

**Directions for questions 1 to 25:** Select the correct alternative from the given choices.

1. It has been reported that the frequent incidence of dermatitis in Maxico county has primarily resulted from consumption of agricultural products grown using pesticides. A leading food retailer, after publicly announcing it as a social responsibility, has planned distribution of only organically grown products. Since the retailer has 60% market share, most farmers have started organic farming so that their products can be accepted by the retailer. So, this will significantly decrease the incidence of dermatitis.

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

- (A) Other food retailers do not buy agricultural products grown using pesticides if the food retailer no longer buys such products.
  - (B) The decline in agriculture produce due to non-use of pesticides is by other methods.
  - (C) If the leading food retailer buys only organically grown produce, the firm's costs increase.
  - (D) The government of Maxico undertakes many health programs that benefit its citizens.
2. In order to minimize dependence on oil imports, the government of Sardonia recently imposed new emission standards on new cars, beginning this year. It also has given tax exemptions to those exchanging old cars with new cars complying with those standards. Thus, it is reasonable to predict that the air pollution from car traffic will decrease significantly in the coming years.

All of the following, if true, would strengthen the conclusion above EXCEPT

- (A) Sardonians who get new cars complying with new emission standards do not drive more than before.
- (B) The oil prices in international markets do not rise significantly, adding to the problem of low foreign exchange reserves the country is already facing.
- (C) The proportion of old cars not needing to comply with new emission standards remains constant over the coming years.
- (D) The disposable income of Sardonians does not increase significantly, thereby maintaining the total numbers of cars constant.

In the second millennium BC, Cuneiform script of Mesopotamia reached Elam, an ancient country in Europe, as per the archaeological finds in Elam. An ancient script could spread this far either by Elamites' reaching Mesopotamia or by Mesopotamians reaching Elam. Because it was decisively proven that Elamites did not have the land route to reach

Mesopotamia, scholars hypothesize that it was Mesopotamians who spread the Cuneiform script to Elam.

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

- (A) Early dynasty of Elam of the second millennium BC had sophisticated boat building technology.
- (B) Characteristic pottery found in Mesopotamia of third millennium BC was also found in Elam, indicating trade between them.
- (C) Remains of clinker-built sailboats, featuring bitumen waterproofing found in Mesopotamia have been dated to third millennium BC.
- (D) The melting of ice during the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium paved the way for Mesopotamians to travel on land even without boats.

4. **Government Representative:** Critics of our Steel policy implemented five years ago complain about the declining production of steel in the country. Yet, the fact is that not only did more steel mills start the production than those that stopped production, but each year the average production of each steel mill has been increasing since the implementation of the policy. So it stands to reason that the Policy has been beneficial to steel industry.

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

- (A) The steel production cost is lower today than it was when the policy was implemented, adversely affecting the profitability of the companies.
- (B) Each year since the implementation of the policy, the average production of steel mills closed has been higher than that of newly opened steel mills.
- (C) The average steel production for any company in the country was at a ten-year low when the steel policy was implemented.
- (D) Most of the steel manufacturing units that were closed were actually based on technology that is outdated and not economically viable.

5. Atlantic salmon begin their life in freshwater, migrate to Atlantic Ocean to feed and grow, and return to freshwater to spawn. They primarily depend on olfactory (smell) cues to find their home rivers to comeback for spawning. However, most of the rivers in Maine have been found to be chemically contaminated, radically altering the olfactory cues. It has also been found that the homing salmon population decreased by 90% during the recent

decades. So, to protect the Atlantic salmon visiting rivers in Maine, we should control chemical pollution.

Which of the following, if true, most weakens the conclusion above?

- (A) Atlantic salmon has to travel six thousand miles, under very harsh conditions, from their feeding grounds to their breeding grounds.
- (B) The dams constructed on the rivers in Maine have been built with fish passes to facilitate movement of fish during their migration.
- (C) Populations of all migrating fish including Atlantic salmon have been slightly decreasing over the past decades.
- (D) Due to sand deposits, the river mouths of Maine rivers have become shallow, creating a hurdle for fish passage.

