

Critical Reasoning

Q1. You are visiting your cousin Tony. Tony begins by telling you what a great job he has. 'I am a future millionaire,' he says. 'All the top executives in the company are millionaires and I am a future top executive.' Tony is already planning on what kind of a mansion he wants to build. What is the assumption that Tony is making?

- (A) All millionaires have mansions.
- (B) Top executives become millionaires.
- (C) He works for a company where all the top executives become millionaires.
- (D) Tony thinks he has a great job.
- (E) None of the above.

Q2. For several years, Nighttime News attracted fewer viewers than World News, which broadcasts its show at the same time as Nighttime News. Recently, the producers of Nighttime News added personal interest stories and increased coverage of sports and weather. The two programs now have a roughly equal number of viewers. Clearly, the recent programming changes persuaded viewers to switch from World News to Nighttime News. Which of the following is an assumption on which the author relies?

- (A) Viewers are more interested in sports and weather than in personal interest stories.
- (B) The programming content of Nighttime News is more closely aligned with the interests of the overall audience than is the content of World News.
- (C) Some World News viewers liked the new Nighttime News programming better than they liked the World News programming.
- (D) There are other possible causes for an increase in the number of viewers of Nighttime News, including a recent ad campaign that aired on many local affiliates.
- (E) The quality of World News will remain constant even if Nighttime News improves.

Q3. Be a Good Driver

Traffic Safety Expert: In order to achieve a substantial reduction in the extremely high number of car accidents in our country, we should implement a radical new safe driving plan. Seat belts and air bags would be eliminated from the driver's side of all automobiles to provide the driver with the strongest possible incentive to drive safely. Further, an electroshock system would administer shocks to the driver if he or she exceeds the speed limit or engages in other unsafe driving practices. In declaring that the radical new safe driving plan will help to reduce accident rates, the author assumes which of the following?

- (A) Many car accidents are caused, at least partially, by naturally occurring conditions such as rain and fog.
- (B) Accidents in which one or both participants exceed 60 miles per hour account for a majority of all fatal car accidents.
- (C) A significant number of accidents are the result of negligence or other unsafe driving practices on the part of the driver.
- (D) To alleviate safety concerns, citizens should be allowed to reinstall their drivers' side seat belts and air bags at their own expense.
- (E) If not implemented properly, electroshock systems can cause heart attacks and other health problems.

Q4. Fresh Start

Advertisement: According to a recent research study, daily use of Fresh Start, a new toothpaste, reduces the risk of developing dental cavities by over 20 percent. In addition, as a result of a new formula, the use of Fresh Start results in whiter, healthier-looking teeth. Clearly, Fresh Start not only gives your teeth a beautiful look but also provides the most reliable protection against dental cavities. Which of the following is an assumption in the argument above?

- (A) No other toothpaste provides more reliable protection against dental cavities.
- (B) Fresh Start's formula does a better job of whitening teeth than do competitor's formulas.
- (C) People are just as interested in having beautiful teeth as they are in having healthy teeth.

- (D) Fresh Start also prevents other dental disorders, such as gingivitis.
(E) Reliable protection against dental cavities, combined with excellent aesthetic properties, is likely to make Fresh Start a popular toothpaste on the market.

Q5. Exchange Student

Student Advisor: One of our exchange students faced multiple arguments with her parents over the course of the past year. Not surprisingly, her grade point average (GPA) over the same period showed a steep decline. This is just one example of a general truth: problematic family relationships can cause significant academic difficulties for our students. Which of the following is an assumption underlying the general truism claimed by the Student Advisor?

- (A) Last year, the exchange student reduced the amount of time spent on academic work, resulting in a lower GPA.
(B) The decline in the GPA of the exchange student was not the reason for the student's arguments with her parents.
(C) School GPA is an accurate measure of a student's intellectual ability.
(D) If proper measures are not taken, the decline in the student's academic performance may become irreversible.
(E) Fluctuations in academic performance are typical for many students.

