumption
- The correct option will strengthen the argument one way and weaken the argument the other way
- Answer choices usually start with the word whether or are worded in the form of a question

4.3 Strengthen the **Argument Questions**

Strengthen Questions

Strengthen Questions, as the name suggests, will require you to strengthen whatever it is that an argument is stating. However, do keep in mind that strengthen does not mean to confirm an argument. Even if an option can provide a small point in favour of the argument, it is strengthening the argument. Similarly, even if an option can remove a small doubt from your mind about the argument, it is again strengthening the argument.

Notice that to strengthen an argument, it is imperative that the stimulus have a conclusion. So strengthen questions will always contain a stimulus that is in the form of an argument.

Let us take a look at an example:

Of all the laptops available for sale in Ireland, those manufactured by Ivy Infotech must have the fastest processors. Over the last six months, Ivy Infotech has sold three times as many laptops as its closest competitor. Additionally, Ivy Infotech's order books are full for the next 12 months.

Which of the following options, if true, most strengthens the argument?

- (A) Ivy Infotech is the oldest manufacturer of laptops in Ireland.
- (B) Ivy Infotech has the largest market share in laptop sales in Ireland for the past five years.
- (C) Ivy Infotech sources its processors from the company which is the world's biggest manufacturer of laptop processors.
- (D) All the laptops available for sale in Ireland are same in every aspect except for their processors.
- (E) The Irish populace prefers laptops with faster processors.

Since this is a strengthen question, you know that the stimulus will be worded in the form of an argument. So, the first step is to identify the conclusion and the evidence of this argument.

Conclusion (What is the argument stating)

Laptops manufactured by Ivy Infotech have the fastest processors.

Evidence (Why is the argument stating this)

Ivy Infotech has sold the maximum number of laptops in the last six months in Ireland.

But does this make sense? Can't there be some other plausible reason why the people in Ireland are buying Ivy Infotech's laptops?

Maybe these laptops have a very sleek design, maybe they have a very long battery life, or maybe they are the cheapest laptops in the market. There can be several other reasons (other than faster processors) why the Irish are buying laptops manufactured by Ivy Infotech. This brings us to the assumption. Remember that since the stimulus is in the form of an argument, it must contain an assumption.

Assumption (the unstated evidence)

So let's try to predict the assumption. It could be something on the lines of 'the only difference among the different laptops available in Ireland is the speed of the processor; the laptops are the

same in every other aspect', because in that case if the Irish are still buying Ivy Infotech's laptops then these laptops must have the fastest processors, else people would be buying some other company's laptops.

Strengthener

So, now that we have identified the conclusion, the evidence, and the assumption, the option that best tells us that the assumption is true has to **strengthen** the argument. **D** does this best and should be the correct answer.

For clarity, let's also take a look at the other options:

- (A) The argument is only concerned with processor speeds accounting for high sales. It has got nothing to do with how old a company is.
- (B) Again this option doesn't tell us why Ivy Infotech has the largest market share. Is it the processor speed or some other reason?
- (C) Very well; but it is possible that the other competitors of Ivy Infotech also source their processors from this same company.
- (D) The correct answer. If the only difference among the laptops is the processor speed and if people are still buying laptops manufactured by Ivy Infotech, then these laptops must have the fastest processors.
- (E) The option uses the word *prefers* which doesn't tell you anything. You could prefer flying by a private jet to flying by a commercial airline but you mostly still have to fly by a commercial airline. So the Irish could prefer laptops with faster chips but might buy some other laptop which has a slightly slower processor but a much longer battery life or which costs much less.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing what not to do with the GMAT Official Guide.

Strengtheners and Assumptions

Did you notice something interesting in the above question—the correct answer is almost a paraphrase of the assumption that we had predicted earlier, that is, the strengthener is the same as the assumption. If you think about it conceptually, this has to be the case. An assumption is unstated evidence that strengthens an argument so if this unstated evidence is stated in the form of an option, then it will obviously strengthen the argument. Therefore, a strengthener will either be the assumption itself or it will supply some evidence that will make it more likely for the assumption to be true.

Thus, the answer to a strengthen question will, a lot of the times, be the assumption, though you may not consciously realize this all the time.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining how Strengthen questions connect with the Assumption.

Active and Passive Strengtheners

Since strengtheners follow from the assumption, it is obvious that, just like we had active and passive assumptions, we'll also have active and passive strengtheners. An active strengthener will give you a positive point, that is, a point in favour of the argument whereas a passive strengthener will remove one or more of the negative points from the argument.

The following can be some passive strengtheners for the Ivy Infotech example:

- Sleek design is not the reason why the Irish are buying Ivy Infotech's laptops.
- A longer battery life is not the reason why the Irish are buying Ivy Infotech's laptops.
- The fact that Ivy Infotech's laptops are the cheapest laptops available in the market is not the reason why the Irish are buying Ivy Infotech's laptops.

Notice that all these passive strengtheners again use the word *not*, just like the passive assumptions did

So a passive strengthener, in essence, removes a doubt from your mind about the argument whereas an active strengthener gives you some supporting point in favor of the argument.

Always Strengthen the Connection Between the Evidence and the Conclusion

While strengthen questions are generally easy, there is one folly that you must guard against—you must, at all times, try to strengthen the connection between the evidence and the conclusion. **Never strengthen the conclusion in isolation** (even if the argument asks you to strengthen the conclusion).

I read in the newspaper this morning that in the last one month, 20 children have been kidnapped in Sodham County, when they stepped out of their house alone at night. So, I conclude that if you are a child staying in Sodham County, it is unsafe for you to step out alone at night.

Which of the following two options strengthens my argument?

- 1. I read this article in a newspaper that is known for its honest and credible reporting.
- 2. Two child kidnappers, who have recently been released from prison, have been seen loitering around in Sodham County at night over the last month.

While a lot of you may have gone with option two as the correct answer, it is in fact incorrect. Why

am I concluding that if you are a child in Sodham County, it is unsafe for you to step out alone at night? Not because I know something about the child kidnappers, but because I read something in the newspapers.

Another person could very well come and tell me that the newspaper is known for false reporting and for sensationalizing things, facts which would weaken my argument. The opposite facts, as stated in option one, will then obviously strengthen my argument because my evidence is the newspaper article.

So, the takeaway is that you always try to strengthen the link between the evidence and the **conclusion**. The evidence is there for a purpose and you must make use of it.

How to Approach Strengthen Questions

- 1. **Read the argument** and be clear on the evidence and the conclusion.
- 2. Try to **predict the assumption** because the strengthener will, in some way, be linked to this.
- 3. Go through the options and eliminate those that weaken the argument or that are otherwise outside the scope of the argument.
- 4. Remember to take into consideration the evidence as well—don't just strengthen the conclusion in isolation.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining the one mistake you should never make in Strengthen or Weaken the argument questions.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the **GMAT Official Guide**

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(OG 2018 – Q 545, 547, 548, 552, 562, 566, 569, 570, 572, 576,
589, 592, 594, 595, 597, 598, 602, 604, 610, 611, 624, 631, 641,
                           648, 649)
(OG 2017 - Q 545, 546, 547, 550, 560, 564, 568, 571, 575, 592,
594, 595, 598, 599, 602, 604, 610, 612, 626, 647, 649, 656, 660)
 (OG 2016 – O 2, 3, 5, 17, 19, 21, 24, 25, 31, 36, 55, 57, 60, 61,
          62, 65, 67, 83, 94, 104, 106, 108, 115, 119)
(OG VR 2018 – Q 106, 110, 112, 115, 121, 138, 139, 140, 142,
              155, 158, 167, 170, 175, 181, 188)
(OG VR 2017 - Q 106, 112, 116, 141, 142, 143, 145, 149, 160,
                    168, 171, 179, 182, 188)
(OG VR 2016 - Q 4, 7, 13, 18, 31, 37, 38, 39, 41, 44, 51, 56, 58,
                       63, 67, 74, 77, 78)
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To Sum it up

- The stimulus will always be in the form of an argument
- A strengthener will make it more likely for the conclusion to be arrived at from the evidence
- Never strengthen just the conclusion in isolation. Always strengthen the link between the evidence and the conclusion
- A lot of the times the answer to a Strengthen Question is the Assumption itself
- Active strengtheners provide a point in favor of the argument
- Passive strengtheners remove a doubt about the argument

4.4 Weaken the **Argument Questions**

Weaken Questions

Weaken Questions, as the name suggests, will require you to weaken or raise doubts about whatever it is that an argument is stating. In that sense, these are the exact opposite of Strengthen questions that you saw in the previous chapter.

Do keep in mind that **weaken does not mean to negate an argument**. Even if an option can raise a small doubt in your mind about the validity of the argument, it is weakening the argument. Similarly if an option removes a strengthener from an argument, it is again weakening the argument.

Notice that to weaken a stimulus, it is imperative that the stimulus have a conclusion. So weaken questions will always contain a stimulus that is in the form of an argument.

For conceptual clarity, let's look at the same example that we saw in the previous chapter but with different options.

Of all the laptops available for sale in Ireland, laptops manufactured by Ivy Infotech must have the fastest processors. Over the last six months, Ivy Infotech has sold three times as many laptops as its closest competitor. Additionally, Ivy Infotech's order books are full for the next 12 months.

Which of the following options, if true, most weakens the argument?

- (A) Ivy Infotech was severely criticised last year for manufacturing laptops with slow processors.
- (B) Apart from laptops, Ivy Infotech also manufactures desktops and tablets, sales of which have declined drastically in the last six months.
- (C) At the same time last year, Ivy Infotech had sold 60% more laptops than it has this year.
- (D) All the laptop manufacturers in Ireland, including Ivy Infotech, source their processors from the same company.
- (E) Due to production bottlenecks, the production of laptops by Ivy Infotech's rival companies fell by more than 60% in the last six months.

Since this is a weaken question, you know that the stimulus will be worded in the form of an argument. So, the first step is to identify the conclusion and the evidence of this argument.

Conclusion (What is the argument stating):

Laptops manufactured by Ivy Infotech have the fastest processors.

Evidence (Why is the argument stating this):

Ivy Infotech has sold the maximum number of laptops in the last six months in Ireland.

But does this make sense? Can't there be some other plausible reason why the people in Ireland are buying Ivy Infotech's laptops? Maybe these laptops have a very sleek design, maybe they have a very long battery life, or maybe they are the cheapest laptops in the market. There can be several other reasons (other than fast processors) why the Irish are buying laptops manufactured by Ivy Infotech. This brings us to the assumption. Remember that since the stimulus is in the form of an argument, it must contain an assumption.

Assumption (the unstated evidence):

So let's try to predict the assumption. It will be something on the lines of 'the only difference among the different laptops available in Ireland is the speed of the processor; the laptops are the same in every other aspect', because in that case if the people are still buying Ivy Infotech's laptops then these laptops must have the fastest processors, else people would be buying some other company's laptops.

Weakener:

So, now that we have identified the conclusion, the evidence, and the assumption, the answer choice that best tells us that the assumption may NOT be true has to weaken the argument. In essence, this option will provide us with some other reason (other than faster processors) why the sales of Ivy Infotech's laptops have been very high. E does this best and should be the correct answer.

For clarity, let's also take a look at the other answer choices:

- (A) It is very much possible that because of this criticism that Ivy Infotech equipped its laptops with faster processors. So, by no stretch does this option weaken the argument.
- (B) Desktops and tablets are outside the scope of the argument. The fact remains that Ivy Infotech's laptops have outsold those of its rivals by a large margin. We need to show that this was not because of the faster processors and this option fails to do so.
- (C)This option states that overall Ivy Infotech has performed worse this year than it did last year but we are not concerned with this. The fact remains that Ivy Infotech's laptops have outsold those of its rivals by a huge margin. We need to show that this was not because of the faster processors and this option fails to do so.
- Looks good but doesn't necessarily weaken the argument. The fact that all the companies in (D) Ireland source their processors from the same company does not mean that the processors are all the same. Those sourced by Ivy Infotech could very well be faster than those sourced by its rival firms.
- (E) This option gives you an alternative reason why Ivy Infotech has sold more laptops than its rivals. It was not because of demand side pull but because of supply side constraints. Because of the production bottlenecks at Ivy Infotech's rival companies' plants, Ivy Infotech's laptops were probably available in the market in much larger numbers than those of its rivals, which is why they sold more. Hence, this option weakens the argument by providing you with an alternative explanation to the one mentioned in the stimulus.

Weakeners and Assumptions

Common sense dictates that the only way in which an option can weaken an argument is by raising doubts about the validity of its assumption. When you make an assumption, you immediately deny the possibility of any other scenario being true. The weakener will provide you with these alternate scenarios and, hence, raise doubts in your mind as to which explanation is the correct one.

Remember that an option will never weaken the argument by questioning its evidence or by trying to negate its evidence. The evidence is a fact so it can never be questioned. What can be questioned, however, is the conclusion that is arrived at by using this evidence. You can't question facts but you can always question an opinion.

So, the answer to a weaken question will usually be the option that provides you with alternatives to what has been assumed in the argument.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing 3 tips to keep in mind for GMAT test day.

Always Weaken the Connection Between the Evidence and the Conclusion

Just like strengthen questions, on weaken questions also, you must, at all times, try to weaken the connection between the evidence and the conclusion. Never weaken the conclusion in isolation (even if the argument asks you to weaken the conclusion).

Let's look at an example:

According to a recent survey conducted in Unitown City, people who drove SUV's were much more likely to flout traffic rules than people who drove regular sedans. Hence, if the government wishes to reduce the incidence of road accidents, it should ban the sale of SUVs in the city.

Which of the following two options most weakens the argument?

- 1. The road condition in Unitown City is very poor, and it is much easier to drive SUVs on these roads than regular sedans.
- 2. The survey comprised only 5% of the population of Unitown City.

The conclusion of this argument is based on the evidence of the recent survey. The only way to weaken this argument is by questioning the integrity of this survey. Notice that you cannot state that the survey was never conducted, you can only question its integrity.

Option two states that the survey only comprised a very small population of Unitown City so it may not be representative of the entire population of Unitown City. For example, it is possible that people drive rashly in the neighbourhood where this survey was conducted, but the people in the rest of the city are safe drivers. Thus, option two definitely weakens the argument.

As against this, option one provides you with a reason why people should be allowed to drive SUVs. But if driving SUVs is going to lead to more accidents, then this may not be a good enough reason not to ban the sale of SUVs in the city. Hence, this option is outside the scope of the argument.

So the takeaway is that you always try to **weaken the link between the evidence and the conclusion**. The evidence is there for a purpose and you must make use of it.

How to Approach Weaken Questions

- 1. **Read the argument** and be clear on the evidence and the conclusion.
- 2. Try to **predict the assumption** because the weakener will, in some way, try to convince you that

this assumption may not be valid.

- 3. Go through the options and eliminate those that strengthen the argument or are otherwise outside the scope of the argument.
- 4. Remember to take into consideration the evidence as well—don't just weaken the conclusion in isolation.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a difficult Weaken the Argument question from the OG 2016.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the GMAT Official Guide

(OG 2018 - Q 546, 549, 574, 575, 583, 588, 600, 606, 615, 617, 619, 620, 622, 625, 627, 629, 642, 646, 654, 658, 664, 666, 667) (OG 2017 - Q 548, 574, 589, 606, 617, 618, 620, 621, 623, 627, 629, 640, 643, 644, 654, 658, 663, 666, 667) (OG 2016 – Q 4, 30, 45, 48, 50, 69, 76, 77, 79, 97, 102, 103, 113, 117, 121, 124) (OG VR 2018 - Q 122, 124, 125, 128, 131, 136, 141, 143, 159, 164, 168, 171, 173, 176, 177, 179, 182, 185, 186, 187) (OG VR 2017 - Q 111, 123, 126, 127, 131, 135, 144, 147, 152, 172, 173, 177, 180, 186, 187) (OG VR 2016 - Q 5, 6, 12, 19, 21, 22, 27, 30, 40, 42, 45, 48, 49, 68, 72, 82, 83)

To Sum it up

- The stimulus will always be in the form of an argument
- The weakener will make it less likely for the conclusion to be arrived at from the evidence
- Never weaken just the conclusion in isolation. Always weaken the link between the evidence and the conclusion
- The answer to a Weaken Question will raise doubts about the validity of the assumption

4.5 Identify the Flaw Questions

Flaw Questions

Flaw Questions will ask you to identify a flaw in the author's reasoning. Keep in mind that all arguments have the same fundamental flaw—they rely on one or more assumptions. So, in a flaw question, you basically need to question the assumption made by the author.

Let's look at an example:

Ronald scored 600 on the GMAT while Derek scored 338 on the GRE. Therefore, Ronald performed much better than Derek did.

Which of the following is the most serious flaw in the argument?

- (A) The argument does not take into account the possibility that Ronald's score could be a fluke.
- (B) The argument does not take into account the past academic records of Ronald and Derek.
- (C) The argument arrives at an extreme conclusion on the basis of unverified data.
- (D) The argument assumes that standardized test scores are the best predictors of future success of an individual.
- (E) The argument discounts the possibility that the GRE and the GMAT may have different scoring scales.

Since this is a flaw question, you know that the stimulus will be worded in the form of an argument. So, the first step is to identify the conclusion and the evidence of this argument.

Conclusion (What is the argument stating):

Ronald has performed better than Derek.

Evidence (Why is the argument stating this):

Ronald scored 600 on the GMAT and Derek scored 338 on the GRE, and since 600 is more than 338, Ronald must have performed better.

But does this make sense? Those of you who are aware of the GRE scoring pattern would obviously know that a 338 (out of 340) on the GRE is a much better score than a 600 (out of 800) on the GMAT. However, the argument does not assume that you will know this or need you to know this.

For all you know, the GRE could be scored out of 1000 and the GMAT could be scored out of 2000. The important thing is to notice that the argument does not mention this fact, which will then take you to the assumption.

Assumption (the unstated evidence):

The assumption now is fairly easy to predict—the GRE and the GMAT are scored on the same scoring scale. Only if this is assumed can the argument conclude what it is concluding; if you negate this fact then the argument will fall apart.

Flaw—The flaw will always question the assumption. It will raise doubts in your mind as to what if the assumption were not true. Out of the five options in the above argument, E does this best and,

hence, is the correct answer. The argument does not take into account the possibility that the GRE and the GMAT may have different scoring scales—that a 338 on the GRE may actually be a better score than a 600 on the GMAT.

For clarity, let's also take a look at the other options:

- (A) It really doesn't matter how Ronald arrived at that particular score as long as there is a possibility that this score could still be worse than Derek's score.
- (B) Past academic records are irrelevant because the argument is only concluding for the current tests taken by Ronald and Derek. The argument does not make a conclusion that Ronald, in general, is a better student than Derek.
- (C)There is nothing in the argument to suggest that the data is unverified.
- (D) The argument does not make any conclusions about how successful will the two candidates be in the future.
- (E)The correct answer.

Flaw and Assumptions

As we have seen, the answer to a flaw question will always be linked to the assumption of the argument. In essence, the flaw is the fact that the argument is relying on an assumption in the first place. So, a flaw will simply end up questioning the assumption at all times.

The Wording of the Flaw Question Stem

A flaw question will either directly ask you to identify the flaw in the argument or it could also make use of terms such as vulnerable to the objection or vulnerable to the criticism. Here are some common ways of wording flaw questions:

- The argument is flawed primarily because...
- Which of the following most strongly indicates that the logic of the above argument is flawed?
- The argument is most vulnerable to which of the following criticisms/objections?

How are Flaw Questions Different from Weaken Questions?

Are flaw questions the same as weaken questions? The answer is that the two are similar but not the same.

There is **one big difference** between the two—a flaw is always from within the argument; it is simply the assumption stated in some other words and will never provide additional evidence. As against this, a weakener will almost always mention additional evidence that will question the validity of the argument's assumption. You can only weaken an argument by bringing in an additional point whereas the flaw will always be inherent in the argument.

Because of this fact an option that mentions a flaw will always be worded in the form of a question or a doubt whereas an option that mentions a weakener will always be worded in the form of a fact or evidence.

For example, in the Ronald vs. Derek argument, the following can be a possible weakener:

• The GRE is scored out of 340 whereas the GMAT is scored out of 800.

Now do you notice how this option is different from the one that mentioned the flaw? The flaw was just raising a doubt that the two scoring scales may be different whereas this option provides a fact that confirms that the two scoring scales are indeed different.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing the 5 bad habits to avoid on your GMAT prep journey.

Typical Flaws Present in Arguments

There are some typical flaws that the GMAT likes to test students on. Let's take a look at some of them:

i. **Mistaking Correlation for Causation**: In such cases, the argument will state that X and Y take place together or one after the other, so X is the cause of Y, that is, what appeared to be a simple correlation is actually a cause and effect relation.

The days on which Kevin wears a black shirt, he performs much better in his practice tests than he does on days on which he wears a shirt of some other color. So, on the day of the final test, Kevin must ensure that he wears a black shirt.

From the above argument, we can conclude that there is definitely a correlation between the color of Kevin's shirt and his practice test performance. However, this does not necessarily mean that it is the color of the shirt that is the cause of that improved performance. For all we know, it is possible that Kevin wears a black shirt on the days when he is most relaxed and because he is more relaxed he performs better on his practice tests. Thus, a correlation does not necessarily imply a cause and effect relation.

ii. Confusing you with Absolute Numbers and Percentages: In such arguments, the author will try to confuse you by providing absolute numbers as evidence and concluding for a percentage or vice versa. You've already seen an example of this in the argument at the beginning of this chapter (Ronald vs. Derek). Here's another one:

10% of the total houses in London are for sale and 30% of the total houses in New York are for sale. So, there are more houses for sale in New York than in London.

The above argument assumes that the total number of houses in New York and London is the same, but what if that is not the case? If London has five times as many houses as New York does, then there could actually be more houses for sale in London.

iii. Representativeness: In such arguments, the author will assume a small sample size to be representative of a much larger population or group.

> The mayor of Rodham City does not seem to be very popular with the city's residents. Out of the 20 people that I spoke to this afternoon, as many as 15 said that they hated the mayor.

The above argument assumes that the opinions or views of these 20 people are representative of the views of all or a majority of the residents of Rodham City.

You'll see each of these argument types in much more detail later in this book when we discuss some typical argument patterns tested on the GMAT.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining the commonly tested flaws on GMAT Critical Reasoning questions.

How to Approach Flaw Questions

- 1. **Read the argument** and be clear on the evidence and the conclusion.
- 2. Try to **predict the assumption** because the flaw will always question the assumption in some manner.
- 3. **Look for some typical flaws** based on the wording of the argument. If the argument mentions causality, look for a correlation-causation problem; if it mentions a survey, look for a problem of representativeness, and so on.
- 4. Remember not to confuse a flaw with an option that weakens the argument. If confused, go with the option that is directly connected to the argument's assumption.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the **GMAT Official Guide**

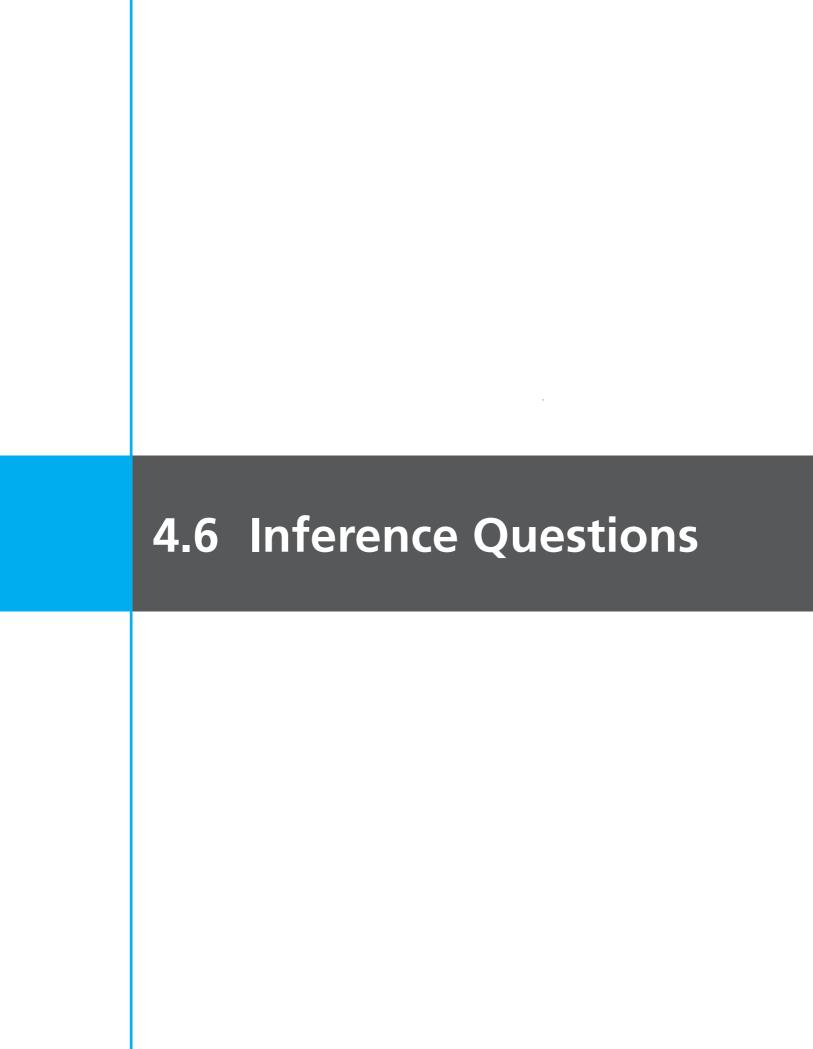
(OG 2018 – Q 560, 567, 575, 600, 633) (OG 2017 - Q 559, 565, 597, 600, 633) (OG 2016 – Q 6, 16, 22, 59, 63, 88) (OG VR 2018 – Q 128, 136, 164, 182) (OG VR 2017 - Q 125, 130, 140, 163, 167) (OG VR 2016 - Q 20, 25, 36, 59, 62)



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a difficult Identify the Flaw question from the OG 2016.

To Sum it up

- The **flaw** will always question the **assumption**
- Stimulus will be in the form of an argument
- Can also be worded as *vulnerable to the objection* or *vulnerable to the criticism* questions
- Different from Weaken questions as Flaw is always from within the argument
- Typical Flaws
 - o Mistaking Correlation for Causation
 - o Confusing you with absolute Numbers and Percentages
 - o Representativeness



Inference Questions

Inference Questions will ask you to infer or conclude something from the information given in the stimulus. The literal meaning of *infer* is to conclude something without it being explicitly mentioned. This is exactly what you are required to do on an Inference question—arrive at an option that is not explicitly stated in the stimulus but that can easily be concluded given the information in the stimulus. This presents its own unique problems that we will see later in this chapter.

First, let's take a look at an example of an Inference question:

Last year three automobile manufacturers—Honda, Toyota, and Suzuki—launched new models of their respective sedans in Japan. The three models that were launched were similarly priced and had similar features. However, the sales of Suzuki's new sedan have been far lower than those of Honda and Toyota's new sedans in the past one year.

The statements above best support which of the following as a conclusion?

- (A) The people in Japan prefer cars manufactured by Toyota and Honda to those manufactured by Suzuki.
- (B) The people in Japan do not like cars manufactured by Suzuki.
- (C) Cars manufactured by Suzuki are notorious for their flimsy build quality and poor fuel efficiency.
- (D) In the last one year, Suzuki has earned less revenues from the sale of its new sedan than have Honda and Toyota.
- (E) Suzuki manufactures its cars primarily for the export market and not for domestic sale.

Do remember that the stimulus of an Inference question may not necessarily be in the form of an argument. In fact, most of the times the stimulus will contain a set of facts like the one above does. All that the above stimulus tells us is that Honda, Toyota, and Suzuki have each launched a new sedan last year and that the sales of Honda and Toyota's new sedans have been far greater than the sales of Suzuki's new sedan. These are all facts and the author does not provide any conclusion on the basis of these facts.

Inference Must be True and NOT May be True

One very important thing to keep in mind while evaluating options on an Inference question is that the correct option must be true under all conditions/possibilities. There may be some options which may be true under some situations and may not be true under others. These will not be the correct answer.

With this background, let's go through each of the options in the above question and see if we can arrive at the correct answer:

(A) This seems very obvious but such inferences must be avoided. For all you know, people in Japan might actually prefer Suzuki cars the most but due to some supply constraints, Suzuki's new sedan may not be available in the market.

- (B) The earlier explanation applies to this option as well. In fact this option goes a step further by concluding that Japanese people do not like Suzuki cars at all. Since this may or may not be the case, this cannot be the correct answer.
- (C) This looks very logical because it provides a very convincing reason why the sales of Suzuki's cars have been low. But are we actually required to explain why the sales of Suzuki's new sedan have been low? Absolutely not. So this option does not even come close to being an Inference. It merely explains why the sales of Suzuki's new sedan may have been low but that is not what we are required to do in the argument.
- (D) The correct answer. The argument tells us that the three new sedans are similarly priced. Then if Suzuki has sold fewer cars (and by a large margin) than have Honda and Toyota, its revenues from the sale of this new sedan have to be lower than those of Honda and Toyota. This option must be true in all cases and, hence, has to be the correct answer.
- (E) Like option C, this option again provides a logical explanation for Suzuki's low sales in Japan but this may or may not be the case. In any case, we are not required to provide an explanation in the first place. So, this cannot be a valid inference.

How will Inference Questions be Worded?

In some cases, an Inference question may directly ask you to infer something from the argument but in most cases these questions will be more confusingly worded and could be mistaken for some other question types.

Must be True Questions i.

You saw these questions earlier in the Assumption chapter; you can get questions with similar wording in Inferences as well. Conceptually the biggest difference between an Inference and an Assumption is the different places that they can be placed at in an argument. The following diagram will make it easier to grasp:



So, the assumption is what leads to the argument or what logically completes the argument. Without the assumption, the argument will be logically incomplete. The inference then follows from this argument. Hence, Assumption comes before the argument and Inference comes after the argument. This conceptual difference leads to a slight variation in the manner in which these two must be true questions are worded:

Assumption:

Which of the following options must be true for the above argument to be true?

Inference:

If the above argument/statements are true, then which of the following options must be true?

Do you notice the difference between the two? An assumption question will look for an answer choice that will make the argument true whereas an Inference question will start by assuming that the argument/stimulus is true and ask you to infer something from this.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a question on which students often confuse an Inference with an Assumption.

ii. Questions with the word 'support'

The term *support* is used by two question types—Strengthen questions and Inference questions. Here is an example of each:

Strengthen:

Which of the following options, if true, most strongly *supports* the hypothesis in the above argument?

Inference:

The above hypothesis, if true, best *supports* which of the following as a conclusion?

The difference between the two will again be the language of the question. A Strengthen question will ask you to select an answer choice *that supports* the argument whereas an Inference question will ask you to select an answer choice *that can be supported* by the stimulus/argument, that is, that follows from the stimulus.

Tips for Inference Questions

Inference does not mean to summarize the stimulus:

An inference does not have to provide a logical conclusion to the stimulus nor does it have to be a summary of the stimulus. It just has to be a fact that can most definitely be concluded on the basis of the information provided in the stimulus. It goes without saying that there can be multiple inferences that can be arrived at from a given stimulus.

Always avoid extreme answer choices:

It is human nature to read too much between the lines. In fact, this quality may even be beneficial or an asset in real life. However, on the GMAT, this will prove to be a liability. If you read too much between the lines, you will almost always end up with extreme or strongly worded answer choices, which will most likely never be the correct answer to an Inference question. So, avoid options containing words such as *must*, *always*, *only*, *cannot be determined*, *etc*. Instead go with options that contain vague words such *as usually*, *maybe*, *might*, *sometimes*, *possibly*, *etc*.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling an Inference Question that has a lot of extreme options among the answer choices.

Never use outside knowledge to answer Inference Questions:

If you avoid extreme options, you will automatically end up avoiding the use of outside knowledge while evaluating answer choices. For example, in the Suzuki argument, if you are aware that in real life, Suzuki makes cars that are of a flimsy build quality or that are primarily meant for exports, then this may color your judgment and make you select the wrong answer choice.

Don't bother predicting the answer:

Because multiple inferences can be arrived at from a given stimulus, it doesn't make sense to predict the answer. Instead, look at each answer choice and try to eliminate extreme options or those that are outside the scope of the argument.

Assumptions play no role in Inference Questions:

Unlike the five question types we saw earlier, Inference questions will not require you to identify the assumption in the argument. In most cases, the stimulus won't contain an argument in the first place; it will just contain a set of facts.

Inference Questions will also be tested on Reading Comprehension:

Yes, Inference questions will form a very important chunk of RC questions. As many as half the questions in the RC section can be Inference questions. These have been discussed in more detail in our RC Grail book.

Avoid Explain Answers:

A common wrong-answer trap in Inference questions is an answer choice that explains the situation in the stimulus. These options will look extremely logical to you but remember that the question is not asking you to explain the stimulus but to infer something from the stimulus.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing your GMAT self-prep strategy.

How to Approach Inference Questions

- 1. First read the stimulus. If it does not contain an argument or a discrepancy, then it will most likely be an Inference question.
- 2. Read the question stem to confirm that you are indeed looking at an Inference question.

- 3. **Do not bother predicting the answer**; immediately jump to the answer choices.
- 4. Don't spend too much time on each answer choice. Take a quick look at all five answer choices (maybe spending 10 seconds on each) and eliminate ones that are outside the scope of the argument.
- 5. By now you should've ideally narrowed down your choice to two or three options. Go through these options again and **eliminate the ones that are extreme** or strongly worded.
- 6. Sometimes Step 5 can directly lead you to the answer. In case you have more than one possibility for the correct answer, **read the stimulus once again** and try to identify the option that must be true based on this stimulus.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the GMAT Official Guide

(OG 2018 – Q 544, 581, 591, 618, 634, 653, 662) (OG 2017 – Q 544, 582, 591, 619, 645, 661) (OG 2016 – Q 1, 53, 80) (OG VR 2018 – Q 107, 113, 117, 118, 126, 147, 165) (OG VR 2017 – Q 107, 114, 119, 120, 128, 151) (OG VR 2016 – Q 1, 10, 15, 16, 23, 47, 65)



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a difficult Inference Question from the OG 2016.

To Sum it up

- Stimulus will usually not be in the form of an argument
- You are not required to summarize the information in the stimulus
- The correct option *must* be true and not *may* be true
- Can be worded as *must be true* questions or *support* questions
- Don't try to predict the answer
- Always avoid extreme or strongly worded options
- Never use outside information to answer Inference questions
- Assumptions usually play no role in Inference questions

4.7 Explain the Paradox Questions

Explain the Paradox Questions

Explain the Paradox Questions will ask you to provide the most logical explanation for the situation described in the stimulus. This stimulus will usually contain a contradiction or an anomaly, that is, a contrary-to-fact situation. Also, the stimulus will always contain facts and won't be in the form of an argument.

Let us take a look at an example:

Leading book publishers had predicted that the rampant illegal sharing of books online would have an extremely detrimental impact on the sale of their books. However, the more illegal online sharing sites increase in popularity, the more physical books are being sold.

Which of the following options best explains why the sales of physical books have been increasing with the increase in online piracy?

- (A) The illegal sharing of books online has not become as popular as was expected.
- (B) People in general find it more difficult to read books on a computer screen than reading a physical book.
- (C) Book publishers have, in the last few years, invested heavily in advertising their books.
- (D) A lot of people have discovered new authors through online book sharing sites and subsequently bought other books written by these authors because it is easier to read a physical book.
- (E) The government has introduced heavy fines for those downloading books from online sharing sites.

An explain question will never contain an argument so don't waste your time looking for the conclusion, evidence, and assumption. Instead try to quickly paraphrase the contradiction in the stimulus—it was expected that people will stop buying books because they could now download books for free from illegal online book sharing sites. However, as the free illegal book sharing sites gain popularity, the sales of physical books have actually increased. The correct option needs to explain why this has been the case.

Let's take a look at each option in the question above:

- (A) This option directly questions a fact mentioned in the stimulus, which is something that can never be done on any CR question. The arguments states that illegal online book sharing is becoming more and more popular and we need to accept this fact as it is. We just need to show the connection between this and the fact that the sales of physical books have also been growing similarly.
- (B) This looks very good. However, notice that it just provides you with a reason why people may not want to read books online. So, in this case the sales of physical books should have remained unaffected or declined marginally. Then why have the sales been increasing? This option doesn't explain this fact. Remember that the correct answer has to explain both sets of facts and not just one of them.

