

38. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the conclusion above?

- (A) The employees of Company P lost more time at work due to job-related accidents than did the employees of Company O.
- (B) Company P considered more types of accidents to be job-related than did Company O.
- (C) The employees of Company P were sick more often than were the employees of Company O.
- (D) Several employees of Company O each had more than one job-related accident.
- (E) The majority of job-related accidents at Company O involved a single machine.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Two companies have the same number of employees working the same number of hours a week, but one company's employees reportedly had fewer job-related accidents last year and so are likely to have fewer job-related accidents in general. (The same as the previous item.)

Reasoning *What point would most weaken the argument?* The passage concludes that one company is safer than the other because it reported fewer job-related accidents than the other did. Since the argument relies on the comparison of one company's reported accidents to the other company's reported accidents, any information that suggests their reporting was done differently would undermine both the argument's comparison and the conclusion. Differences in the way the companies reported the accidents would make the accident rates difficult to compare directly. Since the company reporting the greater number of job-related accidents also considers more types of accidents to be job-related, the basis of the comparison is weakened and so is the argument.

- A The greater amount of time lost at work by the employees of the company with the greater number of job-related accidents is to be expected; the argument is not affected.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the fact that the company reporting the greater number of accidents used a broader definition. Thus, the basis of the comparison is faulty, and the conclusion is weakened.
- C Illness is not the same as a job-related accident, so more reports of illness are irrelevant to a comparison of accidents.
- D This statement is consistent with Company O's reporting that fewer of its employees had job-related accidents; it does not undermine the conclusion.
- E Identifying one major cause of job-related accidents at Company O does not weaken the conclusion that the company is likely to have fewer accidents than Company P.

The correct answer is B.

39. Last year the rate of inflation was 1.2 percent, but during the current year it has been 4 percent. We can conclude that inflation is on an upward trend and the rate will be still higher next year.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the conclusion above?

- (A) The inflation figures were computed on the basis of a representative sample of economic data rather than all of the available data.
- (B) Last year a dip in oil prices brought inflation temporarily below its recent stable annual level of 4 percent.
- (C) Increases in the pay of some workers are tied to the level of inflation, and at an inflation rate of 4 percent or above, these pay raises constitute a force causing further inflation.
- (D) The 1.2 percent rate of inflation last year represented a 10-year low.
- (E) Government intervention cannot affect the rate of inflation to any significant degree.

Argument Evaluation

Situation The rate of inflation was 1.2 percent last year but is 4 percent in the current year. It is therefore expected to rise above 4 percent next year.

Reasoning *What point weakens this conclusion?* The conclusion is based on an *upward trend* that is derived from data for two years. Data from only two years provide rather weak evidence of a *trend*. Additional evidence that provides a context for the annual inflation rates during the most recent two-year period will promote a more solid evaluation of this prediction of next year's inflation rate. If inflation has recently been *stable* at 4 percent, and the temporary drop the previous year is accounted for by lower oil prices, then the basis for the prediction seems quite weak.

- A As long as the sample was representative, the figures should be accurate. This point does not weaken the conclusion.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a point that weakens the conclusion.
- C This statement explains one process by which inflation increases and tends to support the conclusion that inflation will continue to rise.
- D Learning that last year's figure was the lowest rate of inflation in 10 years does not provide enough information to conclude whether the rate of inflation will rise next year.
- E The failure of government intervention to affect the rate of inflation could be seen to support, not weaken, the conclusion.

The correct answer is B.

40. Offshore oil-drilling operations entail an unavoidable risk of an oil spill, but importing oil on tankers presently entails an even greater such risk per barrel of oil. Therefore, if we are to reduce the risk of an oil spill without curtailing our use of oil, we must invest more in offshore operations and import less oil on tankers.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument above?

- (A) Tankers can easily be redesigned so that their use entails less risk of an oil spill.
- (B) Oil spills caused by tankers have generally been more serious than those caused by offshore operations.
- (C) The impact of offshore operations on the environment can be controlled by careful management.
- (D) Offshore operations usually damage the ocean floor, but tankers rarely cause such damage.
- (E) Importing oil on tankers is currently less expensive than drilling for it offshore.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Currently, the risk of an oil spill is greater from oil tankers than it is from offshore oil drilling. In order to reduce the risk of an oil spill, we should expand offshore operations and import less oil on tankers.

Reasoning *What point weakens this argument?* The argument is based on the current situation, but present conditions need not continue in the future if they can be improved. What if oil tankers can be redesigned so that they pose less risk of an oil spill? In that case, the argument is weakened because the lowered risk of oil spills resulting from improved oil tanker design could actually make tankers less problematic than offshore operations.

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a weakness in the argument.
- B The more serious nature of the oil spills caused by tankers strengthens the argument.
- C Careful management controlling the environmental impact of offshore operations supports the argument rather than weakens it.
- D While offshore operations may cause other environmental damage, this point does not weaken the argument about oil spills.
- E Importing oil on tankers may be an attractive economic alternative, but because this point is unrelated to oil spills, it does not weaken the argument.

The correct answer is A.

41. Manufacturers of mechanical pencils make most of their profit on pencil leads rather than on the pencils themselves. The Write Company, which cannot sell its leads as cheaply as other manufacturers can, plans to alter the design of its mechanical pencil so that it will accept only a newly designed Write Company lead, which will be sold at the same price as the Write Company's current lead.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the Write Company's projection that its plan will lead to an increase in its sales of pencil leads?

- (A) First-time buyers of mechanical pencils tend to buy the least expensive mechanical pencils available.
- (B) Annual sales of mechanical pencils are expected to triple over the next five years.
- (C) A Write Company executive is studying ways to reduce the cost of manufacturing pencil leads.
- (D) A rival manufacturer recently announced similar plans to introduce a mechanical pencil that would accept only the leads produced by that manufacturer.
- (E) In extensive test marketing, mechanical-pencil users found the new Write Company pencil markedly superior to other mechanical pencils they had used.

Evaluation of a Plan

Situation A manufacturer of mechanical pencils plans to produce a new pencil that accepts only the redesigned pencil leads that the company also intends to make and sell. Despite the fact that its leads are sold for a higher price than competitors' leads, the company anticipates that this approach will generate increased lead sales.

Reasoning *What point supports the plan's success?* It is clear that increased lead sales are directly tied to the sales and ongoing use of the new pencil that can use only that type of lead. If the new pencils sell well and then get used frequently, the buyers will need to purchase leads regularly. If thorough test marketing has shown that potential buyers find the new pencil greatly superior to use, then the pencil buyers will have to purchase the only available leads that fit their pencils, no matter whether the leads are more expensive, and the projection that sales of these pencil leads will increase is strengthened.

- A It is not known whether the Write Company's pencil is the least expensive, nor are the lead-buying habits of first-time buyers known. This information thus does not strengthen the projection.
- B This expectation applies for all manufacturers and does not show that the Write Company's plan will cause increased sales of its pencil leads.
- C Reducing the cost of manufacturing the leads could lead to greater profits but not to greater sales, since the passage states that the price will remain the same.
- D A rival manufacturer's announcement to follow the same plan does not affect whether the plan will be successful for the Write Company.
- E **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a point that supports the plan's success.

The correct answer is E.

42. Mourdet Winery: Danville Winery's new wine was introduced to compete with our most popular wine, which is sold in a distinctive tall, black bottle. Danville uses a similar bottle. Thus, it is likely that many customers intending to buy our wine will mistakenly buy theirs instead.

Danville Winery: Not so. The two bottles can be readily distinguished: the label on ours, but not on theirs, is gold colored.

Which of the following, if true, most undermines Danville Winery's response?

- (A) Gold is the background color on the label of many of the wines produced by Danville Winery.
- (B) When the bottles are viewed side by side, Danville Winery's bottle is perceptibly taller than Mourdet Winery's.
- (C) Danville Winery, unlike Mourdet Winery, displays its wine's label prominently in advertisements.
- (D) It is common for occasional purchasers to buy a bottle of wine on the basis of a general impression of the most obvious feature of the bottle.
- (E) Many popular wines are sold in bottles of a standard design.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Mourdet Winery sells its most popular wine in a tall, distinctive black bottle. It complains that its customers may be confused by the similarity of the bottle being used for Danville Winery's new wine and thus may mistakenly buy the competing Danville product. Danville Winery rejects this claim, pointing to Danville's unique gold label.

Reasoning *What point undermines Danville Winery's response?* At issue is the degree of difference between the two wineries' packaging of their products. Danville Winery claims that its use of the gold label distinguishes its bottles. What if some purchasers do not look closely enough to see that difference? If occasional purchasers make their purchases based on a general impression of the most obvious features of the bottle, they might easily confuse the two tall, black bottles. Danville Winery's gold label may make little difference to such purchasers, who could overlook the label as they select the bottle by its seemingly distinctive form.