Q6. The Starship Enterprise is in danger of imploding from laser beams if the warp generators are not toroid resistant. Captain Spock says that no malleable circuits are toroid resistant and all warp generators are made of malleable circuits. What is the conclusion that can be drawn from Captain Spock's reasoning?

- (A) Laser beams do not affect the malleable circuits.
(B) The Starship Enterprise is not in danger.
(C) The Starship Enterprise will implode from laser beams.
(D) Warp generators are toroid resistant.
(E) None of the above.

Q7. Two Universities

Both enrollment and total tuition revenue at Brownsville University have increased during each of the last four years. During the same period of time, enrollment at Canterbury University has steadily decreased, while total tuition revenue has remained constant. Which of the following assertions is best supported by the statements above?

- (A) Brownsville University now collects more total tuition revenue than Canterbury University.
(B) Students regard higher tuition as an indicator of higher quality.
(C) The per-student tuition at Canterbury University has risen over the last four years.
(D) Within four years, enrollment at Brownsville University will likely exceed enrollment at Canterbury University.
(E) Canterbury University will likely continue to raise tuition to make up for lost revenue from declining enrollment.

Q8. Network Television

In 1984, network television commercials accounted for 80% of all network and non-network television advertising revenue. In 2004, that figure was 60%. During that same period, operating costs for the networks remained steady, and in 2004 every major network announced record-setting profits. The information above, if true, supports which of the following conclusions?

- (A) Between 1984 and 2004, the number of homes with access to non-network television channels increased by more than 20%.
(B) Teenagers comprise a growing Proportion of television viewers, and teenagers prefer to watch non-network television shows.
(C) The amount of advertising revenue earned from non-network television commercials in 2004 was greater than the amount of revenue earned by network television commercials in 1984.
(D) Between 1984 and 2004, advertising revenue earned from non-network television commercials grew at a faster rate than revenue earned from network television commercials.
(E) Soon advertising revenue from non-network television commercials will surpass revenue from network television commercials.

Q9. Gift Catalogue

Gift Catalogue Inc. sent seven custom-made gift packages last week. Last week, all of the shipments from Gift Catalogue Inc. that were sent out on Wednesday or later consisted entirely of non-custom-made gift packages. Gift Catalogue Inc. sent seven gift packages to Technocorp last week, at least two of which were custom-made gift packages. If the statements in the passage above are true, which of the following must also be true about Gift Catalogue Inc.?

- (A) At least one of the gift packages sent to Technocorp last week was not custom-made.
- (B) At least one of the custom-made gift packages sent last week was not directed to Technocorp.
- (C) The majority of the gift packages sent to Technocorp last week were sent on Wednesday or later.
- (D) Some of the gift packages sent to Technocorp last week were sent on Tuesday or earlier.
- (E) Technocorp received a higher proportion of the gift packages sent last week from Gift Catalogue Inc. than any other recipient.

Q10. Mutual Funds

Many managers of mutual funds proclaim that they have been able to generate consistently higher rates of return on their investments than the general stock market by buying shares of undervalued companies. Classical economic theory, however, proposes the "efficient capital markets hypothesis," which proposes that stock prices accurately reflect the value of the underlying investments, incorporating all information available to the public. If the efficient capital markets hypothesis is correct, then it should be expected that

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- (A) mutual fund managers, in order to compete with each other, will bid up the prices of certain stocks beyond their true values.
 - (B) mutual fund managers use insider information, an illegal practice, to generate higher rates of return than the general stock market.
 - (C) stock prices will rise over time.
 - (D) given public information alone, companies cannot reliably be labeled undervalued or overvalued relative to the general stock market
 - (E) some mutual fund managers are better than others at generating a higher rate of return on investments

Q11. South American girls have won the Miss World contest at least for the last 4 years in a row. Therefore the winner this year will also be a South American. Which of the following definitely strengthens the conclusion?

