



Assumptions (Practice)

Course on Mastering Critical Reasoning - CAT, 2024

the MORE
YOU PRACTICE
THE BETTER
YOU GET

IT'S PRACTICE!

1. Ramirez: The film industry claims that pirated DVDs, which are usually cheaper than legitimate DVDs and become available well before a film's official DVD release date, adversely affect its bottom line. But the industry should note what the spread of piracy indicates: consumers want lower prices and faster DVD releases. Lowering prices of DVDs and releasing them sooner would mitigate piracy's negative effect on film industry profits.
- The argument above relies on which of the following assumptions?
- A. Releasing legitimate DVDs earlier would not cause any reduction in the revenue the film industry receives from the films theatrical release
 - B. Some people who would otherwise purchase pirated DVDs would be willing to purchase legitimate DVDs if they were less expensive and released earlier than they are now.
 - C. The film industry will in the future be able to produce DVDs more cheaply than is currently the case.
 - D. Some current sellers of pirated DVDs would likely discontinue their businesses if legitimate DVDS were released faster and priced lower.
 - E. Current purchasers of pirated DVDs are aware that those DVDs are not authorized by the film industry.

2. Editorial: Our city's public transportation agency is facing a budget shortfall. The fastest growing part of the budget has been employee retirement benefits, which are exceptionally generous. Unless the budget shortfall is resolved, transportation service will be cut, and many transportation employees will lose their jobs. Thus, it would be in the employees' best interest for their union to accept cuts in retirement benefits. Which of the following is an assumption the editorial's argument requires?

- A. The transportation employees' union should not accept cuts in retirement benefits if doing so would not be in the employees' best interest.
- B. The only feasible way for the agency to resolve the budget shortfall would involve cutting transportation service and eliminating jobs.
- C. Other things being equal, it is in the transportation employees' interest to have exceptionally generous retirement benefits.
- D. Cutting the retirement benefits would help resolve the agency's budget shortfall.
- E. The transportation employees' union will not accept cuts in retirement benefits if doing so will not allow more transportation employees to keep their jobs.

3. Researchers hope to find clues about the A'mk peoples who lived in the Kaumpta region about one thousand years ago but who left few obvious traces. The researchers plan to hire the few remaining shamans of the modern-day indigenous people in Kaumpta, who are believed to be descended from the A'mk, to lead them to ancestral sites that may be the remains of A'mk buildings or ceremonial spaces. The shamans were taught the location of such sites as part of their traditional training as youths, and their knowledge of traditional Kaumpta customs may help determine the nature of any sites the researchers find.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the success of the plan depends?

- A. The researchers have reliable evidence that the A'mk of one thousand years ago built important ceremonial spaces.
- B. The shamans have a reasonably accurate memory of A'mk sites they learned as youths.
- C. Kaumpla shamans are generally held in high esteem for their traditional knowledge.
- D. Modern technologies available to the researchers are likely to be able to find some A'mk sites easily.
- E. Most or all A'mk sites are likely to be found within the Kaumpta region.

4. If the county continues to collect residential trash at current levels, landfills will soon be overflowing and parkland will need to be used in order to create more space. Charging each household a fee for each pound of trash it puts out for collection will induce residents to reduce the amount of trash they create, this charge will therefore protect the remaining county parkland.

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

- A. The collection fee will not significantly affect the purchasing power of most residents, even if their households do not reduce the amount of trash.
- B. The collection fee will not induce residents to dump their trash in the parklands illegally.
- C. The beauty of county parkland is an important issue for most of the county's residents.
- D. Landfills outside the county's borders could be used as dumping sites for the county's trash.

5. Farmer: Worldwide, just three grain crops—rice, wheat, and corn—account for most human caloric intake. To maintain this level of caloric intake and also keep pace with global population growth, yields per acre from each of these crops will have to increase at least 1.5 percent every year, given that the supply of cultivated land is diminishing. Therefore, the government should increase funding for research into new ways to improve yields.

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

- A. It is solely the government's responsibility to ensure that the amount of rice, wheat, and corn produced worldwide keeps pace with global population growth.
- B. Increasing government funding for research into new ways to improve the yields per acre of rice, wheat, and corn crops would help to increase total worldwide annual production of food from these crops.
- C. Increasing the yields per acre of rice, wheat, and corn is more important than increasing the yields per acre of other crops.
- D. Current levels of funding for research into ways of improving grain crop yields per acre have enabled grain crop yields per acre to increase by more than 1.5 percent per year worldwide.
- E. In the coming decades, rice, wheat, and corn will become a minor part of human calorie intake, unless there is government-funded research to increase their yield per acre.

