

# STRENGTHENING/WEAKENING

## Exercise 1: Looking at Arguments

A. Some people say that all students should wear school uniforms because it makes everyone feel like they're part of a team. Which statement would weaken this idea?

1. Kids feel happier wearing their favourite clothes.
2. Buying school uniforms can be hard for families without much money.
3. Uniforms make the school look more like a workplace.
4. Kids do better in school when they wear uniforms.

B. Some people say that all dogs love playing fetch because they have lots of energy and want to make their owners happy. Which statement would strengthen this idea?

1. Cats like to do things on their own more than dogs do.
2. Dogs often help people feel better because they're so friendly.
3. Many dogs were bred long ago to help with hunting, which includes fetching things.
4. Some dogs like playing with other dogs more than they like fetching things.

C. Some people say that eating a variety of foods is important for staying healthy because it gives your body what it needs. Which statement would weaken this idea?

1. Some people have medical conditions that mean they have to eat a special diet.
2. Unhealthy food is often cheaper and easier to get than healthy food.
3. Cooking food at high temperatures can destroy important nutrients.
4. Exercise is just as important as eating well for staying healthy.

## Exercise 2: Looking at Statistics and Cause-and-Effect

A. After a school started teaching kids to wash their hands more often, 20% fewer kids were absent from school. Which statement would weaken the idea that teaching hand-washing caused fewer kids to be absent?

1. At the same time as teaching hand-washing, the school also started a program for giving shots to prevent sickness.
2. More kids got common colds at the same time as the hand-washing teaching.
3. The school started giving free snacks to kids who came to school every day during the hand-washing teaching.
4. The school only really pushed the hand-washing lessons to the older kids.

B. The average temperature in a city went up by 2 degrees Celsius over the last 10 years. Which statement would strengthen the idea that people caused this increase in temperature?

1. The city's population has been getting smaller over the same time period.
2. The city's electricity use didn't change over the past 10 years.
3. A few new factories were built in the city in the last two years.
4. A study from a climate research group shows a worldwide temperature increase during the same time period.

C. A product sold 30% more after a new advertising campaign started. Which statement would weaken the idea that the ads caused the increase in sales?

1. The company gave a short-term discount on the product during the ad campaign.
2. Other products like this one had lower sales during the same time.
3. The product's packaging was changed before the ads started.
4. Some customers liked the product, but others didn't.

### Exercise 3: Scientific Arguments

A. Scientists found out that kids who eat more fruits and vegetables usually feel healthier. Which fact would weaken the idea that eating more fruits and vegetables directly makes you healthier?

1. The scientists only talked to a small group of kids.
2. Other things, like playing outside a lot, might also make kids healthier.
3. Fruits and vegetables can be expensive in some places, so not everyone can eat a lot.
4. The scientists found a link, but didn't prove that eating fruits and vegetables makes you healthier.

B. A study showed that kids who listen to peaceful music while doing homework get better marks. Which fact would strengthen the idea that peaceful music helps you do better at school?

1. The kids in the study were picked randomly from many different schools.
2. The study was written up in a very important science magazine.
3. Peaceful music has been shown to help people concentrate in other situations.
4. The study made sure to consider things like how long the kids studied and how they prepared for tests.

C. Scientists found a type of plant that grows really well in sour soil. Which fact would weaken the idea that sourness in the soil directly helps this plant grow?

1. This plant can also be found in soils that aren't sour.
2. Other plants living nearby prefer soil that isn't sour.
3. The sourness of the soil is probably because of natural things happening in the earth and not specifically because of these plants.
4. The study didn't think about things like sunlight and heat that might also affect how plants grow.

#### Exercise 4:

A. A writer says that all students should take the same test to make sure everyone has an equal chance at college. Which fact would weaken the writer's idea?

1. Some kids have special learning needs that mean they need different test styles.
2. Standard tests are used all over the world to see how good students are at school.
3. Kids from different cultures might understand test questions in different ways.
4. Colleges like standard tests because they make it simpler to decide who gets in.

B. A writer thinks that restaurants should have meals for vegans to make more people happy. Which fact would strengthen the writer's idea?

1. More and more people all over the world are choosing to be vegan.
2. Meals for vegans can be more expensive to make than meals with meat.
3. Some customers like restaurants that specialise in one type of food.
4. Restaurants should focus on their best meals instead of adding vegan options.

C. The writer believes that using buses and trains reduces air pollution and traffic in cities. Which fact would challenge the writer's belief?

1. Many cities don't have a good bus and train system.
2. Taking a bus or train can take longer than driving your own car.
3. The writer used data from cities with very different numbers of people living in them.
4. Bus and train companies advertise a lot, which might make the data biased.



## Exercise 5: Looking at General Ideas (Generalisations)

A. A teacher says that all students who read a lot do well at school. Which situation would contradict this generalisation?

1. One student reads a lot but finds it hard to understand difficult ideas.
2. Another student only reads sometimes but always gets top marks.
3. A group of students who don't read much always do better than average on tests.
4. The teacher reads a lot and is known for knowing about lots of different subjects.

B. A scientist says a new study shows a certain vitamin helps all adults remember things better. Which situation would weaken this claim?

1. The study talked to lots of different people, including young adults and old people.
2. The company that makes the vitamin paid for the study.
3. Some people who took the vitamin got headaches.
4. Other scientists didn't agree with how the study was done.

C. A parent thinks that all kids who eat sweet snacks before bed will find it hard to fall asleep. Which situation would challenge this belief?

1. A kid sometimes eats sweet snacks and usually falls asleep quickly.
2. Another kid doesn't eat sweet snacks and often finds it hard to fall asleep.
3. A few kids who eat sweet snacks fall asleep without any problem.
4. The parent finds it hard to fall asleep after eating sweet snacks.