- A If Danville Winery uses gold labels frequently, then consumers probably associate gold with Danville; this supports the response rather than undermining it.
- B The difference in the height of the bottles gives consumers another way to distinguish between the wineries' products, so this does not undermine the response.
- C The prominent display of the uniquely gold label in advertising should help associate the label with Danville Winery, which supports the response.
- D **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a point that undermines Danville Winery's response.
- E Other wines in standard bottles are irrelevant to the argument.

The correct answer is D.

43. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

The computer industry's estimate that it loses millions of dollars when users illegally copy programs without paying for them is greatly exaggerated. Most of the illegal copying is done by people with no serious interest in the programs. Thus, the loss to the industry is quite small, because _____.

- (A) many users who illegally copy programs never find any use for them
- (B) most people who illegally copy programs would not purchase them even if purchasing them were the only way to obtain them
- (C) even if the computer industry received all the revenue it claims to be losing, it would still be experiencing financial difficulties
- (D) the total market value of all illegal copies is low in comparison to the total revenue of the computer industry
- (E) the number of programs that are frequently copied illegally is low in comparison to the number of programs available for sale

Argument Construction

Situation The computer industry's estimate of its losses due to illegally copied programs is exaggerated because most of the illegal copying is done by people who are not greatly interested in the programs.

Reasoning *Why would the loss to the industry be said to be small?* The industry's loss due to illegal copying of programs must be evaluated in terms of the sales lost; the actual loss to the industry is directly related to the legitimate sales opportunities that have been lost. Would the people illegally copying the programs buy them if they could not otherwise obtain them? If it were true that most of them have *no serious interest in the programs*, they would be unlikely to purchase them. In this case, few sales would be lost and the loss to the industry could be considered small.

- A What users do (or do not do) with programs once they have them does not explain why the loss to the industry is small.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the fact that if the illegal copiers were unlikely to purchase the same programs, then the industry has not lost potential sales.
- C The greater financial difficulties of the industry do not explain why the loss incurred because of the illegally copied programs is small.
- D This comparison is faulty: the loss is not being considered in the context of total industry revenues but in the context of total sales of programs.
- E This comparison is faulty: the low number of illegal copies would have to be compared with the number of copies sold, not the number *available for sale*.

The correct answer is B.

44. In the last decade there has been a significant decrease in coffee consumption. During this same time, there has been increasing publicity about the caffeine in coffee's adverse long-term effects on health. Therefore, the decrease in coffee consumption must have been caused by consumers' awareness of the harmful effects of caffeine.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously calls into question the explanation above?

- (A) On average, people consume 30 percent less coffee today than they did 10 years ago.
- (B) Heavy coffee drinkers may have mild withdrawal symptoms, such as headaches, for a day or so after significantly decreasing their coffee consumption.
- (C) Sales of specialty types of coffee have held steady as sales of regular brands have declined.
- (D) The consumption of fruit juices and caffeine-free herbal teas has increased over the past decade.
- (E) Coffee prices increased steadily in the past decade because of unusually severe frosts in coffee-growing nations.

Argument Evaluation

Situation The decrease in coffee consumption in the last decade can be explained by consumers' increased awareness of the detrimental effects of the caffeine in coffee.

Reasoning *What point weakens this explanation?* A conclusion may be weakened when another explanation at least as compelling as the original is offered. Coffee consumption may have decreased over the decade for some reason other than consumers' awareness of the adverse health effects of caffeine. If the price of coffee has increased in the same period that consumption has decreased, then the decrease may well be the result of consumers' attention to price rather than their attention to health. Higher prices would offer a good alternative explanation that would weaken the original explanation.

- A This point supports the explanation.
- B Withdrawal symptoms would occur only after decreased consumption has occurred.
- C This point about differing types of coffee does not weaken the explanation.
- D This point could support the explanation if it were the proven result of a switch by former coffee drinkers; it does not weaken the explanation in any event.
- E **Correct.** This statement properly identifies an alternative rationale and undermines the given explanation.

The correct answer is E.

45. Fewer families lose their houses because of major disasters such as fire or flood than because of a wage earner's illness that results in death or disability. Yet, whereas most mortgage companies require borrowers to carry insurance to protect against major disasters, they do not require insurance to protect against the death or disability of a wage earner.

Which of the following, if true, would contribute most to an explanation of the difference in insurance requirements?

- (A) Some people are less aware of tragedies caused by major disasters than of those caused by the death or disability of a wage earner.
- (B) Many people are made uncomfortable by having to consider the possibility of their own death or disability or that of a family member.
- (C) Few wage earners are insured by their employers against a temporary loss of income resulting from disability.
- (D) The value of a property to a mortgage company is not affected by the death or disability of a wage earner.
- (E) Insuring against major disasters can be more costly than insuring against death or disability.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Most mortgage companies require borrowers to carry insurance to protect their homes against major disasters, though not against the death or disability of a wage earner; however, more families lose their homes because of the death or disability of a wage earner than because of a major disaster.

Reasoning *Why do mortgage companies not require homeowners to carry insurance to protect against losing their homes due to lost income?* Consider what is being insured and by whom. The mortgage companies protect their investment in the collateral property when they require homeowners to carry insurance against major disasters. Their investment is not in the people who live in the house, but in the property. Mortgage companies do not require insurance protecting against the death and disability of wage earners because the value of the property is not affected by the death or disability of the people who live there.

- A Some people's awareness of tragedies is not relevant to the policies of mortgage companies.
- B The uncomfortable feelings many people have about death and disability do not influence of the policies of mortgage companies.
- C The lack of disability insurance supplied by employers does not affect the policies of mortgage companies.
- D **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the factor that explains the difference in insurance requirements: mortgage companies invest in property, not people, and a wage earner's loss of income does not affect the value of the property.
- E The greater cost of insuring against major disasters does not affect the policies of mortgage companies.

The correct answer is D.

46. Which of the following best completes the passage below?

When the products of several competing suppliers are perceived by consumers to be essentially the same, classical economics predicts that price competition will reduce prices to the same minimal levels and all suppliers' profits to the same minimal levels. Therefore, if classical economics is true, and given suppliers' desire to make as much profit as possible, it should be expected that _____.

- (A) in a crowded market widely differing prices will be charged for products that are essentially the same as each other
- (B) as a market becomes less crowded as suppliers leave, the profits of the remaining suppliers will tend to decrease
- (C) each supplier in a crowded market will try to convince consumers that its product differs significantly from its competitors' products
- (D) when consumers are unable to distinguish among the products in a crowded market, consumers will judge that the higher-priced products are of higher quality
- (E) suppliers in crowded markets will have more incentive to reduce prices and thus increase sales than to introduce innovations that would distinguish their product from their competitors' products

Argument Construction

Situation Classical economics holds that prices and profits are minimal when consumers perceive the products of competing suppliers to be the same.

Reasoning According to classical economics, what strategy are suppliers most likely to use to maximize profits in such a situation? The given information states that the force driving prices and profits down in this case is the consumers' perception that the competing products are *essentially the same*. It is reasonable to assume that, with prices already at *minimal levels*, it is not possible to lower them any more. What can be done? The suppliers' most likely strategy would then be to change the consumers' perception of their products. It can be expected that an individual supplier would try to convince consumers that its product greatly differs from (and is certainly preferable to) the products of its competitors.

- A *Prices will be reduced by competition to the same minimal levels; they will not differ widely.*
- B *The passage discusses the conditions of a crowded market, not a market that is becoming less crowded.*
- C **Correct.** This statement properly suggests that the most likely strategy for any one supplier in a crowded market is convincing consumers that its product is very different from those of its competitors.
- D *Since prices will be reduced to the same minimal levels, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between higher- and lower-priced products.*
- E *Since prices will be reduced to the same minimal levels, it would be impossible to reduce them even more.*

The correct answer is C.

47. Installing scrubbers in smokestacks and switching to cleaner-burning fuel are the two methods available to Northern Power for reducing harmful emissions from its plants. Scrubbers will reduce harmful emissions more than cleaner-burning fuels will. Therefore, by installing scrubbers, Northern Power will be doing the most that can be done to reduce harmful emissions from its plants.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?

- (A) Switching to cleaner-burning fuel will not be more expensive than installing scrubbers.
- (B) Northern Power can choose from among various kinds of scrubbers, some of which are more effective than others.
- (C) Northern Power is not necessarily committed to reducing harmful emissions from its plants.
- (D) Harmful emissions from Northern Power's plants cannot be reduced more by using both methods together than by the installation of scrubbers alone.
- (E) Aside from harmful emissions from the smokestacks of its plants, the activities of Northern Power do not cause significant air pollution.

Argument Construction

Situation A power plant can reduce emissions by installing scrubbers and by switching to cleaner-burning fuel; installing scrubbers reduces emissions more than switching fuels. By installing scrubbers, the company is doing the most that it can do.

Reasoning *What assumption is this argument based on?* The assumption must come from what is stated in the argument; it cannot be about material not discussed in the argument at all. Here, the conclusion that the company is doing the most that it can do is based on choosing between the two options rather than choosing both options together. This argument assumes, then, that installing the scrubbers alone is just as effective as both installing scrubbers *and* switching to cleaner-burning fuel.