- (C) This again addresses one part of the contradiction—why have the sales of books been increasing. But this option does not show the link between increase in illegal online sharing of books and the increase in sales of physical books.
- (D) The correct answer. This choice correctly identifies a link between the two sets of facts mentioned in the stimulus. People discover new authors through online book sharing sites, they like the book that they have read, and so they subsequently buy other books by these authors in the physical format because it is easier to read in this form.
- (E) Like B, in this case also the sales of physical books should have remained steady or changed slightly but what explains the increase in sales of physical books?

Based on the above analysis, we can arrive at certain tips to keep in mind while attempting Explain the Paradox questions.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling an Explain the Paradox Question from the OG 2016.

Tips for Explain Questions

Make sure you have identified the discrepancy in the argument before looking at the options:

A lot of times students rush to the options without realising what exactly they have to explain. As a result, they go through all the five options and are not able to eliminate anything, so they go back and again read the stimulus to understand the discrepancy. Then they once again go through all the options leading to wastage of precious time.

Never explain just one side of the stimulus:

As you saw in some of the options above, the correct answer has to explain both sides of the paradox and not just one side.

Never question the evidence:

This applies to all Critical Reasoning question types. Never try to negate or question the evidence or facts provided in the stimulus. Take this as true at all times.

The answer will always be from the outside:

The answer to an explain question will always be a new point that somehow explains the contradiction in the stimulus. So, don't eliminate an option just because it contains terms that have not been mentioned in the stimulus. As long as it explains the discrepancy, it could very well be the correct answer.



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Common Wrong Answer Choices on Explain Questions

- Options that explain only one side of the contradiction
- Options that negate or question the validity of the evidence provided in the stimulus

How to Approach an Explain Question

- 1. **Read the stimulus**. If it contains an argument then it most likely will not be an *Explain* question. However, if it contains a discrepancy/contradiction/anomaly, then it has to be an *Explain* question.
- 2. **Read the question stem** to confirm that you are indeed looking at an *Explain* question.
- 3. **Don't bother making a prediction** because there are several possibilities that can explain the situation. Quickly scan through the options eliminating the common wrong answer types discussed above.
- 4. By this time, you should have **come down to two choices**, if not arrived at the correct answer itself. If confused, go back and **read the stimulus** to understand the stimulus better. **Restate the contradiction** or discrepancy in your own words and check which option is best explaining both sides of it. **Select this option** and move on.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the GMAT Official Guide (OG 2018 – Q 551, 553, 556, 557, 558, 568, 586, 596, 613, 616, 621, 630, 640, 656, 660, 665) (OG 2017 – Q 549, 551, 554, 555, 557, 566, 567, 569, 580, 587, 596, 614, 615, 622, 630, 639, 648, 664) (OG 2016 – Q 7, 10, 11, 14, 23, 26, 39, 51, 58, 74, 75, 78, 85, 107, 122) (OG VR 2018 – Q 114, 132, 135, 153, 154) (OG VR 2017 – Q 110, 115, 122, 136, 137, 138, 139, 159, 170) (OG VR 2016 – Q 11, 33, 34, 35, 55, 66)

To Sum it up

- Stimulus will always contain a discrepancy/anomaly/contradiction
- Any option that explains this contradiction will be the correct answer
 - Will always be a new point containing extra outside information
- Always explain both sides of the contradiction and not just one side
- Never question or deny the contradiction or the evidence

4.8 Provide a Logical **Conclusion Questions**

Logical Conclusion Questions

These questions are easy to identify because they always have a blank at the end. The question stem asks you to fill in this blank in the most logical manner.

Some people think of a **Logical Conclusion Question** as an Assumption question while some think of it as an Inference question. However, we think these questions can also test you on other concepts (in fact, most of these questions will come closest to the Strengthen question type) apart from the two mentioned ones, which is why we have decided to treat these questions as a separate type. Also, the OG 2016 contains a lot of these questions which is why we have dedicated an entire chapter to this question type.

First, let's take a look at how these questions look:

Which of the following most logically completes the argument below?

According to the policies of the prestigious City Golf Club, a one-time donation of five million dollars to the club's corpus guarantees an individual a lifetime membership to the club. However, more than fifty percent of the people who have become members of the Club after the adoption of this policy have become members without paying this amount. This fact, however, should not lead one to conclude that the Board of the Club is taking in members through unethical or underhand methods, since¬

- (A) all the Board members of the City Golf Club are highly respected citizens of the city
- (B) other prestigious clubs in the country also follow a similar policy for admitting members
- (C) the Club awards complementary memberships to a select few people who have done exemplary social work in that year
- (D) there are several other ways of obtaining the membership of the club
- (E) most people who apply for membership to the club have strong political connections

The stimulus of a Logical Conclusion Question will almost always be in the form of an argument. However, identifying the conclusion, evidence, and assumption in these arguments may not be as straightforward as it is on strengthen or weaken questions. To understand this better, let's try to break up the above argument into its components.

The Evidence

According to the policies of the City Golf Club, anyone who pays a donation of five million dollars can get a confirmed membership to the club. However, most of the people who have become members of the club after the adoption of this policy have not had to pay this amount.

The Conclusion

This is where things get interesting because this argument actually has two conclusions. One is an intermediate conclusion and one is the final conclusion which raises an objection to the intermediate conclusion.

Intermediate Conclusion

This conclusion states that the Board of the Club is taking in members through unethical means. This conclusion is the one arrived at on the basis of the above evidence and is made by a hypothetical person. Notice that this is not directly stated in the argument but is clearly implied by it.

Final Conclusion

This is the author's conclusion wherein he questions the intermediate conclusion or states that the intermediate conclusion is incorrect.

So all we need to do in the blank is to provide a reason that strengthens or supports this final conclusion of the author (or that weakens the intermediate conclusion made by the hypothetical person).

The Assumption

This is tricky. Don't go looking for an assumption in the final conclusion of the argument. Remember you need to question the intermediate conclusion (and in any case it is this conclusion that was arrived at on the basis of the evidence and not the final one) so you need to find an assumption made in arriving at the intermediate conclusion.

The stimulus does not say that the *only* way to become a member of the club is by paying a donation of five million dollars. There could be several other ways of becoming a member as well. In arriving at the intermediate conclusion, the hypothetical person is assuming that the only way to become a member of the Club is by paying the donation of five million dollars.

To weaken the hypothetical person's conclusion (and to strengthen the author's conclusion) we just need to show that the above assumption is not true. Option D does this best and should be the correct answer.

Do not get confused as to whether you should look for the assumption in the intermediate conclusion or the final conclusion. A simple rule of thumb is to look for the assumption between the evidence and the conclusion. In the above argument, the author does not provide any evidence for his final conclusion; in fact you have to provide this evidence in the blank. The evidence that is mentioned in the argument can only lead you till the intermediate conclusion so it is here that you must look for an assumption.

Let's also look at the other options for the sake of clarity:

- (A) Even if the Board members are highly respected citizens of the city, it is still possible that one of them could be indulging in some underhand dealings with prospective members.
- For all you know, the other clubs could also be following similar underhand practices.
- (C) This only accounts for a few members but the stimulus clearly tells us that more than 50% of the members got in without paying the money, so how did these people get in?
- (D) The correct answer.

(E) If these people indeed used their political connections to get their memberships then that is the same as resorting to unethical practices. So, this option could actually strengthen the intermediate conclusion and not weaken it.

Did you notice that the previous question was almost the same as a strengthen question. All you had to do was strengthen the author's final conclusion. So, will all Logical Conclusion questions require you to strengthen the author's conclusion? Not necessarily.

Then how do you make out when you need to strengthen and when you need to do something else?

The answer is by looking at the word that leads to the blank. This is the word that comes immediately before the blank starts. If the word is *since or because* (like in the above argument) then you will definitely be required to strengthen the author's argument. Also, in such cases, the author's conclusion will be in the sentence that leads up to this word.

If the leading word/phrase is *that* or *it should be expected that*, then you will be required to make an inference from the information provided in the stimulus. In these questions, remember to avoid extreme options and go with vaguely worded ones.

If the leading word is *assuming that*, then obviously you need to point out the assumption in the argument and the conclusion will again be the last sentence that leads up to the blank.

If the OG 2016 is anything to go by, most Logical Conclusion questions will have a *since* or *because* at the end and, hence, will require you to strengthen the argument.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a Provide a Logical Conclusion Question from the OG 2016

How to Approach Logical Conclusion Questions

- 1. You'll easily be able to recognize this question type by noticing the **blank at the end**. Quickly read the stimulus to get an idea of what the argument is talking about.
- 2. **Read the leading word** into the blank to understand what exactly you are required to do. If you need to strengthen the argument or find the assumption in the argument, then quickly read the last sentence of the argument to understand what exactly is the final conclusion of the argument.
- 3. Check if the argument contains any **intermediate conclusion**. If you find these difficult to spot, just try to **paraphrase** what conclusion is the evidence taking you to; is it the final conclusion of the argument or some other intermediate conclusion.
- 4. **Eliminate options** until you are left with the correct one.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a difficult Provide a Logical Conclusion Question from the OG 2016.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the GMAT Official Guide

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(OG 2018 – Q. 550, 563, 564, 577, 582, 587, 593, 601, 603, 605,
                      609, 612, 626, 661)
(OG 2017 - Q 561, 562, 576, 577, 583, 588, 593, 601, 603, 605,
                      609, 611, 613, 652)
(OG 2016 – Q 18, 32, 33, 38, 43, 44, 46, 54, 64, 66, 68, 71, 72, 73,
 (OG VR 2018 – Q. 108, 109, 116, 127, 129, 130, 134, 137, 145,
                    148, 151, 152, 161, 174)
 (OG VR 2017 - Q 108, 109, 118, 129, 132, 133, 134, 146, 148,
                    154, 157, 175, 176, 185)
  (OG VR 2016 - Q 2, 3, 14, 24, 28, 29, 43, 50, 54, 70, 71, 81)
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To Sum it up

- Always contain a blank at the end
- Stimulus will usually be in the form of an argument
- Most questions will require you to strengthen the conclusion The conclusion is in the sentence that leads to the blank
- The word leading into the blank will tell you what question type to treat the questions as:
 - Since/because Strengthen question
 - *It should be expected that* Inference question
 - Assuming that Assumption question

4.9 Miscellaneous Questions

1. Bold Face Questions

In **Bold Face Questions**, two complete sentences or parts of sentences are highlighted in bold. The question will usually ask you to identify the role being played by the two bold or highlighted parts in the overall context of the argument.

The difficulty with bold face questions is that while you have to read the entire stimulus to understand what the argument is trying to state, you have to answer only for the bold parts. A common trap the test maker uses is to give you options that describe the role played by the non-bold parts of the stimulus in order to trick you into going with these options.

The stimulus of a bold face question will usually be in the form of an argument because only then can different sentences play different roles. In fact, the stimulus will usually contain several arguments and counter arguments so as to make it difficult for you to grasp what exactly the parts in bold are doing.

Bold face questions are generally regarded by test takers as one of the most (if not the most) difficult question types on Critical Reasoning. There are two reasons why these questions appear to be more difficult than the others:

- 1. You only have to answer for the bold parts.
- 2. The confusing language of the options. All the options will use abstract language such as *the first* is the opposition of the supposition assumed in the argument.

The options that you see on bold face questions will always be worded in the form of *the first is doing x and the second is doing y*, further highlighting the fact that you only have to answer for the bold parts.

Let us take a look at an example:

There is not one good reason for granting men paternity leave from work, while there are several good reasons to deny it. For one, it would be an additional expense to businesses. Businesses are already facing tough times all over the world, so adding additional overhead is not an option. If the father acts like a father, he and the child will bond. If the father doesn't act like a father, he and the child will not bond, regardless of whether he is at home or at work.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first is the primary conclusion of the argument and the second is a secondary conclusion.
- (B) The first is the advocacy of the argument and the second raises doubts about this advocacy.
- (C) The first provides evidence as to why a policy should not be adopted by businesses and the second further strengthens this evidence.
- (D) The first is a conclusion that the argument disagrees with; the second provides the reasoning behind this disagreement.

(E) The first is the primary conclusion of the argument and the second provides reasoning supporting the primary conclusion.

The argument provides reasons why men should not be granted paternity leave. The first bold part states the overall conclusion of the argument, and the second provides a reason in support of this conclusion. E states this best and is the correct answer.

Let's look at the other options for more clarity:

- (A) While the first is indeed the primary conclusion of the argument, the second is not a secondary conclusion. In fact, the second supports the primary conclusion of the argument by providing a reason why paternity leave is not required.
- (B) While the first can be considered an advocacy, the second does not by any stretch raise doubts about this advocacy.
- (C) The first bold part does not provide any evidence, it just provides the conclusion. The evidence is in the rest of the argument.
- (D)The argument in fact agrees with the first bold part.
- The correct answer.

List of Common Roles Played by the Bold Parts

- **Final Conclusion**: This is the point that argument is trying to make.
- **Intermediate Conclusion**: This often contrasts with the final conclusion.
- **Counterpoint**: This is a statement that opposes something stated earlier in the argument.
- **Background information:** This provides some context for the issue described in the argument.
- **Prediction**: This will always be an opinion and talk about something happening in the future.
- **Objection**: Questions or doubts something stated in the argument.

On bold face questions, once you have read the stimulus and before you look at the options, make a rough assessment of what exactly is the connection between the two parts of the argument in bold. This need not be a very precise relation; even something on the lines of the first and the second are saying opposite things or the first is an evidence or a cause and the second is the conclusion or the effect will do as this will help you eliminate some incorrect options.

Remember that on bold face questions you may not always be able to select the answer; rather you will often end up eliminating wrong answer choices to arrive at the correct answer. For example, you could be stuck between two options both of which may look fine to you. Then you'll have to get down to reading every individual word in the shortlisted options and try to eliminate the incorrect ones.

For instance, if you know that the argument is neutral (that is, it does not take any sides) and one of the options mentions the phrase the author advocates that, you immediately know that this cannot be the answer because the author is not advocating anything in the entire stimulus.

How to Approach Bold Face Questions

- Read the stimulus and try to understand its overall meaning. The stimulus of bold face questions
 usually tends to be long, so spend some time on this. As you read, try to identify what role each
 of the bold sentences may be playing from the list of common roles that you saw earlier in this
 chapter.
- 2. Once you have read the entire argument, go back and just **read the bold parts** and try to identify the relation between them.
- 3. Quickly scan through all the options, **eliminating** ones which are clearly incorrect. For example, if you have identified that the first bold part is an evidence, any option that states that the first bold part is a conclusion can immediately be eliminated.
- 4. Once you've narrowed down your choices to two or three, go through every word of the options and try to **spot something that contradicts** what is stated in the argument.

Myth Associated with Bold Face Questions

If I get a bold face question on my GMAT, I must be doing well on the test; this is a common myth held by a lot of students but that's exactly what it is—a myth. We know of several students who got verbal scores in the 40s and yet did not get a single bold face question. Similarly, we also know of several students who got bold face questions yet ended up scoring in the 20s. Another thing to keep in mind is that even if you do get a bold face question, this may turn out to be an experimental question, in which case it won't make any difference to your score.

Please reference these questions in the corresponding editions of the GMAT Official Guide (OG 2018 – Q 561, 565, 599, 623, 639, 647, 651, 652, 659) (OG 2017 – Q 563, 573, 624, 625, 636, 638, 646, 651, 659) (OG 2016 – Q 20, 29, 81, 82, 91, 93, 105, 110) (OG VR 2018 – Q 133, 160, 169, 183) (OG VR 2017 – Q 124, 164, 169, 183) (OG VR 2016 – Q 60, 64, 79)



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a difficult Bold Face Question from the OG 2016.

2. Main Point Questions

Main Point Questions ask you to identify the conclusion of the argument. The stimulus will always be in the form of an argument because the idea is to be able to arrive at a conclusion for the same. While, conceptually, these questions appear relatively simple (after all how difficult can it be to identify the conclusion of an argument?), the question is not actually just asking you to restate the conclusion.

In fact, you will be required to sort of paraphrase the argument. So, your answer will also have parts of evidence mentioned in it.

Let us take a look at an example:

The usual meaning of free is devoid of cost or obligation. However, retailers often use the word for something which is merely included in the overall price. One common example is a buy one, get one free sale. The second item is not free under the normal definition, since, to obtain it, the buyer is obliged to pay the full cost of the first item.

What is the main point of the argument?

- (A) Retailers often deceive buyers by creating the illusion of a discount; the buyer in fact does not get any discount.
- (B) Whenever a retailer advertises an item as Free, the item is, in fact, not free.
- (C) Retailers often trick customers by increasing the price of a product and then offering huge discounts on this increased price.
- (D) An item cannot be free if one has to pay money in any form to acquire that item.
- (E) The definition of Free can have different connotations for different people or groups of people.

The main point of the argument is that an item cannot be called free if one has to pay a price (in the form of purchasing another item) to get the item in question. D states this best and is the correct answer.

Let's take a look at the other answer choices for clarity:

- (A) There is no deception as the buyer does get a discount. He does not get the product completely free, though, because he has to buy another product to get the one that is free. But he still gets these at a lower price than he would have otherwise.
- (B) Extreme answer choice. There could be some instances in which the item is free.
- (C) The argument never states this fact.
- (D) The correct answer.
- According to the argument, the definition of *Free* should only have one connotation.

The best way of making Main Point questions difficult is to provide very close or ambiguous answer choices so that students get confused. If the answer choices are very different, you can easily eliminate four incorrect ones; however, if the answer choices are extremely close, things could get a little tricky for you.

It always helps if you can paraphrase the entire argument in your own words before looking at the answer choices. This will keep you from getting confused between two close choices.

A few years back, the GMAT used to test students a lot on Main Point questions but of late these questions hardly appear on the test. Even the OG 2016 contains barely one or two such questions.

Avoid answers

- Which only summarize a part of the argument
- Which restate a fact from the argument



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3. Parallel Reasoning Questions

Parallel Reasoning Questions require you to understand the overall structure of the argument and to select an option that most closely matches this structure. Because of the unusual requirement of Parallel Reasoning questions, the options that you see on these questions will always be from fields other than the one that is mentioned in the argument. For example, the argument could talk about football and the correct answer could talk about medicines and diseases.

A lot of the times, the argument could actually contain a flaw and the question stem could ask you to identify a similar flaw in the options given. The options in such cases will again be in the form of mini-arguments.

What you need to watch out for are options that are half right and half wrong, so make sure you read every word of the options carefully.

It is important to note that the correct option does not have to be in the exact same form as the original stimulus. For example, if the stimulus states the conclusion at the end, it is not necessary that the correct answer also state the conclusion at the end. The conclusion can very well be in the beginning as well. It is the overall reasoning that has to match and not the layout of the stimulus. This is why paraphrasing the argument will be very useful on Parallel Reasoning questions.

Let us take a look at an example:

All the companies in Balco City have decided to freeze salary increments this year owing to the tough economic situation. Kevin works for a company in Balco city. So, Kevin will face a salary cut this year.

Which of the following arguments exhibits flawed reasoning most similar to the one exhibited in the above argument?

- (A) Jerry has not been keeping well of late because of which he hasn't been able to study at all. Therefore, Jerry will perform poorly in the upcoming college examination.
- (B) Because of excessive traffic on the roads, Tom will not be able to arrive for a business meeting ahead of the scheduled time. So, Tom might arrive late for the meeting.

- (C) The temperature in the city may fall. Due to heavy rainfall, the temperature is not expected to rise.
- (D) Tom likes to travel to his office by bus. Today, there is a bus strike in the city, so Tom will not go to his office.
- (E) Mobile phones will cost more in the next few months because the prices of mobile phones are not expected to be cut in the near future.

The stimulus for a Parallel Reasoning question will usually be in the form of an argument. So let's start by breaking up the argument into its components:

The Conclusion

Kevin will face a salary cut this year.

The Evidence

Companies in the city in which Kevin works have decided not to provide salary raises this year.

The Assumption

This is a classic example of the fallacy which states that there are only two extreme possibilities for every event, that is, if an event does not happen then its opposite will take place. But there can always be a third possibility that nothing, that is, no change happens. For example, in the above argument, if the salaries will not rise, then one can't conclude that they will necessarily fall. They might remain at the same level.

So the assumption in the argument is that is salaries don't increase then they will necessarily fall. To state it in more general terms, the assumption is that if X doesn't happen then the opposite of X will happen.

Let's try locating a similar flawed assumption in each of the options that are given to us:

- (A) This is actually a very sound argument. If Jerry has not studied, he will most likely perform poorly in the upcoming college examination. So, there is no flaw in this argument.
- This option looks good because if Tom can't reach before time, he does not necessarily have to reach late. He could also reach on time. However, the problem is the use of the word 'might' suggesting that this may or may not happen. The correct option will conclude that this will definitely happen.
- (C) This option puts the conclusion before the evidence. It is in effect saying that since the temperature is not expected to rise, it may fall. The problem again is—like option B—the use of *may*. We require a stronger word such as *must* to parallel the conclusion of the original stimulus.
- (D) The original argument assumes that if X does not happen then the opposite of X will happen whereas this option assumes that if X does not happen, then Y will also not happen. Sometimes it may help to think of arguments in terms of X and Y.

(E) The correct answer. This option again puts the conclusion at the beginning and states that since the prices of mobile phones are not expected to fall in the near future, the prices will go up instead. This is exactly the kind of flawed reasoning we are looking for. The use of the strong 'will' makes this the correct answer.

Do not worry too much about these questions because they hardly appear any more on the GMAT.



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To Sum it up

Bold Face Questions

- Always paraphrase the argument and predict the relation between the two bold parts before looking at the option
- o Remember to answer only for the bold part

Main Point Questions

- The correct answer will not just restate the conclusion; it will also incorporate parts of the evidence
- Avoid answers which summarize only a part of the argument or which restate a fact from the argument

Parallel Reasoning Questions

- The options will always be from diverse fields that have no apparent connection with what is mentioned in the stimulus
- o The exact structure of the correct answer may not be the same as that of the argument.

SECTION 5 Common Argument Structures

In this chapter we will look at some typical argument structures that the GMAT uses. The question types will still be the same as we saw in the preceding chapters and nobody will ask you to identify the structure of the argument. It's just that if you spot the structure of the argument, it'll become very easy for you to arrive at the correct answer because you will know what exactly you are looking for even before you go to the options. You've already seen some of these in the Flaw chapter; now we'll take a more in-depth look at them.

5.1 **Causality**

These arguments will state that just because two things happen together or one after the other, one is the cause of the other. Let's take a look at a very simplified example:

Jason is very intelligent because he studied at Harvard.

Cause: The fact that Jason has studied at Harvard.

Effect: Jason becoming intelligent.

If you look at this argument in terms of facts and opinion, the facts are that Jason is intelligent and that he has studied at Harvard. However, the opinion is the connection between these two facts— Jason is intelligent because he studied at Harvard.

Assumption: When the author concludes that the reason for Jason's intelligence is the fact that he studied at Harvard, he automatically assumes that nothing else could be responsible for Jason's intelligence except the fact that he studied at Harvard.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining the concept of Causality in detail.

Causality Arguments and Weaken Questions

On most occasions, whenever you get causation type of arguments, the question stem will require you to weaken the argument. There are two ways of weakening cause and effect arguments:

By providing another reason for the effect

As we saw above, in a cause and effect argument, the author assumes that nothing else could be responsible for the effect in question. So if we can show that another cause could also lead to the same effect, then the argument is immediately weakened because we don't know what is leading to the effect for sure.

For example, the following can be a weakener for the Harvard argument above:

Both of Jason's parents are geniuses.

So, maybe Jason is very intelligent because of genetic reasons and not because he went to Harvard.

ii) By showing that the cause and effect could actually be upside down

This is a slightly more difficult to spot method of weakening cause and effect arguments. Even if two things happen together and we know that there definitely is a cause and effect relation between them, how do we know which of the two is causing the other; is X causing Y or is Y causing X. So if the argument concludes that X is causing Y, one way of weakening the argument is to show that it is actually Y that may be causing X.

For example:

Because Jason was very intelligent, he got admitted into Harvard.

So it's not that Jason became intelligent after going to Harvard but rather that he was intelligent which is why he could go to Harvard in the first place.

Therefore, if the argument in the stimulus is of the form A is causing B, then it can be weakened in the following two ways:

- i) By showing that C can also lead to B
- ii) By showing that it is not A that is causing B, but B that is causing A

Let's now look at a relevant example:

A study has found that new ventures that are funded through bank loans are more likely to succeed than those funded by an entrepreneur's friends and relatives. The reason for this is not difficult to fathom. The obligation to pay a fixed instalment to the bank every month prevents the entrepreneur from getting complacent and increases his motivation to succeed.

Which of the following raises the strongest doubt on the finding of the above study?

- (A) Banks only fund those business ventures that have a very high probability of succeeding.
- (B) The study also showed that some ventures that had been funded by an entrepreneur's friends and relatives were extremely successful.
- (C) Most entrepreneurs agree that the pressure of repaying the bank loans acts as a positive stimulus for them.
- (D) It is an accepted fact that only those entrepreneurs opt for bank funding who are unable to generate funds from personal sources.
- (E) According to a different study, there is a strong correlation between an entrepreneur's educational background and the nature of his business venture.

It's best to summarize cause and effect arguments in the form of a cause and an effect.

The Cause: Funding through bank loans.

The Effect: A high probability of success for a new venture.

As we saw earlier, there are two ways of weakening cause and effect arguments—either provide some other cause for the same effect or reverse the cause and the effect.

Option A reverses the cause and effect in the argument and is the correct answer. This option states that the cause was the business venture's high probability of success and the effect was funding provided by the bank. Had the bank felt that the venture may not succeed, it would not have funded the venture in the first place. So, it is not because of the bank funding that the venture succeeded but because the venture was going to succeed that the bank funded it.

Let's look at the other options for clarity:

- (A) The correct answer.
- The use of the word *some* does not tell you anything. Some ventures were successful and some were not. Had the option stated that *most* such ventures are very successful then it could have negated the argument (but this won't be the case because then the argument would be questioning the evidence itself, which can never happen).
- (C) This option actually strengthens the argument.
- (D) Under what conditions an entrepreneur opts for bank funding is of no consequence to the argument.
- The nature of the entrepreneur's business venture is of no consequence to the argument.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a difficult Causality Question from the OG 2016.

Representativeness

Representativeness arguments will involve arriving at a generalized conclusion for a large population based on a sample or survey of a small subset of that population.

Let us take a look at an example:

In response to a recent survey conducted by a newspaper in Quantos city, 70% of the respondents stated that they are very happy with the performance of the mayor and 20% stated that they are reasonably happy with the performance of the mayor. Only 10% of the respondents stated that they were unhappy with the performance of the mayor. So, it seems safe to conclude that the residents of Quantos City are in general happy with the mayor's performance.

Which of the following options most strongly weakens the above argument?

- (A) The mayor has been in the news a lot lately because of corruption charges that have been pressed against him.
- (B) The primary readership of the newspaper that conducted the survey comprises the economically well to do people, a demographic that makes up only 20% of the population of Quantos City.
- (C) The crime rate in Quantos City has not gone down during the term of the mayor.
- (D) The mayor is against the abolition of property tax in Quantos City whereas most of the residents of the city are in favour of such a move.
- (E) The survey is representative of the entire population of Quantos City.

The Conclusion

The residents of Quantos City are in general happy with the mayor's performance.

The Evidence

The majority of respondents to a survey have expressed satisfaction with the mayor's performance.

The Assumption

The assumption is where the representativeness factor will come into play. What if this survey was conducted only amongst the economically well off residents? It is possible then that the poorer residents of Quantos City may actually be unhappy with the mayor's performance, but their views haven't been taken into consideration at all in this survey. So for the argument to hold true, the author of the argument has to assume that the survey mentioned in the argument is representative of the opinion of the entire population of Quantos city. B questions this assumption and should be the correct answer.

Let's look at the other options as well for clarity.

- (A) The point still stands that a majority of the respondents to the survey have said that they are happy with the mayor's performance.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) Same as A.
- (D) Same as A. Why are people then saying that they are satisfied with the mayor's performance? Maybe this is not such a big issue for the people then.
- (E) This actually strengthens the argument by stating that the survey is absolutely correct.

In general, whenever you see the terms *survey*, *poll*, *research*, *study*, *etc.*, mentioned in the evidence of any argument, immediately question whether this survey/poll/research is representative of the larger population as a whole. This will always be the assumption in the argument.

Then if you have to strengthen the argument, you will have to show that the survey/poll/research is indeed representative of the larger population whereas if you have to weaken the argument you will have to show that the survey/poll/research may not be representative of the larger population.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling a difficult Representativeness Question from the OG 2016.

Arguments with Numbers

Number Arguments are a mix of Math and reasoning questions. These arguments will typically try to confuse you with their use of numbers.

Let us take a look at an example:

Last year, 300 undergrad students of Villa College managed to gain admission to the top ten graduate schools in the country. However, only 100 undergrad students of Havary College managed to gain admissions to these schools. Thus, if you wish to study in the country's top ten graduate schools, your chances are higher if you pursue your undergrad degree from Villa College than from Havary College.

The Evidence

300 undergrad students of Villa College gained admission into the country's top ten schools whereas only 100 undergrad students of Havary College gained admission to these schools.

The Conclusion

A student's chances of gaining admission into one of the country's top ten graduate schools are higher if he attends Villa College than if he attends Havary College.

On the face of it, this argument looks very plausible. After all 300 is a much greater number than 100. However, what if the total number of applicants from Villa College to the country's top ten graduate schools is 1000? Then, the probability of a student getting into one of these top schools is 0.3 or 30%. And what if the total number of applicants from Havary College to the country's top ten graduate schools is 200? Then the probability of a student getting into one of these top schools is 0.5 or 50%.

So the chances of a Havary College student getting into a top graduate school are higher than those of a Villa College student. But this fact will make our argument fall apart. This leads us to the assumption in the argument.

The Assumption

The assumption has to be that the number of applicants to the country's top graduate schools from Villa College and Havary College is the same. Only then can 300 reflect a higher probability than 100.

So, as you can see, number questions can be extremely confusing because the argument may appear completely logical to you at face value. It would help if you knew some common traps that the test makers use to create number argument questions:

i. A higher percentage could lead to a lower number and vice versa

You can only make sense of percentages when you have a total number given to you. Looking at percentages in isolation can distort your perception of the data.

In Year 1, the total radio sales in country X were 100,000 units and in Year 2, the total sales came down to 60,000 units. In Year 1,40 % of all radio sets sold were of Company A and in Year 2, this percentage increased to 60%

So you notice that even though Company A's share of the total radio sales increased from 40% to 60%, the total number of radio sets sold by Company A actually fell from 40,000 in Year 1 to 36,000 in Year 2.

ii. A higher number could lead to a lower percentage and vice versa

Again looking at absolute numbers, without taking into consideration the relevant percentages, can distort your perception of the data.

10 students who study from Professor Roberts scored in the 90th percentile in their tests whereas 60 students who study from Professor Brown scored in the 90th percentile in the same test.

From the above data you may infer that Professor Brown is perhaps a better teacher than is Professor Roberts. However, such an inference will be extremely erroneous because we don't know the total number of students taught by each of the Professors. If Professor Roberts taught only 20 students, then 50% of his students scored in the 90th percentile, and if Professor Brown taught 300 students, then only 20% of his students scored in the 90th percentile.

Tips for Making Inferences from Number Arguments:

- For any number argument question you need three details—the total number, the absolute number, and the percentage.
- If the stimulus contains percentages, avoid answer choices that contain absolute numbers.
- If the stimulus contains absolute numbers, avoid answer choices that contain percentages.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing the difference between a Necessary condition and a Sufficient condition.

To Sum it up

• Cause and Effect Argument

- o If the argument states that A is causing B, then there are two ways of weakening this:
 - Show that C could also cause B
 - Show that it is actually B that might be causing A

Representativeness

o Whenever the argument talks about a survey, research, study, etc., always check for the error of Representativeness

Number Arguments

• Will try to confuse you with absolute numbers and percentages

The Importance of Terminology on GMAT Critical Reasoning

The Usage of Some, Many, Most, and Majority

While you may think that there is not much difference between these terms, there actually is a big difference. Some or few means more than one but most means more than 50%. This can have a huge bearing when you get down to eliminating incorrect options.

Let us look at an example:

Four out of five students who study from Professor Larry score above 75% in their exams. So the credit for their excellent performance must go to Professor Larry.

Which of the following two options most strongly weakens the argument?

- 1. Some students who study from Professor Larry also take additional tuitions in the subject from Professor James.
- Most students who study from Professor Larry also take additional tuitions in the subject from Professor James.

The argument is in the form of a cause and effect argument where the cause is Professor Larry and the effect is students getting excellent scores in their exams. The easiest way to weaken such arguments is to provide an alternative explanation (cause) for the effect.

Both the above options provide you with an alternative explanation—the fact that students also took classes from Professor James, so maybe Professor James is the cause and not Professor Larry. So does this mean that both the options weaken the argument?

No, it doesn't.

Option one states that *some* students who study from Professor Larry also take classes in the same subject from Professor James. This doesn't tell you anything relevant because some students may be taking these extra classes and some may not. For example, say the total number of students who take classes from Professor Larry is 100 and 5 of them also take classes from Professor James.

Now, the argument tells you that on an average, 80 out of these 100 students (four out of five) score 75% or above in their exams. Then even if the five students who studied from Professor James scored well because of Professor James' teaching, how do you account for the remaining 75 students? It is still very probable that they performed well because of Professor Larry's teaching. So the use of *some* does not take you to the answer.

However, *most* means more than 50% so out of the 100 students who study from Professor Larry, if 51 also take classes from Professor James, then this definitely raises a doubt as to whether these students are doing well because of Professor Larry or Professor James. Thus, this option weakens the argument by providing an alternate explanation to the stated conclusion.

The takeaway is that words such as *some*, *many*, and few will rarely give you the answer; instead **look out for words such as** *most*, *majority*, *etc*.

However, don't follow this strategy as a blind rule. There is a situation in which *some* can give you the answer. Say an argument concludes that nobody in America uses wood fired stoves anymore. Now, if one of the answer choices were to say that a *few* or *some* people in America still use these stoves, then this option would definitely weaken the argument.



Scan this QR code to watch a video explaining the Importance of Terminology on GMAT Critical Reasoning Questions.

2. The Usage of 'not' in the Answer choices

This will be relevant only for **Assumption Questions**. As you saw earlier in the chapter on Assumptions, the use of *not* in one or more answer choices is an indicator that you may be looking at a passive assumption. Let's take a look at the previous argument once again:

Four out of five students who study from Professor Larry score above 75% in their exams. So the credit for their excellent performance must go to Professor Larry.

Which of the following is an assumption in the argument?

- 1. The fact that they study from Professor Larry is the only reason that his students do well in the exam.
- 2. The fact that most of the students who take classes from Professor Larry also take classes from Professor James is **not** the reason why these students perform well in the exams.

Option one is definitely assumed in the argument because there can be several other reasons why these students perform well in their exams—maybe they refer to several additional books, maybe they do more research on their own, etc. So for the argument to conclude that the cause of the students' good scores is Professor Larry, it has to assume that nothing else could be the cause of this.

How about option B? Interestingly, option B is also an assumption in the argument. This option logically follows from the earlier assumption. If the argument assumes that the only reason students do well is because they attend Professor Larry's classes, then it automatically also assumes that any other explanation for the said fact cannot be correct. Option B negates the possibility of one such explanation being true, so it is also an assumption in the argument.

Basically, option A is an active assumption and option B is a passive assumption.



Scan this QR code to watch a video discussing why you shouldn't let a high GMAT score make you complacent.

3. The Usage of EXCEPT in the Question Stem

If we were to ask you what is the opposite of a strengthen answer choice, what will you say? Most likely 'weaken'. It is this thought process that you will have to guard against in EXCEPT questions. Technically, the opposite of a strengthen answer choice will be an answer choice that does not strengthen. The fact that this answer choice does not strengthen does not necessarily imply that it will weaken the argument. It may just be an irrelevant fact, or it may be an inference, etc.

Therefore, if the question stem tells you that each of the given answer choice strengthens the argument EXCEPT, then you need to identify four answer choices that strengthen the argument and the remaining fifth answer choice will be the correct answer—this answer choice may or may not weaken the argument.

So, in EXCEPT questions, when you encounter an answer choice that looks irrelevant, don't eliminate it since this may be the correct answer; in fact, this answer choice will most likely be the correct answer.



Scan this QR code to watch a video tackling an EXCEPT Question from the OG 2016.

