

Critical Reasoning Based Questions
Type III : Strengthening / Weakening Argument Based

S.A.

Passage-1

Organic farming, on average, has lower input costs than conventional farming because it excludes or strictly limits the use of pesticides and insecticides. But the yields are lower than conventional farming since it is very knowledge-intensive and many farmers are still relatively inexperienced with respect to the principles of organic farming.

Q. Which of the following best supports the claim that organic farming will be profitable?

- (a) Many organic farms are coming up not only in developed countries but also in developing countries.
- (b) The yields from conventional agriculture have reached their limits and will not increase further.
- (c) Spurred by the movement towards pesticide-free food, many consumers and restaurants are willing to pay high prices for organic products.
- (d) Prolonged use of pesticides is known to make pests resistant to them and call for increased dosage and hence increased costs.

Passage- 2

In Bolivia inefficiency and corruption still persist and this is evident in the form of the stacks of files that choke the system. The department of Income Tax is moving toward computerization in a bid to speed up the process of filing returns. But is this development enough? Why not go a step forward and free the individual from the whole cumbersome process of filing returns?

Q. Which of the following would most effectively meet the author's point?

- a) Introducing a tax on consumption at the point of sale of goods and abolishing income tax.
- b) Allowing the individual to make payments through internet and avoiding paperwork.
- c) The government should pay the income tax on behalf of the individual.
- d) All of the above.

Passage-3

According to the theory of continental drift, in prehistoric times, many of today's separate continents were part of a single huge landmass. As the plates on which this landmass rested began to move, the mass broke apart, and ocean water filled the newly created chasms. It is hypothesized, for example, that South America was once joined on its east coast with what is now the west coast of Africa.

Q. Which one of the following discoveries, if it were made, would most support the above hypothesis about South America and Africa?

- a. A large band of ancient rock of a rare type along the east coast of South America is of the same type as a band on the west coast of Africa.
- b. Many people today living in Brazil are genetically quite similar to many western Africans.
- c. The climates of western Africa and of the east coast of South America resemble each other.
- d. Some of the oldest tribes of people living in eastern South America speak languages linguistically similar to various languages spoken by certain western African peoples.

Passage-4

Sleep deprivation is the cause of many social ills, ranging from irritability to potentially dangerous instances of impaired decision making. Most people today suffer from sleep deprivation to some degree. Therefore we should restructure the workday to allow people flexibility in scheduling their work hours.

Q. Which one of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's argument?

- a. The primary cause of sleep deprivation is overwork.
- b. Employees would get more sleep if they had greater latitude in scheduling their work hours.
- c. Individuals vary widely in the amount of sleep they require.

d. More people would suffer from sleep deprivation today than did in the past if the average number of hours worked per week had not decreased.

Passage-5

In a survey of job applicants, two-fifths admitted to being at least a little dishonest. However, the survey may underestimate the proportion of job applicants who are dishonest, because____

Q. Which of the followings best completes the above passage?

- a. some dishonest people taking the survey might have claimed on the survey to be honest
- b. some generally honest people taking the survey might have claimed on the survey to be dishonest
- c. some people who claimed on the survey to be at least a little dishonest may be very dishonest
- d. some people who claimed on the survey to be dishonest may have been answering honestly

W.A.

Passage-1

Human history abounds in claims and theories confining the right of governing to a few select citizens. Exclusion of the many is justified on the ground that human beings may be rightfully segregated for the good of society and viability of the political process. **(CSAT-2015)**

Q. Which one of the following statements is least essential as part of the argument in the above passage?

- a) Man seeks control over external things affecting him.
- b) In society, there are super and sub human beings
- c) Exceptions to universal citizen participation are conducive to systemic efficacy.
- d) Governing implies-recognition of disparities in individual capacities.

Passage-2

An inexpensive and simple multi-banded indicator test gives early warning of kidney damage by detecting the amount of protein in urine of the high risk patients such as those suffering from diabetes or hypertension. Too much may indicate that kidneys are not functioning efficiently and that the patient should be referred to a specialist. Pathologists in India are now encouraging all people to buy home-kits of the same.

