

Module:7

Building Verbal Ability

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Critical Reasoning

- ▮ Critical Reasoning questions are similar to Reading Comprehension questions, but they generally shorter than that of a Reading Comprehension question, and you will only answer one question about the passage as opposed to three or four.
- ▮ In CR questions, the focus is to assess your ability to critically analyze an argument being made and the evidence used to either weaken or strengthen an argument.
- ▮ The aim of the question is different, thus, your strategy to approaching CR questions should also be different.

Strategy

- ▮ Keyword Skimming
- ▮ Paraphrasing
- ▮ A purposeful reading
- ▮ Find the conclusion

Example

- ▮ 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_.
 - ▮ 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
 - ▮ E. some people who are not job applicants are probably at least a little dishonest

Answer

- ▮ A is the best answer.
- ▮ If applicants who are in fact dishonest claimed to be honest, the survey results would show a smaller proportion of dishonest applicants than actually exists. Therefore, this choice is the best answer. B is inappropriate because generally honest applicants who claimed to be dishonest could contribute to the overestimation, but not to the underestimation, of dishonest applicants. D is inappropriate because applicants who admitted their dishonesty would not contribute to an underestimation of the proportion of dishonest applicants. C and E are inappropriate because the argument is concerned neither with degrees of dishonesty nor with the honesty of non-applicants.

Your Turn

- ▮ The average life expectancy for the United States population as a whole is 73.9 years, but children born in Hawaii will live an average of 77 years, and those born in Louisiana, 71.7 years. If a newlywed couple from Louisiana were to begin their family in Hawaii, therefore, their children would be expected to live longer than would be the case if the family remained in Louisiana.

- ▮ Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the conclusion drawn in the passage?
 - ▮ A. Insurance company statisticians do not believe that moving to Hawaii will significantly lengthen the average Louisianan's life.
 - ▮ B. The governor of Louisiana has falsely alleged that statistics for his state are inaccurate.
 - ▮ C. The longevity ascribed to Hawaii's current population is attributable mostly to genetically determined factors.
 - ▮ D. Thirty percent of all Louisianans can expect to live longer than 77 years.
 - ▮ E. Most of the Hawaiian Islands have levels of air pollution well below the national average for the United States.

Answer

- ▮ C is the best answer.
- ▮ This choice suggests that a significant proportion of Hawaii's population is genetically predisposed to be long lived. Since Louisianans are not necessarily so predisposed, and since the Louisianans' children will acquire their genetic characteristics from their parents, not from their birthplace, this choice presents a reason to doubt that Hawaiian born children of native Louisianans will have an increased life expectancy. Therefore, this choice is the best answer. Because the conclusion concerns people born in Hawaii, not the average Louisianan, **A** does not weaken the conclusion. Because the governor's allegation is false, it cannot affect the conclusion. **D** fails to weaken the conclusion because it is consistent with the information given and the conclusion about life expectancy. By suggesting that Hawaii's environment is in one respect particularly healthy, **E** supports the conclusion.

Verbal Analogy

- ▮ similarity in some respects between things that are otherwise dissimilar
- ▮ It draws a similarity between one pair of words and another pair of words.

▮ fish : scales

- ▮ what is the connection between the words *fish* and *scales*?
- ▮ Obviously, a fish is covered with scales; now think of two other

Strategy

- ▮ **Strong vocabulary:**
- ▮ **Ability to decode the relationship between the words in the question:**

Exercise

▮ BUTTER : BREAD

- ▮ **a.** jam : jelly
- ▮ **b.** paint : wood
- ▮ **c.** toast : jelly
- ▮ **d.** head : foot
- ▮ **e.** yellow : blue

▮ SHELF : BOOKCASE

- ▮ **a.** arm : leg
- ▮ **b.** stage : curtain
- ▮ **c.** bench : chair
- ▮ **d.** key : piano
- ▮ **e.** lamp : bulb

▮ FISH : SCHOOL

- ▮ **a.** wolf : pack
- ▮ **b.** tiger : jungle
- ▮ **c.** herd : peacock
- ▮ **d.** raven : school
- ▮ **e.** dog : collie

▮ SCALE : WEIGHT

- ▮ **a.** yardstick : length
- ▮ **b.** width : depth
- ▮ **c.** length : width
- ▮ **d.** size : area
- ▮ **e.** mileage : speed

Exercise

WATERMELON : FRUIT

- ▮ **a.** collar : leash
- ▮ **b.** dog : companion
- ▮ **c.** fish : bowl
- ▮ **d.** Dalmatian : canine
- ▮ **e.** apple : orange

FOOT : SKATEBOARD

- ▮ **a.** tire : automobile
- ▮ **b.** lace : shoe
- ▮ **c.** ounce : scale
- ▮ **d.** walk : jump
- ▮ **e.** pedal : bicycle

STRETCH : EXTEND

- ▮ **a.** tremble : roll
- ▮ **b.** thirsty : drink
- ▮ **c.** shake : tremble
- ▮ **d.** stroll : run
- ▮ **e.** stitch : tear

SHIELD : ARROW

- ▮ **a.** bow : quiver
- ▮ **b.** knight : horse
- ▮ **c.** umbrella : rain drops
- ▮ **d.** peony : flower
- ▮ **e.** boy : girl

Para Jumbles

- ▮ Para-Jumble refers to a paragraph wherein the sentences forming it are jumbled.
- ▮ We are required to arrange the sentences in a proper manner such that they link and form a coherent paragraph.

Example

- 1. Scientists have for the first time managed to edit genes in a human embryo to repair a genetic mutation, fueling hopes that such procedures may one day be available outside laboratory conditions.
- 2. The cardiac disease causes sudden death in otherwise healthy young athletes and affects about one in 500 people overall.
- 3. Correcting the mutation in the gene would not only ensure that the child is healthy but also prevents transmission of the mutation to future generations.
- 4. It is caused by a mutation in a particular gene and a child will suffer from the condition even if it inherits only one copy of the mutated gene.
- 5. In results announced in Nature this week, scientists fixed a mutation that thickens the heart muscle, a condition called hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.

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Practice

- ▮ 1. The process of handing down implies not a passive transfer, but some contestation in defining what exactly is to be handed down.
- ▮ 2. Wherever Western scholars have worked on the Indian past, the selection is even more apparent and the inventing of a tradition much more recognizable.
- ▮ 3. Every generation selects what it requires from the past and makes its innovations, some more than others.
- ▮ 4. It is now a truism to say that traditions are not handed down unchanged, but are invented.
- ▮ 5. Just as life has death as its opposite, so is tradition by default the opposite of innovation.

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Practice

1. Before plants can take life from atmosphere, nitrogen must undergo transformations similar to ones that food undergoes in our digestive machinery.
2. In its aerial form nitrogen is insoluble, unusable and is in need of transformation.
3. Lightning starts the series of chemical reactions that need to happen to nitrogen, ultimately helping it nourish our earth.
4. Nitrogen — an essential food for plants — is an abundant resource, with about 22 million tons of it floating over each square mile of earth.
5. One of the most dramatic examples in nature of ill wind that blows goodness is lightning.