To Sum it up

- Answer choices containing terms such as *some* and *many* will rarely be correct
- Prefer answer choices with terms such as *most* and *majority*
- If the answer choices contains the word *not*, it might be a passive assumption or a passive strengthener
- Pay attention to the use of EXCEPT
 - o If four answer choices strengthen the argument, it is not necessary that the fifth will necessarily weaken it

SECTION 6 Critical Reasoning Practice Set

Aristotle Critical Reasoning Practice Set

1. Financial Expert: Our country has a very high debt-to-GDP ratio and it's difficult for a country with a high debt-to-GDP ratio to grow in a dynamic manner. Moreover, our debt is growing higher and that means inflation is getting worse. All in all, our country is badly managed these days.

Which of the following assertions is most strongly supported by the passage?

- High debt has an adverse impact on the inflation rate.
- (B) It is not possible for a badly managed country to grow in a dynamic manner.
- High level of debt is extremely detrimental to the growth of a country. (C)
- (D) Growing inflation is a sign of a badly managed country.
- (E) Whatever growth is happening in this particular country cannot possibly be called dynamic growth.
- 2. In the early 1960s, Myanmar was the richest country in Asia, but then it closed its economy to the outside world and is now the poorest country in the region. However, Myanmar is now opening up its economy to the outside world once again, and so will soon regain its former glory. Thus, it makes sense for smart investors to invest in Myanmar.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- A closed economy will rapidly deplete the financial resources of a country.
- (B) The countries that dealt with Myanmar in 1962 will still be interested in dealing with
- (C)If Myanmar does not open up its economy to the outside world, it will continue to remain poor.
- The severe internal unrest that has continued in Myanmar for the last several years is not responsible for its current financial state.
- (E) At least some smart investors are currently aware of Myanmar's past glory.
- 3. While critics have written off the APG company's new Model T chandelier, owing to its poor sales across the globe, the Model T is actually not a complete failure because it has managed to sell 10,000 pieces in Eastern Europe, a market in which rival companies haven't even managed to sell 5,000 pieces of their respective chandeliers.

Which of the following is assumed in the above argument?

- If a chandelier does not sell well in the Eastern European market, then it is a complete failure.
- (B) The Eastern European market is the biggest market for chandeliers.
- If a chandelier sells well in the Eastern European market, then it cannot be considered a complete failure.

- (D) The Model T is the only type of chandelier manufactured by the APG company.
- (E) If the Model T had not sold in good numbers in Eastern Europe, then it could have been considered a complete failure.
- 4. G. Bell Corporation, a manufacturer of mobile handsets, has claimed to have become the leading seller of mobile handsets, in terms of units sold, in the country. According to latest figures released by all the handset manufacturers in the country, G. Bell Corporation managed to sell 80 per cent of the total handsets that it manufactured during the year whereas the market leader, H. Wells Corporation, managed to sell only 50 per cent of its total handsets.

Which of the following identifies a flaw in G. Bell Corporation's reasoning?

- (A) It does not take into account H. Wells Corporation's huge book of advance orders for handsets that need to be shipped during the next year.
- (B) It incorrectly assumes that the current trend will continue into the next year as well.
- (C) It makes no comparison of the average price at which G. Bell Corporation sold its handsets and the average price at which H. Wells Corporation sold its handsets.
- (D) It does not take into account the total number of handsets sold by either manufacturer.
- (E) It does not take into account the total market size for mobile handsets in the country.
- 5. The supply of iron ore, the most important component in steelmaking, has been steadily declining in Marco city. This has forced steel manufacturing units in Marco city to source iron ore from far off mines leading to an increase in their transportation costs. Because transportation costs make up a large chunk of the total cost of steelmaking, the steel manufacturers in Marco city have had no option but to increase the selling price of their steel. This has, in turn, led to an increase in the retail price of utensils and other articles of daily use made of steel. Since the retail consumers now have to pay more for these steel items, while their earnings remain unchanged, they have decided to cut down on their non-essential expenditure such as that on movie tickets. This has led movie theatres in Marco city to reduce their ticket prices.

Which of the following provides the most support for the assertion that the prices of movie tickets in Marco city will continue to decline in future?

- (A) The people of Marco city will not be willing to cut down their expenditure on eating out.
- (B) After the inauguration of the Gold port Bridge, expected to happen very soon, the transportation costs to Marco city will be halved.
- (C) There are no blockbuster movies with stellar star casts lined up for release anytime soon.
- (D) The supply of iron ore to Marco city is expected to go down even more in the near future
- (E) Residents of Marco city view movie tickets as non-essential items of expenditure.

There are two ways in which an athlete can maximise his performance on the field—by 6. improving his physical stamina or by improving his mental stamina. Research has clearly shown that physical stamina is much more important than mental stamina in boosting an athlete's performance. Thus, if an athlete is working at improving his physical stamina, he is doing the most he can to maximise his performance on the field.

Which of the following most strengthens the above argument?

- According to another research, when athletes with comparable levels of mental stamina compete on the field, the one with the higher physical stamina invariably comes out the winner.
- A combination of physical and mental stamina cannot boost the performance of the (B) athlete any more than physical stamina can by itself.
- Critics of the researchers mentioned in the argument claim that these researchers considerably overestimate the importance of physical stamina in maximising the performance of an athlete.
- There are other aspects, apart from stamina, that also play a significant role in maximising the performance of an athlete on the field.
- If an athlete focuses more on developing his mental rather than physical stamina, he (E) is likely to perform poorly on the field.
- 7. According to a report by the American Staffing Federation (ASF), the government's new policy for the retail industry is likely to create 2 million jobs for fresh graduates over the next three years. The ASF has, thus, welcomed the government's move to implement this policy across the nation as its implementation will lead to a lowering of the national unemployment rate.

Which of the following, if true, would cast the most serious doubt on the accuracy of AFS' conclusion?

- Opponents of the policy will not allow the government to implement the policy (A) anytime soon.
- The new policy will result in a large number of uneducated workers becoming (B) redundant and, as a result, losing their jobs.
- There are several other ways of lowering the national unemployment rate available to the government.
- The nation faces more serious problems than unemployment and the government (D) should instead focus on resolving those first.
- The implementation of the new policy is going to cost the government a considerable (E) amount of money so the government will most likely increase corporate tax rates to recover this amount.
- It seems that employees at middle management positions who wish to get promoted to 8. senior management positions in their companies should start purchasing clothes from

leading fashion designers. In a recent survey of 1000 employees working at different senior management positions, as many as 80% stated that they only bought clothes from leading fashion designers.

Which of the following most weakens the argument?

- (A) The senior managers mentioned in the survey only started purchasing clothes from leading fashion designers after they became senior managers.
- (B) The clothes manufactured by leading fashion designers are usually very expensive and outside the reach of most middle level managers.
- (C) Most employees at senior management positions are no smarter than those at middle management positions.
- (D) Some employees do not manage to reach senior management positions, even though they wear clothes manufactured by leading fashion designers.
- (E) Wearing clothes manufactured by leading fashion designers can in some way improve the prospects of an employee getting promoted to the senior management positions.
- 9. According to those in favor of privatization of Social Security in the US, the current system is impossible to sustain. Decades ago, there were many more workers for every recipient but now the situation has reversed. Sooner or later, the fund will not be able to meet its obligations, because there will be more payments going out, than income coming in. Privatizing the system for the future recipients, while gradually phasing out the system for current and near-term recipients, is probably the best way to keep the system viable.

The answer to which of the following questions would be most useful in determining whether privatization of Social Security in the US would be a good idea?

- (A) Whether privatization has proved successful for other government provided services such as employee provident funds
- (B) Whether the population of the US is likely to increase significantly in the future
- (C) Whether the growth in the number of workers is the US is likely to outstrip the growth in the number of dependents in the future
- (D) Whether privatization of social security will lead to large scale protests by US citizens
- (E) Whether taking loans can help the Social Security system tide over the problem of reduction in funds coming into the system
- 10. Large corporations use several strategies to minimize their tax payments, without doing anything explicitly illegal. One such strategy involves the use of transfer pricing, when subsidiaries in different countries charge each other for goods or services *sold* within the group. This is particularly popular among technology and drug companies that have lots of intellectual property, the value of which is especially subjective. These intra-company royalty transactions are supposed to be arm's-length, but are often priced to minimise profits in high-tax countries and maximise them in low-tax ones.

If the above statements are true, then which of the following could be a strategy adopted by a company that wants to get the maximum benefit out of transfer pricing?

- (A) Sell products, at low prices, to its subsidiary located in a high tax rate country
- (B) Charge its subsidiary, located in a low tax rate country, higher prices for products sold
- (C) Pay its subsidiary, located in a high tax rate country, high prices for products bought
- (D) Pay its subsidiary, located in a low tax rate country, low prices for products bought
- (E) Pay its subsidiary, located in a low tax rate country, high prices for products bought
- 11. Mr. Ice sells ice cream for \$1 each. Mr. Freeze sells a different ice cream for \$3 each. On one Sunday, at the end of the day's business, Mr Ice had sold three times as many ice creams as Mr Freeze. Interestingly, they had both also made the same amount of profit for that day.

Which of the following can be inferred from the above statements?

- The total cost incurred by Mr Freeze for that day was three times that incurred by Mr Ice.
- (B) Mr Ice's ice cream is more popular than Mr. Freeze's ice cream.
- The total cost incurred by Mr Ice for that day was three times that incurred by Mr. Freeze.
- Mr Freeze's ice cream sells in smaller numbers because of its higher selling price.
- Both Mr Ice and Mr Freeze incurred the same costs for that day. (E)
- 12. The main purpose of business is to maximise shareholder value over the long term by selling goods or services. Thus, employees who use funds for anything other than to increase their sales are simply cheating the shareholders.

Which of the following is an assumption made in drawing the conclusion above?

- Most business owners would agree with the above definition of the purpose of a business.
- (B) Increasing sales is not the only way to maximise shareholder value.
- (C) Spending money on making the workplace more comfortable for employees will not lead to increased worker productivity and in turn increased business profits.
- (D) The only function of a business is to maximise returns for its shareholders.
- (E) According to this definition, many employees could be accused of cheating.
- 13. The Bakers football team has been struggling for form all through the past two years in which it has not even managed to reach the semi-finals of any major football tournament. To arrest this decline, the team management has now decided to reappoint its former coach, Charles Keith, who had been sacked two years back.

Which of the following options gives reason to believe that the team management's strategy may not work?

- (A) Several of the team's most successful players have left the team in the past two years.
- (B) The team has been receiving a lot of negative press for its poor performance in the past two years.
- (C) Charles Keith had been sacked two years ago by the team management on account of corruption charges, which couldn't eventually be proved.
- (D) The team that Charles Keith has been coaching for the past two years hasn't been performing really well either.
- (E) The continuous string of poor performances has led to a loss of morale among several of the members of the football team.
- 14. A jewellery manufacturer produces rings in two metals—gold and platinum. The manufacturer has noted that, over the last three years, the gold rings have consistently outsold the platinum ones by a large margin, even though the designs available in both the metals are exactly the same. This has led the manufacturer to conclude that consumers prefer gold to platinum.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument?

- (A) Over the last three years, diamond rings have outsold both gold and platinum ones.
- (B) Jewellery buyers give more importance to design than to the metal used.
- (C) Platinum is easier to maintain than is gold.
- (D) Platinum rings take longer to produce than do gold rings.
- (E) Gold rings cost considerably less than do platinum ones.
- 15. It is not correct on the part of the district administration to ban the sport of drag racing. After all, only 50 people have been injured in the last one year while drag racing whereas more than 400 people have been injured while playing baseball. The administration should, thus, ban baseball instead.

The argument above is flawed because:

- (A) It compares two different types of sports.
- (B) It does not take into account the treatment cost of the injuries.
- (C) It fails to take into account the total number of people who drag race and the total number of people who play baseball.
- (D) It does not take into account injuries caused in other sports such as boxing.
- (E) It uses inaccurate data to support its conclusion.

Almost all arguments against the theory of evolution stem from the fact that it is very 16. difficult to prove how a group of non-living elements can combine together and give rise to life. However, just because something cannot be proved with certainty today doesn't mean that the possibility isn't there. Remember, there was a time when almost the whole world believed the Earth was the centre of the universe until Galileo came by and proved otherwise.

The statements above, if true, best support which of the following assertions?

- At one point of time, Galileo was the only person who believed that the earth was not the centre of the universe.
- (B) A majority of scientists do not agree with the theory of evolution.
- It is difficult to prove the theory of evolution with certainty.
- When Galileo stated that the sun and not the earth was the centre of the universe, he was called insane by his compatriots.
- (E) Everything that, at one time, seems impossible will, at some point in the future, become possible.
- 17. 30 years ago, residents of Pandora County used to buy an average of 10 books every year. Today the residents of Pandora County buy an average of three books every year. Therefore, it can be concluded that book sales in Pandora County must have fallen over these 30 years.

The argument above rests on which of the following assumptions?

- The residents of Pandora County used to have more free time 30 years ago than they do now.
- (B) The residents of Pandora County have many more activities that vie for their attention today than 30 years back.
- (C)The population of Pandora County hasn't increased significantly in the last 30 years.
- (D) The literacy rate hasn't significantly changed in Pandora County over the past 30
- (E) Those residents of Pandora County who used to read 30 years ago have now not become too old to read.

18.	Which of th	ne following	most logical	ly completes	the argument	below?
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A new palm vein scanning technology is being developed by scientists that could be used
with laptops or other tablet devices. This technology involves the use of a biometric sensor
that can scan the unique pattern of veins in a person's palm to verify their identity. This
technology could do away with the problem of remembering multiple passwords to access
different websites. However, the technology would require new biometric sensors to be built
into computers but this should not be a hindrance in the success of the new technology,
because .

- (A) the new technology is bound to be extremely popular with computer users
- (B) the biometric sensors do not cost a lot of money and are available in plentiful supply
- (C) most people have forgotten one or more of their passwords at some point in their lives
- (D) there is almost always a market for innovations such as these
- (E) the biometric sensors can be easily and cost effectively built into computers

19.	Those who claim that the Kribki Company is poorly managed often cite, as evidence, the
	fact that the Kribki Company has twice as many complaints listed against it on a popular
	complaint website than its nearest competitor. However, this data does not necessarily prove
	that the Kribki Company is poorly managed because

Which of the following best completes the argument above?

- (A) the Kribki Company also has a lot of loyal customers who have great things to say about it
- (B) the website on which the complaints are listed started operations only one year ago whereas the Kribki Company has been in the business for more than three decades
- (C) the Kribki Company has twice as many people manning its customer service department than its nearest competitor
- (D) the Kribki Company has six times as many customers as its nearest competitor
- (E) the Kribki Company does eventually manage to resolve the complaints of most of its customers
- 20. Angel dusting is a process wherein an ingredient, which would be beneficial in a reasonable quantity, is instead added by manufacturers to their products in an insignificant quantity so that they can make the claim that their product contains that ingredient, and mislead the consumer into expecting that they will gain the benefit of that ingredient. For example, a cereal may claim it contains "10 essential vitamins and minerals", but the amounts of each may be only 1% or less of the Reference Daily Intake, providing virtually no benefit or nutrition.

If the above statements are true, which of the following could be an example of Angel dusting?

- (A) A laptop that claims to have the longest battery backup, actually has a backup just 10% longer than is provided by its closest competitor.
- (B) A book that claims to cover all the concepts of Organic Chemistry actually provides just one example of each concept.
- (C) A vitamin capsule that claims to contain 23 vitamins and amino acids contains less than 3% of each.

- A protein shake that claims to contain a magic ingredient that can make muscles grow faster, only contains 20% of this ingredient's daily recommended intake.
- (E)An apartment that claims to have used Italian marble for its flooring has used exactly one slab of Italian marble and the remaining ninety-nine slabs of regular marble
- 21. In the year 2000, olive oils made up just 40% of the liquid oils market, with standard oils taking 52% and speciality oils accounting for the remainder. But now, fuelled by health concerns and a general move towards premium products, the tables have turned. Today, the olive oil sector is worth some \$104 million and alone accounts for an estimated 51% of the total market.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) In 2000, the total worth of the olive oil sector was less than \$104 million.
- (B) The total sales of the standard oils at present time are lower than their sales in 2000.
- (C) Olive oil is healthier than all other liquid oils available in the market.
- (D) The market share of the standard oils category today must have declined from what it was in 2000.
- (E) The total worth of the specialty oil category today is higher than what it was in 2000.
- 22. The consumption of tobacco in the country has fallen drastically in the past one year. During the same period of time, the government has been running a sustained advertising campaign to educate citizens about the ill effects of chewing tobacco. Thus, the government's advertising campaign has proved to be a resounding success.

Which of the following options most weakens the argument above?

- (A) The government has had to spend a huge amount of money on this advertising campaign, an amount that it will eventually recover from the general public in the form of new taxes.
- (B) More and more tobacco consumers in the past one year have now shifted to consuming relatively harmless substances such as chewing gum.
- (C) The consumption of alcoholic drinks has increased in the country in the past one year.
- (D)Tobacco prices have more than tripled in the country in the past one year.
- (E) All the major tobacco companies are still in business in the country.
- 23. Jim Rogers: It's very difficult for foreigners to do business in India because India doesn't like foreigners and keeps them away. The biggest proof of this is Walmart, which has many stores in China, but not a single fully-owned store in India, simply because India doesn't like overseas businessmen.

Which of the following is an assumption made in drawing the conclusion above?

- (A) There is nothing that can make India like foreign businessmen.
- (B) The fact that Walmart has many stores in China proves that China loves foreigners.
- (C) The limited size of the Indian market hasn't stopped Walmart from entering India.
- (D) Any foreign company other than Walmart is also not present in India.
- (E) China's policies are probably more favourable towards foreigners than are India's policies.
- 24. Which of the following most logically completes the argument?

- (A) that all the seats at the back of the plane haven't already been booked
- (B) that the plane will be flying over the Sahara desert
- (C) that the plane is manufactured by Boeing and has been part of the test described in the stimulus
- (D) that the plane does not crash on its tail
- (E) that these results apply to airplane crashes in general, and not just to those of old 727s into sand.
- 25. According to some people, income tax should be done away with in the US since there are several other ways to collect taxes. A few countries in Europe have successfully abolished income taxes by raising other taxes such as sales tax. Of course, this makes products more expensive but with the added amount of money you would receive on your paycheck, you will still be better off than you were paying income taxes.

Which of the following, if true, provides the most support for the argument above?

- (A) The prices of products in European countries, when converted into US dollars at current rates are very similar to their prices in the United States.
- (B) The increase in prices of products because of the increased sales tax rate will not more than offset the benefit of not paying any income taxes.
- (C) The legislative body in the United States has stated that it will support the move to abolish income tax.
- (D) Apart from increasing sales tax, the government can also increase other special taxes such as those on petroleum products.
- (E) The government has enough funds in reserve currently to be able to absorb any shock because of lowered tax collection.

26. The reason for Kim's excellent performance in her final college tests is that she used to study for eight hours every day.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- The fact that Kim took classes from the Teaching Company is not the reason for her excellent performance in her college tests.
- In addition to studying for eight hours every day, Kim also did not miss a single class in her college.
- In addition to her excellent performance in the college tests, Kim also won several awards for her performance in extracurricular activities such as debates and dramatics.
- (D) Both of Kim's parents are geniuses.
- (E) Some of Kim's friends, who used to study for much less duration than her, also performed very well on their final college tests.
- 27. A study of 1000 American citizens has found that 70 per cent of them would not work for a company with bad reputation even if they were unemployed and that nearly 90 per cent of them would consider leaving their current jobs if they were offered another role with a company that had an excellent corporate reputation. Of those willing to work for a company with a bad reputation, the research found that, on average, it would take doubling an employee's salary for them to make such a jump.

If the statements above are true, which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by them?

- At least 10% of the people in the survey would not mind working for a company with a bad reputation but would also consider leaving their current jobs to join another company with excellent corporate reputation.
- The survey is representative of the worker pool across the United States.
- (C) At least 25% of the people in the survey would agree to do an unethical act if their salary was substantially increased.
- For US workers, higher salary takes precedence over the reputation of the company they work for.
- If a company in the US expects to attract the best talent, it must either have an excellent corporate reputation or be ready to pay high salaries.
- One way in which companies can increase their productivity is by making use of 28. telecommuting. Many office workers waste a lot of time in their cars or other modes of road transport every morning trying to reach office, and a lot of them spend their day attending video conferences and typing emails, activities which could easily be carried out from the comfort of their homes. So it makes sense for companies to encourage their employees to use telecommuting services and work from home rather than travel to the office every day.

In order to evaluate the above argument, it would be useful to determine each of the following EXCEPT:

- (A) Whether the cost of telecommuting will more than offset the increased productivity that comes about from its use
- (B) Whether the day to day work of most companies involves physical interaction amongst their employees
- (C) Whether a large part of the work of an average employee can be conducted using telecommuting services
- (D) Whether the use of telecommuting service will lead to increased revenues for the companies adopting this service
- (E) Whether the general traffic situation is likely to dramatically improve in the future
- 29. Buyers of used cars must love the color white. Of all the used cars sold in the country this year, as many as 60% were white.

Which of the following most weakens the argument?

- (A) The color white is easier to maintain and hides scratches really well, unlike other colors such as black.
- (B) White has been the most preferred car color of new car buyers in the country for several decades now.
- (C) The prices of used cars do not vary on the basis of the color of the cars.
- (D) There are more new cars sold in the country than used cars.
- (E) The huge depreciation costs on new cars make it very attractive to buy used cars in the country.
- 30. Researchers have found that one in five patients hospitalized for heart attack experiences a major depression. According to the cardiologists who conducted the research, the depressed patients are 55 percent more likely than other heart attack patients to need hospital care for a heart problem again within a year and three times as likely to die from a future attack or other heart-related conditions.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) If a person dies of a heart attack, there is a high probability that he may have been suffering from depression as well.
- (B) If a patient needs to be re-hospitalised for a heart related problem within a year of his earlier heat attack, it is very likely that he may be suffering from depression.
- (C) There are some similarities between symptoms of depression and symptoms of a heart attack in a patient.
- (D) Depressed people are more likely to die of a heart attack than are people who do not suffer from depression.

- Suffering from a heart attack can lead to depression in some people.
- 31. To prevent the incidence of highway robberies, the government of Baptesia formed a Highway Patrol Force two years back whose sole task was to patrol the country's highways and prevent highway robberies. Ever since the formation of the Highway Patrol Force, there have been only a handful of highway robberies and the individual losses suffered in these robberies were far less than the expenses incurred on maintaining the Highway Patrol Force. The government of Baptesia should, thus, disband the Highway Patrol Force and provide compensation to victims of highway robberies instead.

The above argument is flawed because:

- It ignores the fact that the presence of the Highway Patrol Force could be the reason for the small number of highway robberies in the past two years.
- It unjustifiably assumes that the government has enough money to pay compensation to the victims of highway robberies.
- It ignores the possibility that the Highway Patrol Force could be used for other purposes instead of being disbanded.
- It makes use of unverified facts to arrive at a conclusion.
- It does not consider data from other countries that have similar task forces before arriving at its conclusion.
- 32. A recent survey of buyers of luxury cars in Beecham city has revealed that males who are between 40 and 50 years of age and who live in the Southern part of the city are more likely to buy these cars than is any other demographic group in the city. Maxpages is a magazine that contains articles primarily relevant to males in the age group of 40 to 50 years and is circulated only in the Southern part of Beecham city. Using the findings of this survey, Terence, who owns two luxury car showrooms in Beecham city, has decided to advertise in the Maxpages magazine.

Which of the following would be most useful to know in determining whether Terence should advertise in the Maxpages magazine?

- What is the exact number of luxury cars that were sold in all of Beecham city in the last one year?
- (B) What percent of the total car market is the luxury car market in Beecham city?
- Do women and children play a major role in determining which luxury car to buy? (C)
- (D)Is the luxury car market in Beecham city expected to grow over the next few years?
- (E) Would it be cheaper to advertise in some other magazine that is targeted at people of all age groups?

33. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

A study was recently conducted to determine whether power lines caused some kind of negative health effects. The researchers surveyed everyone living within 200 meters of high-voltage power lines over a 15-year period and looked for statistically significant increases in rates of over 1000 ailments. The study found that the incidence of childhood leukaemia was four times higher among those who lived closest to the power lines. However, this statistic by itself should not be a cause for alarm, because _______.

- (A) childhood leukemia can also be caused by other genetic factors
- (B) another study has found that most of the children who suffer from childhood leukemia stay far away from power lines
- (C) the number of potential ailments, that is, over 1000, was so large that it created a high probability that at least one ailment would exhibit statistically significant difference just by chance alone
- (D) there was no significant correlation between the other 999 diseases and how close to power lines a person stayed
- (E) childhood leukaemia, unlike leukaemia in adults, can be cured by medicines and therapy and is rarely fatal
- 34. The mayor of Newtown is up for re-election in a month's time and is extremely apprehensive of his chances. According to a recent survey conducted by a news channel in Hampstead, Newtown's most populous suburb, more than 80 percent of the respondents stated that they would not vote for the current mayor.

The mayor's apprehensions are based on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) The people who were part of the survey will in no case change their mind.
- (B) The opinion of the residents of Hampstead is a pretty accurate representation of the opinion of the residents of Newtown as a whole.
- (C) The mayor was recently involved in a corruption scandal that received a lot of negative publicity in the print media.
- (D) The mayor did not do enough to help the victims of the hurricane that struck Newtown last year.
- (E) In the last three elections for the post of the mayor in Newtown, the incumbent mayor has never been re-elected to office.
- 35. According to a nationwide survey of college students, 70% of the students who major in Science in high school were likely to pursue an engineering degree in college. Interestingly, according to the same survey, 70% of the students pursuing an engineering degree in college had not majored in science in high school.

Which of the following inferences is best supported from the above statements?

- (A) The number of students who studied science in high school is the same as the number of students who are pursuing an engineering degree in college but who did not major in science in high school.
- (B) There are more students pursuing science in high school than there are students pursuing science in colleges in the country.
- A student's major in high school has no impact on the specialization she chooses to pursue in college.
- There are more students pursuing an engineering degree who had taken up a nonscience major in high school than there are students pursuing an engineering degree who had majored in science in school.
- 30% of the students pursuing an engineering degree in the country had taken up a non-science major in high school.
- 36. Customer reviews are becoming a fixture on retail and consumer brand websites, with over 70% of retailers planning to feature them by the end of the year. The accelerated adoption of customer reviews indicates a more enlightened approach to handling negative comments, that is, the acknowledgment that occasional negative reviews do not hurt sales.

Under which of the following conditions is the above strategy likely to backfire?

- (A) The quality of the product in question is so poor that a customer is not likely to buy it in the first place.
- (B) There are frequent negative reviews for a product.
- (C) The 20% of the retailers who do not launch this feature decide to offer huge discounts on their products.
- (D) The customers of a product never come to know about the existence of this feature on the product website.
- (E) It costs retailers a considerable sum of money to implement this feature on their respective websites.
- 37. All the winners of the Great Indian Derby in the past 60 years have been horses that have been in the racing circuit for at least two years. While nobody knows for sure what the correlation between the two is, it remains beyond doubt that the winner of the Great Indian Derby will always be a horse that has been competing in races for at least two years.

Which of the following can be inferred from the above statements?

- (A) If a horse has been competing in races for two years or more, it will definitely win the Great Indian Derby.
- (B) The Great Indian Derby is more competitive than other horse races in the country.
- (C) The experience that comes as part of being active in the racing circuit for at least two years plays a valuable role in making a horse victorious in the Great Indian Derby.

- (D) It is possible, on the off chance, for a horse to win the Great Indian Derby even if it has not been active in the racing circuit for at least two years.
- (E) If a horse has not been part of the racing circuit for at least two years, it will not win the Great Indian Derby.
- 38. For the past two decades, Eton Coaching Institute has been the market leader in preparing students for the entrance test to medical schools in the country. While several new players have set up shop in the last few years, and have shown good results, it remains without doubts that if a student wishes to ace the medical school entrance test, his best chances are with Eton Coaching Institute.

The statements above, if true, best support which of the following assertions?

- (A) There is something unique about the books provided by the Eton Coaching Institute that makes its students perform very well in the medical school entrance test.
- (B) If a student does not join the Eton Coaching Institute, he will most likely fail to clear the medical school entrance test.
- (C) The teachers at Eton Coaching Institute are probably better than those at other institutes.
- (D) A student could clear the medical school entrance test, even if he hasn't prepared with the Eton Coaching Institute.
- (E) If a student has prepared with the Eton Coaching Institute, he will clear the medical school entrance test.
- 39. It is extremely unlikely that the incumbent governor will be voted back to office in the coming elections. According to a recent survey of residents of the state, more than 80% expressed dissatisfaction with the governor's performance and almost 60% stated that they would vote for the governor's opponent.

Which of the following most strongly supports the argument?

- (A) The views of most of the state's residents are in concordance with the views of the survey's respondents.
- (B) The governor has received a lot of bad publicity in the past owing to his involvement in a corruption scandal.
- (C) The survey only covered a small fraction of the state's populace.
- (D) The governor's opponent is very popular amongst the residents of the state.
- (E) The newspapers in the state are against the governor and favor his opponent instead.
- 40. The decision to ban the use of hands-free mobile phone headsets while driving is not justified. There is no doubt that mobile phone use while driving is distracting and dangerous. However, it is dangerous because drivers use their hands and eyes to operate the phone,

when their full physical attention should be on the road. Hands-free technologies allow for mobile phone use without such distractions, and these options should remain legal.

Which of the following, if true, undermines the argument above?

- The functioning of the eyes and the hands is governed by the brain and there is considerable evidence to show that the use of mobile phones distracts the brain.
- (B) Most good quality hands free headsets are expensive which will discourage people from buying them.
- Just because something is legal does not necessarily mean that it is safe.
- There have been some incidents of road accidents involving drivers who were talking on the mobile phones using hands-free technology while driving at the time of the accident.
- (E) There are other technologies available, such as the use of Bluetooth to connect one's mobile phone to the car's speaker system, that are much safer than the use of handsfree devices.
- Researchers from a data analysis firm have found that the three most popular 41. combinations—1234, 1111, and 0000—account for close to 20 percent of all four-digit passwords. The researchers also found that every four-digit combination that starts with 19, ranks above the 80th percentile in popularity, with those in the upper 1900s coming in the highest. Also quite common are combinations in which the first two digits are between 01 and 12 and the last two are between 01 and 31.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) The password 1922 will most likely be less popular than 1981.
- (B) The password 0123 will most probably be more common than 2331.
- (C) If a password was to be selected from a random list of 100 four digit passwords, there is a very high possibility that it will be 1234, 1111, or 0000.
- One out of three four digit passwords will be 1234, 1111, or 0000.
- (E) Passwords starting with the digits 19 are more popular than those starting with 21.
- 42. A tricktykart is similar to a bicycle in that a rider uses pedals to propel it ahead. However, since it has three wheels and not two, a tricktykart cannot technically be considered a bicycle and, thus, tricktykart manufacturers cannot avail of the tax exemptions available to bicycle manufacturers.

Which of the following is assumed in the argument?

- Since a tricktykart is very difficult to topple over, it is particularly useful for handicapped people and for those lacking a sense of balance.
- (B) Given the similarities between it and a bicycle, a tricktykart should, in fact, be considered a bicycle.

- (C) Any self-propelled vehicle that has more than two wheels cannot be considered a bicycle.
- (D) The government should make an exemption in the case of a tricktykart, given its importance for handicapped people, and provide tricktykart manufacturers with tax concessions.
- (E) A tricktykart cannot run on two wheels.
- 43. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

Over the years, supporters of slavery have put forward several view-points to rationalize their belief. One such argument states that some people are meant to be slaves as part of the natural order of the universe, or as part of God's plan, and it is wrong to interfere with this by abolishing slavery. However, such an argument is flawed, because it fails to take into account the fact that _______.

- (A) slavery is a cruel practice that does not find much favor with most people in the world
- (B) just because something is part of God's plan does not mean it is the morally correct thing to do
- (C) slavery is considered illegal in almost all the countries of the world
- (D) there exist no certain criteria to distinguish between natural slaves and those who should not be enslaved
- (E) just because something is meant to be does not mean that it has to be
- 44. The list of the highest paying cities in the world is headed by cities in Switzerland. This serves to reaffirm the fact that people in Western European cities on average earn three times more than those in Eastern Europe. The fact that, in Switzerland, deductions from salary are relatively low, further widens the gap between net wage level earned there and in other countries, especially in the rest of Western Europe. The largest wage differences are in Asia, where the highest value (Tokyo) is twelve times higher than the lowest (Delhi).

Which of the following can properly be inferred from the statements above?

- (A) The Swiss pay less money in taxes than do people in the rest of Western Europe.
- (B) Delhi is the poorest city in the Asian continent.
- (C) The wage difference between the richest and poorest cities of Eastern Europe is less than twelve times.
- (D) Switzerland is not situated in Western Europe.
- (E) Tokyo has more rich people than does Delhi.
- 45. The perceived value of goods and services, rather than just their price, is becoming an increasingly prominent factor in the purchase decisions of modern consumers, a new report

has indicated. Thus, it can be concluded that consumers will be increasingly willing to spend extra on goods and services that are high-quality and durable.

For the above statements to be true, which of the following must be true?

- The price of a product plays no role in the making of purchase decisions by modern (A) consumers.
- (B) There is a positive relation between the quality of a product and its durability.
- (C) The modern consumer is not likely to allow the quality of a product to determine his purchase decision.
- The ideal way for manufacturers to charge more for their products is to increase the perceived value of their products in the minds of the modern consumer.
- (E) The durability of a product is in some way related to its perceived value in the minds of modern consumers.
- Companies X and Y have decided to enter into a joint venture to conduct mining operations 46. together. As per the terms of the agreement, all metals that are unearthed will go to Company X and all non-metals will go to Company Y. Thus, all the Zinconium that is dug out should go to Company Y.

Which of the following most strengthens the argument?

- Zinconium sells for very high prices in the international market.
- (B) The processing of Zinconium requires specialised machinery that is already available with Company Y.
- (C)The agreement between the two companies has no provision of sharing any of the resources that are dug out.
- In terms of its chemical properties, Zinconium has more characteristics in common with non-metals than with metals.
- (E)Company Y will bear a larger proportion of the total cost of conducting the mining operations than will Company X.
- 47. The 17 countries of the Eurozone are all united by one currency—the euro, but that doesn't mean that there aren't price disparities in the continent. A sum of 20 Euros can buy you 35 cups of coffee in Portugal but only seven cups of coffee in Greece. The same amount of money can get you 16 cartons of eggs in Malta, but only seven cartons of eggs in Ireland.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) On an average, a cup of coffee costs more in Portugal than in Greece.
- (B) A carton of eggs costs more in Malta than in Ireland.
- (C)Price disparities are an unusual phenomenon in the countries of the Eurozone.
- The cost of a cup of coffee in Greece is the same as that of a carton of eggs in Ireland.

- (E) Portugal is a cheaper country to stay in than is Greece.
- 48. John, a stock broker, has a list of companies whose shares he recommends his clients to invest in. Over the past one year, the share price of 20 companies listed on the stock exchange has appreciated by 100% or more and 16 of these companies are part of John's list. Thus John claims that he is an expert at picking stocks and that more and more investors should park their funds with him to get the maximum return on their investment.

The answer to which of the following questions would be most important in determining whether an investor should park his funds with John?

- (A) How many companies are there on John's list?
- (B) Whether any other stock broker has also showed similar or better performance last year?
- (C) What is the total number of companies listed on the stock exchange?
- (D) Has John shown similar results in the previous years as well?
- (E) Does John hire the services of someone else to identify stocks in which his clients should invest?
- 49. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

- (A) a reduction in car use does not necessarily indicate a reduction in car sales.
- (B) fears about smog and global warming have led many people in rich countries to prefer the use of public transport to that of private cars.
- (C) fuel prices are expected to increase further in the next few years.
- (D) there are several new car launches lined up in rich countries over the next couple of years
- (E) relatively poorer countries will then probably generate even lower car sales.
- 50. According to the results of a new ground-breaking research, those who wake up early in the morning are generally more alert during the day than those who wake up late. Thus, companies should insist that all their employees wake up early so that they remain alert all through the day.

Which of the following is an assumption in the above argument?

(A) People who wake up early in the morning will not get lethargic during the day.