6. **Literary critic:** Fewer and fewer students nowadays are opting for literary criticism, resulting in fewer people with the flair for the subject opting for it in higher education. Consequently, people who want to appreciate the available pieces of current literary criticism are studying other genres of literature instead. Thus, to encourage literary appreciation among readers of literary criticism, we need to encourage more students to opt for literary criticism as their major.

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

- (A) Most students who choose literary criticism as their subject in higher education believe that they have a flair for the subject.
- (B) Most people who appreciate literary criticism do so through books on literary criticism written in the past.
- (C) Literary criticism's current meager popularity can be attributed to the popularity of other genres of literature that have become profuse.
- (D) The continued popularity of literary criticism depends in part on the readers' ability to understand the intricacies of the criticism.

7. Chert arrowheads characteristic of European Neolithic humans have been dated between 7000 BCE and 1700 BCE. The people believed to be living in Europe during that period did not know the technology to sharpen hard objects and still, they must have used the arrowheads, because similar arrowheads have not been excavated anywhere in ancient region that has later come to be known as Europe.

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the conclusion above?

- (A) Sumerian civilization, supposedly the most sophisticated civilization of that period, is said to have the technology to sharpen hard objects.
- (B) The European Neolithic humans are believed to have knowledge of some technologies more advanced than the technology to sharpen hard objects.
- (C) Chert is a kind of hard sedimentary stone that has been available usually in small pieces, usually with a single acute edge.
- (D) Of all the technologies present in ancient Europe, sharpening technology was the second

8. It is widely accepted that employees who are said to develop stress-related symptoms undertake regular exercise and other activities. However, a recent study has proved that even all these measures have not been able to reduce the incidence of stress-related problems among such employees.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the force of evidence cited?

- (A) Companies imposing deadlines decide on the deadlines, basing on their perceptions of the ability of the employees.
- (B) People who undertake the said measures are those who are frequently exposed to work pressures.
- (C) Facilities that offer social and physical activities need not necessarily be present within the proximity the companies that are exacting.
- (D) Even people who are prone to stress-related problems join such employment because only such type of jobs are mostly available.

9. Good Money, a micro-finance company, operates in a certain state with 17 branches. Although desirous of expanding, it was outmaneuvered by Quick Money in negotiations to acquire Easy Money chain of micro-finance. To complete its acquisition of Easy Money, Quick Money must sell five branches to comply with a state law forbidding any micro-finance company to operate more than one branch per district. Since Quick Money will still be left operating 20 branches in the state, it will then have the highest number of branches in the state.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously undermines the prediction?

- (A) Good Money, Quick Money and Easy Money are the only organizations to operate micro-finance branches in the state.
- (B) Some of the state's districts do not permit micro-finance to in those districts.
- (C) All of the Quick Money branches make extensive organizational changes in order to become profitable.
- (D) Quick Money uses proceeds from the sale of the five branches to acquire Easy Money.

10. **Art Critic:** I have analyzed all the paintings in the art galleries in this country and have noticed that the oil paintings made before 1900 are far better than those painted after 1900. Clearly, oil painting artists before 1900 worked with more skill, care and effort than subsequent oil painters.

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the art critic's argument?

- (A) Many of the oil paintings made before 1900 were comparatively exhibited for a longer period than were those painted after 1900.
- (B) The period before 1900 is far more extensive in art history than is that after 1900.
- (C) Most of the recent paintings are in private collections rather than in public domains.
- (D) Oil painters require a lot of training before they can become professional painters.

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7. Chert arrowheads characteristic of European Neolithic humans have been dated between 7000 BCE and 1700 BCE. The people believed to be living in Europe during that period did not know the technology to sharpen hard objects and still, they must have used the arrowheads, because similar arrowheads have not been excavated anywhere in ancient region that has later come to be known as Europe.

