

CR – Weaken

1. No nation in the world has experienced as significant a decline in its Yucaipa tree population as our nation. Yet only our nation imposes a law prohibiting the use of Yucaipa tree-bark oil in cosmetics. The purpose of this law in the first place was to help maintain the Yucaipa tree population, at least in this nation. But the law is clearly unnecessary and therefore should be repealed.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the conclusion drawn in the passage?

- a. This nation contains more Yucaipa trees than any other nation.
 - b. Yucaipa tree-bark oil is not used for any consumer goods other than cosmetics.
 - c. The demand for cosmetics containing Yucaipa tree-bark oil is expected to decline in the future in other nations while continuing unabated in this nation.
 - d. In other countries, labor used to harvest Yucaipa trees for cosmetics is less expensive than comparable labor in this nation.
 - e. In this nation, some wild animals eat Yucaipa tree bark, thereby contributing to their destruction.
2. Damaged nerves in the spinal cord do not regenerate themselves naturally, nor even under the spur of nerve-growth stimulants. The reason, recently discovered, is the presence of nerve-growth inhibitors in the spinal cord. Antibodies that deactivate those inhibitors have now been developed. Clearly, then, nerve repair will be a standard medical procedure in the foreseeable future.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the accuracy of the prediction above?

- (A) Prevention of the regeneration of damaged nerves is merely a by-product of the main function in the human body of the substances inhibiting nerve growth.
 - (B) Certain nerve-growth stimulants have similar chemical structures to those of the antibodies against nerve-growth inhibitors.
 - (C) Nerves in the brain are similar to nerves in the spinal cord in their ability to regenerate themselves naturally.
 - (D) Researchers have been able to stimulate the growth of nerves not located in the spinal cord by using only nerve-growth stimulants.
 - (E) Deactivating the substances inhibiting nerve growth for an extended period would require a steady supply of antibodies.
3. The proposal to hire ten new police officers in Middletown is quite foolish. There is sufficient funding to pay the salaries of the new officers, but not the salaries of additional court and prison employees to process the increased caseload of arrests and convictions that new officers usually generate. Which of the following, if true, will most seriously weaken the conclusion drawn above?
 - a. Studies had shown that an increase in city's place force does not necessarily reduce crime
 - b. When one major city increased its police force by 19% last year, there were 40% more arrests and 13% more convictions
 - c. If funding for the new police officers' salaries is approved, support for other city services will have to be

reduced during the next fiscal year

d. In most US cities, not all arrests result in convictions, and not all convictions result in prison terms

e. Middletown's ratio of police officers to citizens has reached a level at which an increase in the number of officers will have a deterrent effect on crime

4. In 1883, the Indonesian island Krakatoa, home to a massive volcano, seemingly disappeared overnight as an eruption rent the entire island apart, catapulting rock and debris into the atmosphere. For the next years, as ash circled the entire globe, the average world temperature dropped by several degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, an eruption of similar power in terms of the amount of debris ejected into the atmosphere will likely cause the average temperature around the world to drop by several degrees.

Which of the following, if true, best challenges the main claim of the argument?

A. In 1990, a major volcano took place in Japan but the average temperature increased as a result.

B. The eruption of the Indonesian island of Tambora was even larger than that of Krakatoa, yet the average world temperature did not drop as much as it did following the eruption of Krakatoa.

C. In 1883, the ocean-atmospheric phenomenon La Niña occurred, an event that is always followed by a drop of several degrees in the world's average temperature

D. According to sophisticated computer analysis, the eruption of Mt. Toba between 69,000 and 77,000 years ago, one of the most powerful ever, may have hastened an ice age.

E. No volcanic eruption in the 20th century was close to the magnitude of the Krakatoa eruption, yet average world temperatures dropped between 1950 and 1960.

5. Typically during thunderstorms most lightning strikes carry a negative electric charge; only a few carry a positive charge. Thunderstorms with unusually high proportions of positive-charge strikes tend to occur in smoky areas near forest fires. The fact that smoke carries positively charged smoke particles into the air above a fire suggests the hypothesis that the extra positive strikes occur because of the presence of such particles in the storm clouds.

Which of the following, if discovered to be true, most seriously undermines the hypothesis?

(A) Other kinds of rare lightning also occur with unusually high frequency in the vicinity of forest fires.

(B) The positive-charge strikes that occur near forest fires tend to be no more powerful than positive strikes normally are.

(C) A positive-charge strike is as likely to start a forest fire as a negative charge strike is.

(D) Thunderstorms that occur in drifting clouds of smoke have extra positive-charge strikes weeks after the charge of the smoke particles has dissipated.

(E) The total number of lightning strikes during a thunderstorm is usually within the normal range in the vicinity of a forest fire.