- (B) It is a good idea for employees to remain alert during the day.
- (C) Alert employees are generally more productive than lethargic ones.
- (D) An alert nature does not cause people to wake up early in the morning.
- (E) Lethargy can be cured in other ways as well such as by having a cup of strong coffee.
- 51. According to a recent survey conducted in the US, about 52.5 percent of Americans are now owners of at least some type of mobile phone devices. Interestingly, the same survey also found that 66 percent of the Asian community in the US owns smart phones, making them the leading users of such devices in the country.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) More Asians own mobile phones than Americans.
- (B) The Asian community owns the maximum number of mobile phones in the US.
- (C) Almost half the population of the US does not own smart phones.
- (D)Feature phones sell more in the US than do smart phones.
- (E) The Asian community in the US is very well off which is why they can afford the more expensive smart phones.
- 52. The Georgetown Public School recommends that all its students take an active interest in playing chess. This is because, according to a recent medical study, those students who played chess on an average performed better in tests of general intelligence than those who did not play chess. Thus, the school contends that playing chess will boost up the intelligence of its students.

Which of the following raises the most serious doubt about the conclusion above?

- Some students who perform well in tests of general intelligence do not play chess.
- (B) Intelligent students are the only ones who take an interest in playing chess.
- (C) A similar correlation has not been observed with regards to other sports such as baseball.
- (D)Some of the students who play chess perform poorly in subjects such as History.
- (E) There can be other ways in which a student could develop intelligence.
- 53. George: The anti-drunk driving campaigns will not be successful. Some people are just immune to these campaigns and will drink and drive no matter what.

Shelly: Complete eradication of drunk driving is not the expected outcome. The goal is reduction.

Shelly responds to George by:

- (A) questioning the veracity of George's evidence
- (B) suggesting that George's conclusion is based on incorrect assumptions
- (C) partially agreeing with George's main conclusion but disagreeing with his reasoning
- (D) partially agreeing with George's point of view but suggesting that he has overlooked a beneficial effect
- (E) contradicting George's reasoning and supplying an alternative reasoning
- 54. Modern renditions of classic novels such as *Ulysses* can sometimes not be appropriate for reading by children or young adults because of the amount of inappropriate content that is added to these novels by the publishers. However, ABC publishers do not add any inappropriate content to their novels. Therefore, parents who want their children to enjoy literary classics, yet at the same time wish to keep their children away from inappropriate content, can buy them books published by ABC publishers.

Which of the following most strengthens the above argument?

- (A) Apart from inappropriate content, ABC publishers do not add anything else to their books that might make these books unsuitable for reading by children.
- (B) ABC Publishers is one of the most reputed publishing houses in the country known for its strong ethical and moral code.
- (C) Some inappropriate content might not be as bad for children as some other.
- (D) The literary classics published by ABC publishers do not by themselves contain any inappropriate content that parents do not wish to expose their children to.
- (E) Children are not exposed to inappropriate content from other sources apart from books.
- 55. The proposal requiring mutual fund companies to set aside a part of their fee for investor education is laudable but meaningless. The challenge actually lies in finding the right ways of educating investors and making them financially literate.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the argument?

- (A) People looking to invest in mutual funds currently lack the knowledge to make informed decisions.
- (B) Most mutual funds have accumulated large reserves of cash for investor education.
- (C) Investing in mutual funds is very different from investing in other financial instruments such as shares and debentures.
- (D) Financially literate customers, on the whole, provide more business to mutual fund companies than do financially ignorant ones.
- (E) Activities aimed at educating customers cost a lot of money and most mutual funds do not have the cash reserves to conduct such activities.

There are only two kinds of fruits that can be grown on a large scale in Nashvin County— 56. bananas and oranges. The unique climate of Nashville County is of particular benefit to the orange trees and as a result, the total number of oranges that can be grown in one year in Nashville County is three times the number of bananas that can be grown in a year. However, most orchard owners still focus on growing more banana trees than orange trees.

Which of the following best explains the paradox highlighted above?

- While the demand for oranges in the domestic market is low, the export demand for oranges is huge.
- (B) The selling price of a dozen bananas is at least 6 times that of a dozen oranges.
- The amount of fertilizer required by banana trees and orange trees is more or less the (C) same.
- (D) It takes less manpower to pluck ripe oranges from trees than it does to pluck bananas.
- Most orchard owners in other neighbouring counties also focus more on growing bananas than on growing oranges.
- 57. In an election, Candidate A received 70% of the total votes cast and Candidate B received the remaining 30% of the total votes cast. Thus, Candidate A was declared the winner. Candidate B has disputed the results of the election saying that he is much more popular with the public than is Candidate A.

Which of the following, if true, most helps to explain why Candidate B lost the election, despite being more popular than Candidate A?

- The public has been opposed to some of the policies of candidate B.
- Candidate A had recently been in the news because of his involvement in a corruption (B) scandal.
- Most of candidate B's supporters are factory workers whose work shift time clashes with the time of the day when election votes can be cast.
- The voting was conducted in an extremely fair manner with no incidents of cheating reported from anywhere.
- (E) Candidate A spent more time canvassing for votes than did Candidate B.
- 58. The airfares on almost all routes in the country have increased considerably in the past six months. In fact, on some routes, the fares have as much as doubled from what they were six months earlier. Since there has been no significant increase in the number of fliers in the country in the last six months, the media has blamed cartelization in the airline industry for this rapid increase in fares.

Which of the following, if true, undermines the argument above?

- The media is known to sensationalize events of public importance to gain more readership/viewership.
- (B) The airfares on some routes have actually fallen over the past six months.

- (C) Two of the six airline companies operating within the country have shut down operations in the last six months.
- (D) The price of aviation fuel increased drastically two years back and has remained at that level since then.
- (E) Other neighbouring countries have also seen similar rise in air fares but nobody has accused the airline companies in those countries of cartelization.
- 59. Clerical workers show more signs of stress during the work day than those in executive or higher positions. According to the findings of a study, employees on the lower levels of job hierarchy had higher blood pressure and increased heart rate in the mornings. They also had higher average levels of the stress hormone Cortisol throughout the day.

Each of the following is an assumption in the argument, EXCEPT:

- (A) The study is representative of all employees in general.
- (B) High blood pressure cannot be caused by factors other than stress.
- (C) The hormone Cortisol does not itself cause stress.
- (D) Increased heart rate is a sign of stress.
- (E) The higher average salary and, in general, better lifestyle of the employees at the executive and higher positions, to an extent, insulates them from stress.
- 60. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

Those who suggest that higher education should be offered to all for free are wrong. The cost of providing higher education will most likely be more than its benefits. Many vocational jobs require apprenticeships and in-house training, rather than a college degree. In fact, this would likely further exacerbate the unemployment issue, since __________.

- (A) there would be no way for government to recover the extra money that it has spent on providing free higher education
- (B) there are more vocational jobs available currently than jobs requiring higher education
- (C) there would simply be more qualified candidates vying for the same number of jobs
- (D) the sole purpose of higher education should not be to get jobs
- (E) the population of people in the working age group is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years
- 61. Bob: The introduction of the new high-yielding variety of seeds this year has greatly improved the financial situation of the farmers in our country, most of whom were facing huge losses until last year.

Shanon: Your conclusion is incorrect. According to a recent survey, as many as 90% of the farmers in the country made losses of 20% to 30% in their farming operations.

Which of the following casts the most serious doubt on Shanon's argument?

- Most farmers are now more satisfied with their farming operations than they were when they were using ordinary seeds.
- (B) Monetary loss or gain is not the only way of judging the benefit of the new highyielding varieties of seeds.
- (C) The high-yielding varieties of seeds in general cost no more than ordinary seeds do.
- The use of high-yielding varieties of seeds allows farmers to cut down their fertilizer (D) requirement by more than half.
- (E) Until last year, the average loss suffered by farmers in the country was between 100% and 150%.
- A stain-removing agent currently available in City X can remove the most stubborn of stains 62. from clothes but is not very popular because it leaves behind a foul smell in the clothes. It takes around 10 days for the smell to completely go away from the clothes. Another stainremoving agent has just been launched in City X which is as effective at cleaning stains as the older one. An advantage of the new stain-removing agent is that its smell starts to go away from the clothes in two days itself. Thus, this new agent should easily be able to outsell the older one.

Which of the following pieces of information would be most helpful in evaluating the argument above?

- (A) The rate of growth or decline in sales of stain-removing agents in city X
- (B) The total number of stain removing agents sold last year in city X
- (C)The per capita income of people residing in city X
- (D) The amount of time it takes for the smell of the new stain-removing agent to completely go away from the clothes
- (E) A comparison of the smell of the new stain removing agent with that of similar agents available in other cities
- 63. While cooking pasta, most Italian chefs add some cooking oil. The reason for this is not difficult to ascertain. Oil, by nature, is a greasy substance so the use of cooking oil prevents the pasta from sticking to the utensil its being cooked in.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously calls into question the explanation above?

- (A) The oil used most often by Italian chefs for cooking is olive oil, which has a neutral taste.
- (B) While it is being cooked, the pasta never comes in contact with the oil.
- (C) There are some Italian chefs who do not use cooking oil while cooking pasta.
- If added in large quantities, the cooking oil can spoil the taste of the pasta.

- (E) To provide added taste is not the reason why cooking oil is added to pasta while it is being cooked.
- 64. The recent increase in the number of accidents related to bungee jumping has led to a lot of people asking for a ban on bungee jumping. Opponents of the ban argue that it is a personal choice whether someone wants to indulge in bungee jumping and the constitution guarantees every individual's right to freedom. They assert that as long as nobody else is getting harmed, an individual should be allowed to indulge in bungee jumping.

Which of the following most strengthens the argument made by the opponents of the ban?

- (A) Bungee jumping is safer than other activities such as free style rappelling or zip lining.
- (B) The operating licenses of a lot of bungee jumping companies have been cancelled after incidents of accidents were reported from these companies.
- (C) Most accidents related to bungee jumping happen because of a weak or defective bungee cord.
- (D) In the more than 400 documented accidents connected to bungee jumping, nobody other than the person making the jump has ever got injured.
- (E) Bungee jumping companies can be allowed to operate as long as they implement some new safety measures.
- 65. A left handed playing style must offer some unique advantages to table tennis players, maybe in the types of angles they are able to incorporate in their shots. In a survey of professional table tennis players, as many as 70 percent said that they played left handed.

Which of the following is an assumption in the above argument?

- (A) Playing left handed allows table tennis players to create some angles in their shots that cannot be created playing right handed.
- (B) Table tennis is the most popular sport in several parts of the world because one doesn't need expensive equipment or lots of space to play it.
- (C) Most tennis players covered in the survey had the option of playing right handed or left handed.
- (D) Most players of lawn tennis, a sport somewhat similar to table tennis, also play left handed.
- (E) Most tennis players covered in the survey used their left hand for other activities as well such as writing or eating.
- 66. The apex banking regulator in the country has stated that banks are favouring profits over customer welfare. This is because banks are not passing on the benefit of cut in policy rates to the borrowers. The regulator regretted that the lending rates of banks have not come down in tandem with reduction in the liquidity reserve ratio rate; rather the rates have gone up.
 - Which of the following, if true, is most damaging to the position taken by the apex banking regulator?

- (A) Banks are in essence businesses so their primary motive should be to make profits.
- (B) The costs of running a bank have gone up considerably in recent times.
- (C) Many banks still invest a considerable amount of money in improving the banking experience of their customers.
- The sales of several high value products such as automobiles and homes have gone down because of the high interest rate charged on loans by banks.
- (E) Even publicly owned banks have not passed on the benefit of lower liquidity reserve ratio rates to their customers.
- 67. David Spiegel stunned the world in 1989 when he revealed that certain therapy groups may help breast cancer patients live longer. These groups also seem to help them live better. So if you suffer from breast cancer there is a good chance that you can improve your life, and maybe even extend it, by joining a professionally led support/therapy group that uses Spiegel's "supportive-expressive" model.

If the statements above are true, which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by them?

- It would be a good idea for cancer patients to be part of some support or therapy group.
- (B) Being part of a support/therapy group increases a breast cancer patient's desire to get
- (C) One way of curing breast cancer is to make the patient join a support/therapy group.
- Being part of a support/therapy group can have beneficial effects for certain groups of people.
- (E)Doctors recommend joining support/therapy groups as a means to alleviate the discomfort caused by breast cancer.
- 68. The CEO of the mining company has been using the company's resources for his own personal gains. In the past one year, the mining company has invested in 13 mines in Djboutin, the country of birth of the CEO. The CEO has also mentioned in several interviews that, at a later point in his career, he plans to stand for the Presidency of Djboutin.

Which of the following is an assumption that the argument depends on?

- (A) The investments in the mines in Djboutin make good business sense.
- (B) It is cheaper to conduct mining operations in Djboutin than in most other countries that the mining company operates in.
- To conduct mining operations in Diboutin will require heavy investment in a particular type of machinery that will not be of any use in the mining company's mines in other countries.
- (D) It is not the Board of Directors of the mining company that decides which mines to invest in.

- (E) There is no unforeseen event in the future that will dissuade the CEO from standing for the Presidency of Djboutin.
- 69. The government is aiming to roll out an ambitious project for providing free medicines to its citizens at public health facilities across the country. Once the scheme is launched, the government will provide free generic medicines to all patients coming to public health facilities. Opponents of the project have criticized it, stating that since the plan covers only generic medicines, most of the citizens will be outside its purview.

Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the criticism made above of the Health Ministry's strategy?

- (A) The Health Ministry has made suitable arrangements to ensure that there is no shortage of generic drugs once the new scheme is rolled out.
- (B) A survey of public health facilities across the country has revealed that more than half of the prescribed medicines at these facilities comprise generic medicines.
- (C) Most of the country's citizens prefer branded medicines to generic ones.
- (D) The middle and lower income groups, which comprise a large chunk of the country's population, still frequent public health facilities to resolve their health issues.
- (E) The cost of running this scheme will eventually have to be borne by the citizens in the form of increased taxes.
- 70. The city administration is planning to impose severe fines on all house owners in the old part of the city who are adding extra floors to their houses. The government claims that the purchase agreement for these houses clearly states that the owners were to add no extra floors to the houses. The government's move is unjustifiably harsh because most of these houses were purchased by their owners at least 50 years back and the size of the families of these owners has increased considerably since then. Surely, the owners cannot be fined if they want to create more space for their family members to stay in.

Which of the following most weakens the argument above?

- (A) Constructing additional floors in houses situated in the old part of the city costs a huge sum of money as there is a severe water shortage in this area and the water needed for construction work has to be transported on diesel tankers.
- (B) Construction of additional floors in houses situated in the old part of the city will ruin the aesthetics of this locality and make it unattractive for future buyers.
- (C) The children of some of the house owners who stay in the old part of the city stay in other countries and not necessarily with the house owners.
- (D) The addition of extra floors will not affect the market value of the houses in the old part of the city.
- (E) Most of the house owners in the old part of the city who are adding floors to their houses are doing so primarily for the purpose of renting out these floors.

There should be a ban on television commercials for prescription drugs. These commercials put preconceived notions in people's heads and make them ask their doctor for a drug whose side effects they are not aware of. If a person needed that drug, their doctor would have already prescribed it to them.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- Most people who visit a doctor are already aware as to which drug the doctor will most likely prescribe to them.
- Television commercials for prescription drugs don't have an educational aspect to (B) them in that they don't educate the consumers about the use of various drugs.
- Pharmaceutical companies try to sell harmful drugs to consumers by using deceptive advertising.
- (D) At least some people ask doctors to recommend to them medicines whose advertisement they have seen on television.
- At times, doctors themselves use the advertisements for prescription drugs as a source of information to recommend medicines to their patients.
- It is interesting to note that, of the ten different brands of digital cameras available in the 72. market, the one that sells the most is the second most expensive of the lot. This camera also offers the best picture quality of all the digital cameras available in the market. Clearly, the price of the camera plays no role in the customer purchase decision; it is the picture quality of the camera that matters to them.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the argument above?

- (A) Between two similarly equipped digital cameras, most customers will prefer the lower priced one.
- There is a direct correlation between the price of a camera and its picture quality.
- Some customers only purchase the cheapest available digital camera, irrespective of its picture quality.
- The second largest selling brand of digital camera, which is also the third most expensive in the market, offers poor picture quality.
- (E) Digital cameras are usually purchased by affluent customers for whom the price of the camera isn't a big consideration.
- 73. Telecom subscriber: It seems that all the telecom companies in our country are working in an absolutely unprofessional manner. The online consumer complaint forum is full of negative comments about all these companies, irrespective of the brand, while there are hardly any positive comments.

Telecom company representative: But this is because the people who are happy with our service don't have any incentive to post comments.

The telecom company representative responds to the telecom subscriber's complaint by:

- (A) Raising doubts about the source of the customer's evidence
- (B) Pointing out that the customer has ignored the positive reviews that telecom companies get
- (C) Highlighting that the evidence in question is not representative of the entire population
- (D) Agreeing with the subscriber's conclusion but contradicting his use of evidence
- (E) Providing evidence that raises doubts over the claims made by the telecom subscriber
- 74. In a recent study of people afflicted by the Babblers syndrome an interesting fact was noted. The people suffering from this syndrome consumed dairy products in much larger quantities than people who were not suffering from this syndrome. Thus, the study concluded that to reduce the chances of getting afflicted with Babblers syndrome, one should completely avoid the consumption of dairy products or consume them in moderate quantities at best.

The study's conclusion is based on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Excessive consumption of dairy products can have a negative impact on the health of people.
- (B) Babblers syndrome is a dangerous disease.
- (C) The effects of Babblers syndrome do not include excessive desire to consume dairy products.
- (D) Cutting down on dairy products will ensure that one does not contract Babblers syndrome.
- (E) Nothing else can lead to Babblers syndrome except the consumption of dairy products.
- 75. Which of the following most logically completes the argument?

It is now known that to get the maximum out of a car engine one can do two things—use high octane fuel, which contains additives that extend the life and efficiency of the engine, or get the engine flushed at regular intervals, which removes all harmful substances from the engine. It has been shown by several studies that the use of high octane fuel is up to three times more effective in extending the life of the car engine than is the use of engine flushing. This does not, however, mean that engine flushing can play no role in extending the life of a car engine, because ________.

- (A) some studies have shown that using high octane fuel can lead to problems with a car's exhaust system
- (B) high octane fuel costs much more than regular fuel and this cost is expected to increase over the next few years
- (C) many car mechanics recommend the use of engine flushing over the use of high octane fuels

- the benefits of using high octane fuel are independent of the benefits of engine flushing
- (E) engine flushing, when not done by expert mechanics, can cause permanent damage to the engine of a car
- 76. Researchers have discovered that parents who made their children, when they were between the ages of 2 and 10, watch videos of Pete Sampras, the legendary tennis player, had children who grew up to be much better tennis players than children of parents who did not do so. The researchers, thus, concluded that parents who wish to make their children pursue tennis should make their children, when they are between the ages of 2 and 10, watch videos of legendary tennis players.

Which of the following most strengthens the argument?

- Pete Sampras was one of the greatest tennis players of all times and even modern tennis greats try to emulate him by watching his videos.
- When children who are between 2 and 10 years of age watch Pete Sampras play, the (B) neurons in their brains make subconscious connections as a result of which these children are able to apply some of Pete Sampras' playing style in their own game of tennis at a later stage in life.
- Children whose parents made them watch videos of Pete Sampras when these children were more than 10 years of age also saw a marked improvement in their children's ability to play tennis.
- Parents who made their children, when they were between 2 and 10 years of age, watch videos of other legendary tennis players also reported that their children developed into excellent tennis players.
- (E) Some children whose parents did not expose them to videos of any tennis players also developed into excellent tennis players later in life.
- 77. Studies of the relationship between public opinion and political action on a wide range of subjects show nothing unique or very interesting about the state of public opinion on climate change. Significant policy action has occurred on other issues with less public support on many occasions. However, instead of motivating further support for action, efforts to intensify public opinion through apocalyptic visions or appeals to authority, have instead led to a loss of trust in campaigning scientists and a deep politicization of the climate issue.

- (A) The first is evidence that has been used to support a conclusion; the second is that conclusion.
- (B) The first provides the findings of a study; the second provides data that raises doubts on these findings.
- (C) The first is the primary conclusion of the argument; the second provides evidence to question this conclusion.

- (D) The first provides the findings of a study; the second provides further elaboration of these findings.
- (E) The first is a claim used to justify a conclusion; the second is a counter-claim that questions that conclusion.
- 78. People who drink coffee regularly say that they are addicted to caffeine because they feel that they can't live without it. Addiction is defined as a state in which a person strongly depends on a drug with severe withdrawal symptoms. He should have an urge to consume it more and more and is tolerant to a particular dose. Based on this definition, caffeine consumption does not qualify as an addiction. Researches too have shown that caffeine does not cause any kind of addiction. Alcohol or other drug addiction can have severe social and physical consequences but this is not the case with caffeine which further strengthens the belief that it is not addictive or does not cause addiction.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first provides the definition of a term that has been used to arrive at a conclusion; the second provides further support for that conclusion.
- (B) The first provides the definition of a term; the second provides further support for that definition.
- (C) The first provides a definition that constitutes the main premise of the argument; the second is the conclusion of the argument as a whole.
- (D) The first and second are contradictory claims, both of which together provide support for the primary conclusion of the argument.
- (E) The first provides evidence in support of the conclusion of the argument; the second provides further justification for this evidence.
- 79. Of late, several waste management companies have reported that the percentage of plastic items in the waste they collect for disposal in landfills has been increasing. This fact, however, does not warrant the conclusion that the administration's efforts to dissuade people from throwing plastic items in their garbage have failed. It's just that, of late, more and more quantities of other waste products such as glass, paper and metal items are being recycled, leading to an overall decrease in the quantity of waste that needs to be disposed in landfills and thereby to an increase in the 'percentage' of plastic items that have to be disposed off in landfills.

- (A) The first provides a conclusion that the argument disagrees with; the second provides evidence in support of the disagreement.
- (B) The first is the primary conclusion of the argument and the second provides further support for this conclusion.
- (C) The first is a claim that the argument goes on to dispute; the second provides support for the primary conclusion of the argument as a whole.

- The first provides evidence to support an explanation that the argument favors; the second is that explanation.
- (E)The first provides evidence to support an explanation that the argument rejects; the second is a competing explanation that the argument favors.
- 80. Arguments to restrict immigration on the grounds that immigrants will take domestic jobs ignore the fact that immigrants, once employed, will earn and spend money on goods and services, creating new jobs that will more than make up for the old ones they took.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- The immigrants will not send most of the money that they earn back to their hometowns.
- (B) Studies show that large scale inflow of immigrants invariably leads to an increase in the incidence of crime in that city.
- The immigrants will not subsequently get their families to also join them in the new (C) city.
- (D) Immigrants generally tend to save most of the money that they earn.
- Opponents of immigration are not opposed to immigration for reasons other than loss of jobs.
- It is not uncommon for close synonyms to be understood to share the same meaning. The 81. difference between words like hard and difficult, for example, goes tragically unnoticed. One may employ one or the other with complete indifference, postulating no discrepancy between them. In general, this is well and good; most people lack the scrupulous pedanticalness to quibble over such trifles. Nevertheless, for those people with ample compulsiveness (and time), it is of significant value to comprehend such nuances.

- The first is the primary conclusion of the argument; the second mentions a group of (A) people who are in favor of such a conclusion.
- The first is a general statement that is supported by evidence provided in the rest of (B) the argument; the second is one such piece of evidence.
- (C) The first states the conclusion of the argument; the second calls that conclusion into question.
- The first is a point of view that the argument claims most people will agree with; the second mentions a group of people who would disagree with that point of view.
- (E) The first is a claim, the accuracy of which is at issue in the argument; the second mentions evidence falsifying such a claim.

82. Which of the following most logically completes the argument below?

Mobile phones emit radioactive radiation because they use radio frequency waves to make and receive calls. Even though the doses are very small, experts at the World Health Organisation (WHO) have voiced concern that these emissions might cause leukaemia and other diseases and have issued a warning against the excessive use of mobile phones. The WHO, then, is most likely going to issue a similar warning for home phones wired to a wall jack as well, because ________.

- (A) Home phones are also used to make and receive calls.
- (B) Home phones are also communication devices used by the general public.
- (C) Home phones also use radio frequency waves.
- (D) People, on an average, spend more time talking on home phones than on mobile phones.
- (E) Experts have voiced concern about the use of home phones as well.
- 83. As pets have become increasingly humanized in recent years, almost becoming a substitute for children in some cases, owners have become increasingly concerned about the quality of their pets' diets, leading to rising interest in grain-free offerings. According to its critics, grain is merely a *filler* in pet food that has little real nutritional benefit.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first is the cause of a given effect; the second is a criticism of that effect.
- (B) The first is the cause of a given effect; the second is the opinion of a group that provides further support for this effect.
- (C) The first describes a general scenario and the second provides a specific implication of this scenario.
- (D) The first is the point of view of a group of people and the second contradicts this point of view by providing conflicting evidence.
- (E) The first is the conclusion of the argument and the second provides evidence on the basis of which this conclusion has been arrived at.
- 84. I do not think it is right to project electric cars as better than gas-fuelled cars. One negative aspect of electric cars is the fact that they don't have enough power and, as a result, enough acceleration to perform in certain driving situations. For example, this lack of power could be dangerous in driving situations when fast acceleration is needed to avoid an accident.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the argument above?

- (A) Electric cars are much better for the ecology than are gas fuelled ones.
- (B) Electric cars are much cheaper to run than are gas fuelled cars.
- (C) The price of fuel is only expected to increase in the future whereas the price of technology used in the manufacture of electric cars is expected to decrease.

- The biggest reason for road accidents is over speeding, which is the direct result of increased power in a car.
- In future, electric cars are expected to have much more powerful engines than do (E)current electric cars.
- 85. Photon city is known for its commerce colleges across the nation. However, it seems that the quality of education imparted at these colleges has deteriorated considerably with time. When commerce graduates living in Photon city were recently administered a test, most of them could not even answer simple questions such as what was meant by activity based costing.

The argument is most vulnerable to the criticism that:

- it incorrectly assumes that all commerce graduates have to be aware of what is meant by activity based costing.
- (B) it makes no distinction between commerce graduates living in Photon city and those who have graduated from commerce colleges in Photon city.
- it does not take other important skills such as interpersonal skills and communication skills into consideration.
- it provides no details about how commerce graduates in the rest of the country have performed on this test.
- it does not take into account the education policies of the government.
- 86. The restrictions on what one can carry inside an airplane are surely too severe. Airlines these days issue a long checklist of items that cannot be carried inside an aircraft making it cumbersome for the travelers to keep a track of all these items. In any case, barely two percent of travelers are ever caught with these restricted items, so it's best if these restrictions are removed.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) The restrictions themselves do not discourage people from carrying restricted items on to airplanes.
- (B) The restrictions have been implemented all across the world.
- (C) There is no scope for corrupt practices on the part of those enforcing these restrictions.
- (D) There have been instances when an innocent traveler has been wrongly detained by over cautious airline personnel.
- (E) Criminals are hardly likely to carry restricted items with them on an airline.
- It is generally observed that, while selecting between two identical products, consumers typically tend to go with the cheaper one. However, when it comes to luxury products, an opposite trend has been observed. Consumers, in fact, tend to prefer the higher priced

product in this case as exclusivity takes precedence over the desire to get the maximum value for one's money.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first is the main conclusion of the argument; the second provides support for the main conclusion.
- (B) The first provides evidence in support of the main conclusion of the argument; the second is the main conclusion of the argument.
- (C) The first states an observation that the argument agrees with; the second undermines the evidence that is the basis for the agreement.
- (D) The first describes a finding that is contrary to what is generally the case; the second provides an explanation for this finding.
- (E) The first is a claim that has been used to support a conclusion that the argument accepts; the second is that conclusion.
- 88. It appears that the residents of Clarktown are becoming more and more health conscious these days. The sale of fitness equipment such as treadmills and cycling machines has increased by more than 300% in Clarktown over the last one year.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the conclusion drawn above?

- (A) Due to a change in the sales tax structure last year, fitness equipment costs up to 30% less in Clarktown than in its neighbouring towns.
- (B) The sale of health magazines has increased appreciably in Clarktown over the past one year.
- (C) Nutritionists in Clarktown have reported a sharp increase in the cases of obesity that have been reported in Clarktown over the past year.
- (D) The range of fitness equipment available at Clarktown is very limited and some advanced machines are not available at all.
- (E) Two athletes, both of whom won gold medals at the Olympics three years ago, are residents of Clarktown.
- 89. America's record of protecting species threatened with extinction, which is often depicted as dismal, is in truth an enviable achievement. Since 1973, when the Endangered Species Act took effect, only seven animal species in North America have disappeared. Several hundred others once considered certain to die out continue to exist in the wild. Moreover, a number of species, including the bald eagle and the Arctic peregrine falcon have been or are being taken off the priority-protection list because their numbers have increased considerably now.

- (A) The first is a claim that the argument goes on to dispute; the second is information used to strengthen the claim.
- The first is a claim that the argument calls into question; the second provides support (B) for the position taken by the argument.
- The first is an objection that has been raised against the position taken by the argument; the second is the position taken by the argument.
- The first is a claim, the accuracy of which is at issue in the argument; the second is a (D)conclusion drawn on the basis of that claim.
- (E) The first is evidence that has been used to support an explanation that the argument challenges; the second is that explanation.
- 90. 30% of the residents of Tafta City own cars. However, 70% of the residents of Hampton, a suburb in Tafta City, are car owners. So, it can be concluded that the total number of cars owned by residents of Hampton exceeds the total number of cars owned by the rest of the residents of Tafta City.

The answer to which of the following questions would be most important in determining whether the above conclusion is correct?

- (A) What is the total population of Tafta City?
- What proportion of the population of Tafta City resides in Hampton? (B)
- (C)What is the total number of cars owned by residents of Tafta City?
- (D) What is the total number of people residing in Hampton?
- (E) What proportion of the population of Tafta City has bought cars from outside Tafta City?
- 91. For people looking at purchasing laptops, there are two important decision parameters the speed of the laptop's processor and the backup that its battery provides. Jake, an expert at computers, believes that, of the two determinants, processor speed is the more important one. Surprisingly, he recommends that his friends buy the laptop with the longest battery backup.

Which of the following best explains the apparent contradiction between Jake's belief and his recommendation?

- Jake is aware that a laptop with a processor that is faster than any of the current (A) processors will be launched within the next six months.
- Jake is aware that for a lot of buyers, a third factor—the weight of the laptop—is (B) more important than the other two factors.
- (C) All the laptops currently available in the market use the same processor.
- (D) Laptops with powerful batteries cost more than those with regular batteries.
- Jake is probably not as much of an expert at computers as he likes to believe.

92. It is truly a waste of time to attend college. Out of the ten richest people in the world, six are college dropouts. Thus, if one wants to become rich, then it makes sense to drop out of college and start one's own venture.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the argument?

- (A) Had the six people mentioned in the argument attended college, they may have been even richer than they are currently.
- (B) Attending college helps a person increase his or her social circle by making new friends.
- (C) Statistics reveal that 95% of all new ventures are most likely to fail.
- (D) The percentage of college dropouts who have gone on to become rich is several times smaller than the percentage of college graduates who have gone on to become rich.
- (E) Becoming rich is not the only measure of success, happiness is perhaps more important.
- 93. Over the last few years that he has been traveling by the subway, Ricky has made an interesting observation. Every time the train is late by more than six minutes, it gets extremely crowded and Ricky finds it impossible to get a seat. In the last 6 years, it has never happened that the train arrived more than six minutes late and Ricky could find a place to sit.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the above statements?

- (A) The number of people traveling by the subway has increased several times over the last few years.
- (B) If the train comes on time, Ricky will definitely get a place to sit.
- (C) If Ricky does not find a seat in the train, it must have arrived more than six minutes late.
- (D) The Transport Authority needs to urgently increase the frequency of subway trains.
- (E) If the train arrives more than six minutes late, Ricky will most likely not find a place to sit.
- 94. The number of people in Denvo city who like to watch movies in multiplexes has apparently increased considerably. Over the last five years it has become difficult to find seats in most multiplexes in Denvo City.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument?

- (A) Several blockbuster movies were released in the last five years.
- (B) Denvo city had seven multiplexes out of which three have shut down in the last five years.
- (C) Many residents of Denvo city have stated in a survey that they hate going out for movies.

- The ticket prices charged by multiplexes in Denvo city have fallen over the past five years.
- (E) It is very easy to find seats in multiplexes situated in the neighbouring Vento city.
- 95. Researchers have long been trying to understand why the consumption of opium makes one sleepy. A group of researchers has recently concluded that opium is sleep inducing because it has soporific qualities.

Which of the following parallels the flaw in the reasoning above?

- (A) The student performed poorly in the test because he did not study for it.
- (B) It is dark at night because of the absence of the sun.
- (C) The new car has a powerful engine so it must also have powerful brakes.
- Airplanes are able to fly because of their aerodynamic shape.
- The price of a company's stock has not appreciated because the company's stock price has remained stagnant.
- 96. Banker: Our asset quality is fairly strong and has been improving in the past few quarters. But given our size, we cannot afford to allow any of our large accounts to turn nonperforming. It would create havoc for us.

Which of the following must be true on the basis of the statements made by the banker above?

- (A) The bank in question must be a small sized bank.
- (B) If any of the bank's accounts become non-performing, the bank will go bankrupt.
- The bank does not mind if any of its smaller accounts turn non-performing.
- The bank used to have assets of a poor quality a few quarters back.
- One of the important factors that will determine the bank's performance is the quality of its large accounts.
- Opponents of the free market approach assert that the free market often fails to achieve 97. maximum efficiency—that it sometimes wastes resources. They often cite the example of utility services. If there were free competition among utilities, it would lead to a lot of duplication—different companies putting up telephone and electric poles, waterlines, etc., side by side, which would be a waste. So they argue that it is important for government to restrict competition and thus correct market failures.

The answer to which of the following questions would help evaluate whether the opponents of the free market theory are correct?

(A) Whether it is possible to procure items such as electric and telephone poles used by utility services at low prices

- (B) Whether there is some other feasible way of solving the problem of duplication mentioned in the argument
- (C) Whether following this strategy is likely to lead to formation of monopolies that can be used to exploit consumers
- (D) Whether free market is likely to have any detrimental effect on the economy of the country
- (E) Whether the free market approach has been adopted by any other countries in the world
- 98. A proposal has recently been floated by the government to increase road use tax rates across the country. This will lead to an increase in operating costs for trucking companies, who will then most likely increase their freight rates. The higher freight rates will, in turn, lead to a consequent increase in the prices of goods and commodities of daily use such as vegetable and grocery items. Thus, if the proposal is passed, it will actively contribute to inflation in the country.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly indicates that the logic of the prediction above is flawed?

- (A) It assumes that there is no other way in which inflation can increase apart from increased road use taxes.
- (B) It mistakes a likely outcome for a confirmed outcome.
- (C) It resorts to addressing peripheral issues while ignoring the deeper fundamental problems with the economy.
- (D) It assumes that inflation will not increase if the road tax is not increased.
- (E) It mistakes a correlation for a cause and effect relation.
- 99. Board of ABC Company: Owing to the excellent performance of the company in the last four quarters under the leadership of the new CEO, the Board has decided to reward the CEO with a 50% bonus.

Shareholder of ABC Company: But last year ABC Company's sales grew by only 30%, which was the lowest amongst all its competitors.

Which of the following provides the most logical counter for the Board to offer to the shareholder?

- (A) ABC Company's sales had fallen every year for the past three years.
- (B) The CEO cannot be personally held responsible for the low sales growth.
- (C) The CEO needs to be encouraged, else he may lose the motivation to increase the sales further.
- (D) The CEO has hired several middle managers at very high salaries leading to increased costs for the company.

- (E) The CEO has not made any remarkable changes to the production or marketing strategy of the company.
- 100. In a college election, Tom received 50% of the votes cast, Jim received 30% of the votes cast, and Joanna received the remaining 20% of the votes cast. Jim was eventually declared the winner of the election for the post of the college President.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) There were only three candidates who stood for the election.
- (B) The college students most likely don't like Joanna.
- (C) Tom must have spent more time campaigning than Jim or Joanna did.
- (D) The number of votes received was not a criterion to decide who would be President.
- (E) There must be some criterion, other than the number of votes received, that also helps decide who would be President.