- A Since cost is not discussed in the argument, this statement cannot be assumed.
- B Different kinds of scrubbers are not mentioned, so this point may not be assumed.
- C Nothing in the argument reflects the company's lack of commitment.
- D Correct.** This statement properly identifies the argument's necessary assumption.
- E The company's other activities are not a part of the argument.

The correct answer is D.

48. Some anthropologists study modern-day societies of foragers in an effort to learn about our ancient ancestors who were also foragers. A flaw in this strategy is that forager societies are extremely varied. Indeed, any forager society with which anthropologists are familiar has had considerable contact with modern, non-forager societies.

Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the criticism made above of the anthropologists' strategy?

- (A) All forager societies throughout history have had a number of important features in common that are absent from other types of societies.
- (B) Most ancient forager societies either dissolved or made a transition to another way of life.
- (C) All anthropologists study one kind or another of modern-day society.
- (D) Many anthropologists who study modern-day forager societies do not draw inferences about ancient societies on the basis of their studies.
- (E) Even those modern-day forager societies that have not had significant contact with modern societies are importantly different from ancient forager societies.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Studying contemporary foraging societies in order to understand ancient foragers is flawed because forager societies are so widely varied and also because the contemporary foragers have had so much contact with modern societies.

Reasoning *Which point weakens this argument?* The argument rejects the comparison of modern-day foraging societies to ancient ones because of the variety of existing forager societies and because the modern-day foragers have been in contact with other modern cultures. What situation would support making this comparison? What if modern-day foragers remain similar to ancient foragers because of non-changing features of foraging societies throughout history? If these are features that are not shared with other cultures, then the argument that anthropologists cannot learn about ancient foragers by studying their modern counterparts is weakened.

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the factor that weakens the argument: a comparison could well be a valuable source of understanding if all foraging societies are shown to share common features not found in other societies.
- B This point is irrelevant to the comparison and thus does not weaken the argument.
- C This point does not address the issue of comparing a modern society to an ancient one.
- D That some anthropologists do not compare ancient and modern societies does not weaken the argument that such comparisons should not be made.
- E This point strengthens, rather than weakens, the argument.

The correct answer is A.

49. Contrary to earlier predictions, demand for sugarcane has not increased in recent years. Yet, even though prices and production amounts have also been stable during the last three years, sugarcane growers last year increased their profits by more than 10 percent over the previous year's level.

Any of the following statements, if true about last year, helps to explain the rise in profits EXCEPT:

- (A) Many countries that are large consumers of sugarcane increased their production of sugarcane-based ethanol, yet their overall consumption of sugarcane decreased.
- (B) Sugarcane growers have saved money on wages by switching from paying laborers an hourly wage to paying them by the amount harvested.
- (C) The price of oil, the major energy source used by sugarcane growers in harvesting their crops, dropped by more than 20 percent.
- (D) Many small sugarcane growers joined together to form an association of sugarcane producers and began to buy supplies at low group rates.
- (E) Rainfall in sugarcane-growing regions was higher than it had been during the previous year, allowing the growers to save money on expensive artificial irrigation.

Argument Construction

Situation Even though demand for sugarcane has not increased, and although prices and production amounts have been stable, sugarcane growers experienced a 10 percent rise in profits last year.

Reasoning Which piece of information does NOT help explain the rise in profits? All the answer choices will show a reason that profits rose except one. Consider each one to determine which situation would NOT be likely to contribute to increased profits. Any changes that lowered costs for the sugarcane growers WOULD be able to contribute to a rise in their profits. On the other hand, if it is true that many historically large consumers of sugarcane reduced their overall consumption last year, then the lower demand for sugarcane would be unlikely to drive increases in profits. Such a decrease in total consumption would be more likely to drive prices and profits down than up.

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a factor that does not explain a rise in profits.
- B Saving money on wages would contribute to a rise in profits.
- C Saving money on oil would contribute to a rise in profits.
- D Saving money on supplies bought at a lower rate would contribute to a rise in profits.
- E Saving money on irrigation would contribute to a rise in profits.

The correct answer is A.

50. If the county continues to collect residential trash at current levels, landfills will soon be overflowing and parkland will need to be used in order to create more space. Charging each household a fee for each pound of trash it puts out for collection will induce residents to reduce the amount of trash they create; this charge will therefore protect the remaining county parkland.

Which of the following is an assumption made in drawing the conclusion above?

- (A) Residents will reduce the amount of trash they put out for collection by reducing the number of products they buy.
- (B) The collection fee will not significantly affect the purchasing power of most residents, even if their households do not reduce the amount of trash they put out.
- (C) The collection fee will not induce residents to dump their trash in the parklands illegally.
- (D) The beauty of county parkland is an important issue for most of the county's residents.
- (E) Landfills outside the county's borders could be used as dumping sites for the county's trash.

Argument Construction

Situation Landfills will overflow and parkland will have to be used instead if current trash collection levels continue. Charging fees per pound of trash collected will inhibit trash growth and protect parkland.

Reasoning *What assumption underlies the conclusion?* The assumption that underlies an argument is always about the specific subjects discussed in the argument; it cannot be about extraneous material. Here, the assumption is about the plan, the parkland, and the fee, all mentioned in the argument. To reach the conclusion that the plan will protect the parkland, the argument must assume that county residents will comply with the new fee, reducing both the trash they generate and the need to convert parkland to landfills. It is assumed that residents will not resort to some illegal means of avoiding the new fee, and it is certainly assumed that they will not contribute to the destruction of parklands by dumping trash in them illegally.

- A No mention is made of a change in buying habits in the argument.
- B The relation of the fee to residents' purchasing power is not discussed.
- C **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the fact that the argument rests on the assumption that the fee will not create illegal dumping.
- D The beauty of the parkland and its importance to residents are not discussed.
- E Landfills outside the county are not discussed.

The correct answer is C.

51. Biometric access-control systems—those using fingerprints, voiceprints, and so forth, to regulate admittance to restricted areas—work by degrees of similarity, not by identity. After all, even the same finger will rarely leave exactly identical prints. Such systems can be adjusted to minimize refusals of access to legitimate access-seekers. Such adjustments, however, increase the likelihood of admitting impostors.

Which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by the information above?

- (A) If a biometric access-control system were made to work by identity, it would not produce any correct admittance decisions.
- (B) If a biometric access-control system reliably prevents impostors from being admitted, it will sometimes turn away legitimate access-seekers.
- (C) Biometric access-control systems are appropriate only in situations in which admittance of impostors is less of a problem than is mistaken refusal of access.
- (D) No biometric access-control systems—based, for example, on numerical codes—are less likely than biometric ones to admit impostors.
- (E) Anyone choosing an access-control system should base the choice solely on the ratio of false refusals to false admittances.

Argument Construction

Situation Biometric access-control systems work by degrees of similarity, not by identity. Adjusting the system to minimize refusals of access to legitimate access-seekers increases the likelihood that impostors will gain access.

Reasoning *What conclusion do these statements support?* A conclusion may be drawn only from what is stated or implied. Here, a conclusion may be drawn by stating the inverse of what has previously been said: just as impostors will gain access if the system is adjusted to lessen the chance of refusal to legitimate access-seekers, so legitimate access-seeker will occasionally be denied access if the system is adjusted to keep out impostors.

- A Not enough evidence is given about identity recognition to reach such a conclusion.
- B **Correct.** This statement is the inverse of a given statement and so properly identifies a reasonable conclusion.
- C The statements do not discuss the appropriate situations for the systems.
- D No comparison is made, so no comparative conclusion may be drawn.
- E The statements do not indicate the basis on which to choose the system.

The correct answer is B.

52. Although computers can enhance people's ability to communicate, computer games are a cause of underdeveloped communication skills in children. After-school hours spent playing computer games are hours not spent talking with people. Therefore, children who spend all their spare time playing these games have less experience in interpersonal communication than other children have.

The argument depends on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Passive activities such as watching television and listening to music do not hinder the development of communication skills in children.
- (B) Most children have other opportunities, in addition to after-school hours, in which they can choose whether to play computer games or to interact with other people.
- (C) Children who do not spend all their after-school hours playing computer games spend at least some of that time talking with other people.
- (D) Formal instruction contributes little or nothing to children's acquisition of communication skills.
- (E) The mental skills developed through playing computer games do not contribute significantly to children's intellectual development.

Argument Construction

Situation Spending after-school hours playing computer games does not enhance communication skills because children are not talking with other people during this time. Children who spend all their spare time playing computer games do not have as much interpersonal communication as other children do.

Reasoning *What assumption does this argument depend on?* The unstated assumption in an argument must be about the subjects discussed in the argument; it cannot be about a subject that is not mentioned. Here, playing computer games is said to replace talking with people. Thus the argument assumes that children who do not spend all their spare time playing computer games instead spend at least some of that time talking with people.