6. In an attempt to abate the destructive decline in Micro Chip's revenue brought about by shrinking demand that is accompanying an economic recession, Micro Chip is offering customers a 50% discount for the next three months on all purchases fully paid for within 15 days.

Which of the following assumptions most underlies the chip maker's offer of a discount?

- A. Micro Chip expects this discount to help the company retain existing customers and gain new ones, enabling the firm to survive in the long-term.
- B. The government will provide massive technology tax credits to businesses, spurring them to purchase chips and other related products.
- C. The government will not pursue Micro Chip if in fact its behavior in offering a deep discount amounts to a violation of predatory pricing laws.
- D. The decrease in revenue brought about by the reduction in price will be smaller than the anticipated increase in revenue brought about by the increase.

7. The earth's resources are being depleted too fast. To correct this, the United States must keep its resource consumption at present levels for many years to come.

The argument above depends on which of the following assumptions?

- A. Per capita resource consumption in the United States is at an all-time high.
- B. The United States uses more resources than any other country.
- C. Curbing U.S. resource consumption will significantly retard world resource depletion.
- D. The United States imports most of the resources it uses.

8. The program to control the entry of illegal drugs into the country was a failure in 1987. If the program had been successful, the wholesale price of most illegal drugs would not have dropped substantially in 1987.

The argument in the passage depends on which of the following assumptions?

- A. The supply of illegal drugs dropped substantially in 1987.
- B. The price paid for most illegal drugs by the average consumer did not drop substantially in 1987.
- C. Domestic production of illegal drugs increased at a higher rate than did the entry of such drugs into the country.
- D. A drop in demand for most illegal drugs in 1987 was not the sole cause of the drop in their wholesale price.

9. Rasheeq thinks that he is intelligent. But that is not true since he has not managed to get into IBA.

The above argument is based on which of the following assumptions?

- A. Most students that get into IBA are intelligent.
- B. Being intelligent is not a prerequisite for getting into IBA.
- C. Not all intelligent students get into IBA.
- D. Students who don't manage to get into IBA are not intelligent.

10. All good footballers want to win, and all footballers who want to win exercise regularly; therefore, all footballers who do not exercise regularly are bad footballers.

If the assumptions of the arguments above are true, then which of the following arguments must be true?

- A. No bad footballer wants to win.
- B. No footballer who does not exercise regularly is a good footballer.
- C. Every footballer who exercises regularly is a good footballer.
- D. All footballers who want to win are good footballers.

11. The upcoming presidential election in the West African republic of Ganelon is of grave concern to the U.S. State Department. Ganelon presently has strong political and military ties to the United States. However, the Socialist party is widely expected to win the election, leading to fears that Ganelon will soon break away from the pro-American bloc and adopt a nonaligned or openly anti-American stance.

Which of the following is an assumption made in the passage above?

- A. Socialist party government in Ganelon is more likely to oppose the United States than is a non-Socialist party government.
- B. The people of the United States recognize their nation's interest in the political stability of West Africa.
- C. A weakening of U.S. political ties with Ganelon could have serious consequences for U.S. relations with other African nations.
- D. The Socialist party leaders in Ganelon believe that their nation's interests would best be served by an alliance with anti-American forces.

12. The U.S. census is not perfect, thousands of Americans probably go uncounted. However, the basic statistical portrait of the nation painted by the census is accurate.

Certainly some of the poor go uncounted, particularly the homeless; but some of the rich go uncounted as well, because they are often abroad or traveling between one residence and another.

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

- A. Both the rich and the poor have personal and economic reasons to avoid being counted by the census.
- B. All Americans may reasonably be classified as either poor or rich.
- C. The percentage of poor Americans uncounted by the census is close to the percentage of rich Americans uncounted.
- D. The number of homeless Americans is approximately equal to the number of rich Americans.

13. In the twentieth century, the visual arts have embarked on major experimentation, from cubism to expressionism. While tastes always vary, there are certainly some people who find beautiful objects of each of the art movements of the first half of the twentieth century. In the latter half of the twentieth century, though, most works are so abstract or shocking that neither the critic nor the general public uses the word “beautiful” to describe them: indeed, sometimes late twentieth-century artists have, as one of their expressed goals, the creation of a work that no one could find beautiful. Whatever these artists are creating may be intellectually engaging at some level, but it is no longer art.

Which of the following is an assumption that supports drawing the conclusion above from the reasons given for that conclusion?