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- (D) Of all the technologies present in ancient Europe, sharpening technology was the second technology, the first being fire-making technology.

8. It is widely believed that employees who have been subjected to work pressures such as having to meet strict deadlines are said to develop stress-related symptoms by undertaking regular exercise and other social activities. However, a recent study has proved that even all these measures have not been able to reduce the incidence of stress-related problems among such employees.

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11. Recently, textile mills have become more cooperative than ever in complying with environmental standards. For example, the recent pollution control norms mandated by the government are more strictly followed even though such compliance would require huge capital investments on machinery, indicating that those mills have become more environmentally conscious.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the environmental consciousness exhibited by the textile mills?

- (A) Many companies have undertaken lobbying to prevent the passing of the bill designed to make environmental standards more stringent than before.
- (B) When textile companies upgrade their machinery to meet the latest pollution control standards, they are likely to widely advertise to enhance their public image.
- (C) The textile mills that are on small scale are exempted from the new environmental norms.
- (D) The machinery complying with the latest pollution control norms will have significant cost savings in textile production while almost doubling production.

12. Abolition of government regulations on telephone services has increased competition among service providers and thus will eventually lead to compromise in call quality. Anxious to reduce call rates in what has, as a result of deregulation, become a highly competitive market, these service providers will be tempted to reduce costs by compromising on the call quality.

Which of the following, if true, would cast the most serious doubt on the prediction that deregulation of telephone services will ultimately compromise call quality?

- (A) There are a number of factors that cannot be made cost-efficient.
- (B) Consumers select a telephone service provider as much as on the basis of call quality as on the basis of the cost.
- (C) The number of telephone service providers has significantly increased since the deregulation of the service.
- (D) Many telephone service providers have become bankrupt after the deregulation of telephone services.

13. Colorado potato beetle *L. decemlineata* is a pest devastating potato crop by destroying almost 30% of produce. Spotted lady beetles *C. maculata*, particularly their larvae, are voracious predators of aphids and consume caterpillars and are able to feed on eggs and larvae of Colorado potato beetles. Agricultural officers plan to introduce *C. maculata* into potato growing districts in order to minimize the loss in potato production.

Which of the following, if true about *C. maculata*, provides the strongest evidence that the plan will succeed?

- (A) It proliferates in the weather conditions of districts growing potatoes.

- (B) It lies dormant for a long period before it starts reproduction.
- (C) It spreads more slowly than *L. decemlineata* under most climatic conditions.
- (D) It does not destroy some commonly found beetle species.

14. Sardonian government is considering a proposal to the effect that certain economic policies should be determined, not by the legislature itself, but by referendum in which all graduate voters of the country can take part. Critics of the proposal argue that the outcome of public referendum would be prejudiced, since wealthy business houses are able to influence the voters' views by means of widespread advertising.

Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the critics' argument?

- (A) Many legislators consider public referendum a way of avoiding voting because the residents of their constituencies might not agree with the policies proposed.
- (B) During elections, the number of people who vote for a particular candidate is not related to the amount the candidate spent on advertising.
- (C) Proponents of economic policies opposed by wealthy business houses are often unable to afford advertising to bring out their point of view.
- (D) Different graduates take different positions as to the nature of economic policies that are being considered for passing in the legislature.

15. During the last elections in the country, women who contested the elections were about as likely to win as men. However, only ten percent of the candidates entering the legislature were women. Therefore, the reason for this under-representation is not that women had difficulty winning elections, but that so few women wanted to run for the election.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously undermine the conclusion above?

- (A) During the last election, the proportion of women entering the legislature was smaller than that of men entering the legislature.
- (B) Most of the women who ran for the office actually competed against women rather than against men.
- (C) The number of women elected for corporate positions is far higher than the number of women elected for legislatures.
- (D) Many more women than men who wanted to contest the elections did not contest because they were unable to get adequate funding for their campaigns.