- A Other activities, such as watching television, are not discussed in the argument.
- B The argument is limited to after-school hours or spare time.
- C **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the assumption on which the argument is based.
- D Formal instruction is not discussed in the argument.
- E Only the underdevelopment of communication skills is blamed on the games.

The correct answer is C.

53. One variety of partially biodegradable plastic beverage container is manufactured from small bits of plastic bound together by a degradable bonding agent such as cornstarch. Since only the bonding agent degrades, leaving the small bits of plastic, no less plastic refuse per container is produced when such containers are discarded than when comparable nonbiodegradable containers are discarded.

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the argument above?

- (A) Both partially biodegradable and nonbiodegradable plastic beverage containers can be crushed completely flat by refuse compactors.
- (B) The partially biodegradable plastic beverage containers are made with more plastic than comparable non-biodegradable ones in order to compensate for the weakening effect of the bonding agents.
- (C) Many consumers are ecology-minded and prefer to buy a product sold in partially biodegradable plastic beverage containers rather than in nonbiodegradable containers, even if the price is higher.
- (D) The manufacturing process for partially biodegradable plastic beverage containers results in less plastic waste than the manufacturing process for nonbiodegradable plastic beverage containers.
- (E) Technological problems with recycling currently prevent the reuse as food or beverage containers of the plastic from either type of plastic beverage container.

Argument Evaluation

Situation One kind of partially biodegradable beverage container produces as much plastic refuse per container as a nonbiodegradable container does because only the bonding agent, not the plastic, degrades once the container is discarded.

Reasoning *Which point strengthens the argument?* The information that strengthens the argument will be about the subjects of the argument, not about tangential issues. In this case, discovering that the partially biodegradable containers actually use more plastic than comparable non-biodegradable ones in order to compensate for the weakness of the biodegradable bonding agent would strengthen the argument.

- A The container's ability to be crushed flat is irrelevant to the argument.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a point that strengthens the argument by saying that the container actually produces more plastic refuse.
- C Consumers' preferences are not relevant to the argument about residual plastic.
- D The argument is not concerned with waste from manufacturing processes, but only with the product itself.
- E The reuse of the containers is not a part of the argument.

The correct answer is B.

54. Most employees in the computer industry move from company to company, changing jobs several times in their careers. However, Summit Computers is known throughout the industry for retaining its employees. Summit credits its success in retaining employees to its informal, nonhierarchical work environment.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports Summit's explanation of its success in retaining employees?

- (A) Some people employed in the computer industry change jobs if they become bored with their current projects.
- (B) A hierarchical work environment hinders the cooperative exchange of ideas that computer industry employees consider necessary for their work.
- (C) Many of Summit's senior employees had previously worked at only one other computer company.
- (D) In a non-hierarchical work environment, people avoid behavior that might threaten group harmony and thus avoid discussing with their colleagues any dissatisfaction they might have with their jobs.
- (E) The cost of living near Summit is relatively low compared to areas in which some other computer companies are located.

Argument Evaluation

Situation A computer company attributes its success in retaining employees to its informal, non-hierarchical work environment.

Reasoning *Which point strengthens the company's argument?* The company says that employees stay at the company for one reason: its work environment. The argument can therefore be strengthened only by a point that relates to the specific work environment. If employees feel that a more formal, hierarchical structure would interfere with their ability to do their jobs, the argument is strengthened.

- A This point is irrelevant since it does not concern the structure of the work environment.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a point that strengthens the company's argument, relating the work environment to job satisfaction and therefore to employees' remaining at the company.
- C The previous work experience of senior employees is irrelevant.
- D While this point shows how the work environment might affect employee behavior on the job, it does not show how it would affect whether employees remain at the company.
- E This point presents an alternate explanation—employees stay due to low cost of living—and so tends to weaken the company's argument.

The correct answer is B.

55. Low-income families are often unable to afford as much child care as they need. One government program would award low-income families a refund on the income taxes they pay of as much as \$1,000 for each child under age four. This program would make it possible for all low-income families with children under age four to obtain more child care than they otherwise would have been able to afford.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously calls into question the claim that the program would make it possible for all low-income families to obtain more child care?

- (A) The average family with children under age four spends more than \$1,000 a year on child care.
- (B) Some low-income families in which one of the parents is usually available to care for children under age four may not want to spend their income tax refund on child care.
- (C) The reduction in government revenues stemming from the income tax refund will necessitate cuts in other government programs, such as grants for higher education.
- (D) Many low-income families with children under age four do not pay any income taxes because their total income is too low to be subject to such taxes.
- (E) Income taxes have increased substantially over the past 20 years, reducing the money that low-income families have available to spend on child care.

Evaluation of a Plan

Situation To help low-income families pay for child care, a government project would provide these families with tax refunds for each young child. The claim is made that the program will allow all low-income families to obtain more child care.

Reasoning *What point undermines the claim?* The claim is that *all* low-income families would receive money to buy more care; the money would be in the form of income tax refunds. The program thus assumes that issuing refunds through the income tax system is an effective mechanism for providing funding to all these families. Does the income tax system indeed provide a satisfactory distribution channel? What if some low-income families have such low incomes that they do not pay income taxes? If they don't pay such taxes, then they cannot receive tax refunds, and the planned process for delivering funding will be unsuccessful.

- A The amount that families spend is irrelevant to the claim that they would have more money to buy care.
- B Although the money is to be in the form of a refund that could be spent however the family wished, it is the availability of additional money that is the point of the claim.
- C The effect of the refund program on other programs is irrelevant to the claim.
- D **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a situation that undermines the program's claim.
- E If an increased tax burden has left less money for child care, the need for the program is great; this does not undermine the claim.

The correct answer is D.

56. Social scientists are underrepresented on the advisory councils of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Since these councils advise NIH directors and recommend policy, the underrepresentation of social scientists results in a relative lack of NIH financial support for research in the social sciences.

If the statements above are correct, they most strongly support which of the following?

- (A) A significant increase in the size of NIH advisory councils would be required in order to increase the representation of social scientists on these councils.
- (B) A significant increase in the representation of social scientists on NIH advisory councils would result in an increase in NIH funding for social science research.
- (C) A significant increase in funding for social science research would result in improved policy recommendations to NIH directors.
- (D) A significant increase in funding for the training of social scientists would result in an increase in the number of social scientists on NIH advisory councils.
- (E) A significant increase in the representation of social scientists on NIH advisory councils would have to precede any increase in the number of NIH directors who are social scientists.

Argument Construction

Situation There are few social scientists on NIH advisory councils, so there is little NIH financial support for social-science research.

Reasoning *What conclusion can be drawn from these statements?* If the relative lack of social scientists on NIH advisory panels leads to relative lack of funding for social science research, then increasing the representation should increase the funding.

- A It does not follow from the given information that the advisory councils would have to be significantly enlarged to increase the representation.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a conclusion that can reasonably be drawn from the given information: since lack of representation leads to lack of money, more representation should lead to more money.
- C Since the given statements do not discuss the quality of policy recommendations, no conclusion on this point can be drawn.
- D The discussion concerns funds for research, not for training, so this conclusion cannot be drawn.
- E Since the statements do not discuss how people become NIH directors, this conclusion is not justified.

The correct answer is B.

57. Among the more effective kinds of publicity that publishers can get for a new book is to have excerpts of it published in a high-circulation magazine soon before the book is published. The benefits of such excerption include not only a sure increase in sales but also a fee paid by the magazine to the book's publisher.

Which of the following conclusions is best supported by the information above?

- (A) The number of people for whom seeing an excerpt of a book in a magazine provides an adequate substitute for reading the whole book is smaller than the number for whom the excerpt stimulates a desire to read the book.
- (B) Because the financial advantage of excerpting a new book in a magazine usually accrues to the book's publisher, magazine editors are unwilling to publish excerpts from new books.
- (C) In calculating the total number of copies that a book has sold, publishers include sales of copies of magazines that featured an excerpt of the book.
- (D) The effectiveness of having excerpts of a book published in a magazine, measured in terms of increased sales of a book, is proportional to the circulation of the magazine in which the excerpts are published.
- (E) Books that are suitable for excerpting in high-circulation magazines sell more copies than books that are not suitable for excerpting.

Argument Construction

Situation Having an excerpt from a new book published in a high-circulation magazine leads to increased book sales; the magazine also pays a fee to the book's publisher.

Reasoning *What conclusion does this information support?* A conclusion must be based only on the information provided. Since the given information discusses the effect of excerpting on the sale of books, the conclusion should be about book sales. One reasonable conclusion is that reading an excerpt prompts an increased number of people to buy a book instead of merely reading the excerpt.

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the conclusion best supported by the given information; if excerpting leads to more book sales, then more people must decide to buy the book than decide to read only the excerpt.
- B This conclusion contradicts a statement in the argument; magazine editors do buy excerpts, so this conclusion is not justified.
- C Information about how publishers calculate sales is not part of the information provided, so this conclusion is not justified.
- D The argument is limited to high-circulation magazines, so a conclusion related to circulation in general is unwarranted.
- E The argument is only concerned with books that are suitable for excerpting, so there is no basis for this conclusion.