Answers and Explanations

Q No.	Ans.								
1	A	21	D	41	A	61	Е	81	D
2	D	22	D	42	С	62	D	82	С
3	С	23	С	43	D	63	В	83	В
4	D	24	Е	44	С	64	D	84	D
5	D	25	В	45	Е	65	С	85	В
6	В	26	A	46	D	66	В	86	A
7	В	27	A	47	D	67	D	87	D
8	A	28	D	48	A	68	D	88	A
9	С	29	В	49	A	69	В	89	В
10	E	30	В	50	D	70	E	90	В
11	E	31	A	51	С	71	D	91	С
12	С	32	С	52	В	72	A	92	D
13	A	33	С	53	D	73	С	93	Е
14	E	34	В	54	D	74	С	94	В
15	C	35	D	55	В	75	D	95	Е
16	С	36	В	56	В	76	D	96	Е
17	С	37	E	57	С	77	D	97	С
18	E	38	D	58	С	78	A	98	В
19	D	39	A	59	E	79	В	99	A
20	E	40	A	60	С	80	A	100	Е

Financial Expert: Our country has a very high debt-to-GDP ratio and it's difficult for a 1. country with a high debt-to-GDP ratio to grow in a dynamic manner. Moreover, our debt is growing higher and that means inflation is getting worse. All in all, our country is badly managed these days.

Which of the following assertions is most strongly supported by the passage?

- High debt has an adverse impact on the inflation rate.
- (B) It is not possible for a badly managed country to grow in a dynamic manner.
- (C)High level of debt is extremely detrimental to the growth of a country.
- Growing inflation is a sign of a badly managed country.
- Whatever growth is happening in this particular country cannot possibly be called dynamic growth

Answer: A

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- The argument clearly states that increasing debt is worsening the inflation rate, so then A can definitely be inferred.
- Cannot necessarily be concluded. We don't even know what all things constitute a (B) badly managed country, so then we definitely cannot conclude this.
- We know that high level of debt to GDP ratio is detrimental for the growth of a country but from this we cannot necessarily conclude that high level of debt by itself is extremely detrimental. If the GDP is also high then high level of debt could be a good thing.
- This may not necessarily be true because the argument states that all the things together constitute a badly managed country, but what is true for the whole may not be true for each part.
- (E) The argument states that it's difficult for this country to grow in a dynamic manner and not that it is impossible for this country to do so.
- 2. In the early 1960s, Myanmar was the richest country in Asia, but then it closed its economy to the outside world and is now the poorest country in the region. However, Myanmar is now opening up its economy to the outside world once again, and so will soon regain its former glory. Thus, it makes sense for smart investors to invest in Myanmar.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) A closed economy will rapidly deplete the financial resources of a country.
- (B) The countries that dealt with Myanmar in 1962 will still be interested in dealing with it.
- If Myanmar does not open up its economy to the outside world, it will continue to remain poor.

- (D) The severe internal unrest that has continued in Myanmar for the last several years is not responsible for its current financial state.
- (E) At least some smart investors are currently aware of Myanmar's past glory.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The argument concludes that the only reason why Myanmar became the poorest country in the Asian region is because it closed its economy to the outside world. Thus, it assumes that there can be no other explanation for this fact. D is one such passive assumption, which has to be true for the conclusion to be true. If you negate D then the argument will fall apart.

- (A) This may be inferred from the argument but is definitely not an assumption.
- (B) Doesn't necessarily have to be true. New countries may want to deal with Myanmar now.
- (C) Again, this may be an inference but is not an assumption.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) Irrelevant to the argument.
- 3. While critics have written off the APG company's new Model T chandelier, owing to its poor sales across the globe, the Model T is actually not a complete failure because it has managed to sell 10,000 pieces in Eastern Europe, a market in which rival companies haven't even managed to sell 5,000 pieces of their respective chandeliers.

Which of the following is assumed in the above argument?

- (A) If a chandelier does not sell well in the Eastern European market, then it is a complete failure.
- (B) The Eastern European market is the biggest market for chandeliers.
- (C) If a chandelier sells well in the Eastern European market, then it cannot be considered a complete failure.
- (D) The Model T is the only type of chandelier manufactured by the APG company.
- (E) If the Model T had not sold in good numbers in Eastern Europe, then it could have been considered a complete failure.

Answer: C

Explanation:

In this question, students often get confused between options A and C because they feel that the two options are saying the same thing. However, this is not the case. It is very much possible that a chandelier does not sell well in Eastern Europe but it sells in huge numbers in the rest of the world. Then it obviously cannot be considered a failure. Thus, A is not a valid assumption. C, on the other hand, has to be true if the argument has to stand.

(A) Doesn't necessarily have to be true as explained above.

- (B) The size of the Eastern European market has got nothing to do with the assumption.
- (D) The range of chandeliers manufactured by the APG Company makes no difference to the assumption.
- (E) This could be an inference at best but not the assumption by any stretch.
- G. Bell Corporation, a manufacturer of mobile handsets, has claimed to have become the 4. leading seller of mobile handsets, in terms of units sold, in the country. According to latest figures released by all the handset manufacturers in the country, G. Bell Corporation managed to sell 80 percent of the total handsets that it manufactured during the year whereas the market leader, H. Wells Corporation, managed to sell only 50 percent of its total handsets.

Which of the following identifies a flaw in G. Bell Corporation's reasoning?

- It does not take into account H. Wells Corporation's huge book of advance orders for handsets that need to be shipped during the next year.
- (B) It incorrectly assumes that the current trend will continue into the next year as well.
- It makes no comparison of the average price at which G. Bell Corporation sold its handsets and the average price at which H. Wells Corporation sold its handsets.
- It does not take into account the total number of handsets sold by either manufacturer.
- It does not take into account the total market size for mobile handsets in the country.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Note that the argument states that G. Bell sold 80% of its total production (and not of the total market size) and H. Wells sold 50% of its total production. For the conclusion to be true, the argument has to assume that the total number of handsets manufactured by the two manufacturers are the same, but this may not be the case. D questions this fact and so is the correct answer.

- (A) Future sales are outside the scope of the argument. For all you know, G. Bell could also have equally large advance order bookings.
- (B) The argument assumes no such thing.
- (C) The argument is concerned with units sold so the price is outside the scope.
- (D) The correct answer.
- The total market size is again irrelevant because we don't know how much of the total (E) market size each of the two manufacturers account for.
- 5. The supply of iron ore, the most important component in steelmaking, has been steadily declining in Marco city. This has forced steel manufacturing units in Marco city to source iron ore from far off mines leading to an increase in their transportation costs. Because transportation costs make up a large chunk of the total cost of steelmaking, the steel

manufacturers in Marco city have had no option but to increase the selling price of their steel. This has, in turn, led to an increase in the retail price of utensils and other articles of daily use made of steel. Since the retail consumers now have to pay more for these steel items, while their earnings remain unchanged, they have decided to cut down on their non-essential expenditure such as that on movie tickets. This has led movie theatres in Marco city to reduce their ticket prices.

Which of the following provides the most support for the assertion that the prices of movie tickets in Marco city will continue to decline in future?

- (A) The people of Marco city will not be willing to cut down their expenditure on eating out.
- (B) After the inauguration of the Goldport Bridge, expected to happen very soon, the transportation costs to Marco city will be halved.
- (C) There are no blockbuster movies with stellar star casts lined up for release anytime soon.
- (D) The supply of iron ore to Marco city is expected to go down even more in the near future
- (E) Residents of Marco city view movie tickets as non-essential items of expenditure.

Answer: D

Explanation:

This argument consists of a series of cause and effects, wherein the effect of one event becomes the cause of another event. The last item in this chain is the reduction of movie ticket prices by movie theatres in Marco City. So, one entire chain of cause and effect has ended with movie theatres lowering their ticket prices. Now, why will the movie theatres lower their ticket prices even further? Only if the cycle of cause and effect were to start all over again and continue on and on. Since the cycle starts with the decline in supply of iron ore to Marco city, for the cycle to continue the supply of iron ore has to keep on decreasing in future as well. D states this and is the correct answer.

- (A) Unless we are told whether the expenditure on eating out is essential or non-essential expenditure, this point will be irrelevant to the argument.
- (B) This should actually weaken the argument by suggesting that the impact of reduced iron ore supply could be absorbed by the reduction in transport cost.
- (C) The presence of blockbuster movies is outside the scope of the argument.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) Even if this is so, the movie ticket prices should stabilize at their new low prices. Why should they go down further?
- 6. There are two ways in which an athlete can maximize his performance on the field—by improving his physical stamina or by improving his mental stamina. Research has clearly shown that physical stamina is much more important than mental stamina in boosting an

athlete's performance. Thus, if an athlete is working at improving his physical stamina, he is doing the most he can to maximize his performance on the field.

Which of the following most strengthens the above argument?

- According to another research, when athletes with comparable levels of mental stamina compete on the field, the one with the higher physical stamina invariably comes out the winner.
- (B) A combination of physical and mental stamina cannot boost the performance of the athlete any more than than physical stamina can by itself.
- Critics of the researchers mentioned in the argument claim that these researchers considerably overestimate the importance of physical stamina in maximizing the performance of an athlete.
- There are other aspects, apart from stamina, that also play a significant role in maximizing the performance of an athlete on the field.
- If an athlete focuses more on developing his mental rather than physical stamina, he is likely to perform poorly on the field.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument states that there are two ways of doing something and that one of the ways is more effective than the other. On the basis of this, it concludes that if someone is using this better way, then he is doing the most he can to maximize the results. The assumption obviously is that the person cannot use both the ways together. For example, it is possible that if an athlete were to improve both his physical and his mental stamina, he can boost his performance even more than by just working on his physical stamina. The argument assumes that this will not be the case. **B** states this best and should be **the correct answer**.

- This just further confirms the researcher's observation. However, the fact still stands (A) that what if the athlete were to work at improving both—his physical and his mental stamina. Would his performance improve even more then?
- This weakens the argument by suggesting that the researchers' conclusion may have (C) been erroneous.
- (D) The other aspects are outside the scope of the argument.
- (E) This can probably be an inference from the argument but it cannot be the assumption.
- 7. According to a report by the American Staffing Federation (ASF), the government's new policy for the retail industry is likely to create 2 million jobs for fresh graduates over the next three years. The ASF has, thus, welcomed the government's move to implement this policy across the nation as its implementation will lead to a lowering of the national unemployment rate.

Which of the following, if true, would cast the most serious doubt on the accuracy of AFS' conclusion?

- (A) Opponents of the policy will not allow the government to implement the policy anytime soon.
- (B) The new policy will result in a large number of uneducated workers becoming redundant and, as a result, losing their jobs.
- (C) There are several other ways of lowering the national unemployment rate available to the government.
- (D) The nation faces more serious problems than unemployment and the government should instead focus on resolving those first.
- (E) The implementation of the new policy is going to cost the government a considerable amount of money so the government will most likely increase corporate tax rates to recover this amount.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument concludes that the government's new policy to create jobs should be supported because it will create a large number of jobs for a particular group—fresh graduates. However, if there was evidence to show that this policy could lead to large scale job loss in another segment (uneducated workers), then the benefits of the policy would be negated. B does this and is the correct answer.

- (A) The question is not of whether the policy will actually be implemented or not but of whether the policy should be implemented.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) We are not concerned about the other ways but about whether this new policy should be that way.
- (D) The other problems that a nation faces are outside the scope of the argument.
- (E) The government might be willing to foot the cost if the returns are worth it, so this does not necessarily weaken the argument.
- 8. It seems that employees at middle management positions who wish to get promoted to senior management positions in their companies should start purchasing clothes from leading fashion designers. In a recent survey of 1000 employees working at different senior management positions, as many as 80% stated that they only bought clothes from leading fashion designers.

Which of the following most weakens the argument?

- (A) The senior managers mentioned in the survey only started purchasing clothes from leading fashion designers after they became senior managers.
- (B) The clothes manufactured by leading fashion designers are usually very expensive and outside the reach of most middle level managers.
- (C) Most employees at senior management positions are no smarter than those at middle management positions.

- (D) Some employees do not manage to reach senior management positions, even though they wear clothes manufactured by leading fashion designers.
- (E) Wearing clothes manufactured by leading fashion designers can in some way improve the prospects of an employee getting promoted to senior management positions.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The argument is based on the assumption that the only or at least one of the primary reasons why the employees at senior management positions have reached those positions is the clothes they wear.

- (A) This option directly contradicts the above assumption by stating that these employees started wearing these clothes only after they reached senior management positions. Thus, the clothes couldn't possibly have played any role in them getting promoted to these positions.
- (B) While this option may look good, it does nothing to weaken the causal connection mentioned in the argument. If the causal connection were to indeed hold true, the employees at middle management positions may even want to take out loans to purchase these expensive clothes as that is the only way they can get promoted to senior management positions.
- This somewhat strengthens the argument by suggesting that different levels of 'smartness' is not the reason why these people have got promoted to senior management positions. Then the reason could very well be the clothes that they wear.
- The argument never states that this will be a sufficient condition to get to senior management positions, but that it may be a necessary condition. It is possible that even after wearing clothes by leading fashion designers, you still don't reach senior management positions for some other reasons.
- (E) This could be an inference from the argument but is definitely not the assumption.
- 9. According to those in favor of privatization of Social Security in the US, the current system is impossible to sustain. Decades ago, there were many more workers for every recipient but now the situation has reversed. Sooner or later, the fund will not be able to meet its obligations, because there will be more payments going out, than income coming in. Privatizing the system for the future recipients, while gradually phasing out the system for current and near-term recipients, is probably the best way to keep the system viable.

The answer to which of the following questions would be most useful in determining whether privatization of Social Security in the US would be a good idea?

- Whether privatization has proved successful for other government provided services such as employee provident funds
- (B) Whether the population of the US is likely to increase significantly in the future
- Whether the growth in the number of workers is the US is likely to outstrip the growth in the number of dependents in the future

- (D) Whether privatization of social security will lead to large scale protests by US citizens
- (E) Whether taking loans can help the Social Security system tide over the problem of reduction in funds coming into the system

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument assumes that in the US the number of dependents in the future will be far more than the number of earning workers, a situation that will lead to the social security funds drying up. However, if this assumption is not true, then the Social Security system could continue working as it has been over the years. C points out this fact and is the correct answer.

- (A) Whether privatization has proved successful for other services has no bearing on whether privatization will work for the Social Security system.
- (B) The problem is not the population growth rate but the ratio between earners and dependents. As long as this ratio remains favourable, an increase in population should not make any difference.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) This is not the basis of the argument's conclusion.
- (E) Taking loans can provide a short-term solution but the problem will remain in the long term.
- 10. Large corporations use several strategies to minimize their tax payments, without doing anything explicitly illegal. One such strategy involves the use of transfer pricing, when subsidiaries in different countries charge each other for goods or services sold within the group. This is particularly popular among technology and drug companies that have lots of intellectual property, the value of which is especially subjective. These intra-company royalty transactions are supposed to be arm's-length, but are often priced to minimise profits in high-tax countries and maximise them in low-tax ones.

If the above statements are true, then which of the following could be a strategy adopted by a company that wants to get the maximum benefit out of transfer pricing?

- (A) Sell products, at low prices, to its subsidiary located in a high tax rate country
- (B) Charge its subsidiary located in a low tax rate country, higher prices for products sold
- (C) Pay its subsidiary located in a high tax rate country high prices for products bought
- (D) Pay its subsidiary, located in a low tax rate country, low prices for products bought
- (E) Pay its subsidiary, located in a low tax rate country, high prices for products bought

Answer: E

Explanation

To get the maximum benefits out of transfer pricing, a company would want to show maximum earnings in a low tax country or minimum earnings in a high tax country. E states

that the company would pay high prices to its subsidiary in a low tax country, that is, the earnings of the subsidiary will be high and these will be taxed at a low rate, so the company will benefit overall.

- (A) When the company sells products, it receives money. Since we have no idea about the tax rate in the country where the company is located, this option is irrelevant.
- (B) Same as A. (When the company charges its subsidiary, it receives money)
- If the company pays high prices to its subsidiary in a high tax rate country, the income (C) of the subsidiary will be high and the tax on this income will also be high. So the company will lose money.
- In this case, even though the subsidiary will pay lower taxes, its revenues will also be less because of the low prices charged.
- (E) The correct answer.
- 11. Mr. Ice sells ice cream for \$1 each. Mr. Freeze sells a different ice cream for \$3 each. On one Sunday, at the end of the day's business, Mr Ice had sold three times as many ice creams as Mr Freeze. Interestingly, they had both also made the same amount of profit for that day.

Which of the following can be inferred from the above statements?

- The total cost incurred by Mr Freeze for that day was three times that incurred by Mr Ice.
- (B) Mr Ice's ice cream is more popular than Mr. Freeze's ice cream.
- The total cost incurred by Mr Ice for that day was three times that incurred by Mr. (C) Freeze.
- Mr Freeze's ice cream sells in smaller numbers because of its higher selling price.
- (E) Both Mr Ice and Mr Freeze incurred the same costs for that day.

Answer: E

Explanation:

The stimulus states that Mr Ice sold three times as many ice creams as did Mr Freeze. Note that the selling price of Mr Freeze's ice cream is three time that of Mr Ice's ice cream. So, this means that both of them made the same amount of dollar sales for that day. The stimulus also states that they made the same profits at the end of that day. Thus, if sales and profits are the same, the costs have to be the same as well. E is the correct answer.

12. The main purpose of business is to maximize shareholder value over the long term by selling goods or services. Thus, employees who use funds for anything other than to increase their sales are simply cheating the shareholders.

Which of the following is an assumption made in drawing the conclusion above?

Most business owners would agree with the above definition of the purpose of a business.

- (B) Increasing sales is not the only way to maximize shareholder value.
- (C) Spending money on making the workplace more comfortable for employees will not lead to increased worker productivity and in turn increased business profits.
- (D) The only function of a business is to maximize returns for its shareholders.
- (E) According to this definition, many employees could be accused of cheating.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument assumes that the only way to maximize owner's value is by increasing sales. This can lead us to several passive assumptions. C contains one such assumption. Notice that if you negate C, the argument will fall apart.

- (A) Whether business owners agree with this definition is irrelevant.
- (B) This weakens the argument whereas we need to find an assumption.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) This is directly stated in the argument so cannot be its assumption.
- (E) This could be an inference but is definitely not an assumption.
- 13. The Bakers football team has been struggling for form all through the past two years in which it has not even managed to reach the semi-finals of any major football tournament. To arrest this decline, the team management has now decided to reappoint its former coach, Charles Keith, who had been sacked two years back.

Which of the following options gives reason to believe that the team management's strategy may not work?

- (A) Several of the team's most successful players have left the team in the past two years.
- (B) The team has been receiving a lot of negative press for its poor performance in the past two years.
- (C) Charles Keith had been sacked two years ago by the team management on account of corruption charges, which couldn't eventually be proved.
- (D) The team that Charles Keith has been coaching for the past two years hasn't been performing really well either.
- (E) The continuous string of poor performances has led to a loss of morale among several of the members of the football team.

Answer: A

Explanation

The argument assumes that the only reason for the decline in the Baker football team's performance is the sacking of Charles Keith. However, there could be other reasons for this

decline as well and to weaken the argument, we need to highlight one such reason, which A does. The cause of the decline may not be the departure of the coach but that of several of its best players. If this were the case, re-hiring the coach will not arrest the decline.

- (B) The appointment of the coach is precisely to counter this negative press by improving the performance of the team.
- (C) The reason for Charles Keith's sacking is not our concern.
- (D) There could be several reasons for this. Maybe this team is made up of amateurs or is not motivated enough.
- (E) Same as B.
- 14. A jewellery manufacturer produces rings in two metals—gold and platinum. The manufacturer has noted that, over the last three years, the gold rings have consistently outsold the platinum ones by a large margin, even though the designs available in both the metals are exactly the same. This has led the manufacturer to conclude that consumers prefer gold to platinum.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument?

- (A) Over the last three years, diamond rings have outsold both gold and platinum ones.
- (B) Jewellery buyers give more importance to design than to the metal used.
- (C) Platinum is easier to maintain than is gold.
- (D) Platinum rings take longer to produce than do gold rings.
- (E) Gold rings cost considerably less than do platinum ones.

Answer: E

Explanation:

The argument concludes that just because gold rings sell more than platinum rings, customers prefer the metal gold to the metal platinum. But there can clearly be other reasons why customers prefer gold rings to platinum ones—maybe the gold rings are cheaper or have better designs or are easier to resell. Any such option can weaken the argument. E highlights the cost aspect and should be the correct answer.

- (A) The argument is only concerned with gold and platinum rings. Diamond rings are outside the scope of the argument.
- (B) This does not necessarily suggest that customers don't pay attention to the metal used or that gold rings have better designs than platinum ones. Maybe the second item on the customers' preference checklist, after the design, is the metal used.
- (C) So then platinum rings should be selling more, why are gold rings selling more?
- (D) The amount of time it takes to produce a ring in either metal is irrelevant.
- (E) The correct answer.

15. It is not correct on the part of the district administration to ban the sport of drag racing. After all, only 50 people have been injured in the last one year while drag racing whereas more than 400 people have been injured while playing baseball. The administration should, thus, ban baseball instead.

The argument above is flawed because:

- (A) It compares two different types of sports.
- (B) It does not take into account the treatment cost of the injuries.
- (C) It fails to take into account the total number of people who drag race and the total number of people who play baseball.
- (D) It does not take into account injuries caused in other sports such as boxing.
- (E) It uses inaccurate data to support its conclusion.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument is only looking at 50 and 400 as absolute numbers whereas it should look at them as percentages. For example, if 100 people drag race and 50 are injured, that is a 50% injury rate. As against this, if 10,000 people play football and 400 are injured, that is only a 4% injury rate. Thus, **C** is the flaw in the argument.

- (A) There is nothing wrong in comparing two different things, as long as they are both types of sports.
- (B) The cost of treatment is outside the scope of the argument.
- (D) Other sporting activities are also outside the scope of the argument.
- (E) There is nothing in the argument to suggest that it uses inaccurate data.
- 16. Almost all arguments against the theory of evolution stem from the fact that it is very difficult to prove how a group of non-living elements can combine together and give rise to life. However, just because something cannot be proved with certainty today doesn't mean that the possibility isn't there. Remember, there was a time when almost the whole world believed the Earth was the centre of the universe until Galileo came by and proved otherwise.

The statements above, if true, best support which of the following assertions?

- (A) At one point of time, Galileo was the only person who believed that the earth was not the centre of the universe.
- (B) A majority of scientists do not agree with the theory of evolution.
- (C) It is difficult to prove the theory of evolution with certainty.
- (D) When Galileo stated that the sun and not the earth was the centre of the universe, he was called insane by his compatriots.
- (E) Everything that, at one time, seems impossible will, at some point in the future, become possible.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Let's look at each option and eliminate:

- We can't say this for sure. There may have been more people who believed so but were scared of speaking up.
- We know for sure that some scientists do not agree with the theory of evolution. However, whether they are in majority or not is something we do not know.
- The correct answer; this almost paraphrases the opening lines of the stimulus.
- (D) While a lot of you may know that this is true, this cannot be inferred from the stimulus.
- (E) Extreme generalization. May not be true for everything and the argument never suggests this anyway.
- 30 years ago residents of Pandora County used to buy an average of 10 books every year. 17. Today, the residents of Pandora County buy an average of three books every year. Therefore, it can be concluded that book sales in Pandora County must have fallen over these 30 years.

The argument above rests on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) The residents of Pandora County used to have more free time 30 years ago than they do now.
- (B) The residents of Pandora County have many more activities that vie for their attention today than 30 years back.
- The population of Pandora County hasn't increased significantly in the last 30 years.
- The literacy rate hasn't significantly changed in Pandora County over the past 30 years.
- Those residents of Pandora County who used to read 30 years ago have now not (E) become too old to read.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument concludes that since the average number of books purchased per person in Pandora County has decreased over the past 30 years, the total book sales in Pandora County must have also decreased. But what if the population of Pandora County has increased several times in the past 30 years? So, earlier if 100 people were buying 10 books each to give a total sale of 1000 books, today 500 people may be buying 3 books each to give a total sale of 1500 books.

Therefore, for the conclusion to be true the assumption has to be that the population of Pandora County hasn't increased significantly over the last 30 years.

- (A) How much time each resident spends reading has no connection with how many books are sold.
- (B) Irrelevant to the argument.

- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) While the literacy rate may seem relevant, this option may or may not be true but it doesn't have to be true for our conclusion to be true.
- (E) Irrelevant to the argument.
- 18. Which of the following most logically completes the argument below?

A new palm vein scanning technology is being developed by scientists that could be used with laptops or other tablet devices. This technology involves the use of a biometric sensor that can scan the unique pattern of veins in a person's palm to verify their identity. This technology could do away with the problem of remembering multiple passwords to access different websites. However, the technology would require new biometric sensors to be built into computers but this should not be a hindrance in the success of the new technology, because

- (A) the new technology is bound to be extremely popular with computer users
- (B) the biometric sensors do not cost a lot of money and are available in plentiful supply
- (C) most people have forgotten one or more of their passwords at some point in their lives
- (D) there is almost always a market for innovations such as these
- (E) the biometric sensors can be easily and cost effectively built into computers

Answer: E

Explanation:

Since the leading word is because, we need to strengthen the conclusion that the requirement of biometric sensors to be built into computers will not be a problem. E does this best and is the correct answer.

- (A) The technology may be popular but if this technology is very expensive then most people may not be able to afford it.
- (B) Even if the biometric sensors themselves are cheap, their installation in computers could be very expensive.
- (C) Irrelevant fact.
- (D) The market may not be there if these innovations become very costly.
- (E) The correct answer.

Which of the following best completes the argument above?

- the Kribki Company also has a lot of loyal customers who have great things to say about it
- the website on which the complaints are listed started operations only one year ago (B) whereas the Kribki Company has been in the business for more than three decades
- the Kribki Company has twice as many people manning its customer service department than its nearest competitor
- (D) the Kribki Company has six times as many customers as its nearest competitor
- the Kribki Company does eventually manage to resolve the complaint of most of its customers

Answer: D

Explanation:

Note that the option that goes in the blank has to show that the Kribki Company is not poorly managed despite the evidence cited in the argument. If the Kribki Company has six times as many customers as its nearest competitor but only twice as many complaints, then in percentage terms the Kribki Company is actually much better managed than its closest competitor. Thus, **D** is the correct answer.

- (A) The evidence still stands that the number of complaints against the Kribki Company is twice that against its nearest competitor.
- (B) This has no bearing on the argument.
- This still does not explain the fact as to how the number of complaints against the Kribki Company is twice that against its nearest competitor.
- (E) While it may eventually be resolving the complaints of its customers, this still shows that the Kribki Company is poorly managed.
- 20. Angel dusting is a process wherein an ingredient, which would be beneficial in a reasonable quantity, is instead added by manufacturers to their products in an insignificant quantity so that they can make the claim that their product contains that ingredient, and mislead the consumer into expecting that they will gain the benefit of that ingredient. For example, a cereal may claim it contains "10 essential vitamins and minerals", but the amounts of each may be only 1% or less of the Reference Daily Intake, providing virtually no benefit or nutrition.

If the above statements are true, which of the following could be an example of Angel dusting?

- (A) A laptop that claims to have the longest battery backup, actually has a backup just 10% longer than is provided by its closest competitor.
- (B) A book that claims to cover all the concepts of Organic Chemistry actually provides just one example of each concept.
- A vitamin capsule that claims to contain 23 vitamins and amino acids contains less than 3% of each.

- (D) A protein shake that claims to contain a magic ingredient that can make muscles grow faster, only contains 20% of this ingredient's daily recommended intake.
- (E) An apartment that claims to have used Italian marble for its flooring has used exactly one slab of Italian marble and the remaining ninety-nine slabs of regular marble.

Answer: E

Explanation:

E is the correct answer. If the advertising suggests that the use of Italian marble has been done in the entire apartment and, in fact, only one out of hundred tiles is made of Italian marble, then it is as good as not having Italian marble in the flat at all.

- (A) This does not suggest that the laptop has a short battery backup.
- (B) The book claims to cover all the concepts, which it apparently does; it never claims to provide several examples of every concept.
- (C) Irrelevant. We have no idea whether 3% of these vitamins and amino acids is adequate or inadequate. Even if the 23 ingredients are equally divided, each will comprise around 4% of the capsule, so 3% is not as low as it sounds. In any case, we don't have any reference data.
- (D) Again, we don't have any reference data. It is possible that 20% of the magic ingredient coming from one source is a very good thing because the other sources contain less than 1% of the daily recommended intake of this ingredient.
- (E) The correct answer. This option is the best of the lot because it gives you a reference figure of 99 tiles. If the apartment had five slabs of marble and one of them was Italian marble, then this may not necessarily be an example of Angel dusting, but the use of one tile out of 99 is definitely an example of Angel Dusting. This is the best option in our lot.
- 21. In the year 2000, olive oils made up just 40% of the liquid oils market, with standard oils taking 52% and speciality oils accounting for the remainder. But now, fuelled by health concerns and a general move towards premium products, the tables have turned. Today, the olive oil sector is worth some \$104 million and alone accounts for an estimated 51% of the total market.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) In 2000, the total worth of the olive oil sector was less than \$104 million.
- (B) The total sales of the standard oils at present time are lower than their sales in 2000.
- (C) Olive oil is healthier than all other liquid oils available in the market.
- (D) The market share of the standard oils category today must have declined from what it was in 2000.
- (E) The total worth of the specialty oil category today is higher than what it was in 2000.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- This does not necessarily have to be the case. What if the total market for liquid oils has shrunk? Then, even though olive oil could have a larger share of this market, in absolute terms, its total worth may have gone down.
- (B) Again this may not be the case if the total market for liquid oils has expanded significantly.
- (C) Extreme option. There could be healthier oils than olive oil available in the market.
- The correct answer. In 2000, the market share of the standard oils category was 52% and currently, the market share of olive oils is 51%. So, then the market share of standard oils category currently cannot be more than 49%, which is lower than 52%.
- (E) This may not be the case if the overall market for liquid oils has shrunk.
- 22. The consumption of tobacco in the country has fallen drastically in the past one year. During the same period of time, the government has been running a sustained advertising campaign to educate citizens about the ill effects of chewing tobacco. Thus, the government's advertising campaign has proved to be a resounding success.

Which of the following options most weakens the argument above?

- The government has had to spend a huge amount of money on this advertising campaign, an amount that it will eventually recover from the general public in the form of new taxes.
- More and more tobacco consumers in the past one year have now shifted to consuming relatively harmless substances such as chewing gum.
- (C) The consumption of alcoholic drinks has increased in the country in the past one year.
- (D) Tobacco prices have more than tripled in the country in the past one year.
- (E)All the major tobacco companies are still in business in the country.

Answer: D

Explanation:

This argument is testing you on Causality. The argument assumes that there can be no other reason (other than government's advertising campaign) for the drop in tobacco consumption in the country. Option **D** provides you one such reason and so, weakens the argument.

- (A) The point still stands that the reason for the fall in tobacco consumption in the country could be the government's advertising campaign. How the government decides to recover this money is outside the scope of the argument.
- (B) What new products the tobacco consumers have shifted does not make any difference to the causality mentioned in the argument.
- (C) Alcoholic drinks are outside the scope of the argument.

- (E) There could be several reasons for this, but this has no bearing on the causality mentioned in the argument.
- 23. Jim Rogers: It's very difficult for foreigners to do business in India because India doesn't like foreigners and keeps them away. The biggest proof of this is Walmart, which has many stores in China, but not a single fully-owned store in India, simply because India doesn't like overseas businessmen.

Which of the following is an assumption made in drawing the conclusion above?

- (A) There is nothing that can make India like foreign businessmen.
- (B) The fact that Walmart has many stores in China proves that China loves foreigners.
- (C) The limited size of the Indian market hasn't stopped Walmart from entering India.
- (D) Any foreign company other than Walmart is also not present in India.
- (E) China's policies are probably more favourable towards foreigners than are India's policies.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument concludes that the reason Walmart does not have any stores in India is because India does not like foreigners. However, there could be other reasons as well for Walmart not doing so. Thus, in arriving at its conclusion, the argument assumes that there could be no other reason for Walmart not entering India, such as Walmart itself not wanting to enter India. C points out one such passive assumption in the argument and is the correct answer.

- (A) Irrelevant to the argument and not necessary for the argument to be true.
- (B) Whether China loves foreigners or not is not our concern.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) The argument never talks about any other company so this cannot be an assumption in the argument.
- (E) This may or may not be an inference but is definitely not an assumption.
- 24. Which of the following most logically completes the argument?

- (A) that all the seats at the back of the plane haven't already been booked
- (B) that the plane will be flying over the Sahara desert

- that the plane is manufactured by Boeing and has been part of the test described in the stimulus
- (D)that the plane does not crash on its tail
- that these results apply to airplane crashes in general, and not just to those of old 727s into sand.

Answer: E

Explanation:

Since the leading word is assuming, we need to find the assumption in the argument. The argument obviously assumes that what holds true for the crash test will hold true for other plane crashes as well. E states this and is the correct answer.

- This is irrelevant to the decision at hand. The idea is whether it makes sense to sit at the back, not whether one actually gets to sit there.
- (B) Irrelevant. It could be any other desert. The assumption has to be whether this would apply to non deserts as well.
- If the plane has already been part of the test, that is, it has already been crashed, it won't be flying again anyway.
- While this may look logical, the argument does not mention anything about how the plane used in the experiment actually crashed—on its tail, its front, its belly, etc. So then we cannot necessarily assume this fact.
- (E) The correct answer.
- 25. According to some people, income tax should be done away with in the US since there are several other ways to collect taxes. A few countries in Europe have successfully abolished income taxes by raising other taxes such as sales tax. Of course this makes products more expensive but with the added amount of money you would receive on your paycheck, you will still be better off than you were paying income taxes.

Which of the following, if true, provides the most support for the argument above?

- The prices of products in European countries, when converted into US dollars at current rates are very similar to their prices in the United States.
- (B) The increase in prices of products because of the increased sales tax rate will not more than offset the benefit of not paying any income taxes.
- (C) The legislative body in the United States has stated that it will support the move to abolish income tax.
- Apart from increasing sales tax, the government can also increase other special taxes such as those on petroleum products.
- (E) The government has enough funds in reserve currently to be able to absorb any shock because of lowered tax collection.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument concludes that the increase in the prices of products because of an increase in the sales tax rate will not adversely affect the consumers because their salaries will also increase due to the abolition of income tax. However, what if this increase in the prices of products was much more than the increase in people's salary? Then the situation will negatively impact the people. The argument obviously assumes this will not be the case. B states this and so strengthens the argument.

- (A) The situation in European countries has no bearing on the situation in the US.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) This is an additional point and not relevant to the reasoning provided in the argument.
- (D) Other taxes are outside the purview of the argument.
- (E) The question is not whether the government will be able to bear the shock of abolition of income tax but whether such a move will be beneficial for the people.
- 26. The reason for Kim's excellent performance in her final college tests is that she used to study for eight hours every day.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) The fact that Kim took classes from the Teaching Company is not the reason for her excellent performance in her college tests.
- (B) In addition to studying for eight hours every day, Kim also did not miss a single class in her college.
- (C) In addition to her excellent performance in the college tests, Kim also won several awards for her performance in extracurricular activities such as debates and dramatics.
- (D) Both of Kim's parents are geniuses.
- (E) Some of Kim's friends, who used to study for much less duration than her, also performed very well on their final college tests.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The argument assumes that there can be no other reason for Kim's excellent performance on her college tests except for the fact that she studied for eight hours every day. A gives one such reason that she took classes from the Teaching Company and, therefore, should be the correct answer. In case you are confused, go through the topic 'Passive Assumptions' in the Assumption chapter in this book. A is a passive assumption.

- (B) This could weaken the argument by suggesting that there could be another reason for Kim's excellent performance on the college tests—that she attended all the classes in college.
- (C) This tells us nothing about the causality mentioned in the original argument.

- Same as B. (D)
- This does not affect the causality in the original argument. There could be different reasons for the success of her friends but Kim's success is on account of her studying for eight hours every day.
- 27. A study of 1000 American citizens has found that 70 per cent of them would not work for a company with bad reputation even if they were unemployed and that nearly 90 per cent of them would consider leaving their current jobs if they were offered another role with a company that had an excellent corporate reputation. Of those willing to work for a company with a bad reputation, the research found that, on average, it would take doubling an employee's salary for them to make such a jump.

If the statements above are true, which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by them?

- At least 10% of the people in the survey would not mind working for a company with a bad reputation but would also consider leaving their current jobs to join another company with excellent corporate reputation.
- (B) The survey is representative of the worker pool across the United States.
- (C) At least 25% of the people in the survey would agree to do an unethical act if their salary was substantially increased.
- For US workers, higher salary takes precedence over the reputation of the company they work for.
- If a company in the US expects to attract the best talent, it must either have an excellent corporate reputation or be ready to pay high salaries.