16. An advertisement designed to convince its readers of the great durability of Television sets manufactured by Weston Electronics cites as evidence that over sixty percent of all the TV sets manufactured by the Company since 2000 are still in use today, compared to no more than a fourth for any other manufacturer.

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

- (A) The cost of Weston Electronics TV sets is slightly

- (B) The number of TV sets manufactured by Weston Electronics each year has not increased since 2000.  
 (C) People who buy Weston TV sets are careful in maintaining them, as they are relatively costly.  
 (D) Since 2000, Weston has made fewer changes in its TV sets than have their competitors done.
17. **Literary critic:** ABC publishers has not lived up to expectations as the literary works published by the Company are fiction that is not only most predictable but also of very ordinary quality.
- ABC Spokesperson:** That is rather ridiculous. ABC Publishers is one of the most respected publishers of the world. Our selection board contains literary figures of mammoth stature; in fact, one of the board members is a Nobel Laureate.
- The ABC Spokesperson's reply is vulnerable to the criticism that it
- (A) exaggerates the literary critic's claim in order to make them seem objectionable.  
 (B) accuses the literary critic of prejudice, without substantiating the accusation.  
 (C) enumerates strengths of ABC Publishers while failing to address the critic's statement.  
 (D) fails to establish that ABC Publishers' works are better than those published by others.
18. Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has recently granted approval to Mitra Clip heart valve repair device to repair leaky mitral valve without open-heart surgery. It is a minimally invasive method of heart valve repair. Most of the post-operative complications arising from undertaking open-heart surgery to repair a valve result from problems not related to valve function. Thus, using the Mitra Clip is far more advisable than using the open-heart surgery to repair the valves.
- Which of the following, if true, would most support the recommendation above?
- (A) Open-heart surgery, which is done during valve repair, enables the surgeons to correct other heart problems also.  
 (B) The procedure using Mitra Clip just as accurately corrects the valve problem as does the procedure using open-heart surgery.  
 (C) The trans-catheter therapy involving Mitra Clip has been used more than hundred thousand times during the last two years.  
 (D) Some patients who are likely to be immune to post-operative complications prefer open-heart surgery.
19. The great horned owl requires a steady diet of snowshoe hares for survival during winter, but can survive on a variety of prey in the summer. During extended summer, primarily because of global warming, the owls may run hares to near extinction. This, in turn, puts in danger the population of lynx, which survive only on snowshoe hares, as they now do not have a steady supply of their food source.
- Which of the following best supports the implied effect of global warming on lynx population?
- (A) The populations of other predators which prey exclusively on snowshoe hare have not decreased significantly during those extended summers.  
 (B) Snowshoe hares do not prey on any animals eaten by great horned owl or lynx, nor do they compete with any other predatory species.  
 (C) In areas where the summers were not extended due to global warming, the lynx population has remained stable.  
 (D) Populations of species that survive in warmer weather conditions have been consistently increasing during the last decade.
20. The government of XYZ country funds universities for fundamental research to broaden conceptual base of academic subjects, but allows the universities to enjoy the patent rights of the discoveries and inventions. Bordila University, a university in XYZ country, plans to capitalize on these patents by selling them to commercial entities and self fund further fundamental research.
- Which of the following, if true, would cast the most serious doubt on the viability of the University's plan described above?
- (A) Commercial entities will be ready to pay for discoveries and inventions only when they have immediate practical uses.  
 (B) Commercial entities interested in developing products based on patents held by universities are likely to fund research in those universities.  
 (C) Research scientists at Bordila University have few or no teaching responsibilities and participate mostly in research funded by the government.  
 (D) Most other universities in XYZ were unable to sell their patents to corporate entities.
21. Since mid-80s, the migratory behavior of white storks changed radically. Instead of migrating to Africa for the winter, the storks migrate to nearby countries such as Portugal to feed on rubbish dumps which provide an abundant and reliable food supply. Scientists predict that these birds, without the need to spend much energy, feed on the abundant supply, consequently making them gain weight, a factor which might prove detrimental for their survival in the long run.
- Which of the following, if true, calls into question the prediction given in the above argument?
- (A) White storks, even when under-nourished, complete their migratory journey to their summer habitats.  
 (B) The quantity of food consumed by all migrating birds is decided by energy requirement, rather than by food availability.  
 (C) White storks consider not just food availability but also optimal temperatures that are essential for their reproduction.  
 (D) Temperatures in the places where 'junk food' is dumped are usually higher than the places to which white storks used to migrate.