The correct answer is A.

58. Insurance Company X is considering issuing a new policy to cover services required by elderly people who suffer from diseases that afflict the elderly. Premiums for the policy must be low enough to attract customers. Therefore, Company X is concerned that the income from the policies would not be sufficient to pay for the claims that would be made.

Which of the following strategies would be most likely to minimize Company X's losses on the policies?

- (A) Attracting middle-aged customers unlikely to submit claims for benefits for many years
- (B) Insuring only those individuals who did not suffer any serious diseases as children
- (C) Including a greater number of services in the policy than are included in other policies of lower cost
- (D) Insuring only those individuals who were rejected by other companies for similar policies
- (E) Insuring only those individuals who are wealthy enough to pay for the medical services

Evaluation of a Plan

Situation An insurance company considers an affordable policy for the elderly but the company's income from the policies must exceed expenditures on claims.

Reasoning *What strategy will minimize the company's losses?* The insurance company's proposed plan would include a high-risk group, the elderly, who are likely to submit claims immediately. By expanding the customer base to include those who are less likely to submit claims for many years, the company will increase its income and thus minimize its losses.

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a strategy that minimizes policy losses.
- B No connection is made between childhood diseases and geriatric diseases, so this point is irrelevant.
- C Offering more services would tend to increase costs, and thus losses.
- D Individuals rejected by other companies are more likely to make claims that would increase losses.
- E Wealthy people would only buy insurance if they planned to make claims; this point is irrelevant.

The correct answer is A.

59. To prevent some conflicts of interest, Congress could prohibit high-level government officials from accepting positions as lobbyists for three years after such officials leave government service. One such official concluded, however, that such a prohibition would be unfortunate because it would prevent high-level government officials from earning a livelihood for three years.

The official's conclusion logically depends on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Laws should not restrict the behavior of former government officials.
- (B) Lobbyists are typically people who have previously been high-level government officials.
- (C) Low-level government officials do not often become lobbyists when they leave government service.
- (D) High-level government officials who leave government service are capable of earning a livelihood only as lobbyists.
- (E) High-level government officials who leave government service are currently permitted to act as lobbyists for only three years.

Argument Construction

Situation Congress might make former officials wait three years before working as lobbyists. An official argues that this rule would keep these people from working.

Reasoning *What assumption must be true for this argument to hold together?* The argument is logical only if it is assumed that the sole possible job opportunity for the ex-officials is lobbying.

- A This broad assumption is not needed.
- B This statement may be true, but it is not needed as an assumption.
- C Low-level officials are irrelevant to the argument.
- D **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the argument's necessary assumption.
- E The current situation is not relevant to the argument.

The correct answer is D.

Questions 60–61 are based on the following:

The fewer restrictions there are on the advertising of legal services, the more lawyers there are who advertise their services, and the lawyers who advertise a specific service usually charge less for that service than the lawyers who do not advertise. Therefore, if the state removes any of its current restrictions, such as the one against advertisements that do not specify fee arrangements, overall consumer legal costs will be lower than if the state retains its current restrictions.

60. If the statements above are true, which of the following must be true?

- (A) Some lawyers who now advertise will charge more for specific services if they do not have to specify fee arrangements in the advertisements.
- (B) More consumers will use legal services if there are fewer restrictions on the advertising of legal services.
- (C) If the restriction against advertisements that do not specify fee arrangements is removed, more lawyers will advertise their services.
- (D) If more lawyers advertise lower prices for specific services, some lawyers who do not advertise will also charge less than they currently charge for those services.
- (E) If the only restrictions on the advertising of legal services were those that apply to every type of advertising, most lawyers would advertise their services.

Argument Construction

Situation Consumer legal costs will be reduced if the state removes even one restriction on lawyers' advertisements because the fewer the restrictions, the greater the number of lawyers who advertise, and lawyers who advertise charge less than lawyers who do not advertise.

Reasoning *What conclusion can logically be drawn?* The argument sets up an inverse proportion: the fewer the number of restrictions on ads, the greater the number of lawyers who advertise. This is true of all restrictions and all lawyers. Therefore, removing any one restriction necessarily increases the number of lawyers who advertise.

- A The lawyers may charge more, but it is equally possible that no lawyer will charge more.
- B No evidence in the passage supports an increased use of legal services.
- C **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the conclusion that logically follows, because reducing any restriction will increase the number of lawyers who advertise.
- D Lawyers who continue not to advertise are not compelled to lower their fees.
- E The argument concerns numbers of advertisers rather than types; it remains possible that few lawyers would advertise.

The correct answer is C.

61. Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the argument concerning overall consumer legal costs?
- (A) The state has recently removed some other restrictions that had limited the advertising of legal services.
 - (B) The state is unlikely to remove all the restrictions that apply solely to the advertising of legal services.
 - (C) Lawyers who do not advertise generally provide legal services of the same quality as those provided by lawyers who do advertise.
 - (D) Most lawyers who now specify fee arrangements in their advertisements would continue to do so even if the specification were not required.
 - (E) Most lawyers who advertise specific services do not lower their fees for those services when they begin to advertise.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Consumer legal costs will be reduced if the state removes even one restriction on lawyers' advertisements because the fewer the restrictions, the greater the number of lawyers who advertise, and lawyers who advertise charge less than lawyers who do not advertise. (The same as the previous item.)

Reasoning *What point weakens the conclusion about lower consumer costs?* The conclusion relies upon the supposition that lawyers who currently advertise charge the consumer less than other lawyers for the same legal services. What if this does not continue to hold true? If more lawyers begin to advertise, they may not charge any less for their services than they did previously, and they are, given the supposition, likely to be more expensive than those who currently advertise. In this case, increasing the number of lawyers who advertise would not lower overall consumer legal costs.

- A The removal of other restrictions does not affect consumer legal costs.
- B The argument is about lowering consumer costs through increasing the number of lawyers who advertise, not about the likelihood of the state's removing restrictions on such advertising.
- C The quality of the legal services is irrelevant to the cost of these services.
- D The content of the ad is irrelevant.
- E **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a point that weakens the conclusion that less-restricted advertising will result in lower costs. While it may be true that more lawyers will advertise if there are fewer restrictions, the cost paid by consumers will not decrease if most of the newly advertising lawyers do not charge lower fees.

The correct answer is E.

62. During the Second World War, about 375,000 civilians died in the United States and about 408,000 members of the United States armed forces died overseas. On the basis of those figures, it can be concluded that it was not much more dangerous to be overseas in the armed forces during the Second World War than it was to stay at home as a civilian.

Which of the following would reveal most clearly the absurdity of the conclusion drawn above?

- (A) Counting deaths among members of the armed forces who served in the United States in addition to deaths among members of the armed forces serving overseas
- (B) Expressing the difference between the numbers of deaths among civilians and members of the armed forces as a percentage of the total number of deaths
- (C) Separating deaths caused by accidents during service in the armed forces from deaths caused by combat injuries
- (D) Comparing death rates per thousand members of each group rather than comparing total numbers of deaths
- (E) Comparing deaths caused by accidents in the United States to deaths caused by combat in the armed forces

Argument Evaluation

Situation The relatively small difference in the number of deaths at home and overseas during the war years shows that it was only slightly more dangerous to be a member of the armed forces overseas than a civilian at home.

Reasoning *What point casts the most serious doubt on the conclusion?* This comparison of two different populations treats them as though they are essentially the same, so consider what dissimilarity between the populations might account for the similarity in the number of deaths. One population, the members of the armed forces stationed abroad, is much smaller than the other population, the civilians in the United States. A similar number of total deaths in a far smaller population actually reveals just how dangerous it was to be in the armed forces overseas. Moreover, the military draws its members from a young and fit population while the general American population includes people of all ages and health conditions. Using the death rate per thousand for each population allows for a more accurate comparison; this comparison will show the significantly higher rate for the smaller population.

- A Including the members of the military who died in the United States together with those who died overseas increases only slightly the smaller population being compared. The two populations are still enormously different in size.
- B Expressing the difference as a percentage of the total number of deaths is beside the point; what matters is the difference in the size of the populations.
- C Separating the kinds of deaths within the smaller population does not affect the comparison between two different populations.
- D **Correct.** This statement correctly identifies the point that gravely weakens the conclusion.
- E Comparing kinds of deaths in the two populations does not lead to a conclusion comparing the numbers of deaths in those populations.

The correct answer is D.

63. Even though most universities retain the royalties from faculty members' inventions, the faculty members retain the royalties from books and articles they write. Therefore, faculty members should retain the royalties from the educational computer software they develop.

The conclusion above would be more reasonably drawn if which of the following were inserted into the argument as an additional premise?

- (A) Royalties from inventions are higher than royalties from educational software programs.
- (B) Faculty members are more likely to produce educational software programs than inventions.
- (C) Inventions bring more prestige to universities than do books and articles.
- (D) In the experience of most universities, educational software programs are more marketable than are books and articles.
- (E) In terms of the criteria used to award royalties, educational software programs are more nearly comparable to books and articles than to inventions.