- A. Art critics generally have a different appraisal of a work of art than does the general public.
- B. The meaning of any work of art is defined entirely by the ideas of the artist who created it.
- C. Beauty is a defining quality of art.
- D. All art movements of the latter half of the twentieth century are responses to the movements of the first half of the century.

14. The number of instances where judges have made unwanted remarks in open courts against other constitutional/ statutory bodies or persons who were not before them is increasing. There is a need to bring such behaviour of judges within the purview of judicial standards.

Which of the following is an assumption implicit in the above passage?

- A. There is a set of judicial standards which the judges are expected to follow.
- B. Till now no one has set any standards for judges.
- C. It is not desirable for the judges to pass such comments on other constitutional/ statutory bodies in their absence.
- D. None of These

15. Studies of fatal automobile accidents reveal that, in the majority of cases in which one occupant of an automobile is killed while another survives, it is the passenger, not the driver, who is killed. It is ironic that the innocent passenger should suffer for the driver's carelessness, while the driver often suffers only minor injuries or none at all. Which of the following is an assumption underlying the reasoning in the passage above?

- A. In most fatal automobile accidents, the driver of a car in which an occupant is killed is at fault.
- B. Drivers of automobiles are rarely killed in auto accidents.
- C. Auto safety experts should increase their efforts to provide protection for those in the passenger seats of automobiles.
- D. Most deaths in fatal automobile accidents are suffered by occupants of cars rather than by pedestrians.

16. A marathon runner noticed the milestone that had 9 on the side facing him and 11 on its back. He expected that the next milestone would have the same number on both sides and show that he was halfway through his race. However, the next milestone had 8 on the side facing him and 11 on its back.

Which of the following points to the error in the runner's assumption?

- A. The numbers on the milestones indicated kilometers not miles.
- B. The runner had overlooked one milestone between the two he observed.
- C. The milestones were not intended for the marathon runners.
- D. The number facing him indicated the miles left to finish and not the miles covered.

17. The average production cost of steel in China has long been significantly lower than that in India. Since India imposed import tariffs on steel imported from China five years ago, making imported steel costlier for steel importers, the amount of steel used in India has remained almost constant. However, recent statistics show that the number of steel factories producing steel in India has decreased. Given these facts, we can conclude that the amount of steel imported from China is likely to increase during this financial year.

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

- A. The cost of iron ore essential for steel production is less in China than in India.
- B. The quality of steel imported from China is as good as that produced in India.
- C. The capacity of steel mills in India has not significantly increased.
- D. The cost of steel imported from China after import tariffs remains the same as that produced in India.

18. Rattan: There are many good reasons for the government to spend tax revenues on education. But, the claim that education offers economic benefit seems to be misguided. The government has to spend a lot of money to develop infrastructure needed for education facilities and to pay salaries to the teachers, while the students virtually pay nothing for the education they receive.

Renu: Your argument fails because you neglect gains outside the education system. after growing up, these educated citizens produce wealth for the whole of the country.

Renu's response to Rattan makes which of the following assumptions?

- A. Educated people get better employment with higher wages paying higher income tax and other indirect taxes to the government than uneducated workforce does.
- B. Rattan is generally against public funding because he believes that funds in private entities are used more efficiently than those in publicly funded organizations.
- C. The economic contributions of those receiving education from public funded institutions can outweigh expenditure incurred for the provision of education.
- D. Funding human resource development should take into consideration economic factors before such investments are made.

19. Many customers of Anu, a service provider, believe that the most frequent reason for complaint about Anu is delay in the delivery of service purchased. This belief is apparently correct, since, of the twenty six thousand complaints received during last year by Anu's call center, thirty percent are related to the delivery of service. Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- A. The number of complaints received during the last year with regard to the quality of service provided and other factors was negligible.
- B. A majority of call centers mostly receives complaints about the delay in the delivery of services.
- C. Some of the complaints received by Anu's call center are related to other aspects of services.
- D. For all call centers, at least thirty percent of complaints received are related to delay in service delivery

20. India has long been narrowly self-sufficient in both iron ore and steel. However, as the country has become more and more industrialized, the consumption of both iron ore and steel has risen to higher levels each year. Therefore, since the industrialization continues to be more prevalent, whereas domestic production of iron ore will not increase due to limitations of iron ore mines, India will soon have to import either iron ore or steel or both.