- (A) The Miss World contest was started 15 years ago and different countries have won it in the past.
- (B) There are more participants from South America this year than before.
- (C) More than 50% of the judges are from South America.
- (D) A different country has won the contest every year in the last decade.
- (E) It has been noticed that the winners of the contest rotate through different continents in a 5-year cycle. The winner five years ago was an Asian country.

Q12. Sneakers

Brand X designs and builds custom sneakers, one sneaker at a time. It recently announced plans to sell "The Gold Standard," a sneaker that will cost five times more to manufacture than any other sneaker that has been ever been created. Which of the following, if true, most supports the prediction that The Gold Standard shoe line will be profitable?

- (A) Because of its reputation as an original and exclusive sneaker, The Gold Standard will be favored by urban hipsters willing to pay exceptionally high prices in order to stand out.
- (B) Of the last four new sneakers that Brand X has released, three have sold at a rate that was higher than projected.
- (C) A rival brand recently declared bankruptcy and ceased manufacturing shoes.
- (D) The market for The Gold Standard will not be more limited than the market for other Brand X shoes.
- (E) The Gold Standard is made using canvas that is more than five times the cost of the canvas used in most sneakers.

Q13. XYZ Profits

The CEO of Corporation XYZ was very excited about the company's 2006 fourth quarter performance. Sales of the company's newest product were double the fourth quarter target projections while product costs remained consistent with estimates. The CEO projected that due to these increased sales, the company's profits for the fourth quarter would dramatically exceed the company's prior expectations. Which of the following, if true, supports the CEO's projection?

- (A) Most of the products sold by Corporation XYZ are manufactured goods that tend to be replaced by consumers every couple of years.
- (B) In the fourth quarter, Corporation XYZ's older, less up-to-date products were often sold at a substantial discount by retailers.
- (C) The profit margins of Corporation XYZ's newest product are higher than the industry average.
- (D) Reviews of Corporation XYZ's newest product in magazines and blogs have been uniformly positive.
- (E) The newest product represents the vast majority of Corporation XYZ's projected revenue for the fourth quarter of 2006.

Q14. Books and Coffee

The respective owners of a book store and a coffee shop that are next door to one another have decided to combine their businesses. Both owners believe that this merger will help increase the number of customers, and therefore the gross revenue. They reason that customers who come for a cup of coffee might find themselves glancing at the book titles for sale, and those who come for books might like to sit down and start reading with a cup of coffee. Which of the following, if true, most weakens the owners' conclusion that a merger will increase revenue?

- (A) Books and drinks can both be considered impulse purchases; often, they are purchased by customers without forethought.
- (B) Because of the way in which the two stores are currently positioned relative to one another, many customers who come to the coffee shop never see or notice the book store.
- (C) If books are damaged in a bookstore before purchase, the customers responsible for the damage are generally not held financially accountable.
- (D) The coffee shop is primarily frequented by local high school students whose parents make up a large percentage of the book store's customer base; the teenagers use the coffee shop as a place to mingle with their friends without family involvement.
- (E) A combination book store and coffee shop that opened in a neighboring city last year has already earned higher than expected profits.

Q15. Brand Popularity

A recent article asserted that, from 2002 to 2006, Band 1 generated the most revenue of any band in the world. The article based this claim on the fact that in each of those years, Band 1 sold the most albums and Band 1's highly anticipated first concert tour was the highest grossing concert tour in the industry in 2006. Which of the following, if true, weakens the article's assertion?

- (A) The band with the highest grossing tour in the industry in 2002 did not tour again in the next four years.
- (B) Band 1 typically puts on extraordinarily expensive concerts with elaborate staging, video displays and light shows.
- (C) From 2002 to 2006, other bands released concert film and video anthology DVDs that were extremely lucrative.
- (D) All of Band 1's albums released from 2002 to 2006 were poorly received by music critics.
- (E) Internet piracy of music resulted in depressed album sales for the period 2002 to 2006 relative to earlier years.