Argument Construction

Situation Faculty members get the royalties from their books, but universities get the royalties from faculty inventions. Faculty members should get the royalties from their educational computer software.

Reasoning *What premise should be added to the argument?* This argument needs to state as a premise its underlying assumption regarding the nature of computer programs. If they are like inventions, then universities should retain the royalties. If they are like books and articles, then faculty members should retain the royalties. The conclusion states that faculty members should receive royalties for educational software without stating that software is comparable to books. The missing premise must show the relationship between educational software and either inventions or books and articles.

- A The amount of the royalties is not at issue.
- B The number of computer programs produced by faculty members is not relevant.
- C The prestige of inventions is irrelevant.
- D The marketability of educational software is not being compared.
- E **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a premise that establishes the relationship required to complete the argument.

The correct answer is E.

64. Red blood cells in which the malarial-fever parasite resides are eliminated from a person's body after 120 days. Because the parasite cannot travel to a new generation of red blood cells, any fever that develops in a person more than 120 days after that person has moved to a malaria-free region is not due to the malarial parasite.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the conclusion above?

- (A) The fever caused by the malarial parasite may resemble the fever caused by flu viruses.
- (B) The anopheles mosquito, which is the principal insect carrier of the malarial parasite, has been eradicated in many parts of the world.
- (C) Many malarial symptoms other than the fever, which can be suppressed with antimalarial medication, can reappear within 120 days after the medication is discontinued.
- (D) In some cases, the parasite that causes malarial fever travels to cells of the spleen, which are less frequently eliminated from a person's body than are red blood cells.
- (E) In any region infested with malaria-carrying mosquitoes, there are individuals who appear to be immune to malaria.

Argument Evaluation

Situation The malarial-fever parasite lives in red blood cells, but these cells are eliminated after 120 days. If the infected person moves to a malaria-free region, any new fever that occurs after 120 days cannot be due to the malarial-fever parasite.

Reasoning *What weakens the conclusion?* The passage says that the malarial parasites that reside in red blood cells are eliminated after 120 days. What if malarial parasites can also reside in other places in a person's body? If the parasites can reside in the spleen, from which they are not eliminated as frequently, as well as in red blood cells, they may not be eliminated within 120 days. Therefore, they could cause malarial fever after the 120-day period. In that case, the conclusion ruling out a new generation of malarial parasites as the cause of new fever is unfounded.

- A The issue is not about a similarity of symptoms but about where the parasites reside.
- B The existence of malaria-free regions is not in question.
- C Other malarial symptoms are not discussed; they are irrelevant.
- D **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a point that weakens the conclusion.
- E Immunity to malaria is irrelevant to a discussion of the reappearance of the disease.

The correct answer is D.

65. Most consumers do not get much use out of the sports equipment they purchase. For example, 17 percent of the adults in the United States own jogging shoes, but only 45 percent of the owners jog more than once a year, and only 17 percent jog more than once a week.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most doubt on the claim that most consumers get little use out of the sports equipment they purchase?

- (A) Joggers are most susceptible to sports injuries during the first six months in which they jog.
- (B) In surveys designed to elicit such information, joggers often exaggerate the frequency with which they jog.
- (C) Many consumers purchase jogging shoes for use in activities other than jogging.
- (D) Consumers who take up jogging often purchase athletic shoes that can be used in other sports.
- (E) Joggers who jog more than once a week are often active participants in other sports as well.

Argument Evaluation

Situation To demonstrate that sports equipment gets little use after purchase, the example is given that fewer than half the jogging shoes sold are used for jogging more than once a year.

Reasoning *What point weakens the conclusion?* The conclusion concerns the broad category of “use” while the evidence is related to a specific activity. Jogging shoes are used for jogging, but they may be used for other activities as well. A consumer among the 45 percent of owners jogging only once a year may indeed wear jogging shoes every day, as might the consumer among the 55 percent wearing jogging shoes to jog even less frequently.

- A. The existence of joggers who are not jogging due to injury only contributes to the original conclusion; it does not cast doubt on it.
- B. If the frequency of jogging is even less than that cited, the conclusion is strengthened rather than weakened.
- C. **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a factor that weakens the conclusion that sports equipment purchases get little use.
- D. These consumers could be among the 45 percent who are conceded by the argument to jog more frequently than once a year.
- E. The argument concedes that a minority of joggers, the 17 percent who jog more than once a week, do use their jogging shoes regularly.

The correct answer is C.

66. Neither a rising standard of living nor balanced trade, by itself, establishes a country's ability to compete in the international marketplace. Both are required simultaneously since standards of living can rise because of growing trade deficits and trade can be balanced by means of a decline in a country's standard of living.

If the facts stated in the passage above are true, a proper test of a country's ability to be competitive is its ability to _____.

- (A) balance its trade while its standard of living rises.
- (B) balance its trade while its standard of living falls
- (C) increase trade deficits while its standard of living rises.
- (D) decrease trade deficits while its standard of living falls
- (E) keep its standard of living constant while trade deficits rise

Argument Evaluation

Situation A country's ability to compete in the international marketplace depends on both a rising standard of living and balanced trade.

Reasoning *What must a country do to be considered competitive?* The passage states that there are two conditions that must be met simultaneously. The standard of living must rise, and trade must be balanced. While it is possible for the standard of living to rise when trade is not balanced and for trade to be balanced while the standard of living is falling, neither of these situations allows the country to be considered competitive internationally. The country must both balance trade and have a rising standard of living.

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the two requirements the country must meet at the same time.
- B One of the two conditions is not met; the standard of living must be rising, not falling.
- C One of the two conditions is not met; trade must be balanced.
- D Neither of the conditions is met; trade must be balanced, and the standard of living must be rising.
- E Neither of the conditions is met; the standard of living must be rising, not constant, and trade must be balanced.

The correct answer is A.

67. A greater number of newspapers are sold in Town S than in Town T. Therefore, the citizens of Town S are better informed about major world events than are the citizens of Town T.

Each of the following, if true, weakens the conclusion above EXCEPT:

- (A) Town S has a larger population than Town T.
- (B) Most citizens of Town T work in Town S and buy their newspapers there.
- (C) The average citizen of Town S spends less time reading newspapers than does the average citizen of Town T.
- (D) A weekly newspaper restricted to the coverage of local events is published in Town S.
- (E) The average newsstand price of newspapers sold in Town S is lower than the average price of newspapers sold in Town T.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Because more newspapers are sold in Town S than Town T, the citizens of Town S are assumed to be better informed about major world events than the citizens of Town T.

Reasoning *Which statement does NOT weaken the conclusion?* The conclusion is clearly faulty; the degree to which citizens are informed, a qualitative measure, cannot be based merely on the number of newspapers sold locally. All the statements will necessarily expose the weakness of this faulty conclusion, with the exception of one that does NOT. While the lower price of newspapers in Town S may explain why more newspapers are sold there, this fact does not weaken the conclusion that the citizens of Town S are better informed simply because more newspapers are sold there.

- A If the population of Town S is larger, the percentage of newspaper buyers in Town S may be no greater than in Town T, and the conclusion is weakened.
- B If most citizens of Town T buy their newspapers in Town S, Town S may misleadingly show evidence of an apparently higher per-resident rate of newspaper sales. Since the higher sales in Town S can be attributed to purchases by nonresidents, the conclusion about the citizens of Town S is weakened.
- C The amount of time spent reading the newspaper is relevant to being well informed. If Town S's citizens spend less time reading the newspaper than Town T's citizens, then they are likely to be less well informed, and the conclusion is weakened.
- D If the citizens of Town S are buying and reading newspapers about local events, rather than world events, they may be less informed about world events than citizens in Town T, and the conclusion is weakened.
- E **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a statement that does NOT weaken the conclusion.

The correct answer is E.

68. When hypnotized subjects are told that they are deaf and are then asked whether they can hear the hypnotist, they reply, "No." Some theorists try to explain this result by arguing that the selves of hypnotized subjects are dissociated into separate parts, and that the part that is deaf is dissociated from the part that replies.

Which of the following challenges indicates the most serious weakness in the attempted explanation described above?

- (A) Why does the part that replies not answer, "Yes"?
- (B) Why are the observed facts in need of any special explanation?
- (C) Why do the subjects appear to accept the hypnotist's suggestion that they are deaf?
- (D) Why do hypnotized subjects all respond the same way in the situation described?
- (E) Why are the separate parts of the self the same for all subjects?

Argument Evaluation

Situation People under hypnosis are told they are deaf. When asked by the hypnotist whether they can hear, they hear the question and respond, "No." A theory explains this puzzling result by stating that the hypnotized subjects dissociate the part of themselves that is deaf from the part that replies to the question.