- 22. Auditor:** The average amount of income tax paid every year by a taxpayer from the service sector of Sardonia is \$20,000. Most of the taxpayers are from the service sector in the country. Furthermore, the average amount of tax paid per year by any taxpayer generally does not fluctuate much from year to year. Therefore, every year, most service workers in the country almost certainly pay at least some tax.

The auditor's argument is most vulnerable to criticism on which of the following grounds?

- (A) It takes for granted that service sector is a typical division of the whole taxpayers with regard to the average income tax paid every year.
  - (B) It takes for granted that if a certain average amount of tax is paid by each taxpayer of service sector, then, approximately, the same amount of tax must be paid every year by each taxpayer of Sardonia.
  - (C) It confuses a claim from which the argument's conclusion about the service sector would necessarily follow with a claim that would follow from the argument's conclusion only with a high degree of probability.
  - (D) It overlooks the possibility that even if, on average, a certain amount of income tax is paid by one group, many members of that group may not pay income tax at all.
23. Though financing a start-up that later becomes successful can bring windfalls, many start-ups face financial constraints because venture capitalists are quite choosy in financing those companies. Infusion of latest technologies into everyday life is mostly possible only due to start-ups though they depend on technologies that are not proven till now. Thus, the managers of venture capital companies are not taking economically sound decisions when they reject finance to the start-ups.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the conclusion of the above argument?

- (A) Technologies that have not been proven till now are the ones that bring radical change in life.
- (B) Managers of venture capital companies need to consider various factors before financing a start-up.
- (C) Managers of venture capital companies have an overriding responsibility to protect investors' capital.
- (D) Economically sound decisions need to optimize profits, while minimizing risk of investment loss.

24. Equity funds have recently purchased shares of software exporters in Estonia. Due to the recent devaluation of Estonian currency, the profits of these companies have substantially increased and their shares are commanding high price. This opportunistic purchase of the shares is not justified because the Estonian currency, at its historic low, creates a potential to strengthen in international currency market, adversely affecting the export oriented industries.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the adequacy of the argument's criticism of purchasing of the said shares?

- (A) The software exports are at their historical high and the trend is likely to continue in coming years.
- (B) Software exports constitute only a tiny fraction of Estonian exports, which themselves constitute a minor portion of the Estonian economy.
- (C) Currency value fluctuations have been more dramatic in Estonia recently than they were when software exports began in the country.
- (D) Equity funds, investing substantial amounts in stocks, churn their portfolios quite frequently depending on the volatility of the equity markets.

25. Several schools have recently started using digital technology in classroom teaching. This new method requires fewer teaching classes to complete the entire syllabus than in the past and, since a fixed number of teaching classes are allocated to each subject, teachers can now have more time to teach additional concepts to students, making them more proficient in the subjects.

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

- (A) The amount of time required for the preparation of the class for digital technology-based teaching is less than the time that would have been used to teach the curriculum in traditional ways.
- (B) Many of the schools that have implemented digital technologies have increased the quality of education.
- (C) Less amount of time was used to develop the digital technologies than is used for training teachers in using those technologies.
- (D) Most of the schools that have started using digital technologies are still using conventional methods to impart education.