Answer: A

Explanation:

According to the stimulus, 300 of the 1000 people would be willing to work for a company with a bad reputation. Also, 900 people would consider leaving their current jobs if they were offered a role with a company that had an excellent corporate reputation. Since the total number of people is only 1000, it has to be the case that (300-100) 200 people will be such that they would belong to both the above groups. A states this best and is the correct answer. Don't be confused by the fact that A mentions 10% and not 20% (200 out of 1000); notice that A uses the term at least 10%, that is, at least 100 people.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) The argument only talks about the pool of 1000 people who were surveyed and does not conclude anything for workers across the United States.
- (C) The argument never really describes what constitutes an unethical act.
- (D) We cannot really conclude this for all workers in the United States.
- (E) Extreme inference. There could be a third situation as well apart from these two.

28. One way in which companies can increase their productivity is by making use of telecommuting. Many office workers waste a lot of time in their cars or other modes of road transport every morning trying to reach office, and a lot of them spend their day attending video conferences and typing emails, activities which could easily be carried out from the comfort of their homes. So it makes sense for companies to encourage their employees to use telecommuting services and work from home rather than travel to the office every day.

In order to evaluate the above argument, it would be useful to determine each of the following EXCEPT:

- (A) Whether the cost of telecommuting will more than offset the increased productivity that comes about from its use.
- (B) Whether the day to day work of most companies involves physical interaction amongst their employees.
- (C) Whether a large part of the work of an average employee can be conducted using telecommuting services.
- (D) Whether the use of telecommuting service will lead to increased revenues for the companies adopting this service.
- (E) Whether the general traffic situation is likely to dramatically improve in the future.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Let's look at each of the options and check whether it is relevant to the argument.

- (A) Relevant. If there is no cost benefit of telecommuting, then companies may not want to make use of it.
- (B) Relevant. If employees' work requires physical interaction then telecommuting may not make sense.
- (C) Relevant. If most of an employees' work entails coming to the office then it may not make sense to use telecommuting.
- (D) Irrelevant. Even if the revenues remain the same, the cost could go down because of telecommuting leading to increased profits from the same revenue base. So it does not matter whether the revenues go up or not.
- (E) Relevant. If the traffic situation improves dramatically in the future, then it might take care of the problem associated with coming to work.
- 29. Buyers of used cars must love the color white. Of all the used cars sold in the country this year, as many as 60% were white.

Which of the following most weakens the argument?

(A) The color white is easier to maintain and hides scratches really well, unlike other colors such as black.

- White has been the most preferred car color of new car buyers in the country for several decades now.
- (C) The prices of used cars do not vary on the basis of the color of the cars.
- (D) There are more new cars sold in the country than used cars.
- (E) The huge depreciation costs on new cars make it very attractive to buy used cars in the country.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument assumes that all or a majority of these 60% of buyers actually want to buy the white cars. However, what if white is the color in which used cars are most often available for sale? Then the used car buyers won't really have a choice but to buy whatever color is available, in this case white. Thus, they would have to buy the white cars even if they may not necessarily love the colour white. **B provides one such possibility**. If most *new* car buyers prefer to buy white cars then obviously most *used* cars available for sale will also be white since it is these new cars that eventually end up in used car lots.

- Why people love the color white is not our concern in the argument.
- If anything, this strengthens the argument by suggesting that lower price is not the reason people prefer to buy white cars.
- (D)The number of new or used cars sold in the country is not of any concern to us.
- (E) Again, why people prefer to buy used cars is not our concern; why they prefer to buy white cars is.
- 30. Researchers have found that one in five patients hospitalized for heart attack experiences a major depression. According to the cardiologists who conducted the research, the depressed patients are 55 percent more likely than other heart attack patients to need hospital care for a heart problem again within a year and three times as likely to die from a future attack or other heart-related conditions.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) If a person dies of a heart attack, there is a high probability that he may have been suffering from depression as well.
- (B) If a patient needs to be re-hospitalised for a heart related problem within a year of his earlier heat attack, it is very likely that he may be suffering from depression.
- There are some similarities between symptoms of depression and symptoms of a heart attack in a patient.
- Depressed people are more likely to die of a heart attack than are people who do not suffer from depression.
- (E)Suffering from a heart attack can lead to depression in some people.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- (A) This may or may not be the case. The argument never states that there is a causal link between all depression and heart attack cases. It just states that those depression patients who have already had a heart attack have a high chance of suffering or dying from a heart ailment.
- (B) **The correct answer.** This is definitely true because for such a patient, there is a 55% chance that he may be suffering from depression.
- (C) The argument never makes any mention of the symptoms of a heart attack or of depression.
- (D) Same as A; there is no direct link between depression and heart attacks for regular people.
- (E) While this may look good, the argument never states what is the reason for this depression—heart attack or something else.
- 31. To prevent the incidence of highway robberies, the government of Baptesia formed a Highway Patrol Force two years back whose sole task was to patrol the country's highways and prevent highway robberies. Ever since the formation of the Highway Patrol Force, there have been only a handful of highway robberies and the individual losses suffered in these robberies were far less than the expenses incurred on maintaining the Highway Patrol Force. The government of Baptesia should, thus, disband the Highway Patrol Force and provide compensation to victims of highway robberies instead.

The above argument is flawed because:

- (A) It ignores the fact that the presence of the Highway Patrol Force could be the reason for the small number of highway robberies in the past two years.
- (B) It unjustifiably assumes that the government has enough money to pay compensation to the victims of highway robberies.
- (C) It ignores the possibility that the Highway Patrol Force could be used for other purposes instead of being disbanded.
- (D) It makes use of unverified facts to arrive at a conclusion.
- (E) It does not consider data from other countries, that have similar task forces, before arriving at its conclusion.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The Highway Patrol Force had been created to prevent or reduce the number of highway robberies and now that the Force has managed to do so, it makes no sense to disband it. It is like punishing them for their success. For all we know, the highway robberies could start unabated once again if the Patrol Force were to be disbanded. Thus, **A is the correct answer**.

- As per the argument, it would cost the government less money to pay compensation than it does to maintain the Patrol force.
- (C) Whether the Patrol Force can be put to other purposes is not our concern in the argument.
- (D) There is nothing to suggest that the facts mentioned in the argument are unverified.
- (E) There is no reason to consider data from other countries.
- 32. A recent survey of buyers of luxury cars in Beecham city has revealed that males who are between 40 and 50 years of age and who live in the Southern part of the city are more likely to buy these cars than is any other demographic group in the city. Maxpages is a magazine that contains articles primarily relevant to males in the age group of 40 to 50 years and is circulated only in the Southern part of Beecham city. Using the findings of this survey, Terence, who owns two luxury car showrooms in Beecham city, has decided to advertise in the Maxpages magazine.

Which of the following would be most useful to know in determining whether Terence should advertise in the Maxpages magazine?

- What is the exact number of luxury cars that were sold in all of Beecham city in the last one year?
- (B) What percent of the total car market is the luxury car market in Beecham city?
- (C) Do women and children play a major role in determining which luxury car to buy?
- (D) Is the luxury car market in Beecham city expected to grow over the next few years?
- Would it be cheaper to advertise in some other magazine that is targeted at people of all age groups?

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument states that since most buyers of a particular product belong to a particular demographic group, it makes sense to advertise in a magazine that is targeted at that particular group. But what if the actual purchase decision was not taken by this group but by some other group such as women and children? Then it would make more sense to advertise in magazines targeted at women and children. Option C raises this point and is the correct answer.

- (A) This fact has no bearing on which magazine Terence should advertise in.
- (B) This could have a bearing on deciding whether Terence should open a luxury car showroom at all anywhere in Beecham City. However, that is not the question at hand.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) Same as B.
- Irrelevant. The idea is to advertise in the magazine that is targeted at the prospective customer.

33. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

A study was recently conducted to determine whether power lines caused some kind of negative health effects. The researchers surveyed everyone living within 200 meters of high-voltage power lines over a 15-year period and looked for statistically significant increases in rates of over 1000 ailments. The study found that the incidence of childhood leukaemia was four times higher among those who lived closest to the power lines. However, this statistic by itself should not be a cause for alarm, because _______.

- (A) childhood leukemia can also be caused by other genetic factors
- (B) another study has found that most of the children who suffer from childhood leukemia stay far away from power lines
- (C) the number of potential ailments, that is, over 1000, was so large that it created a high probability that at least one ailment would exhibit statistically significant difference just by chance alone
- (D) there was no significant correlation between the other 999 diseases and how close to power lines a person stayed
- (E) childhood leukaemia, unlike leukaemia in adults, can be cured by medicines and therapy and is rarely fatal

Answer: C

Explanation:

Since the leading word into the blank is because, we need to strengthen the fact that the statistic given in the stimulus is not a cause for concern. C does this best by stating that the number of diseases that the study took into consideration was very large to be statistically significant. An analogy for this could be related to the stock markets, where if you track 1000 stocks for how the stock performed on the days on which you wore a black T-shirt, you will most likely find a correlation between some stocks performing well and the color of your T-shirt. This cannot lead you to conclude that on the days you wear a black T-shirt the stocks of these companies will perform well.

- (A) Our concern is proximity to power lines; we are not concerned with the other causes of leukemia.
- (B) But how do we explain the results of the study mentioned in the stimulus.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) Even if this is the case, we still need to explain the correlation between that one disease—leukemia—and proximity of people to power lines.
- (E) We are concerned with the cause of the disease and not its cure.
- 34. The mayor of Newtown is up for re-election in a month's time and is extremely apprehensive of his chances. According to a recent survey conducted by a news channel in Hampstead, Newtown's most populous suburb, more than 80 percent of the respondents stated that they would not vote for the current mayor.

The mayor's apprehensions are based on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) The people who were part of the survey will in no case change their mind.
- (B) The opinion of the residents of Hampstead is a pretty accurate representation of the opinion of the residents of Newtown as a whole.
- The mayor was recently involved in a corruption scandal that received a lot of negative (C) publicity in the print media.
- The mayor did not do enough to help the victims of the hurricane that struck Newtown last year.
- In the last three elections for the post of the mayor in Newtown, the incumbent mayor has never been re-elected to office.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The use of the word survey in the stimulus should give you a hint that you need to look for an error of Representativeness in this question. The mayor's conclusion is based on the results of the survey but the survey was just conducted in Hampstead. What if the residents of Hampstead don't like the mayor for personal reasons? Then the residents of other localities might still vote for the mayor and the mayor could still win.

So, for the mayor to conclude that his chances are not very good, he has to assume that the survey in question was representative of the entire population of Newtown. B states this best and is the correct answer.

A lot of the options (C, D, E) provide additional negative points about the mayor but these are irrelevant to the argument at hand, since the evidence in the argument is the survey of voters.

- (A) The mayor's conclusion is based on the results of the survey. What happens after the survey (whether people change their mind or not) is irrelevant.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) This is not the reason why the mayor fears his chances.
- (D)Same as C.
- (E) Same as C.
- 35. According to a nationwide survey of college students, 70% of the students who major in Science in high school were likely to pursue an engineering degree in college. Interestingly, according to the same survey, 70% of the students pursuing an engineering degree in college had not majored in science in high school.

Which of the following inferences is best supported from the above statements?

The number of students who studied science in high school is the same as the number of students who are pursuing an engineering degree in college but who did not major in science in high school.

- (B) There are more students pursuing science in high school than there are students pursuing science in colleges in the country.
- (C) A student's major in high school has no impact on the specialization she chooses to pursue in college.
- (D) There are more students pursuing an engineering degree who had taken up a nonscience major in high school than there are students pursuing an engineering degree who had majored in science in school
- (E) 30% of the students pursuing an engineering degree in the country had taken up a non-science major in high school.

Answer: D

Explanation:

According to the stimulus, 70% of the students who are pursuing an engineering degree in colleges within the country had not majored in science in high school. **D** states this best and should be **the correct answer**.

- (A) The stimulus only talks about percentages. It never gives us any actual numbers so there is no way we can infer this.
- (B) Same as A.
- (C) In fact the opposite is true since a majority of the student's pursuing science in high school took up science in college as well.
- (E) Again, the opposite is true, as is clearly stated in the stimulus.
- 36. Customer reviews are becoming a fixture on retail and consumer brand websites, with over 70% of retailers planning to feature them by the end of the year. The accelerated adoption of customer reviews indicates a more enlightened approach to handling negative comments, that is, the acknowledgment that occasional negative reviews do not hurt sales.

Under which of the following conditions is the above strategy likely to backfire?

- (A) The quality of the product in question is so poor that a customer is not likely to buy it in the first place.
- (B) There are frequent negative reviews for a product.
- (C) The 20% of the retailers who do not launch this feature decide to offer huge discounts on their products.
- (D) The customers of a product never come to know about the existence of this feature on the product website.
- (E) It costs retailers a considerable sum of money to implement this feature on their respective websites.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument states that the occasional negative review will not hurt sales but what if the negative reviews became more frequent. Then this strategy of encouraging customers to post reviews may backfire. B states this and is the correct answer.

- If the customer doesn't buy the product then there will be no reviews—negative or positive.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C)This may lead to a temporary reduction in sales for the remaining 80% of the retailers but is in no way connected to the strategy of encouraging customers to post product reviews.
- (D) In this case the strategy may not work but it will definitely not backfire either. There will be at worst no effect.
- (E) This has again no connection with the strategy backfiring.
- 37. All the winners of the Great Indian Derby in the past 60 years have been horses that have been in the racing circuit for at least two years. While nobody knows for sure what the correlation between the two is, it remains beyond doubt that the winner of the Great Indian Derby will always be a horse that has been competing in races for at least two years.

Which of the following can be inferred from the above statements?

- If a horse has been competing in races for two years or more, it will definitely win the Great Indian Derby.
- (B) The Great Indian Derby is more competitive than other horse races in the country.
- (C)The experience that comes as part of being active in the racing circuit for at least two years plays a valuable role in making a horse victorious in the Great Indian Derby.
- It is possible, on the off chance, for a horse to win the Great Indian Derby even if it has not been active in the racing circuit for at least two years.
- If a horse has not been part of the racing circuit for at least two years, it will not win the Great Indian Derby.

Answer: E

Explanation:

The stimulus clearly states that a horse has no chance of winning the Derby if it has not been active in the racing circuit for at least two years. Thus, E can be best inferred from this. Do not let A confuse you. To be active in the racing circuit for two years is a necessary criterion to win the Great Indian Derby but not a sufficient one. It could be possible for a horse to lose even after satisfying this criterion; however, if a horse does not satisfy this criterion, then it will definitely lose.

(B) The stimulus does not provide us information about any other horse race.

- (C) The stimulus never tells us whether it is the experience or something else. For all you know, it could be the strength and endurance that comes as part of being active in the racing circuit for two years that is the reason for the success of these horses.
- (D) The stimulus says no such thing. In fact, it quite clearly says that such a possibility is very unlikely.
- 38. For the past two decades, Eton Coaching Institute has been the market leader in preparing students for the entrance test to medical schools in the country. While several new players have set up shop in the last few years, and have shown good results, it remains without doubts that if a student wishes to ace the medical school entrance test, his best chances are with Eton Coaching Institute.

The statements above, if true, best support which of the following assertions?

- (A) There is something unique about the books provided by the Eton Coaching Institute that makes its students perform very well in the medical school entrance test.
- (B) If a student does not join the Eton Coaching Institute, he will most likely fail to clear the medical school entrance test.
- (C) The teachers at Eton Coaching Institute are probably better than those at other institutes.
- (D) A student could clear the medical school entrance test, even if he hasn't prepared with the Eton Coaching Institute.
- (E) If a student has prepared with the Eton Coaching Institute, he will clear the medical school entrance test.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference Question, we need to go through each option one by one.

- (A) Not necessarily. The books provided by Eton could very well be the same as those provided by other institutes; maybe it's the teachers at Eton who are unique.
- (B) Extreme inference. The argument never states anything about the chances of a student clearing the medical entrance test. Maybe for other institutes the chances are 2% and for Eton the chances are 10% but even then 90 out of 100 students enrolled at Eton (and 98 of the 100 enrolled at other institutes) will not clear the test.
- (C) This is the opposite of A. It could very well be that the books at Eton are better and the teachers are not.
- (D) The correct answer. The argument never states that a students' only chance of clearing the test is with Eton but that his best chances are with Eton. It is very much possible that a student enrols with some other institute (or doesn't enrol at all) and yet manages to clear the test.
- (E) Same as B.

It is extremely unlikely that the incumbent governor will be voted back to office in the coming elections. According to a recent survey of residents of the state, more than 80% expressed dissatisfaction with the governor's performance and almost 60% stated that they would vote for the governor's opponent.

Which of the following most strongly supports the argument?

- The views of most of the state's residents are in concordance with the views of the survey's respondents.
- (B) The governor has received a lot of bad publicity in the past owing to his involvement in a corruption scandal.
- (C) The survey only covered a small fraction of the state's populace.
- The governor's opponent is very popular amongst the residents of the state. (D)
- The newspapers in the state are against the governor and favor his opponent instead.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The use of survey in the stimulus should give you a hint that you need to look for the issue of Representativeness in this question. The argument assumes that the views of the people in the survey are representative of those in the state as a whole. A states this best and is the correct answer.

- The correct answer. (A)
- (B) Even though this is negative information, this does not have any connection with our evidence and so is irrelevant. For all you know, the bad publicity could be for the wrong reasons which the public may have later realised and so now it might want to vote for the incumbent governor.
- (C) This is the opposite of the correct answer. This raises doubts on the conclusion by suggesting that the evidence may not be representative in nature.
- (D) The popularity of the governor's opponent is not the question in the argument.
- (E) Same as D, this is not the issue at hand.
- The decision to ban the use of hands-free mobile phone headsets while driving is not 40. justified. There is no doubt that mobile phone use while driving is distracting and dangerous. However, it is dangerous because drivers use their hands and eyes to operate the phone, when their full physical attention should be on the road. Hands-free technologies allow for mobile phone use without such distractions, and these options should remain legal.

Which of the following, if true, undermines the argument above?

- The functioning of the eyes and the hands is governed by the brain and there is considerable evidence to show that the use of mobile phones distracts the brain.
- (B) Most good quality hands-free headsets are expensive which will discourage people from buying them.

- (C) Just because something is legal does not necessarily mean that it is safe.
- (D) There have been some incidents of road accidents involving drivers who were talking on the mobile phones using hands-free technology while driving at the time of the accident.
- (E) There are other technologies available, such as the use of Bluetooth to connect one's mobile phone to the car's speaker system, that are much safer than the use of handsfree devices.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The argument assumes that a driver will be able to use his hands and eyes unhindered if he uses a hands-free headset. A weakens this by suggesting that this will not be the case because the use of mobile phone distracts the brain, that will in turn distract the hands and eyes because the brain controls their functioning.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) The price is outside the scope of the argument. The question is whether the use of hands-free headsets should be allowed at all.
- (C) True, but to weaken the argument, we have to show how the use of hands-free headsets is unsafe.
- (D) The operative word here is some. There could be other reasons for these accidents as well, such as over-speeding or carelessness of the pedestrians.
- (E) The availability of other technologies is outside the scope. The question is whether the use of hands-free headsets is safe or not.
- 41. Researchers from a data analysis firm have found that the three most popular combinations—1234, 1111, and 0000—account for close to 20 percent of all four-digit passwords. The researchers also found that every four-digit combination that starts with 19, ranks above the 80th percentile in popularity, with those in the upper 1900s coming in the highest. Also quite common are combinations in which the first two digits are between 01 and 12 and the last two are between 01 and 31.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) The password 1922 will most likely be less popular than 1981.
- (B) The password 0123 will most probably be more common than 2331.
- (C) If a password was to be selected from a random list of 100 four-digit passwords, there is a very high possibility that it will be 1234, 1111, or 0000.
- (D) One out of three four-digit passwords will be 1234, 1111, or 0000.
- (E) Passwords starting with 19 are more popular than those starting with 21.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Since this is an inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- The correct answer. Since the numbers in the upper 1900s are more popular than the rest, 1981 has to be more popular than 1922.
- While you may think this is correct based on the last sentence of the argument, all that can be inferred from the last sentence is that the password 0123 will be a popular one. We cannot infer anything about how it would compare with the password 2331. There could be some other characteristic of 2331 that makes it more popular than 0123.
- (C) Not necessarily. All that the argument states is that these three comprise close to 20% of all passwords, so there's only a 20% chance that the chosen password will be one of these three.
- In fact, one out of five four digit passwords will be one of the three mentioned since the chances are 20%.
- (E)We know that passwords starting with 19 are popular, but we don't know anything about passwords starting with 21.
- 42. A tricktykart is similar to a bicycle in that a rider uses pedals to propel it ahead. However, since it has three wheels and not two, a tricktykart cannot technically be considered a bicycle and thus tricktykart manufacturers cannot avail of the tax exemptions available to bicycle manufacturers.

Which of the following is assumed in the argument?

- Since a tricktykart is very difficult to topple over, it is particularly useful for handicapped people and for those lacking a sense of balance.
- (B) Given the similarities between it and a bicycle, a tricktykart should, in fact, be considered a bicycle.
- Any self-propelled vehicle that has more than two wheels cannot be considered a (C) bicycle.
- The government should make an exemption in the case of a tricktykart, given its importance for handicapped people, and provide tricktykart manufacturers with tax concessions.
- (E) A tricktykart cannot run on two wheels.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument concludes that since a tricktykart has more than two wheels, it cannot be considered a bicycle. Then the argument has to assume that any vehicle that is similar to a bicycle but has more than two wheels cannot be technically considered a bicycle. C states this best and should be the correct answer.

- (A) The usefulness of a tricktykart is not our concern.
- (B) This is a suggestion but we are supposed to find the assumption and not offer a suggestion.
- (D) Same as B.
- (E) This is at best an inference but not an assumption by any chance.
- 43. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

Over the years, supporters of slavery have put forward several view-points to rationalize their belief. One such argument states that some people are meant to be slaves as part of the natural order of the universe, or as part of God's plan, and it is wrong to interfere with this by abolishing slavery. However, such an argument is flawed, because it fails to take into account the fact that ________.

- (A) slavery is a cruel practice that does not find much favor with most people in the world
- (B) just because something is part of God's plan does not mean it is the morally correct thing to do
- (C) slavery is considered illegal in almost all the countries of the world
- (D) there exist no certain criteria to distinguish between natural slaves and those who should not be enslaved
- (E) just because something is meant to be does not mean that it has to be

Answer: D

Explanation:

The sentence leading to the blank states that the argument is flawed so the blank basically has to highlight a flaw in the argument. Remember that the flaw is always linked to the assumption. Those who suggest that some men are meant to be slaves are obviously assuming that there is some way in which one can identify who these men are. The argument cannot be that just because somebody is a slave, he was meant to be a slave. It has to be the other way round, that is, somebody is a slave because he was meant to be a slave. Since there is no criteria for distinguishing between the two, the argument does not hold weight. D states this and is the correct answer.

- (A) This could be a negative aspect of slavery in general, but is definitely not a flaw with the argument.
- (B) Again, this may make sense logically, but isn't necessarily a flaw with the argument.
- (C) Same as A and B.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) Again, logical but not a flaw.
- 44. The list of the highest paying cities in the world is headed by cities in Switzerland. This serves to reaffirm the fact that people in Western European cities on average earn three

times more than those in Eastern Europe. The fact that, in Switzerland, deductions from salary are relatively low, further widens the gap between net wage level earned there and in other countries, especially in the rest of Western Europe. The largest wage differences are in Asia, where the highest value (Tokyo) is twelve times higher than the lowest (Delhi).

Which of the following can properly be inferred from the statements above?

- (A) The Swiss pay less money in taxes than do people in the rest of Western Europe.
- (B) Delhi is the poorest city in the Asian continent.
- The wage difference between the richest and poorest cities of Eastern Europe is less than twelve times.
- Switzerland is not situated in Western Europe.
- (E) Tokyo has more rich people than does Delhi.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's analyze each option one by one.

- We know that the Swiss have lower deductions from their salary but we don't necessarily know whether these are on account of taxes are some other heads.
- (B) All that the stimulus tells us is that the average wage in Delhi is considerably lower than in Tokyo. We don't even know whether we have data for each city in the Asian continent so there is no way we can conclude that Delhi is the poorest city in the continent.
- The correct answer. The argument states that the difference between the highest and lowest wage rates is highest in Asia, so it has to be lower in all other places such as Eastern Europe.
- (D) In fact, the argument suggests that Switzerland is most likely situated in Western Europe.
- (E) Again, this depends on the population of the two countries because the wage level in consideration is an average. So it's possible for Delhi to have more rich people than Tokyo but since Delhi also has many more relatively poorer people, this fact pulls the average wage down.
- 45. The perceived value of goods and services, rather than just their price, is becoming an increasingly prominent factor in the purchase decisions of modern consumers, a new report has indicated. Thus, it can be concluded that consumers will be increasingly willing to spend extra on goods and services that are high-quality and durable.

For the above statements to be true, which of the following must be true?

- The price of a product plays no role in the making of purchase decisions by modern consumers.
- (B) There is a positive relation between the quality of a product and its durability.

- (C) The modern consumer is not likely to allow the quality of a product to determine his purchase decision.
- (D) The ideal way for manufacturers to charge more for their products is to increase the perceived value of their products in the minds of the modern consumer.
- (E) The durability of a product is in some way related to its perceived value in the minds of modern consumers.

Answer: E

Explanation:

Don't mistake this question for an Inference question; it is in fact an Assumption question. Notice the wording of the question stem; it states which of the options has to be true for the argument to be true, that is, the assumption.

The evidence states that consumers would be willing to pay more for products that they perceive higher than the others. However, the conclusion states that these consumers would be willing to spend more on products that are high quality and durable. Thus, the assumption has to be that high quality and durability are factors that increase the perception of a product in the consumers' minds. E states this and is the correct answer.

- (A) Extreme option, the price may play a role but a smaller role than the perception of the product in the consumers' mind.
- (B) No such connection can be arrived at on the basis of the argument.
- (C) Opposite. In fact, according to the last sentence of the argument, the quality of the product will be a deciding factor for the modern consumer.
- (D) This could be an inference from the argument but is definitely not an assumption. If you are confused, try negating this option. It will not make any difference to the argument.
- (E) **The correct answer**. If you negate this, the argument falls apart.
- 46. Companies X and Y have decided to enter into a joint venture to conduct mining operations together. As per the terms of the agreement, all metals that are unearthed will go to Company X and all non-metals will go to Company Y. Thus, all the Zinconium that is dug out should go to Company Y.

Which of the following most strengthens the argument?

- (A) Zinconium sells for very high prices in the international market.
- (B) The processing of Zinconium requires specialised machinery that is already available with Company Y.
- (C) The agreement between the two companies has no provision of sharing any of the resources that are dug out.
- (D) In terms of its chemical properties, Zinconium has more characteristics in common with non-metals than with metals.

Company Y will bear a larger proportion of the total cost of conducting the mining operations than will Company X.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The argument clearly states that all metals go to Company X and all non-metals go to Company Y. It then concludes that Zinconium should go to Company Y. Then it obviously assumes that Zinconium is more similar to a non-metal than to a metal. **D** is the correct answer.

- (A) The selling price of Zinconium is of no use to us.
- (B) This gives you an additional reason why Zinconium should go to Company Y but this has nothing to do with the evidence that is used in the argument. Remember that we always have to strengthen or weaken the connection between the evidence and the conclusion. Company X could always buy such machinery for all we know.
- (C) This makes no difference to our assumption.
- (E) Same as B.
- 47. The 17 countries of the Eurozone are all united by one currency—the euro, but that doesn't mean that there aren't price disparities in the continent. A sum of 20 Euros can buy you 35 cups of coffee in Portugal but only seven cups of coffee in Greece. The same amount of money can get you 16 cartons of eggs in Malta, but only seven cartons of eggs in Ireland.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) On an average, a cup of coffee costs more in Portugal than in Greece.
- (B) A carton of eggs costs more in Malta than in Ireland.
- (C) Price disparities are an unusual phenomenon in the countries of the Eurozone.
- (D) The cost of a cup of coffee in Greece is the same as that of a carton of eggs in Ireland.
- Portugal is a cheaper country to stay in than is Greece.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- (A) In fact, a cup of coffee costs more in Greece than in Portugal.
- (B) Again, a carton of eggs costs more in Ireland than in Malta.
- (C) There is nothing in the argument to suggest this.
- The correct answer. 20 Euros can buy you 7 cups of coffee in Greece, whereas the (D) same amount of money can buy you 7 cartons of eggs in Ireland. Then the price of a cup of coffee in Greece has to be the same as the price of a carton of eggs in Ireland.

- (E) No inferences can be made about how expensive a country is to stay in based on the information given in the argument.
- 48. John, a stock broker, has a list of companies whose shares he recommends his clients to invest in. Over the past one year, the share price of 20 companies listed on the stock exchange has appreciated by 100% or more and 16 of these companies are part of John's list. Thus John claims that he is an expert at picking stocks and that more and more investors should park their funds with him to get the maximum return on their investment.

The answer to which of the following questions would be most important in determining whether an investor should park his funds with John?

- (A) How many companies are there on John's list?
- (B) Whether any other stock broker has also showed similar or better performance last year?
- (C) What is the total number of companies listed on the stock exchange?
- (D) Has John shown similar results in the previous years as well?
- (E) Does John hire the services of someone else to identify stocks in which his clients should invest?

Answer: A

Explanation:

What if John has every company listed on the stock exchange on his list? Then, even though the best performing companies will be part of John's list, the worst performing companies will also be part of his list. As against this, if John has 30 companies on his list, then his strike rate is very good. So to evaluate John's argument, we need to know how many companies he has on his list. A states this and is the best answer.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) The performance of other stock brokers is outside the scope of the argument. We are only concerned with evaluating John's argument.
- (C) This fact is irrelevant to evaluating John's argument.
- (D) John's previous performance is irrelevant in analysing his current performance.
- (E) Even if this is the case, it makes sense to invest with John as long as his argument can be justified.
- 49. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

Measured globally, car use will continue to increase, for as people in emerging markets get
rich, they want the mobility and status that car-ownership offers. But in the rich world the
decades-long link between rising incomes and car use has been severed and miles driven per
person have been falling. This does not, however, warrant the conclusion that automobile
manufacturers located in rich countries should brace themselves for tough times ahead,
since .

- (A) a reduction in car use does not necessarily indicate a reduction in car sales.
- (B) fears about smog and global warming have led many people in rich countries to prefer the use of public transport to that of private cars.
- (C) fuel prices are expected to increase further in the next few years.
- there are several new car launches lined up in rich countries over the next couple of years.
- (E)relatively poorer countries will then probably generate even lower car sales.

Answer: A

Explanation:

We need to strengthen the conclusion that just because car use is going down in rich countries, the car sales will not necessarily go down in these countries. A does this best by pointing out that there is no real connection between car purchase and car use. I could purchase several cars but only use them to travel short distances.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) This explains why the use of cars in rich countries may have gone down but that's not what we are supposed to do in this question.
- (C) If fuel prices increase further, people may not want to buy cars.
- Just because new cars are being launched does not mean these will find buyers.
- (E) Irrelevant to the argument.
- 50. According to the results of a new ground-breaking research, those who wake up early in the morning are generally more alert during the day than those who wake up late. Thus, companies should insist that all their employees wake up early so that they remain alert all through the day.

Which of the following is an assumption in the above argument?

- (A) People who wake up early in the morning will not get lethargic during the day.
- (B) It is a good idea for employees to remain alert during the day.
- (C)Alert employees are generally more productive than lethargic ones.
- An alert nature does not cause people to wake up early in the morning.
- (E)Lethargy can be cured in other ways as well such as by having a cup of strong coffee.

Answer: D

Explanation:

This question is testing you on causality. The argument concludes that the cause is waking up early and the effect is alertness. The two assumptions then are that nothing else is responsible for this alertness and that alertness does not lead to waking up early in the morning. D states the second of these and should be **the correct answer**.

- (A) This can at best be an inference from the argument but does not have to be the assumption. The assumption will make the argument true whereas this can only be inferred if you assume that the argument is true.
- (B) Again, this could be an inference but does not have to be the assumption.
- (C) Same as B.
- (E) Other cures for lethargy are outside the scope of the argument.
- 51. According to a recent survey conducted in the US, about 52.5 per cent of Americans are now owners of at least some type of mobile phone devices. Interestingly, the same survey also found that 66 per cent of the Asian community in the US owns smart phones, making them the leading users of such devices in the country.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) More Asians own mobile phones than Americans.
- (B) The Asian community owns the maximum number of mobile phones in the US.
- (C) Almost half the population of the US does not own smart phones.
- (D) Feature phones sell more in the US than do smart phones.
- (E) The Asian community in the US is very well off which is why they can afford the more expensive smart phones.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Note that the stimulus mentions two different terms—mobile phones and smart phones. The options will most likely try to confuse between the two.

- (A) The evidence is only for Asians living in the US. From this, we cannot make any conclusions about Asians in general.
- (B) We know that the Asian community owns the maximum number of smart phones in the US, but we cannot necessarily conclude this for mobile phones in general.
- (C) While you may dismiss this as another one of those trick options, this is in fact **the correct answer**. According to the argument, 52.5 % of Americans own mobile phones, so then 47.5 % of Americans do not own mobile phones. Smart phones are also mobile phones, so then it is correct to conclude that almost half the US population does not own smart phones.
- (D) Since we don't have the actual number of either of these given to us, we cannot conclude this
- (E) This option explains why the Asian community can afford smart phones but is not an inference that can be made from the argument.

52. The Georgetown Public School recommends that all its students take an active interest in playing chess. This is because, according to a recent medical study, those students who played chess on an average performed better in tests of general intelligence than those who did not play chess. Thus, the school contends that playing chess will boost up the intelligence of its students.

Which of the following raise the most serious doubt about the conclusion above?

- (A) Some students who perform well in tests of general intelligence do not play chess.
- (B) Intelligent students are the only ones who take an interest in playing chess.
- A similar correlation has not been observed with regards to other sports such as (C) baseball.
- Some of the students who play chess perform poorly in subjects such as History. (D)
- There can be other ways in which a student could develop intelligence.

Answer: B

Explanation:

This is a classic case of correlation being confused with causation. Just because those students who play chess perform better in tests of intelligence does not necessarily imply that it is because of chess that these students have become intelligent. It could very well be that since these students are intelligent, they like to play chess, that is, the causality could actually be the other way around. B points this out and is the correct answer.

- (A) The argument does not contend that playing chess is the only way to boost intelligence. There could be other ways as well. All the argument contends is that if a student plays chess then he or she will definitely become intelligent.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) Other sports are outside the scope of the argument.
- (D) The argument restricts itself to tests of intelligence; there is nothing in the argument to suggest that all intelligent students will perform well in all subjects.
- (E) Other ways of developing intelligence are again outside the scope of the argument.
- 53. George: The anti-drunk driving campaigns will not be successful. Some people are just immune to these campaigns and will drink and drive no matter what.

Shelly: Complete eradication of drunk driving is not the expected outcome. The goal is reduction.

Shelly responds to George by:

- (A) questioning the veracity of George's evidence
- (B) suggesting that George's conclusion is based on incorrect assumptions
- (C)partially agreeing with George's main conclusion but disagreeing with his reasoning

- (D) partially agreeing with George's point of view but suggesting that he has overlooked a beneficial effect
- (E) contradicting George's reasoning and supplying an alternative reasoning

Answer: D

Explanation:

Shelly suggests that George may have got the goal of the ad campaign wrong because the goal is not to eradicate drunk driving but to just reduce the cases of drunk driving. D states this best and is the correct answer.

- (A) Shelly never questions the authenticity of George's evidence. She, in fact, partly agrees with what he says; the only thing is that George concludes that the campaign will have no effect whereas Shelly concludes that it will have a beneficial effect.
- (B) Shelly suggests no such thing about George's assumption; rather, she suggests that George's conclusion may not be the intended conclusion of the campaign.
- (C) Shelly does partially agree with George's conclusion but she never disagrees with his reasoning. She disagrees with George about whether the conclusion should actually be what George thinks it should be.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) Shelly never contradicts George's reasoning but his conclusion, which also she partially agrees with.
- 54. Modern renditions of classic novels such as *Ulysses* can sometimes not be appropriate for reading by children or young adults because of the amount of inappropriate content that is added to these novels by the publishers. However, ABC publishers do not add any inappropriate content to their novels. Therefore, parents who want their children to enjoy literary classics. yet at the same time wish to keep their children away from inappropriate content, can buy them books published by ABC publishers.

Which of the following most strengthens the above argument?