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

- A. The annual production of iron ore will not decrease in India.
- B. The demand for iron ore and steel was more in India than in countries with similar economy.
- C. The consumption of iron ore and steel is similar in different industries of India.
- D. The consumption of iron ore and steel has been increasing over the past few years

21. Often, patients who are supposedly prone to diabetes, but are not actually affected by the disease, are prescribed a repeat diabetes diagnostic test every four months, because endocrinologists are concerned about possibly having misjudged the proneness of the patients. When a number of the diagnostic tests were reviewed, however, it has been proved that the most of the patients have been identified with the problem within five or six repeat diagnostic tests. Therefore, it is not a waste of money to order a repeat diagnostic test for persons supposedly prone to diabetes.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the above conclusion depends?

- A. Doctors who are general practitioners rather than endocrinologists are less likely than endocrinologists to judge the proneness to diabetes
- B. The test reports of patients of many endocrinologists from different hospitals were reviewed
- C. Patients prone to diabetes are more likely to have endocrine related problems than are patients not prone to diabetes.
- D. Endocrinologists are less prone to error in estimating the onset of diabetes than are other medical specialists

22. Many people who commute to work everyday suffer from allergic reactions due to Particulate Matter (PM) emitted from diesel engines. A city in Japan recently prohibited, during daytime, the entry of heavy-duty vehicles which exclusively use diesel engines. Hence, we can expect that many such commuters can now commute every day without the fear of allergic reaction.

Which of the following is NOT an assumption on which the argument depends?

- A. The Particulate Matter released by heavy-duty vehicles during night does not persist for long
- B. No other emission released by other vehicles causes an allergic reaction caused by Particulate Matter
- C. Regular passenger vehicles that run on diesel do not release the Particulate Matter, causing allergy
- D. People commuting to work during nighttime are more prone to allergic reaction than are those commuting during daytime

23. Since 1905, India has utilized 80% of the coal mined for power generation. If power demand continues to rise at the present rate, in about 40 years, the coal reserves present in India will be exhausted and India will have to face serious power shortage for want of coal.

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

- A. Since 1905, coal reserves have decreased significantly as a result of increase in demand for power.
- B. Any other power production other than thermal power using coal will be insufficient to prevent the power shortage from occurring.
- C. Other power sources that cater to the needs of India have shown at least a slight improvement in power generation.
- D. Voluntary power conservation will not by itself be sufficient to hold India's current power consumption at the current levels.

24. Any environmental issue discussion about the potential threat to ecosystems due to global warming is not effective if the participating bodies do not use terms such as 'extinction of species' and use milder expressions such as 'decreasing biodiversity' instead. In reality, the harsh expressions such as "extinction engenders desirable reactions, such as higher level of concern, whereas the substitute expressions do not. Therefore, of the two types of terms, harsher words are the ones that should be used during deliberations of this kind.

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

- A. Words such as 'extinction of species' have not so far been used as substitutes for words such as 'decreasing biodiversity' in the environmental issue deliberations.
- B. In serious deliberations related to environment, what is said by the participants is more important than how it is expressed.
- C. In the kind of deliberations in question, the advantages of desirable responses evoked from the harsh terms outweigh the disadvantages, if any, resulting from undesirable emotions from those terms.
- D. The only reason that scholars would have for using harsher expressions in the place of mild expressions is to elicit reasonable responses from the participants.

25. Cognitive scientist: Using the pioneering work of comparative psychologist Gordon Gallup as a model several studies have investigated animals capacity for mirror self recognition (MSR). Most animals exposed to a mirror respond only with social behavior, such as aggression. However, in the case of the great apes, repeated exposure to mirrors leads to self-directed behaviors, such as exploring the inside of the mouth, suggesting that these animals recognize the reflection as an image of self. The implication of these studies is that the great apes have a capacity for self-awareness unique among non human species.

The cognitive scientist makes which of the following assumptions in the argument above?

- A. Gallup's work has established that the great apes have a capacity for MSR unique among non human species.
- B. If an animal does not have the capacity for MSR, it does not have the capacity for self-awareness.
- C. If a researcher exposes an animal to a mirror and that animal exhibits social behavior, that animal is incapable of being self-aware.
- D. When exposed to a mirror, all animals display either social behavior or self-directed behavior.
- E. Animals that do not exhibit MSR may demonstrate a capacity of self-awareness in other ways.

Answer key

Q.	Ans								
1	B	6	D	11	A	16	D	21	B
2	D	7	C	12	C	17	C	22	D
3	B	8	D	13	C	18	C	23	B
4	B	9	D	14	C	19	A	24	C
5	B	10	B	15	A	20	D	25	B