Q. Which of the following, if true would most question the recommendation of the pathologists?

- a) The indicator works only when seen against sunlight.
- b) If the test is carried out just after taking a meal, it does not always show the correct result.
- c) It is normal for children to show a high content of protein in urine.
- d) The indicator shows erratic results when there is a slight difference in room temperature.

Passage-3

The national average life expectancy in India is 66 years, but children born in Andaman Nicobar will live an average of 68 years, and those born in Odhisha live an average of 60 years. If a newlywed couple from Odhisha were to begin their family in Andaman Nicobar, therefore, their children would be expected to live longer than would be the case if the family remained in Odhisha.

Q. Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the migration of the newlywed?

- a. Insurance company statisticians do not believe that moving to Andaman Nicobar will significantly lengthen the average life expectancy.
- b. Some tribals of Andaman Nicobar have alleged that statistics are inaccurate.
- c. The longevity ascribed to Andaman's current population is attributable mostly to genetically determined factors.
- d. Most parts of Andaman Nicobar have levels of air pollution well below the national average of India.

Passage-4

It is repeatedly claimed that the dumping of nuclear waste poses no threat to people living nearby. If this claim could be made with certainty, there would be no reason for not locating sites in areas of dense population. But the policy of dumping nuclear waste only in the more

sparsely populated regions indicates, at the very least, some misgiving about safety on the part of those responsible for policy.

Q. Which one of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the argument?

- a. Evacuation plans in the event of an accident could not be guaranteed to work perfectly except where the population is small.
- b. In the event of an accident, it is certain that fewer people would be harmed in a sparsely populated than in a densely populated area.
- c. Dumping of nuclear waste poses fewer economic and bureaucratic problems in sparsely populated than in densely populated areas.
- d. There are dangers associated with chemical waste, and it, too, is dumped away from areas of dense population.

Passage-5

The town's post office must be replaced with a larger one. The present one cannot be expanded. Land near the present location in the center of town is more expensive than land on the outskirts of town. Since the cost of acquiring a site is a significant part of the total construction cost, the post office clearly could be built more cheaply on the outskirts of town.

Q. Which one of the following, if true, most seriously undermines the argument's stated conclusion?

- a. The new post office will have to be built in accordance with a demanding new citywide building code.
- b. If the new post office is built on the outskirts of town, it will require a parking lot, but if sited near the present post office it will not.
- c. If the new post office is built on the outskirts of town, current city bus routes will have to be expanded to provide access.
- d. If the new post office is built near the center of town, disruptions to city traffic would have to be minimized by taking such steps as doing some construction work in stages at night and on weekends.

Passage-6

Air travel is becoming increasingly more dangerous. In the last year there have been seven major collisions resulting in over 700 deaths, more deaths than in any previous year.

Q. Which statement, if true, would most weaken the argument above?

- a. Since the volume of air traffic has been increasing all the time, an increase in the number of deaths due to collisions does not necessarily mean greater danger.
- b. The increase in collisions can be explained by statistical coincidence, hijackings, and unusual weather.
- c. Mortality per passenger mile is lower for air travel than for any kind of surface transportation.
- d. Last year the average number of passengers per flown plane was significantly lower than that of previous years.

Passage-7

In the modern era, society should accept the premise that equality before the law is not appropriate to the marketplace, where modern methods of marketing, packaging, and financing have reduced the ordinary consumer to a subordinate position. To protect the consumer from the hardship and oppression that could result from this inferior position, the law should limit the freedom of action of the enterprises with which the consumer deals.

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

- a. When a consumer buys a product in a cardboard box or can, there is no way to know what there is inside.
- b. The concept of equality is contradicted by the reality that the consumer is not equal in power to the supplier

- c. The health and well-being of consumers are protected by a variety of statutes that have been in effect for decades.
- d. Equality before the law is an essential part of life and should not be restricted.

Miscellaneous Questions

Passage-1

Statistics reveal that there are significantly more purchasers of video games in the 35 to 50 age group than the 15 to 20 age group, thus refuting the popular misconception that it is the latter demographic group that is most addicted to video-games.