Reasoning *Which question points to a weakness in the theory?* According to the theory, hypnotized people dissociate themselves into separate parts: the hearing part and the deaf part. Then, they must be using the hearing part of themselves when they respond to the hypnotist's question; obviously, if they were using the deaf part of themselves at that point, they would not hear or thus respond at all. So, if they are using the hearing part of themselves, as the theorists maintain, why would they respond, "No," to the question, "Can you hear me?" The hearing part would more logically answer, "Yes."

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a challenge that demonstrates the weakness in the theory.
- B This question does not address the weakness in the explanation; instead it asks why there needs to be an explanation at all.
- C The fact that the subjects accept the hypnotic suggestion that they are deaf is assumed as part of the argument.
- D The theorists do not attempt to explain why all subjects behave similarly, so this question is irrelevant to pinpointing the weakness of the theorists' explanation.
- E The theorists' explanation does not address why the parts of the self are the same for all subjects, so this question does not get to the center—and the weakness—of their argument.

The correct answer is A.

69. Excavation of the ancient city of Kourion on the island of Cyprus revealed a pattern of debris and collapsed buildings typical of towns devastated by earthquakes. Archaeologists have hypothesized that the destruction was due to a major earthquake known to have occurred near the island in AD 365.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the archaeologists' hypothesis?

- (A) Bronze ceremonial drinking vessels that are often found in graves dating from years preceding and following AD 365 were also found in several graves near Kourion.
- (B) No coins minted after AD 365 were found in Kourion, but coins minted before that year were found in abundance.
- (C) Most modern histories of Cyprus mention that an earthquake occurred near the island in AD 365.
- (D) Several small statues carved in styles current in Cyprus in the century between AD 300 and 400 were found in Kourion.
- (E) Stone inscriptions in a form of the Greek alphabet that was definitely used in Cyprus after AD 365 were found in Kourion.

Argument Evaluation

Situation The excavation of Kourion reveals a pattern of destruction typical in towns destroyed by earthquakes. Archaeologists suggest Kourion was destroyed when an earthquake hit nearby in AD 365.

Reasoning Which statement best supports the archaeologists' hypothesis? An earthquake struck near Cyprus in AD 365; this fact is not disputed. If this earthquake is the one responsible for the devastation of Kourion, then there should be evidence of active occupation before AD 365, but no evidence of activity after that date. The dates on the coins found on the site suggest that life in Kourion was flourishing before AD 365; the total lack of coins after the year of the earthquake supports the idea that the city had been destroyed.

- A. The existence of vessels made both before and after AD 365 suggests that Kourion was not destroyed by the earthquake.
- B. **Correct.** This statement properly identifies evidence that supports the archaeologists' hypothesis.
- C. The occurrence of the earthquake is not in question; this statement simply confirms a fact already assumed in the argument.
- D. The existence of statues carved in styles current after the date of the earthquake (AD 365–AD 400) argues against the town's destruction in AD 365.
- E. The existence of inscriptions using an alphabet common only after the earthquake argues against the theory that the earthquake destroyed Kourion.

The correct answer is B.

Questions 70–71 are based on the following:

To protect certain fledgling industries, the government of Country Z banned imports of the types of products those industries were starting to make. As a direct result, the cost of those products to the buyers, several export-dependent industries in Z, went up, sharply limiting the ability of those industries to compete effectively in their export markets.

70. Which of the following can be most properly inferred from the passage about the products whose importation was banned?
- Those products had been cheaper to import than they were to make within Country Z's fledgling industries.
 - Those products were ones that Country Z was hoping to export in its turn, once the fledgling industries matured.
 - Those products used to be imported from just those countries to which Country Z's exports went.
 - Those products had become more and more expensive to import, which resulted in a foreign trade deficit just before the ban.
 - Those products used to be imported in very small quantities, but they were essential to Country Z's economy.

Argument Construction

Situation Country Z bans the importation of products that would compete with those that some of its new industries are beginning to make. Consequently, the export-dependent local industries that buy these products must pay more for them, and these exporters are now less competitive in their markets.

Reasoning *What inference can be made about the banned imports?* A proper inference requires careful analysis of the information given. Export-dependent industries must now buy the products they need from the fledgling industries. The fact that these domestically produced products are more expensive is a *direct result* of the ban. It is reasonable to infer that the imported products were less expensive than the same products made by Country Z's fledgling industries.

- Correct.** This statement properly identifies the reasonable inference that these products were less expensive as imports.
- No information in the passage indicates future plans, so no inference about the future can be drawn.
- The passage provides no information to support the inference that the import markets and export markets are the same.
- The passage provides no information to support an inference about the rising price of the imported products and consequent trade deficit.
- The necessity of the imported products to Country Z's economy cannot be inferred from the information given.

The correct answer is A.

71. Which of the following conclusions about Country Z's adversely affected export-dependent industries is best supported by the passage?
- Profit margins in those industries were not high enough to absorb the rise in costs mentioned above.
 - Those industries had to contend with the fact that other countries banned imports from Country Z.
 - Those industries succeeded in expanding the domestic market for their products.
 - Steps to offset rising materials costs by decreasing labor costs were taken in those industries.
 - Those industries started to move into export markets that they had previously judged unprofitable.

Argument Construction

Situation Country Z bans the importation of products that would compete with those that some of its new industries are beginning to make. Consequently, the export-dependent local industries that buy these products must pay more for them, and these exporters are now less competitive in their markets. (The same as the previous item.)

Reasoning What conclusion can be drawn about the export-dependent industries? Any conclusion must be supported by the facts in the passage. The export-dependent industries could no longer compete effectively when they had to purchase necessary products at greater expense from local industries. The export-dependent industries' inability to adjust successfully to the rise in costs suggests that staying competitive in their markets required tight cost control to maintain their profit margins. It is reasonable to conclude then that their profit margins were not high enough for them to be able to absorb the increased costs caused by their new need to purchase domestically made products.

- Correct.** This statement properly identifies the conclusion that the export-dependent industries were low-margin businesses that could not successfully accommodate the higher prices of the domestically made products.
- The passage provides no information about other countries' ban of imports from Country Z, so no conclusion may be drawn.
- Not enough information is given in the passage to support this conclusion, nor is it likely that export-dependent industries could successfully expand their domestic markets.
- No information about cutting labor costs is given in the passage, so no conclusion may be drawn.
- The passage has no information to support the conclusion that the industries moved into different markets.

The correct answer is A.

72. Biological functions of many plants and animals vary in cycles that are repeated every 24 hours. It is tempting to suppose that alteration in the intensity of incident light is the stimulus that controls these daily biological rhythms. But there is much evidence to contradict this hypothesis.

Which of the following, if known, is evidence that contradicts the hypothesis stated in the lines above?

- (A) Human body temperature varies throughout the day, with the maximum occurring in the late afternoon and the minimum in the morning.
- (B) While some animals, such as the robin, are more active during the day, others, such as mice, show greater activity at night.
- (C) When people move from one time zone to another, their daily biological rhythms adjust in a matter of days to the periods of sunlight and darkness in the new zone.
- (D) Certain single-cell plants display daily biological rhythms even when the part of the cell containing the nucleus is removed.
- (E) Even when exposed to constant light intensity around the clock, some algae display rates of photosynthesis that are much greater during daylight hours than at night.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Biological rhythms of many plants and animals work in 24-hour cycles. The alteration of the intensity of light is thought to control these cycles.

Reasoning *What evidence contradicts the hypothesis that light is the controlling stimulus?* Look for an example demonstrating that intensity of light cannot be the controlling stimulus of the 24-hour cycle. Algae exposed to a constant intensity of light throughout the 24-hour cycle nevertheless exhibit a far greater activity of biological functions during daylight hours than at night. The example of the algae thus contradicts the hypothesis.

- A No reason is given to explain the variation of human body temperature throughout the day; this statement is irrelevant to the hypothesis.
- B No cause is given for the varied activity cycles of different animals; this statement is irrelevant to the hypothesis.
- C The ability to adapt to daylight and darkness in a different time zone lends support to the hypothesis.
- D The ability of single-cell plants to continue functioning in the 24-hour cycle despite lacking a nucleus is irrelevant to the hypothesis.
- E **Correct.** This statement properly identifies evidence that contradicts the hypothesis.

The correct answer is E.

73. The local board of education found that, because the current physics curriculum has little direct relevance to today's world, physics classes attracted few high school students. So to attract students to physics classes, the board proposed a curriculum that emphasizes principles of physics involved in producing and analyzing visual images.

Which of the following, if true, provides the strongest reason to expect that the proposed curriculum will be successful in attracting students?

- (A) Several of the fundamental principles of physics are involved in producing and analyzing visual images.
- (B) Knowledge of physics is becoming increasingly important in understanding the technology used in today's world.
- (C) Equipment that a large producer of photographic equipment has donated to the high school could be used in the proposed curriculum.
- (D) The number of students interested in physics today is much lower than the number of students interested in physics 50 years ago.
- (E) In today's world the production and analysis of visual images is of major importance in communications, business, and recreation.