- (A) Apart from inappropriate content, ABC publishers do not add anything else to their books that might make these books unsuitable for reading by children.
- (B) ABC Publishers is one of the most reputed publishing houses in the country known for its strong ethical and moral code.
- (C) Some inappropriate content might not be as bad for children as some other.
- (D) The literary classics published by ABC publishers do not by themselves contain any inappropriate content that parents do not wish to expose their children to.
- (E) Children are not exposed to inappropriate content from other sources apart from books.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The entire logic of the argument hinges on the fact that ABC Publishers do not add anything inappropriate to their renditions of literary classics. However, what if these books themselves contain some inappropriate content (which was written by their original authors)? Then these books still might not be suitable for reading by children. The argument assumes that this will not be the case. Thus, **D** is the correct answer.

- (A) The scope of the argument is limited to inappropriate content. Any other kind of change or addition to the books is not our concern.
- (B) The reputation of ABC Publishers has no bearing on the argument.
- (C) The idea is to keep children away from inappropriate content altogether, whatever be the degree of its inappropriateness.
- (E)Our scope is again limited to books. Other sources of inappropriate content are outside the scope of the argument.
- 55. The proposal requiring mutual fund companies to set aside a part of their fee for investor education is laudable but meaningless. The challenge actually lies in finding the right ways of educating investors and making them financially literate.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the argument?

- People looking to invest in mutual funds currently lack the knowledge to make informed decisions.
- (B) Most mutual funds have accumulated large reserves of cash for investor education.
- (C) Investing in mutual funds is very different from investing in other financial instruments such as shares and debentures.
- Financially literate customers, on the whole, provide more business to mutual fund companies than do financially ignorant ones.
- Activities aimed at educating customers cost a lot of money and most mutual funds do not have the cash reserves to conduct such activities.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument concludes that it is of no use making insurance companies create a separate reserve for investor education because the real problem is not of lack of funds but of finding the right activities to educate customers. B strengthens this point by stating that insurance companies do have enough funds at their disposal so the problem has to be something else.

- Even if this is true, the reason for this could be that insurance companies do not have enough funds to spend on customer education. This could then weaken the argument by suggesting that insurance companies should indeed keep aside a part of their funds for customer education activities.
- (B) The correct answer.

- (C) Comparison of mutual funds with shares and debentures is irrelevant.
- (D) Same as A.
- (E) Same as A.
- 56. There are only two kinds of fruits that can be grown on a large scale in Nashvin County—bananas and oranges. The unique climate of Nashville County is of particular benefit to the orange trees and as a result, the total number of oranges that can be grown in one year in Nashville County is three times the number of bananas that can be grown in a year. However, most orchard owners still focus on growing more banana trees than orange trees.

Which of the following best explains the paradox highlighted above?

- (A) While the demand for oranges in the domestic market is low, the export demand for oranges is huge.
- (B) The selling price of a dozen bananas is at least 6 times that of a dozen oranges.
- (C) The amount of fertilizer required by banana trees and orange trees is more or less the same.
- (D) It takes less manpower to pluck ripe oranges from trees than it does to pluck bananas.
- (E) Most orchard owners in other neighbouring counties also focus more on growing bananas than on growing oranges.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Even though the yield of oranges is higher in Nashville County, orchard owners still focus on growing more bananas. One reason for this could be the fact that bananas sell for a much higher price than do oranges, something which could more than make up for the smaller banana yield. B gives us one such option. If the selling price of bananas is six times that of oranges then, despite the yield of oranges being higher, it still makes sense to grown bananas.

- (A) All the more reason to grow oranges as they can be exported.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) If the fertilizer requirement is the same then why are more bananas being grown, when the yield of oranges is higher?
- (D) Same as C.
- (E) The question is, 'why are they doing so?'
- 57. In an election, Candidate A received 70% of the total votes cast and Candidate B received the remaining 30% of the total votes cast. Thus, Candidate A was declared the winner. Candidate B has disputed the results of the election saying that he is much more popular with the public than is Candidate A.

Which of the following, if true, most helps to explain why Candidate B lost the election, despite being more popular than Candidate A?

- The public has been opposed to some of the policies of candidate B.
- Candidate A had recently been in the news because of his involvement in a corruption (B) scandal.
- Most of candidate B's supporters are factory workers whose work shift time clashes with the time of the day when election votes can be cast.
- The voting was conducted in an extremely fair manner with no incidents of cheating reported from anywhere.
- Candidate A spent more time canvassing for votes than did Candidate B.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The discrepancy in the argument is the fact that even though B is much more popular with the public, he only got 30% of the votes in the election while his rival got the remaining 70% of the votes despite being less popular. C explains this fact by pointing out one reason because of which Candidate B's supporters may not have been able to vote at al.

- (A) Yet, Candidate B is more popular than Candidate A, so why didn't he win?
- (B) Even more surprising how candidate A won then.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D)This doesn't explain the discrepancy.
- (E) But Candidate B was more popular, then why didn't he win?
- 58. The airfares on almost all routes in the country have increased considerably in the past six months. In fact, on some routes, the fares have as much as doubled from what they were six months earlier. Since there has been no significant increase in the number of fliers in the country in the last six months, the media has blamed cartelization in the airline industry for this rapid increase in fares.

Which of the following, if true, undermines the argument above?

- The media is known to sensationalize events of public importance to gain more readership/viewership.
- (B) The airfares on some routes have actually fallen over the past six months.
- Two of the six airline companies operating within the country have shut down operations in the last six months.
- The price of aviation fuel increased drastically two years back and has remained at that level since then.

(E) Other neighbouring countries have also seen similar rise in air fares but nobody has accused the airline companies in those countries of cartelization.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The conclusion is that airfares have gone up and the cause, according to the argument, is cartelization by airline companies. To weaken the argument, we need to provide another explanation for the same effect. C does this by suggesting that the reason for increase in airfares could be the fact that supply of seats in airplanes has gone down.

- (A) This is a general statement about the media and doesn't explain why the airfares have gone up.
- (B) This may be true but, in general, the airfares have risen according to the argument.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) Since the price of aviation fuel increased two years back, why have the airfares started increasing only in the past six months?
- (E) What is true for other neighbouring countries is outside the scope of the argument.
- 59. Clerical workers show more signs of stress during the work day than those in executive or higher positions. According to the findings of a study, employees on the lower levels of job hierarchy had higher blood pressure and increased heart rate in the mornings. They also had higher average levels of the stress hormone Cortisol throughout the day.

Each of the following is an assumption in the argument, EXCEPT:

- (A) The study is representative of all employees in general.
- (B) High blood pressure cannot be caused by factors other than stress.
- (C) The hormone Cortisol does not itself cause stress.
- (D) Increased heart rate is a sign of stress.
- (E) The higher average salary and, in general, better lifestyle of the employees at the executive and higher positions, to an extent, insulates them from stress.

Answer: E

Explanation:

Since this is an EXCEPT question, we need to identify four assumptions in the argument and the fifth option will be the correct answer.

- (A) This has to be assumed because the conclusion is for all employees in general whereas the evidence is just the study. If the study were not representative of all employees, the argument would fall apart.
- (B) This also has to be true for the argument to be true. If there could be other causes for high blood pressure, then we cannot necessarily conclude that just because certain employees in Britain have high blood pressure, they are under lots of stress.

- This has to be true for the argument to be true. The argument hinges on the fact that stress leads to Cortisol; if this causality were reversed the argument will fall apart.
- (D)Same as B.
- (E) The correct answer. This could be an inference from the argument or an explanation of the argument but is definitely not an assumption in the argument. Even if you negate this option, the argument will not fall apart.
- 60. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

Those who suggest that higher education should be offered to all for free are wrong. The cost of providing higher education will most likely be more than its benefits. Many vocational jobs require apprenticeships and in-house training, rather than a college degree. In fact, this would likely further exacerbate the unemployment issue, since _

- there would be no way for government to recover the extra money that it has spent on providing free higher education
- (B) there are more vocational jobs available currently than jobs requiring higher education
- there would simply be more qualified candidates vying for the same number of jobs (C)
- the sole purpose of higher education should not be to get jobs
- (E) the population of people in the working age group is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years

Answer: C

Explanation:

Since the leading word into the blank is since, we need to strengthen the conclusion that offering higher education for free will worsen the problem of unemployment. C does this by suggesting that since many of the available jobs do not require a higher education degree (they instead require some vocational knowledge), those who receive higher education for free will only add to the number of people who were competing for the jobs available to that applicant pool. Thus, the unemployment problem will get worsened because the number of people seeking jobs will increase but the number of jobs available will remain the same.

- Even if the government cannot recover the extra money it has spent, there is no (A) reason why the unemployment situation should get worsened.
- (B) This is already stated in the argument but we need to explain how this fact will lead to a worsening of the unemployment situation.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) The argument is limited to getting jobs so this option is outside the scope of the argument.
- This fact has no connection with the worsening of the unemployment problem (E) because of the availability of free higher education.

61. Bob: The introduction of the new high-yielding variety of seeds this year has greatly improved the financial situation of the farmers in our country, most of whom were facing huge losses until last year.

Shanon: Your conclusion is incorrect. According to a recent survey, as many as 90% of the farmers in the country made losses of 20% to 30% in their farming operations.

Which of the following casts the most serious doubt on Shanon's argument?

- (A) Most farmers are now more satisfied with their farming operations than they were when they were using ordinary seeds.
- (B) Monetary loss or gain is not the only way of judging the benefit of the new highyielding varieties of seeds.
- (C) The high yielding varieties of seeds in general cost no more than ordinary seeds do.
- (D) The use of high yielding varieties of seeds allows farmers to cut down their fertilizer requirement by more than half.
- (E) Until last year, the average loss suffered by farmers in the country was between 100% and 150%.

Answer: E

Explanation:

To weaken Shanon's argument, we have to show that the 20-30% losses being suffered by farmers is an improvement over their earlier financial situation. **E** does this best by stating that the losses the farmers were making earlier were much higher. So the use of high-yielding varieties has indeed improved their financial situation in relative terms.

- (A) Bob clearly talks about the improvement in the financial situation of the farmers. Their satisfaction levels are of no consequence to us.
- (B) Same as A.
- (C) The fact still remains that the farmers have made losses of 20-30%. So then how can we conclude that their financial situation has improved?
- (D) Same as C.
- 62. A stain-removing agent currently available in City X can remove the most stubborn of stains from clothes but is not very popular because it leaves behind a foul smell in the clothes. It takes around 10 days for the smell to completely go away from the clothes. Another stain-removing agent has just been launched in City X which is as effective at cleaning stains as the older one. An advantage of the new stain-removing agent is that its smell starts to go away from the clothes in two days itself. Thus this new agent should easily be able to outsell the older one.

Which of the following pieces of information would be most helpful in evaluating the argument above?

(A) The rate of growth or decline in sales of stain-removing agents in city X

- The total number of stain removing agents sold last year in city X (B)
- (C) The per capita income of people residing in city X
- (D)The amount of time it takes for the smell of the new stain-removing agent to completely go away from the clothes.
- A comparison of the smell of the new stain removing agent with that of similar (E) agents available in other cities

Answer: D

Explanation:

The author suggests that the new stain-removing agent will outsell the older one, but takes no account of the fact that there's a disparity in the information given. The smell of the new agent starts to wear off in two days, but we need to know how long it takes for the smell to wear off completely. Only then would we be able to compare the new and the old agents. D provides this information and is, therefore, the correct answer.

A, B, and C present irrelevant issues. Neither of these pieces of information helps us to differentiate between the two stain-removing agents.

- We are just comparing the two agents available in city X. A comparison with cleaning agents available in other cities has no bearing on the argument.
- 63. While cooking pasta, most Italian chefs add some cooking oil. The reason for this is not difficult to ascertain. Oil by nature is a greasy substance so the use of cooking oil prevents the pasta from sticking to the utensil its being cooked in.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously calls into question the explanation above?

- The oil used most often by Italian chefs for cooking is olive oil, which has a neutral taste.
- (B) While it is being cooked, the pasta never comes in contact with the oil.
- There are some Italian chefs who do not use cooking oil while cooking pasta. (C)
- If added in large quantities, the cooking oil can spoil the taste of the pasta.
- To provide added taste is not the reason why cooking oil is added to pasta while it is being cooked.

Answer: B

Explanation:

There could be two ways of weakening the argument—either show some other benefit of adding oil or show that the intended benefit mentioned in the argument could not have been the reason for adding oil. B does this by stating that since the pasta never comes in contact with the oil, the purpose of adding oil could not be to prevent the pasta from sticking to the utensils.

- (A) This discounts the possibility that taste could be a reason for adding oil, so then the reason could still be to prevent the pasta from sticking to the utensils.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) The question is why do the chefs who use cooking oil while cooking pasta do so.
- (D) This does not explain the need for adding cooking oil.
- (E) Again this option does not discount the possibility of the chefs adding olive oil to prevent the pasta from sticking.
- 64. The recent increase in the number of accidents related to bungee jumping has led to a lot of people asking for a ban on bungee jumping. Opponents of the ban argue that it is a personal choice whether someone wants to indulge in bungee jumping and the constitution guarantees every individual's right to freedom. They assert that as long as nobody else is getting harmed, an individual should be allowed to indulge in bungee jumping.

Which of the following most strengthens the argument made by the opponents of the ban?

- (A) Bungee jumping is safer than other activities such as free style rappelling or zip lining.
- (B) The operating licenses of a lot of bungee jumping companies have been cancelled after incidents of accidents were reported from these companies.
- (C) Most accidents related to bungee jumping happen because of a weak or defective bungee cord.
- (D) In the more than 400 documented accidents connected to bungee jumping, nobody other than the person making the jump has ever got injured.
- (E) Bungee jumping companies can be allowed to operate as long as they implement some new safety measures.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The opponents of the ban argue that as long as nobody else is getting harmed, people should be free to indulge in bungee jumping. **D** strengthens this by giving empirical evidence that every time, so far, the only person who has got injured in bungee jumping is the person who is making the jump. As long as this person is aware of the risks involved, it is his personal choice whether to make the jump or not.

- (A) The safety aspect of other activities is outside the scope of the argument.
- (B) This actually weakens the argument by suggesting somebody other than the person making the jump has had to suffer because of the said accidents.
- (C) The cause of the accidents is not our concern in the argument.
- (E) Nobody is asking us to make a suggestion as to what bungee jumping companies should do in the future.

A left handed playing style must offer some unique advantages to table tennis players, maybe 65. in the types of angles they are able to incorporate in their shots. In a survey of professional table tennis players, as many as 70 percent said that they played left handed.

Which of the following is an assumption in the above argument?

- Playing left handed allows table tennis players to create some angles in their shots that cannot be created playing right handed.
- (B) Table tennis is the most popular sport in several parts of the world because one doesn't need expensive equipment or lots of space to play it.
- (C) Most tennis players covered in the survey had the option of playing right handed or left handed.
- Most players of lawn tennis, a sport somewhat similar to table tennis, also play left handed.
- Most tennis players covered in the survey used their left hand for other activities as well such as writing or eating.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The above argument states that most professional tennis players play left handed. From this, we can conclude that this must be so because playing left handed provides these players with some unique benefits. But what if these players were naturally left handed? Then they haven't really 'chosen' to play left handed, it just happens to be their dominant hand. The argument assumes that this is not the case—that these players actually had the option of playing right handed or left handed and they have chosen to play left handed. C states this best and should be the correct answer.

- (A) The argument only conjectures that playing left handed may allow players to create certain angles in their shots. For all we know, it may be providing them some other benefit. The question is whether the players have chosen to play left handed and not what benefits it provides.
- (B) The popularity of table tennis is of no consequence to the argument.
- What happens in lawn tennis is not relevant to our argument. In any case, the question is whether these players have chosen to play left handed.
- (E) This actually weakens the argument by suggesting that the left hand happens to be the dominant hand of these players.
- 66. The apex banking regulator in the country has stated that banks are favouring profits over customer welfare. This is because banks are not passing on the benefit of cut in policy rates to the borrowers. The regulator regretted that the lending rates of banks have not come down in tandem with reduction in the liquidity reserve ratio rate; rather the rates have gone up.

Which of the following, if true, is most damaging to the position taken by the apex banking regulator?

- (A) Banks are in essence businesses so their primary motive should be to make profits.
- (B) The costs of running a bank have gone up considerably in recent times.
- (C) Many banks still invest a considerable amount of money in improving the banking experience of their customers.
- (D) The sales of several high value products such as automobiles and homes have gone down because of the high interest rate charged on loans by banks.
- (E) Even publicly owned banks have not passed on the benefit of lower liquidity reserve ratio rates to their customers.

Answer: B

Explanation

The argument assumes that the only reason banks have not reduced lending rates is because they are trying to make more profits. But what if the costs of banks have gone up which is why they are not passing on these benefits to the end customer? B states this and is the correct answer.

- (A) This in fact strengthens the position taken by the apex banking regulator.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) This is a separate point and has no connection with the cause and effect link mentioned in the argument.
- (D) This is an irrelevant fact.
- (E) This again doesn't weaken the argument.
- 67. David Spiegel stunned the world in 1989 when he revealed that certain therapy groups may help breast cancer patients live longer. These groups also seem to help them live better. So if you suffer from breast cancer there is a good chance that you can improve your life, and maybe even extend it, by joining a professionally led support/therapy group that uses Spiegel's 'supportive-expressive' model.

If the statements above are true, which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by them?

- (A) It would be a good idea for cancer patients to be part of some support or therapy group.
- (B) Being part of a support/therapy group increases a breast cancer patient's desire to get better.
- (C) One way of curing breast cancer is to make the patient join a support/therapy group.
- (D) Being part of a support/therapy group can have beneficial effects for certain groups of people.

Doctors recommend joining support/therapy groups as a means to alleviate the discomfort caused by breast cancer.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- (A) The argument is only about breast cancer patients so we can't make inferences about cancer patients in general.
- (B) We know that being a part of a support group is beneficial for a breast cancer patient. However, we don't know whether this is because being part of such groups increases the patient's desire to get better or because of some other reason.
- (C) The argument never states that being part of a support group can cure breast cancer.
- (D)The correct answer. This has to be true based on the information in the stimulus.
- (E) The argument never mentions anything about doctors so we can't infer this option.
- 68. The CEO of the mining company has been using the company's resources for his own personal gains. In the past one year, the mining company has invested in 13 mines in Djboutin, the country of birth of the CEO. The CEO has also mentioned in several interviews that, at a later point in his career, he plans to stand for the Presidency of Djboutin.

Which of the following is an assumption that the argument depends on?

- The investments in the mines in Djboutin make good business sense.
- (B) It is cheaper to conduct mining operations in Djboutin than in most other countries that the mining company operates in.
- To conduct mining operations in Djboutin will require heavy investment in a particular type of machinery that will not be of any use in the mining company's mines in other countries.
- (D)It is not the Board of Directors of the mining company that decides which mines to invest in.
- There is no unforeseen event in the future that will dissuade the CEO from standing for the Presidency of Diboutin.

Answer: D

Explanation:

When the argument concludes that the CEO is using the mining company for his own personal gains, it is obviously assuming that it was the CEO who decided to invest in all those mines in Djboutin. What if it was somebody else, such as the Board of Directors, who made this decision? Then, it would not be fair to blame the CEO for the same. Thus, the argument assumes that this is not the case—that no other entity (other than the CEO) made this decision. **D** states this and should be **the correct answer**.

- (A) It actually weakens the argument by suggesting that the CEO is thinking about the company's good and not his own personal welfare.
- (B) Same as A above.
- (C) It might still make sense to invest in this machinery depending on the potential of the mines in Djboutin. The point is, this makes no difference to the argument that the CEO has been using the mining company for his personal gains.
- (E) What happens in the future is not our concern. The CEO at the moment is definitely interested in standing for the Presidency of Djboutin in the future and that's all that matters for the purpose of our argument.
- The government is aiming to roll out an ambitious project for providing free medicines to its citizens at public health facilities across the country. Once the scheme is launched, the government will provide free generic medicines to all patients coming to public health facilities. Opponents of the project have criticized it, stating that since the plan covers only generic medicines, most of the citizens will be outside its purview.

Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the criticism made above of the Health Ministry's strategy?

- (A) The Health Ministry has made suitable arrangements to ensure that there is no shortage of generic drugs once the new scheme is rolled out.
- (B) A survey of public health facilities across the country has revealed that more than half of the prescribed medicines at these facilities comprise generic medicines.
- (C) Most of the country's citizens prefer branded medicines to generic ones.
- (D) The middle and lower income groups, which comprise a large chunk of the country's population, still frequent public health facilities to resolve their health issues.
- (E) The cost of running this scheme will eventually have to be borne by the citizens in the form of increased taxes.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The question requires you to weaken the criticism of the argument, that is, you need to weaken the argument of the opponents. In arriving at their conclusion, the opponents have obviously assumed that most of the patients are currently prescribed non-generic drugs. B weakens this by stating the opposite, and is the correct answer.

- (A) If most of the people are prescribed non-generic drugs, then it won't matter if the generic drugs are readily available.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) The preference of the citizens is irrelevant. If they are prescribed generic medicines they will obviously go for these.
- (D) This is irrelevant because it makes no mention of generic and non-generic drugs.

- The cost is not really our concern in this argument.
- The city administration is planning to impose severe fines on all house owners in the old 70. part of the city who are adding extra floors to their houses. The government claims that the purchase agreement for these houses clearly states that the owners were to add no extra floors to the houses. The government's move is unjustifiably harsh because most of these houses were purchased by their owners at least 50 years back and the size of the families of these owners has increased considerably since then. Surely, the owners cannot be fined if they want to create more space for their family members to stay in.

Which of the following most weakens the argument above?

- Constructing additional floors in houses situated in the old part of the city costs a huge sum of money as there is a severe water shortage in this area and the water needed for construction work has to be transported on diesel tankers.
- Construction of additional floors in houses situated in the old part of the city will (B) ruin the aesthetics of this locality and make it unattractive for future buyers.
- The children of some of the house owners who stay in the old part of the city stay in other countries and not necessarily with the house owners.
- The addition of extra floors will not affect the market value of the houses in the old part of the city.
- Most of the house owners in the old part of the city who are adding floors to their houses are doing so primarily for the purpose of renting out these floors.

Answer: E

Explanation:

The argument concludes that the house owners in the old part of the city should not be fined by the government for adding floors to their houses because they are doing so to provide extra space for their family members. To weaken the argument, we need to show that the reason why the house owners are doing so is not this but something else. E provides one such reason—if the house owners are adding these floors to rent them out then it has nothing to do with the argument's reasoning that they are trying to make more space for their family members. Thus, this option immediately weakens the argument.

- If the house owners are ready to bear this extra cost, then who is the government to fine them? After all, they are still only just trying to provide extra space for their family members.
- This still doesn't weaken the argument that the house owners are justified in adding (B) these floors as they need extra space for their family members to stay.
- Family members does not only include children; there could be other family members staying with these house owners as well. Also, some doesn't really tell us anything.
- If anything, this strengthens the argument by suggesting that increasing the market value of the houses is not the reason why the house owners are adding these floors.

71. There should be a ban on television commercials for prescription drugs. These commercials put preconceived notions in people's heads and make them ask their doctor for a drug whose side effects they are not aware of. If a person needed that drug, their doctor would have already prescribed it to them.

If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) Most people who visit a doctor are already aware as to which drug the doctor will most likely prescribe to them.
- (B) Television commercials for prescription drugs don't have an educational aspect to them in that they don't educate the consumers about the use of various drugs.
- (C) Pharmaceutical companies try to sell harmful drugs to consumers by using deceptive advertising.
- (D) At least some people ask doctors to recommend to them medicines whose advertisement they have seen on television.
- (E) At times, doctors themselves use the advertisements for prescription drugs as a source of information to recommend medicines to their patients.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Since this is an inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- (A) The people are already aware of what drug they want their doctor to recommend and not of what drug their doctor might actually recommend.
- (B) Nothing can be judged about the educational aspect of television commercials for prescription drugs from the stimulus.
- (C) There is nothing in the argument to suggest arriving at such an extreme and generalized inference.
- (D) **The correct answer**, this is the point of the entire argument.
- (E) This may be the case but cannot be inferred based on the information in the stimulus.
- 72. It is interesting to note that, of the ten different brands of digital cameras available in the market, the one that sells the most is the second most expensive of the lot. This camera also offers the best picture quality of all the digital cameras available in the market. Clearly, the price of the camera plays no role in the customer purchase decision; it is the picture quality of the camera that matters to them.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the argument above?

- (A) Between two similarly equipped digital cameras, most customers will prefer the lower priced one.
- (B) There is a direct correlation between the price of a camera and its picture quality.
- (C) Some customers only purchase the cheapest available digital camera, irrespective of its picture quality.

- The second largest selling brand of digital camera, which is also the third most expensive in the market, offers poor picture quality.
- Digital cameras are usually purchased by affluent customers for whom the price of the camera isn't a big consideration.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The argument arrives at an extreme conclusion. Just because price is not the main determinant of which digital camera to buy does not mean that price plays no role in the customer purchase decision, when it comes to digital cameras. 'A' correctly highlights this fact by pointing out that while picture quality may be the number one consideration on customer's list of preferences, price also matters because between two similarly equipped digital cameras, most customers prefer the lower priced one.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) This may be true but it does not weaken the argument.
- (C) The use of *some* means that this cannot be the answer. Some customers prefer the cheapest available camera and some don't; this fact does not tell us anything about most customers.
- (D) While this strengthens the fact that picture quality is not the only determinant of which digital camera to buy, this option does not weaken the fact that price plays no role in making this choice because this camera is still the third most expensive in the market, so customers couldn't possibly be buying it because of its low price.
- This again does not weaken the argument. It just explains why price doesn't play a big role in deciding which digital camera to purchase, but our agenda is to weaken this conclusion itself.
- Telecom subscriber: It seems that all the telecom companies in our country are working 73. in an absolutely unprofessional manner. The online consumer complaint forum is full of negative comments about all these companies, irrespective of the brand, while there are hardly any positive comments.

Telecom company representative: But this is because the people who are happy with our service don't have any incentive to post comments.

The telecom company representative responds to the telecom subscriber's complaint by:

- Raising doubts about the source of the customer's evidence (A)
- (B) Pointing out that the customer has ignored the positive reviews that telecom companies get
- Highlighting that the evidence in question is not representative of the entire population
- Agreeing with the subscriber's conclusion but contradicting his use of evidence

(E) Providing evidence that raises doubts over the claims made by the telecom subscriber

Answer: C

Explanation:

The telecom company representative basically states that the data the subscriber is referring to is self-selecting, that is, these people have chosen to post their reviews and the only ones who have the motivation or incentive to do so are people who are dissatisfied with the services. Thus, the data may not be representative of all users of telecom services. C states this and is the correct answer.

- (A) The company representative never doubts the customer's evidence, he only insists that it would be wrong to arrive at a particular conclusion by using this evidence.
- (B) The company representative never does this.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) The company representative, in fact, does the opposite—he agrees with the subscriber's evidence but disagrees with his conclusion.
- (E) The telecom representative does not provide any evidence.
- 74. In a recent study of people afflicted by the Babblers syndrome an interesting fact was noted. The people suffering from this syndrome consumed dairy products in much larger quantities than people who were not suffering from this syndrome. Thus, the study concluded that to reduce the chances of getting afflicted with Babblers syndrome, one should completely avoid the consumption of dairy products or consume them in moderate quantities at best.

The study's conclusion is based on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Excessive consumption of dairy products can have a negative impact on the health of people.
- (B) Babblers syndrome is a dangerous disease.
- (C) The effects of Babblers syndrome do not include excessive desire to consume dairy products.
- (D) Cutting down on dairy products will ensure that one does not contract Babblers syndrome.
- (E) Nothing else can lead to Babblers syndrome except the consumption of dairy products.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The study has found that those who suffer from Babbler's syndrome also consume dairy products in large quantities. From this, can we conclude that dairy products are the cause of Babbler's syndrome? There are two other possibilities—either something else is the cause of Babbler's syndrome or dairy products are the effect of Babbler's syndrome.

The argument's conclusion obviously assumes that neither of these possibilities will be true. C states one of these possibilities and, hence, is the correct answer.

- (A) We are only concerned about the connection between dairy products and Babbler's syndrome. Other health problems are outside the scope of the argument.
- (B) Irrelevant to our argument.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D)The argument never concludes that the only way to contract Babbler's syndrome is by the consumption of dairy products. There could be other ways as well. Our point is to show that consumption of dairy products will definitely lead to a person contracting Babbler's syndrome.
- (E) Same as D.
- 75. Which of the following most logically completes the argument?

It is now known that to get the maximum out of a car engine one can do two things—use high octane fuel, which contains additives that extend the life and efficiency of the engine, or get the engine flushed at regular intervals, which removes all harmful substances from the engine. It has been shown by several studies that the use of high octane fuel is up to three times more effective in extending the life of the car engine than is the use of engine flushing. This does not, however, mean that engine flushing can play no role in extending the life of a car engine, because

- (A) some studies have shown that using high octane fuel can lead to problems with a car's exhaust system
- (B) high octane fuel costs much more than regular fuel and this cost is expected to increase over the next few years
- (C) many car mechanics recommend the use of engine flushing over the use of high octane fuels
- the benefits of using high octane fuel are independent of the benefits of engine flushing.
- engine flushing, when not done by expert mechanics, can cause permanent damage to the engine of a car

Answer: D

Explanation:

The leading word *because* should tell you that you need to look at this question as a strengthen question. The conclusion is the last sentence of the argument, that is, it is incorrect to say that engine flushing can play no role in extending the life of a car engine. D strengthens this point by pointing out that the benefits of engine flushing and of using fuel with additives don't overlap, so if both are used together then the benefits could be higher than by using either of them alone.

- (A) For all you know there could be problems associated with the use of engine flushing as well.
- (B) People might still be willing to pay this higher price for the sake of their car engines.
- (C) The word *many* cannot really give the answer because many mechanics recommend and many don't recommend.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) This, in fact, weakens the argument by stating a negative aspect of engine flushing.
- 76. Researchers have discovered that parents who made their children, when they were between the ages of 2 and 10, watch videos of Pete Sampras, the legendary tennis player, had children who grew up to be much better tennis players than children of parents who did not do so. The researchers, thus, concluded that parents who wish to make their children pursue tennis should make their children, when they are between the ages of 2 and 10, watch videos of legendary tennis players.

Which of the following most strengthens the argument?

- (A) Pete Sampras was one of the greatest tennis players of all times and even modern tennis greats try to emulate him by watching his videos.
- (B) When children, who are between 2 and 10 years of age, watch Pete Sampras play, the neurons in their brains make subconscious connections as a result of which these children are able to apply some of Pete Sampras' playing style in their own game of tennis at a later stage in life.
- (C) Children whose parents made them watch videos of Pete Sampras when these children were more than 10 years of age also saw a marked improvement in their children's ability to play tennis.
- (D) Parents who made their children, when they were between 2 and 10 years of age, watch videos of other legendary tennis players also reported that their children developed into excellent tennis players.
- (E) Some children whose parents did not expose them to videos of any tennis players also developed into excellent tennis players later in life.

Answer: D

Explanation:

There is a subtle scope shift taking place in the argument. While the evidence talks about Pete Sampras, the conclusion talks about legendary tennis players in general. The assumption, then, has to be that what applies to Sampras, applies to all legendary tennis players. **D** states this best and should be **the correct answer**.

- (A) The conclusion is not about Pete Sampras but about legendary tennis players in general. This option fails to bring out the connection between the two.
- (B) Same as A.

- (C) Same as A.
- If anything, this option can weaken the argument by suggesting that there is no real connection between watching Pete Sampras play and children developing into great tennis players.
- 77. Studies of the relationship between public opinion and political action on a wide range of subjects show nothing unique or very interesting about the state of public opinion on climate change. Significant policy action has occurred on other issues with less public support on many occasions. However, instead of motivating further support for action, efforts to intensify public opinion through apocalyptic visions or appeals to authority, have instead led to a loss of trust in campaigning scientists and a deep politicization of the climate issue.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- The first is evidence that has been used to support a conclusion; the second is that conclusion.
- (B) The first provides the findings of a study; the second provides data that raises doubts on these findings.
- (C)The first is the primary conclusion of the argument; the second provides evidence to question this conclusion.
- The first provides the findings of a study; the second provides further elaboration of these findings.
- The first is a claim used to justify a conclusion; the second is a counter-claim that questions that conclusion.

Answer - D

Explanation:

Argument Summary: According to studies, while there is generally a positive correlation between public opinion and political action, in case of the topic of 'climate change' such a correlation does not hold; in fact, it gets reversed at times.

Prediction for the two bold parts: The first provides the findings of a study and the second provides more details on these findings.

- (A) If anything, the first is the conclusion and the second provides further support for it by providing more details.
- (B) While the first part is correct, the second does not raise doubts on the first.
- While the first may be considered the conclusion, the second does not by any means (C) question it.
- This perfectly matches our prediction above and should be **the correct answer**. (D)
- (E) There is no such conclusion in the entire stimulus that is supported by the first bold part and questioned by the second.

78. People who drink coffee regularly say that they are addicted to caffeine because they feel that they can't live without it. Addiction is defined as a state in which a person strongly depends on a drug with severe withdrawal symptoms. He should have an urge to consume it more and more and is tolerant to a particular dose. Based on this definition, caffeine consumption does not qualify as an addiction. Researches too have shown that caffeine does not cause any kind of addiction. Alcohol or other drug addiction can have severe social and physical consequences but this is not the case with caffeine which further strengthens the belief that it is not addictive or does not cause addiction.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first provides the definition of a term that has been used to arrive at a conclusion; the second provides further support for that conclusion.
- (B) The first provides the definition of a term; the second provides further support for that definition.
- (C) The first provides a definition that constitutes the main premise of the argument; the second is the conclusion of the argument as a whole.
- (D) The first and second are contradictory claims, both of which together provide support for the primary conclusion of the argument.
- (E) The first provides evidence in support of the conclusion of the argument; the second provides further justification for this evidence.

Answer -A

Explanation:

Argument Summary: Coffee drinkers are incorrect in their belief that they are addicted to caffeine because coffee consumption does not satisfy many of the criteria that constitute an addiction.

Prediction for the two bold parts: The first defines the term 'addiction'. The second provides one reason why caffeine should not be considered addictive.

- (A) The first clearly defines 'Addiction', a fact that the author uses to conclude that caffeine is not addictive. The second provides further evidence to support that caffeine is not addictive. Thus, **A** is the correct answer.
- (B) The second does not provide any support for the definition; it provides support for the conclusion of the argument.
- (C) The second is not the conclusion of the argument.
- (D) While it is true that the first and second both support the argument's primary conclusion, these are not contradictory claims.
- (E) The second provides further justification for the conclusion of the argument and not for the evidence in the first bold part.
- 79. Of late, several waste management companies have reported that the percentage of plastic items in the waste they collect for disposal in landfills has been increasing. **This fact,**

however, does not warrant the conclusion that the administration's efforts to dissuade people from throwing plastic items in their garbage have failed. It's just that, of late, more and more quantities of other waste products such as glass, paper and metal items are being recycled, leading to an overall decrease in the quantity of waste that needs to be disposed in landfills and thereby to an increase in the 'percentage' of plastic items that have to be disposed off in landfills.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- The first provides a conclusion that the argument disagrees with; the second provides evidence in support of the disagreement.
- (B) The first is the primary conclusion of the argument and the second provides further support for this conclusion.
- The first is a claim that the argument goes on to dispute; the second provides support for the primary conclusion of the argument as a whole.
- (D) The first provides evidence to support an explanation that the argument favors; the second is that explanation.
- (E) The first provides evidence to support an explanation that the argument rejects; the second is a competing explanation that the argument favors.

Answer – B

Explanation:

Argument Summary: The argument states that even though the percentage of certain items in the city's waste pool is increasing, this does not necessarily mean that the quantity of those items in the waste pool is also increasing. It is just that the quantity of other items in the waste pool is decreasing which is leading to an increase in the percentage of the remaining items.

Prediction for the two bold parts: The first bold sentence is the primary conclusion of the argument and the second supports the primary conclusion.