The argument is flawed because it:

- (a) Assumes that both demographic groups are equally proficient at playing video games.
- (b) Ignores the fact that the video-games can be played irrespective of one's age.
- (c) Assumes that the purchasers and the players of the game are the same.
- (d) Discounts the fact; the older people might be purchasing video-games to appear to be in sync with the times.

Passage-2

Developed countries have no right to ask developing countries to cap their carbon emissions in order to curtail global warming since the former have been instrumental in releasing large amounts of carbon to fuel developments and bringing the environment to its current stage.

Q. Find out the option based on parallel reasoning-

- (a) The ban on smoking in public places is unwarranted since non-smokers can choose not to go to places that allow smoking in their premises.
- (b) It's unfair to ask drivers to wear seat belts since the cost of not wearing seat belts is always borne exclusively by the drivers themselves.
- (c) He has no right to ask me not to pay bribes to reduce corruption; since he is part of a generation which grew up paying bribes to get things done, thus institutionalizing it.
- (d) The green movement which seeks to save the environment by urging companies to practise sustainable manufacturing, is forgetting that such products will be more expensive, thus marginalizing the poor

Passage-3

Normally, increase in the price of a product decreases its sales except when the price-increase accompanies an improvement in the product. Veblen goods are a group of commodities of which people's preference for buying them increases with an increase in their price, even if there is no change in the product itself.

Q. Which of the following, if true, best explains the anomaly above?

- (a) The market for Veblen goods is characterized by an extremely wide range of competing products.
- (b) Consumers selecting Veblen goods in a store often use the price charged as their main guide to the product's quality.
- (c) Retailers of Veblen goods can generally increase the sales of a particular product temporarily by introducing a price discount.
- (d) Consumers, who purchase Veblen goods, regularly have strong opinions about the brands they prefer.

Passage-4

A proposed ordinance requires the installation in new homes of sprinklers automatically triggered by the presence of a fire. However, an official commented that because more than 85 per cent of residential fires are extinguished by a household member, sprinklers would only marginally decrease property damage caused by residential fires.

Q. Which of the following, if true, would most seriously **weaken** the official's argument?

- (a) The largest proportion of property damage that results from residential fires is caused by fires that start when no household member is present.
- (b) Since new homes are only a tiny percentage of available housing in the city, the new ordinance would be extremely narrow in scope.
- (c) The installation of smoke detectors in new residences costs significantly less than the installation of sprinklers.
- (d) In the city where the ordinance was proposed, the average time required by the fire department to respond to a fire was less than the national average.

Passage-5

In China, injuries to passengers involved in automobile accidents are typically more severe than in Europe, where laws require a different kind of safety belt. It is clear from this that China needs to adopt more stringent standards for safety belt design to protect automobile passengers better.

Q. Each of the following, if true, weakens the argument above EXCEPT:

- a. Europeans are more likely to wear safety belts than Chinese.
- b. Unlike Chinese drivers, European drivers receive training in how best to react in the event of an accident to minimize injuries to themselves and to their passengers.
- c. Automobile passengers in China have a greater statistical chance of being involved in an accident than do passengers in Europe.
- d. Chinese Provinces that have recently begun requiring the European safety belt have experienced no reduction in the average severity of injuries suffered by passengers in automobile accidents.

Passage-6

Authorities concerned with mass transport in metropolitan cities are struggling with deficits. Commuters complain about delays and break-downs, cuts in service and fares higher than they are accustomed to paying. For all these reasons and because the price of fuel is still not prohibitive, the number of commuters using public transportation has fallen, adding to the deficits.

Q. Which among the following statements, about the relationship between the number of commuters using public transportation and the price of fuel, is best supported by the above passage?

- (a) With the rise in the price of fuel, there is a rise in the number of commuters using public transportation.
- (b) Even if the price of fuel rises, the number of commuters using public transportation will continue to decline.
- (c) The number of commuters using public transportation will rise, if the price of fuel rises to a prohibitive level.
- (d) Most of the commuters using public transportation do not use fuel, therefore fluctuations in the price of fuel is unlikely to affect the number of commuters using public transportation.