A typical argument has the following elements:

* Background
* Premise
* Counter-Premise
* Conclusion

An argument generally contains of a number of premises (assertions made by author) and conclusion. Sometimes premises and conclusion can be deduced using the indicators

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Premise Indicators | Conclusion Indicators | Extra-Premise Indicators | Contrasting Indicators |
| Because | Therefore | Furthermore | But |
| Since | Thus | Moreover | Yet |
| But | Consequently | Hereafter | Despite |
| Due to | This shows that | Besides | In spite of |
| owing to | This concludes that | In addition to | Admittedly |
| As indicated by | So | What’s more | While |
| For | Must be that |  | Still |
| For the reason that | Clearly |  | However |
| For example | Follows that |  | On the other hand |
| In that | hence |  | In contrast |
| This can be seen from | accordingly |  | Although |
| We know this by | For this reason |  | Even though |
|  | As a result |  | Whereas |
|  |  |  | After all |

The question stems in critical reasoning falls into one of the following categories:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | First family | Second family | Third family |
| Description: | Top Down– It refers to the questions where the start of flow is in the stimulus and ends at the question, so info in para is taken as it is and end point is under suspicion. | Bottom Up; It is based on the principle of assisting or helping the author’s statement/argument in some way, by revealing an assumption, resolving the paradox and strengthen the argument | It is similar to the second family in terms of information flow but instead of reinforcing the argument, it tends to destroy the argumentation. |
| Types | Must be true | Assumption | Weaken |
| Main Point | Strengthen |  |
| Method of reasoning | Resolve the paradox |  |
| Parallel reasoning |  |  |
| Flaw in reasoning |  |  |

> Must be true

> Main Point

> Strengthen

> Resolve the paradox

> Parallel reasoning

> Weaken

> Method of reasoning

> Flaw in reasoning

> Assumption

>Evaluate the arguments

Primary Objectives to go through a CR passage

> Determine whether stimulus contains argument or not.

> If stimulus contains an argument, determine its conclusion else if it is a fact set, write the facts.

> If stimulus contains argument, determine if it is weak or strong.

> Read precisely and get what the author has said (Don't generalize)

> Carefully read the question stem, deduce answers, if possible.

> Always read all answer choices and divide them in contenders and losers. (Strike them out one-by-one)

> If all answers appear to be losers re-evaluate the paragraph.

Q - Must be true :

Helper Points:

Don’t include premises which has probability indicators.

Restrain from taking in reverse statements.

Shell Game: In these type of questions, the author reverse functioning of one or more words and hence makes it difficult for the test taker to correctly separate out the correct answer.

The statement should pass the fact test.

Correct Answers will include:

Paraphrased sentences.

Combination of 2 or more statements.

Q - Main Point:

Incorrect answers:

The answers that are true but don’t capture the author’s point.

Repeated premise written as an answer.

Q - Weakens the argument

Steps to solve:

Separate the premise & conclusion.

Focus on structure.

You can bring the new information.

Three holes in the argument:

Improper Comparison.

Incomplete information.

Qualified conclusion.

Incorrect answer choices :

Opposite answer, which rather than strengthen the argument.

Out of scope choice.

Shell game.

Key Notes:

infer refers to the must be true question.

Q – Cause and Effect :

Some arguments assert two correlated events in premises and incorrectly conclude that one event has caused the another. We have look only conclusion for this. There are 3 scenarios in which this argument might get invalid

* If the causal has no effect on the receiver.
* If there is some another causal factor involved.
* If the both the actor and recipient are effected by some another factor.

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Two types of arguments don’t have conclusions :

* Explain the discrepancy and
* Draw the inference

The two contradictory statements indicates that one is premise and another is counter-premise, but finally premise supports the conclusion. So, you can differentiate between the two at that time.

The conclusion indicators might indicate intermediate conclusion.

Four steps :

* Identify the questions
* Deconstruct the argument
* State the goal.
* Work from wrong to right.

Types of questions :

**Structure based:**

**Assumption based:**

**Evidence based**

Structure based

* Describe the role

Role of a part of paragraph.

* Describe the argument.

Describe how a certain piece of information affects the argument.

Assumption based

* Find the Assumption
* Strengthen the argument
* Weaken the argument
* Evaluate the argument

Identify a piece of information that would help determining the soundness of argument.

* Find the flaw.

Identify something illogical in the argument.

Evidence based

* Inference

Must be true

* Explain the discrepancy

Eliminate apparent paradox

After finding out the type of question. Deconstruct the argument by breaking it into – Premise, Counter-Premise and Conclusion. Then using the goal (depends on type of question) write down the gist on paper in abbr. form and then move on to the process of Eliminating wrong answers.

Most of the times the conclusion revolves around the counter-premises.

Describe the role questions :

Deconstruct the argument and label the fragments as P, C, X, Same/Opp