- (A) The argument, in fact, agrees with the first bold sentence.
- (B) The correct answer as it perfectly matches with our prediction.
- The argument never goes on to dispute the first; in fact, the first is the primary conclusion of the argument.
- (D) The first is the conclusion and not some evidence.
- (E) The first is the conclusion and not some evidence.
- 80. Arguments to restrict immigration on the grounds that immigrants will take domestic jobs ignore the fact that immigrants, once employed, will earn and spend money on goods and services, creating new jobs that will more than make up for the old ones they took.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) The immigrants will not send most of the money that they earn back to their hometowns.
- (B) Studies show that large scale inflow of immigrants invariably leads to an increase in the incidence of crime in that city.
- (C) The immigrants will not subsequently get their families to also join them in the new city.
- (D) Immigrants generally tend to save most of the money that they earn.
- (E) Opponents of immigration are not opposed to immigration for reasons other than loss of jobs.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The argument assumes that the immigrants will spend money in their city of immigration thereby helping create jobs in the city, but what if the immigrants did not do so? The argument obviously assumes that this will not be the case. A states this and is the assumption in the argument.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) This is extra information and not an assumption.
- (C) If the immigrants do so it will be a good thing because they will spend even more money in the new city.
- (D) This would actually make the argument fall apart. The assumption has to be the opposite of this.
- (E) The motives of the opponents of immigration are outside the scope of the argument.
- 81. It is not uncommon for close synonyms to be understood to share the same meaning. The difference between words like *hard* and *difficult*, for example, goes tragically unnoticed. One may employ one or the other with complete indifference, postulating no discrepancy between them. In general, this is well and good; most people lack the scrupulous pedanticalness to quibble over such trifles. Nevertheless, for those **people with ample compulsiveness (and time)**, it is of significant value to comprehend such nuances.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first is the primary conclusion of the argument; the second mentions a group of people who are in favor of such a conclusion.
- (B) The first is a general statement that is supported by evidence provided in the rest of the argument; the second is one such piece of evidence.
- (C) The first states the conclusion of the argument; the second calls that conclusion into question.
- (D) The first is a point of view that the argument claims most people will agree with; the second mentions a group of people who would disagree with that point of view.

(E) The first is a claim, the accuracy of which is at issue in the argument; the second mentions evidence falsifying such a claim.

Answer – D

Explanation:

Argument Summary: The argument states that, for most people, the finer differences between two very closely related words do not matter. However, there are certain people who are very particular about such differences.

Prediction for the two bold parts: The first is a statement that will hold true for most people. The second points out a group of people who will disagree with the first statement.

- (A) The first bold sentence is just a statement; it is not really a conclusion. In any case, the group of people mentioned in the second bold sentence are against such a conclusion.
- (B) The second bold sentence does not support the first.
- (C) Again, the second does not call the first into question; it merely states that there is a group of people who would not agree with the first.
- (D) This matches our prediction perfectly and is **the correct answer.**
- (E) Neither is the accuracy of the first statement doubtful in the argument, nor does the second statement falsify the first.
- 82. Which of the following most logically completes the argument below?

Mobile phones emit radioactive radiation because they use radio frequency waves to make and receive calls. Even though the doses are very small, experts at the World Health Organisation (WHO) have voiced concern that these emissions might cause leukaemia and other diseases and have issued a warning against the excessive use of mobile phones. The WHO, then, is most likely going to issue a similar warning for home phones wired to a wall jack as well, because ________.

- (A) Home phones are also used to make and receive calls.
- (B) Home phones are also communication devices used by the general public.
- (C) Home phones also use radio frequency waves.
- (D) People, on an average, spend more time talking on home phones than on mobile phones.
- (E) Experts have voiced concern about the use of home phones as well.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The word leading into the blank is because which tells us that we need to strengthen the argument. The conclusion is the last sentence which states that WHO will issue a similar warning (to the one issued for mobile phone use) for home phones wired to a wall jack as well. The evidence clearly states that the problem with the use of mobile phones is that they emit radioactive radiation and the reason they emit radioactive radiation is because they use

radio frequency waves. Thus, C strengthens the argument by pointing out that home phones also use radio frequency waves and so will also emit harmful radioactive radiation.

- (A) This is not the reason why the warning has been issued against the excessive use of mobile phones.
- (B) The problem is not with the function of the device but with its mode of communication (radio waves).
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D) This may not necessarily be harmful if home phones do not emit radioactive radiation.
- (E) But are they justified in doing so? This is the fact that we need to strengthen.
- 83. As pets have become increasingly humanized in recent years, almost becoming a substitute for children in some cases, owners have become increasingly concerned about the quality of their pets' diets, leading to rising interest in grain-free offerings. According to its critics, grain is merely a *filler* in pet food that has little real nutritional benefit.

In the argument given, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- (A) The first is the cause of a given effect; the second is a criticism of that effect.
- (B) The first is the cause of a given effect; the second is the opinion of a group that provides further support for this effect.
- (C) The first describes a general scenario and the second provides a specific implication of this scenario.
- (D) The first is the point of view of a group of people and the second contradicts this point of view by providing conflicting evidence.
- (E) The first is the conclusion of the argument and the second provides evidence on the basis of which this conclusion has been arrived at.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument states that as people are becoming more and more affectionate towards their pets, they are getting more and more concerned about their pets' diets. These people are looking at feeding their pets grain-free diets because grain apparently does not have any nutritional benefits. Both the first and the second bold parts provide reasons why people have become more averse to feeding their pets grain-free diets.

- (A) The first part could be true. The cause could be the pets getting humanized and the effect could be people's desire to feed their pets grain-free diets. However, the second bold part is not a criticism of that effect; it, in fact, supports that effect.
- (B) This is **the correct answer**. The first part is the same as that of option A, and the second part strengthens this fact.

- The first bold part could be a general scenario but the second bold part is definitely not an implication of this. The implication is actually the non-bold part in the middle of the argument.
- The first is not the point of view of any group and the second does not contradict it in any case.
- (E)The first is not the conclusion of the argument; the conclusion is in the non-bold part.
- 84. I do not think it is right to project electric cars as better than gas-fuelled cars. One negative aspect of electric cars is the fact that they don't have enough power and, as a result, enough acceleration to perform in certain driving situations. For example, this lack of power could be dangerous in driving situations when fast acceleration is needed to avoid an accident.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the argument above?

- Electric cars are much better for the ecology than are gas fuelled ones. (A)
- (B) Electric cars are much cheaper to run than are gas fuelled cars.
- (C) The price of fuel is only expected to increase in the future whereas the price of technology used in the manufacture of electric cars is expected to decrease.
- The biggest reason for road accidents is over speeding, which is the direct result of increased power in a car.
- In the future, electric cars are expected to have much more powerful engines than do current electric cars.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The argument assumes that there are no negatives associated with having a car with high power. D points out one such negative and, thus, weakens the argument.

- But the argument about electric cars lacking power and so being unsafe still stands.
- (B) Same as A.
- (C) Again, the original problem still remains.
- (D)The correct answer.
- (E) If you go with this option, instead of weakening the argument, you are in fact agreeing with it and suggesting that this problem will most likely get rectified in the future.
- 85. Photon city is known for its commerce colleges across the nation. However, it seems that the quality of education imparted at these colleges has deteriorated considerably with time. When commerce graduates living in Photon city were recently administered a test, most of them could not even answer simple questions such as what was meant by activity based

The argument is most vulnerable to the criticism that:

- (A) it incorrectly assumes that all commerce graduates have to be aware of what is meant by activity based costing .
- (B) it makes no distinction between commerce graduates living in Photon city and those who have graduated from commerce colleges in Photon city.
- (C) it does not take other important skills such as interpersonal skills and communication skills into consideration.
- (D) it provides no details about how commerce graduates in the rest of the country have performed on this test.
- (E) it does not take into account the education policies of the government.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The survey was conducted of commerce graduates living in Photon City; however, there is nothing to suggest that all these students graduated from colleges in Photon City. If most of these students graduated from colleges outside Photon City then it would not be fair to blame the colleges in Photon City for this fact. B raises this point and is the correct answer.

- (A) The argument assumes no such thing. Activity based costing is just an example of simple questions that the graduates could not answer; the whole test was not about activity based costing.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) Other skills are outside the scope of the argument.
- (D) We are only concerned with the situation in Photon City; what's happening in the rest of the county is irrelevant.
- (E) Education policies of the government are outside the scope of the argument.
- 86. The restrictions on what one can carry inside an airplane are surely too severe. Airlines these days issue a long checklist of items that cannot be carried inside an aircraft making it cumbersome for the travelers to keep a track of all these items. In any case, barely two percent of travelers are ever caught with these restricted items, so it's best if these restrictions are removed.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) The restrictions themselves do not discourage people from carrying restricted items on to airplanes.
- (B) The restrictions have been implemented all across the world.
- (C) There is no scope for corrupt practices on the part of those enforcing these restrictions.
- (D) There have been instances when an innocent traveler has been wrongly detained by over cautious airline personnel.
- (E) Criminals are hardly likely to carry restricted items with them on an airline.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The argument concludes that since only 2% of airline travelers are caught with restricted items, it doesn't make sense to have these restrictions in the first place. The argument assumes that it is not the restrictions themselves that prevent the other 98% of people from carrying restricted items on to airplanes.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) This has no connection with the reasoning in the argument.
- (C) Whether there is scope for corruption on the part of those enforcing these restrictions is outside the purview of the argument.
- This could be an example of a problem with having the restrictions but is definitely not an assumption in the argument.
- This could be because of the restrictions; if the restrictions were not there, the (E)criminals would most likely carry such items with them on to airplanes.
- It is generally observed that, while selecting between two identical products, consumers 87. typically tend to go with the cheaper one. However, when it comes to luxury products, an opposite trend has been observed. Consumers, in fact, tend to prefer the higher priced product in this case as exclusivity takes precedence over the desire to get the maximum value for one's money.
 - The first is the main conclusion of the argument; the second provides support for the main conclusion.
 - The first provides evidence in support of the main conclusion of the argument; the second is the main conclusion of the argument.
 - The first states an observation that the argument agrees with; the second undermines the evidence that is the basis for the agreement.
 - The first describes a finding that is contrary to what is generally the case; the second provides an explanation for this finding.
 - (E) The first is a claim that has been used to support a conclusion that the argument accepts; the second is that conclusion.

Answer - D

Explanation:

Argument Summary: The arguments state that, while people are usually price conscious when buying a product, in the case of luxury products, people tend to prefer the more expensive product because they want to buy something exclusive.

Prediction for the two bold parts: The first states an observation that is contradictory to what is generally the case. The second provides an explanation for this observation. Note that this argument is not really an argument because it doesn't really have a conclusion as such. It just provides that explanation for a contradictory finding.

- (A) The argument doesn't really have a main conclusion at all. It merely states a fact (the first bold sentence is a fact or a finding) and provides an explanation for that fact.
- (B) Same as A.
- (C) The second strengthens (and not undermines) the first.
- (D) **The correct answer** as the second bold sentence provides an explanation of why buyers of luxury products behave the way they do.
- (E) The argument does not have a conclusion, as discussed above.
- 88. It appears that the residents of Clarktown are becoming more and more health conscious these days. The sale of fitness equipment such as treadmills and cycling machines has increased by more than 300% in Clarktown over the last one year.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the conclusion drawn above?

- (A) Due to a change in the sales tax structure last year, fitness equipment costs up to 30% less in Clarktown than in its neighbouring towns.
- (B) The sale of health magazines has increased appreciably in Clarktown over the past one year.
- (C) Nutritionists in Clarktown have reported a sharp increase in the cases of obesity that have been reported in Clarktown over the past year.
- (D) The range of fitness equipment available at Clarktown is very limited and some advanced machines are not available at all.
- (E) Two athletes, both of whom won gold medals at the Olympics three years ago, are residents of Clarktown.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The argument assumes that most of the increase in sales of fitness equipment is on account of residents of Clarktown buying these. 'A' weakens the argument by suggesting that, because the prices of fitness equipment in Clarktown are now lower; residents from the neighbouring towns might be the cause for this rapid increase in sales in the last one year. Thus, the residents of Clarktown may not have been becoming more and more health conscious.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) There could be several reasons for this. In any case, this is not connected to the evidence used in the argument.
- (C) Again, this does not explain the 300% increase in the sales of fitness equipment.
- (D) Irrelevant data.
- (E) The athletes won the gold medal three years ago so why has the impact been felt only in the last year?

- America's record of protecting species threatened with extinction, which is often depicted as dismal, is in truth an enviable achievement. Since 1973, when the Endangered Species Act took effect, only seven animal species in North America have disappeared. Several hundred others once considered certain to die out continue to exist in the wild. Moreover, a number of species, including the bald eagle and the Arctic peregrine falcon have been or are being taken off the priority-protection list because their numbers have increased considerably now.
 - The first is a claim that the argument goes on to dispute; the second is information used to strengthen the claim.
 - (B) The first is a claim that the argument calls into question; the second provides support for the position taken by the argument.
 - The first is an objection that has been raised against the position taken by the argument; the second is the position taken by the argument.
 - The first is a claim, the accuracy of which is at issue in the argument; the second is a conclusion drawn on the basis of that claim.
 - The first is evidence that has been used to support an explanation that the argument challenges; the second is that explanation.

Answer - B

Explanation:

Argument Summary: The argument concludes that, contrary to popular belief, America has done a good job of protecting species threatened with extinction. The argument goes on to provide certain examples to support this conclusion.

Prediction for the two bold parts: It is important to note here that the first bold part does not cover the entire opening sentence; rather it ends in the middle of the sentence. In this form, the first bold sentence presents a claim that the author goes on to disagree with. The second provides support for the author's disagreement.

- (A) The second strengthens the argument's position and not the claim in the first bold sentence.
- (B) The correct answer as the second is not the argument's conclusion but it provides support for the argument's conclusion.
- (C) The second is not the position taken by the argument.
- The second is not drawn on the basis of the first; rather it contains information that contradicts the claim made in the first.
- (E) The second is not an explanation that the argument challenges.
- 90. 30% of the residents of Tafta City own cars. However, 70% of the residents of Hampton, a suburb in Tafta City, are car owners. So. it can be concluded that the total number of cars owned by residents of Hampton exceeds the total number of cars owned by the rest of the residents of Tafta City.

The answer to which of the following questions would be most important in determining whether the above conclusion is correct?

- (A) What is the total population of Tafta City?
- (B) What proportion of the population of Tafta City resides in Hampton?
- (C) What is the total number of cars owned by residents of Tafta City?
- (D) What is the total number of people residing in Hampton?
- (E) What proportion of the population of Tafta City has bought cars from outside Tafta City?

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument only provides us with percentages; it never gives us any absolute number. We know that 30% of the total residents of Tafta City own cars but we don't know what this number is. Again, we know that 70% of the residents of Hampton own cars, but we don't know what proportion of the total population of Tafta City are these residents.

Say the total population of Tafta City is 100. Out of these, 30 people own cars. Now let's look at two possibilities:

Possibility 1: 20% of the population of Tafta City lives in Hampton. So the total number of cars in Hampton is 14, whereas the total number of cars owned by the rest of the residents of Tafta City is (30-14) = 16. Thus, the conclusion of the argument is NOT true.

Possibility 2: 30% of the population of Tafta City lives in Hampton. So the total number of cars in Hampton is 21, whereas the total number of cars owned by the rest of the residents of Tafta City is (30-21) = 9. Thus, the conclusion of the argument IS true.

So to evaluate whether the conclusion of the argument is true or not, we need to know what proportion of the population of Tafta City resides in Hampton. B states this and is the correct answer.

- (A) Knowing the total population will not help unless we know the proportion that stays in Hampton.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) Knowing the total number of cars does not help unless you know what proportion of these are in Hampton.
- (D) This may look tempting but will not help unless you know what percentage of the population of Tafta City is this number.
- (E) Irrelevant fact.
- 91. For people looking at purchasing laptops, there are two important decision parameters—the speed of the laptop's processor and the backup that its battery provides. Jake, an expert at computers, believes that, of the two determinants, processor speed is the more important one. Surprisingly he recommends that his friends buy the laptop with the longest battery backup.

Which of the following best explains the apparent contradiction between Jake's belief and his recommendation?

- Jack is aware that a laptop with a processor that is faster than any of the current processors will be launched within the next six months.
- (B) Jake is aware that for a lot of buyers, a third factor—the weight of the laptop—is more important than the other two factors.
- All the laptops currently available in the market use the same processor.
- Laptops with powerful batteries cost more than those with regular batteries.
- Jake is probably not as much of an expert at computers as he likes to believe.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The only way to explain this fact is by assuming that out of the two factors in question, one is constant. In that case it makes sense to maximize the other factor. C states that all the laptops in the market have the same processor, therefore, it makes sense to buy the one with the longest battery backup.

- (A) If this was the case, Jack should have advised his friends to not buy a laptop at all for the next six months.
- (B) The presence of a third factor is outside the scope of the argument.
- (C) The correct answer.
- (D)Does not explain the contradiction in the stimulus.
- (E) The stimulus clearly states that Jack is an expert at computers.
- 92. It is truly a waste of time to attend college. Out of the ten richest people in the world, six are college dropouts. Thus, if one wants to become rich, then it makes sense to drop out of college and start one's own venture.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the argument?

- Had the six people mentioned in the argument attended college, they may have been even richer than they are currently.
- Attending college helps a person increase his or her social circle by making new friends.
- (C) Statistics reveal that 95% of all new ventures are most likely to fail.
- The percentage of college dropouts who have gone on to become rich is several times smaller than the percentage of college graduates who have gone on to become rich.
- Becoming rich is not the only measure of success, happiness is perhaps more important.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The argument assumes that the probability of a college dropout succeeding is higher than that of a college graduate. However, this fact can only be properly ascertained if we knew how many of the total college dropouts have gone on to become successful or rich and how many of the college graduates have done so. 'D' uses this point to highlight the fact that the chances of a college graduate becoming rich are much higher than those of a college drop out.

- (A) The six people are already the richest in the world; whether they could get even richer is not relevant to the argument. What is relevant is whether a high percentage of other college dropouts can also become as rich as these six people.
- (B) Social circle is outside the scope of the argument.
- (C) This is an irrelevant fact because this is true for both college dropouts and college graduates.
- (D) The correct answer.
- (E) The argument is only concerned about becoming rich so this option is outside the scope.
- 93. Over the last few years that he has been traveling by the subway, Ricky has made an interesting observation. Every time the train is late by more than six minutes, it gets extremely crowded and Ricky finds it impossible to get a seat. In the last 6 years, it has never happened that the train arrived more than six minutes late and Ricky could find a place to sit.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the above statements?

- (A) The number of people traveling by the subway has increased several times over the last few years.
- (B) If the train comes on time, Ricky will definitely get a place to sit.
- (C) If Ricky does not find a seat in the train, it must have arrived more than six minutes late.
- (D) The Transport Authority needs to urgently increase the frequency of subway trains.
- (E) If the train arrives more than six minutes late, Ricky will most likely not find a place to sit.

Answer: E

Explanation:

The stimulus states that if the train comes more than six minutes late, Ricky will most likely not find a seat. Don't use this fact to conclude that the opposite will also be true—that if Ricky does not find a place to sit, then the train must have come six minutes late. There could be other reasons for this as well.

- (A) No such inference can be made from the argument.
- (B) Again, this does not have to be necessarily true.

- (C) Incorrect—as explained above.
- No such inference can be made from the argument.
- (E) The correct answer.
- 94. The number of people in Denvo city who like to watch movies in multiplexes has apparently increased considerably. Over the last five years it has become difficult to find seats in most multiplexes in Denvo City.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument?

- Several blockbuster movies were released in the last five years.
- Denvo city had seven multiplexes out of which three have shut down in the last five years.
- (C) Many residents of Denvo city have stated in a survey that they hate going out for movies.
- The ticket prices charged by multiplexes in Denvo city have fallen over the past five years.
- It is very easy to find seats in multiplexes situated in the neighbouring Vento city

Answer: B

Explanation:

The argument suggests that the reason it is difficult to find seats in multiplexes in Denvo City is because of the increase in the number of viewers. However, B questions this fact by stating that the number of multiplexes has gone down by almost 50 percent, so the number of viewers could have remained unchanged and yet it would become difficult to find seats because the number of seats itself has gone down.

- This provides an explanation for the situation described in the argument and does not (A) weaken it.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) If this is so then why has it become difficult to find seats?
- (D)Same as A.
- (E) The situation in some other city is irrelevant to the argument.
- 95. Researchers have long been trying to understand why the consumption of opium makes one sleepy. A group of researchers has recently concluded that opium is sleep inducing because it has soporific qualities.

Which of the following parallels the flaw in the reasoning above?

- The student performed poorly in the test because he did not study for it.
- (B) It is dark at night because of the absence of the sun.

- (C) The new car has a powerful engine so it must also have powerful brakes.
- (D) Airplanes are able to fly because of their aerodynamic shape.
- (E) The price of a company's stock has not appreciated because the company's stock price has remained stagnant.

Answer: E

Explanation:

This is an example of an argument which takes the conclusion as one of its premises. Such arguments usually make use of synonyms such as sleep inducing and soporific. The two mean the same so the argument never really explains why opium is sleep inducing. 'E' repeats this fallacy by stating that a stock price has not appreciated because it has remained stagnant (which is the same thing). But why has this stock price not appreciated? This option never answers this question.

- (A) This is a direct cause and effect relation.
- (B) Same as A.
- (C) This is an illogical conclusion but does not parallel the reasoning in the original argument.
- (D) Again, a direct cause and effect relation.
- (E) The correct answer.
- 96. Banker: Our asset quality is fairly strong and has been improving in the past few quarters. But given our size, we cannot afford to allow any of our large accounts to turn non-performing. It would create havoc for us.

Which of the following must be true on the basis of the statements made by the banker above?

- (A) The bank in question must be a small sized bank.
- (B) If any of the bank's accounts become non-performing, the bank will go bankrupt.
- (C) The bank does not mind if any of its smaller accounts turn non-performing.
- (D) The bank used to have assets of a poor quality a few quarters back.
- (E) One of the important factors that will determine the bank's performance is the quality of its large accounts.

Answer: E

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- (A) There is no way of concluding this.
- (B) This is an extreme conclusion. While we know in such a case the bank will be negatively affected, we can't necessarily conclude that the bank will go bankrupt.

- Again, this doesn't necessarily have to be true. This may not impact the bank as much as the non-performance of a large account would, but it might still be a bad thing for the bank.
- That the asset quality of the bank has improved does not necessarily mean its asset quality was poor a few quarters back. Maybe it was good then and has become even better now.
- (E) This has to be true because the stimulus clearly states that even if one large account goes bad, the bank will face problems. So while there could very well be other factors that affect the bank's performance, the quality of its large accounts definitely has to be one of them.
- 97. Opponents of the free market approach assert that the free market often fails to achieve maximum efficiency—that it sometimes wastes resources. They often cite the example of utility services. If there were free competition among utilities, it would lead to a lot of duplication—different companies putting up telephone and electric poles, waterlines, etc., side by side, which would be a waste. So they argue that it is important for government to restrict competition and thus correct market failures.

The answer to which of the following questions would help evaluate whether the opponents of the free market theory are correct?

- Whether it is possible to procure items such as electric and telephone poles used by utility services at low prices
- Whether there is some other feasible way of solving the problem of duplication (B) mentioned in the argument
- Whether following this strategy is likely to lead to formation of monopolies that can be used to exploit consumers
- Whether the free market is likely to have any detrimental effect on the economy of the country
- Whether the free market approach has been adopted by any other countries in the world

Answer: C

Explanation:

The argument is assuming that there will be no negative aspects of restricting competition. But what if restricting competition gave rise to monopolies? Then there could be negative consequences of this move. C addresses this point and is the correct answer.

- (A) Even if these items can be procured at low prices, why spend money on duplication?
- (B) We are only concerned about the method described in the argument; any other methods are outside the scope.
- (C) The correct answer.

- (D) Even if the free market does not have a detrimental effect on the economy of a country, it does not necessarily mean that it will have a beneficial effect either.
- (E) What has happened in other countries is outside the scope of the argument.
- 98. A proposal has recently been floated by the government to increase road use tax rates across the country. This will lead to an increase in operating costs for trucking companies, who will then most likely increase their freight rates. The higher freight rates will, in turn, lead to a consequent increase in the prices of goods and commodities of daily use such as vegetable and grocery items. Thus, if the proposal is passed, it will actively contribute to inflation in the country.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly indicates that the logic of the prediction above is flawed?

- (A) It assumes that there is no other way in which inflation can increase apart from increased road use taxes.
- (B) It mistakes a likely outcome for a confirmed outcome.
- (C) It resorts to addressing peripheral issues while ignoring the deeper fundamental problems with the economy.
- (D) It assumes that inflation will not increase if the road tax is not increased.
- (E) It mistakes a correlation for a cause and effect relation.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Notice that the argument states that trucking companies will *most likely* increase their freight rates. *Most likely* does not mean that this will definitely happen. Trucking companies may have already built this increase in road use tax into their current prices, in which case they will not increase the freight rates. Then the entire argument will fall apart. So the flaw in the argument is that it assumes that a likely outcome will be a definite outcome, that is, 'B' is the correct answer.

- (A) The argument assumes no such thing. As long as increase in freight rates can be one cause of inflation, the argument will hold true.
- (B) The correct answer.
- (C) The argument does no such thing.
- (D) The argument does not assume this.
- (E) There is no mention of correlation in the argument. The argument only talks about cause and effect relations. The question is whether this cause and effect will definitely take place?
- 99. Board of ABC Company: Owing to the excellent performance of the company in the last four quarters under the leadership of the new CEO, the Board has decided to reward the CEO with a 50% bonus.

Shareholder of ABC Company: But last year ABC Company's sales grew by only 30%, which was the lowest amongst all its competitors.

Which of the following provides the most logical counter for the Board to offer to the shareholder?

- (A) ABC Company's sales had fallen every year for the past three years.
- (B) The CEO cannot be personally held responsible for the low sales growth.
- (C)The CEO needs to be encouraged, else he may lose the motivation to increase the sales further.
- The CEO has hired several middle managers at very high salaries leading to increased costs for the company.
- (E) The CEO has not made any remarkable changes to the production or marketing strategy of the company.

Answer: A

Explanation:

In this argument, we need to strengthen the Board's decision and at the same time also explain how the fact that the company's sales have only grown by 30% is not necessarily a bad thing. 'A' does this by pointing out that ABC's sales had been continuously falling for the past three years, so if the sales this year have shown a 30% growth then, in relative terms, this performance is very good.

- (A) The correct answer.
- (B) But then there is no reason to reward the CEO either.
- (C) The encouragement cannot be at the cost of falling sales. If the growth rate of the company's sales has fallen compared to the previous years, then there is no reason to reward the CEO.
- This weakens the argument of the Board by suggesting that the CEOs policies could lead to increase in costs.
- (E) Same as D.
- 100. In a college election, Tom received 50% of the votes cast, Jim received 30% of the votes cast, and Joanna received the remaining 20% of the votes cast. Jim was eventually declared the winner of the election for the post of the college President.

Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn from the information above?

- (A) There were only three candidates who stood for the election.
- (B) The college students most likely don't like Joanna.
- (C) Tom must have spent more time campaigning than Jim or Joanna did.
- (D) The number of votes received was not a criterion to decide who would be President.

(E) There must be some criterion, other than the number of votes received, that also helps decide who would be President.

Answer: E

Explanation:

Since this is an Inference question, let's look at each option and eliminate.

- (A) This may not necessarily be the case. There could be a fourth candidate (or even more than four) who did not receive any votes.
- (B) There is no way of arriving at this conclusion.
- (C) Same as B.
- (D) Extreme option. We know that the number of votes received could not have been the only criterion, in which case Tom would have won, but this does not necessarily mean that this was not a criterion at all.
- (E) **The correct answer**. If Jim won despite not receiving the maximum number of votes, then there has to be some factor other the number of votes received that helps decide who would be President.

SECTION 7 Quick Recall

The purpose of this section is to provide you with all the important rules and concepts discussed in this book in one place. Go through this section before you take a full length practice test so that all the important concepts of **Critical Reasoning** are fresh in your mind.

Basics of Critical Reasoning

- Every Question stem has three parts—Stimulus, Question Stem, and Options
- Stimulus can appear in two forms—Argument and Statements of facts
- Assumption + Evidence = Conclusion
- Conclusion
 - o Gives the answer to What the author is saying
 - o Almost always an opinion
 - o Can appear anywhere in an argument (not necessarily at the end)
- Evidence
 - o Gives the answer to Why the author is saying what he is saying
 - o Almost always contains facts
 - o Can never be questioned or doubted. Always take it at face value
- Assumption
 - o Is unstated evidence
 - o Must be true for the argument to be true
- Approach to Critical Reasoning
 - o Start by reading the stimulus and not the question stem
 - Read the stimulus critically and summarize in your own words
 - o Read the question stem and use the strategy to tackle that particular question type
 - o Take an average of two minutes to answer each CR question

Assumption Questions

- Assumption is the most important of all CR concepts
- Assumptions help answer five questions types
 - o Find an Assumption
 - o Evaluate the Argument
 - Strengthen
 - Weaken
 - o Identify the Flaw
- Assumption will never be written in the argument
- Never question the argument's conclusion, however absurd
- Always predict the assumption before looking at the options
- Try the Denial/Negation rule if confused between options
- Active Assumptions
 - Actively support the argument

- Can be pre-phrased or predicted in advance
- o Usually an argument has only one Active Assumption
- Passive Assumptions
 - o Cannot be predicted because there can be several in an argument
 - o Always use some negating word such as not
- Assumption questions can also be worded as *must be true* questions

Evaluate the Argument Questions

- Stimulus will be in the form of an argument
- Indirectly require you to identify the Assumption
- The correct option will strengthen the argument one way and weaken the argument the other way
- Options usually start with the word whether or are worded in the form of a question

Strengthen Questions

- The stimulus will always be in the form of an argument
- A strengthener will make it more likely for the conclusion to be arrived at from the evidence
- Never strengthen just the conclusion in isolation. Always strengthen the link between the evidence and the conclusion
- A lot of the times, the answer to a Strengthen question is the Assumption itself
 - Assumption always strengthens the argument
- Active strengtheners provide a point in favour of the argument
- Passive strengtheners remove a doubt about the argument
 - Will use the word not

Weaken Questions

- The stimulus will always be in the form of an argument
- The weakener will make it less likely for the conclusion to be arrived at from the evidence
- Never weaken just the conclusion in isolation. Always weaken the link between the evidence and the conclusion
- The answer to a Weaken question will raise doubts about the validity of the assumption

Identify the Flaw Questions

- The flaw will always question the assumption
- Stimulus will be in the form of an argument
- Can also be worded as vulnerable to the objection or vulnerable to the criticism questions
- Different from Weaken questions
 - o Flaw is always from within the argument
 - Weaken always provides additional evidence against the argument
- Typical Flaws

- Mistaking Correlation for Causation
- Confusing you with absolute Numbers and Percentages
- o Representativeness

Inference Questions

- Stimulus will usually not be in the form of an argument
- You are not required to summarize the information in the stimulus
- The correct option *must* be true and not *may* be true
- Can be worded as must be true questions or support questions
- Don't try to predict the answer
- Look at each option and eliminate
- Always avoid extreme or strongly worded options
- Never use outside information to answer Inference questions
- Assumptions usually play no role in Inference questions

Explain the Paradox Questions

- Stimulus will always contain a discrepancy/anomaly/contradiction
- Any option that explains this contradiction will be the correct answer
 - o Will always be a new point containing extra outside information
- Always explain both sides of the contradiction and not just one side
- Never question or deny the contradiction or the evidence

Provide a Logical Conclusion Questions

- Always have a blank at the end
- Increasingly tested on the GMAT
- Stimulus will usually be in the form of an argument
- Most questions will require you to strengthen the conclusion. The conclusion is in the sentence that leads to the blank
- The word leading into the blank will tell you what question type to treat the questions as.
 - Since/because Strengthen question
 - It should be expected that Inference question
 - Assuming that Assumption question

Miscellaneous Questions

- Bold faced Questions
 - Always paraphrase the argument and predict the relation between the two bold parts before looking at the option
 - Remember to answer only for the bold part
 - » Instead of selecting the correct option, try eliminating the incorrect ones
- Main Point Questions

- The correct answer will not just restate the conclusion; it will also incorporate parts of the evidence
 - Avoid answers which summarize only a part of the argument or which restate a fact from the argument
- Parallel Reasoning Questions
 - The options will always be from diverse fields that have no apparent connection with what is mentioned in the stimulus
 - o The exact structure of the correct answer may not be the same as that of the argument
 - Watch out for options that are half-right and half-wrong

Common Argument Structures

- Cause and Effect Argument
 - o If the argument states that A is causing B, then there are two ways of weakening this:
 - » Show that C could also cause B
 - » Show that it is actually B that might be causing A
- Representativeness
 - Whenever the argument talks about a survey, research, study, etc., always check for the error of Representativeness
- Number Arguments
 - A higher percentage could lead to a lower number and vice versa. A higher number could lead to a lower percentage and vice versa. For any number argument question you need three details—the total number, the absolute number, and the percentage.
 - o If the stimulus contains percentages, avoid answer choices that contain absolute numbers.
 - o If the stimulus contains absolute numbers, avoid answer choices that contain percentages.

Important Terms on GMAT Critical Reasoning

- Options containing terms such as *some* and *many* will rarely be correct
- Prefer options with terms such as *most* and *majority*
- If the option contains the word *not*, it might be a passive assumption or a passive strengthener
- Pay attention to the use of EXCEPT
 - o If four options strengthen the argument, it is not necessary that the fifth will necessarily weaken it

Concluding Notes

Through this book we have endeavoured to provide you with all the **Critical Reasoning** concepts tested on the GMAT in one place. This book has been written in a lucid, easy to understand style; in fact, we have made a conscious effort to avoid diagrams and jargon as much as possible and focus on understanding the meaning of arguments instead.

While we have tried to ensure that the book is completely free of errors, in case you do spot one, please post it on the **CR Grail 2018** thread on the Forums section of our website. Also, in case there are some concepts that you could not understand from the book or that you would like to discuss with us, please post the same on our forums and we'll respond to you within 48 hours.



Scan this QR code to quickly access our Forums over your mobile device.

We also welcome any other feedback that you may have on how we can make the next edition of this book even better; do mail us the same on feedback@aristotleprep.com

We wish you all the best for your preparation.

The CR Grail 2018 Editorial Team

Index—QR Codes

QR Code	Video/Article		
article c_55441238_151 wiley	How to structure your GMAT preparation		
video c_55441238_125 wiley	The Assumption Family		
video c_55441238_126 wiley	Predict the Assumption		
video c_55441238_127 wiley	The Negation Rule		
video c_55441238_128 wiley	Passive Assumptions		
video c_55441238_129 wiley	A trick for 'Evaluate' Questions		
video c_55441238_130 wiley	A tough 'Evaluate' question		
video c_55441238_131 wiley	Strengtheners, Weakeners, and Assumptions		
video c_55441238_132 wiley	Avoid this mistake on Strengthen/Weaken Questions		
video c_55441238_133 wiley	A tough 'Weaken' Question		
video c_55441238_134 wiley	Common Flaws		
video c_55441238_135 wiley	A difficult 'Flaw' Question		
video c_55441238_136 wiley	Assumption vs Inference		
video c_55441238_137 wiley	Extreme options		
video c_55441238_138 wiley	A tough 'Inference' Question		
video c_55441238_139 wiley	Explain the Paradox		
video c_55441238_140 wiley	Provide a Logical Conclusion		
video c_55441238_141 wiley	A tough Provide a Logical Conclusion Question		
video c_55441238_142 wiley	A tough Bold Face Question		
video c_55441238_143 wiley	A tough Causality Question		
video c_55441238_144 wiley	A difficult Representativeness Question		
video c_55441238_145 wiley	Importance of Terminology		
video c_55441238_146 wiley	The usage of EXCEPT		
article c_55441238_154 wiley	Aristotle Prep Forums		

QR Code	Vlog
video c_55441240_1392 wiley	The concept of Causality in detail
video c_55441240_1393 wiley	Difference between Necessary condition and Sufficient condition
video c_55441240_1394 wiley	Why one shouldn't approach the GMAT very academically
video c_55441240_1395 wiley	GMAT retake strategy
video c_55441240_1396 wiley	Time management on the GMAT
video c_55441240_1397 wiley	Interesting tidbits from the GMAT test day
video c_55441240_1398 wiley	The importance of Comprehension on GMAT Critical Reasoning
video c_55441240_1399 wiley	Qualities you should look for in a GMAT coach
video c_55441240_1400 wiley	How you should analyze your CATs
video c_55441240_1401 wiley	What not to do with the GMAT Official Guide
video c_55441240_1402 wiley	3 tips to keep in mind for GMAT test day
video c_55441240_1403 wiley	5 bad habits to avoid on your GMAT prep journey
video c_55441240_1404 wiley	GMAT self-prep strategy
video c_55441240_1405 wiley	Recent GMAT trends
video c_55441240_1406 wiley	AWA and IR strategy for the GMAT
video c_55441240_1407 wiley	How you can leverage a low GMAT score
video c_55441240_1408 wiley	Why you shouldn't let a high GMAT score make you complacent
video c_55441240_1409 wiley	The importance of change as part of your GMAT prep strategy