Evaluation of a Plan

Situation Low enrollment in physics classes is blamed on the lack of relevance of the current curriculum to the current world. To attract more students, the board proposes a new curriculum emphasizing the principles of physics involved in producing and analyzing visual images.

Reasoning *What is the best reason for the success of this plan?* To attract more students, the class must be relevant to today's world. Evidence that the proposed content of the curriculum is indeed relevant would provide strong support for the plan. If producing and analyzing visual images is of major importance in communications, business, and recreation, the curriculum has clear relevance to today's world and should therefore attract students.

- A This statement does not explain why students would be attracted to the class.
- B This statement explains why students should take physics, but not why they would be attracted to the class.
- C The availability of appropriate equipment is important once students are registered for the class, but it does not explain why they would be attracted to the class in the first place.
- D The downward trend in enrollment does not suggest much success for the new class.
- E **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a factor that contributes to the success of the proposed plan to increase enrollment.

The correct answer is E.

74. Small-business groups are lobbying to defeat proposed federal legislation that would substantially raise the federal minimum wage. This opposition is surprising since the legislation they oppose would, for the first time, exempt all small businesses from paying any minimum wage.

Which of the following, if true, would best explain the opposition of small-business groups to the proposed legislation?

- (A) Under the current federal minimum-wage law, most small businesses are required to pay no less than the minimum wage to their employees.
- (B) In order to attract workers, small companies must match the wages offered by their larger competitors, and these competitors would not be exempt under the proposed laws.
- (C) The exact number of companies that are currently required to pay no less than the minimum wage but that would be exempt under the proposed laws is unknown.
- (D) Some states have set their own minimum wages—in some cases, quite a bit above the level of the minimum wage mandated by current federal law—for certain key industries.
- (E) Service companies make up the majority of small businesses and they generally employ more employees per dollar of revenues than do retail or manufacturing businesses.

Evaluation of a Plan

Situation Small businesses oppose proposed legislation raising the federal minimum wage, even though they would be exempt from paying the minimum wage.

Reasoning *Why would small businesses oppose legislation that apparently favors them?* The argument finds it surprising that the small businesses oppose a plan that exempts them. The perspective of the small businesses must be that there is little value in the exemption. What could be their reasoning? Even though they are exempt, small businesses must compete for workers by offering wages similar to those offered by larger businesses. The larger businesses, not being exempt, would have to increase wages to the federal minimum, forcing the small businesses to do the same in order to attract workers.

- A The current law does not exempt small businesses; this does not explain why small businesses are opposed to a new law under which they would be exempt from paying the federal minimum wage.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies a factor that explains small businesses' opposition to the legislation.
- C The unknown number of exempt companies is irrelevant to why the small businesses oppose the legislation.
- D This statement about state minimum wage levels does not explain why small businesses are opposed to the proposed law.
- E The relative importance of payroll costs for small businesses suggests that they would be in favor of the law; it does not explain their opposition to it.

The correct answer is B.

75. Although aspirin has been proven to eliminate moderate fever associated with some illnesses, many doctors no longer routinely recommend its use for this purpose. A moderate fever stimulates the activity of the body's disease-fighting white blood cells and also inhibits the growth of many strains of disease-causing bacteria.

If the statements above are true, which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by them?

- (A) Aspirin, an effective painkiller, alleviates the pain and discomfort of many illnesses.
- (B) Aspirin can prolong a patient's illness by eliminating moderate fever helpful in fighting some diseases.
- (C) Aspirin inhibits the growth of white blood cells, which are necessary for fighting some illnesses.
- (D) The more white blood cells a patient's body produces, the less severe the patient's illness will be.
- (E) The focus of modern medicine is on inhibiting the growth of disease-causing bacteria within the body.

Argument Construction

Situation Many doctors do not recommend taking aspirin for moderate fever associated with illness because moderate fever activates the immune system and hinders the growth of disease-carrying bacteria.

Reasoning *What is the best conclusion from this information?* This passage maintains that moderate fever can help fight some diseases by activating the immune system and inhibiting the growth of some bacteria that cause disease. Aspirin suppresses moderate fever. By doing so, aspirin can be viewed as hindering a beneficial process and prolonging an illness.

- A The passage says nothing about aspirin's role as a painkiller, so no conclusion can be drawn about aspirin's painkilling properties.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the conclusion that can be drawn from the information.
- C Since moderate fever promotes the *activity* of the white blood cells, it is fair to conclude that suppressing the fever with aspirin affects the *activity* of the white blood cells. Since nothing is said about the effect of aspirin on the *growth* of white blood cells, no conclusion can be made about such growth.
- D The passage does not provide enough information to conclude that the greater the number of white blood cells, the less severe the illness.
- E The passage is about aspirin and moderate fever, not about the focus of modern medicine, so this statement is irrelevant to the material in the passage.

The correct answer is B.

Questions 76–77 are based on the following:

Roland: The alarming fact is that 90 percent of the people in this country now report that they know someone who is unemployed.

Sharon: But a normal, moderate level of unemployment is 5 percent, with one out of 20 workers unemployed. So at any given time if a person knows approximately 50 workers, one or more will very likely be unemployed.

76. Sharon's argument is structured to lead to which of the following as a conclusion?

- (A) The fact that 90 percent of the people know someone who is unemployed is not an indication that unemployment is abnormally high.
- (B) The current level of unemployment is not moderate.
- (C) If at least 5 percent of workers are unemployed, the result of questioning a representative group of people cannot be the percentage Roland cites.
- (D) It is unlikely that the people whose statements Roland cites are giving accurate reports.
- (E) If an unemployment figure is given as a certain percentage, the actual percentage of those without jobs is even higher.

Argument Construction

Situation Roland is alarmed that 90 percent of the population knows someone who is out of work. Sharon replies that a normal level of unemployment is 5 percent, illustrating her point by saying that if a person knows 50 workers, at least one of them is likely to be unemployed.

Reasoning *Sharon's reply leads to what conclusion about unemployment?* Sharon begins her reply with "but," indicating that she is about to counter either Roland's statistic or his alarm; she accepts the statistic and addresses the alarm. If the normal unemployment rate is 5 percent and if the average person knows 50 workers, then knowing one person out of work is within the normal and expected range, not a cause for alarm. Sharon shows that it is possible for 90 percent of the population to know someone unemployed and for unemployment to be a normal rate of 5 percent at the same time.

- A **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the conclusion to which the argument is leading.
- B Sharon's argument is made in the abstract. No information is provided about the current level of unemployment.
- C Sharon does not challenge Roland's statistics, and her argument is designed to make a conclusion not about their accuracy, but only about their interpretation.
- D There is no information about the accuracy of Roland's reports, so no conclusion can be made about how likely or unlikely they are to be accurate.
- E No information in Sharon's argument supports this conclusion.

The correct answer is A.

77. Sharon's argument relies on the assumption that ____.

- (A) normal levels of unemployment are rarely exceeded
- (B) unemployment is not normally concentrated in geographically isolated segments of the population
- (C) the number of people who each know someone who is unemployed is always higher than 90 percent of the population
- (D) Roland is not consciously distorting the statistics he presents
- (E) knowledge that a personal acquaintance is unemployed generates more fear of losing one's job than does knowledge of unemployment statistics

Argument Construction

Situation Roland is alarmed that 90 percent of the population knows someone who is out of work. Sharon replies that a normal level of unemployment is 5 percent, illustrating her point by saying that if a person knows 50 workers, at least one of them is likely to be unemployed. (The same as the previous item.)

Reasoning *What assumption does Sharon make in putting together her argument?* Sharon makes an equalizing statement about people and their acquaintance when she posits that, if an average person knows 50 workers, at least one of them is likely to be unemployed. Sharon's generalization must assume that this is the case equally throughout the country and that unemployment is not concentrated in some geographically isolated areas.

- A Sharon's argument is about a normal level of unemployment; how rarely or frequently that level is exceeded is outside the scope of her argument.
- B **Correct.** This statement properly identifies an assumption that underlies Sharon's argument about the average person and how many unemployed people that average person knows.
- C Sharon's argument is based on a given normal rate of unemployment and a given normal circle of acquaintance, not on this assumption.
- D Sharon's argument is not based on the figure Roland cites and does not assume its accuracy or inaccuracy; her argument merely points out that his figure is not inconsistent with a normal rate of unemployment.
- E The fear of losing a job is not part of Sharon's argument; this statement is irrelevant.

The correct answer is B.

78. In comparison to the standard typewriter keyboard, the EFCO keyboard, which places the most-used keys nearest the typist's strongest fingers, allows faster typing and results in less fatigue. Therefore, replacement of standard keyboards with the EFCO keyboard will result in an immediate reduction of typing costs.

Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the conclusion drawn above?

- (A) People who use both standard and EFCO keyboards report greater difficulty in the transition from the EFCO keyboard to the standard keyboard than in the transition from the standard keyboard to the EFCO keyboard.
- (B) EFCO keyboards are no more expensive to manufacture than are standard keyboards and require less frequent repair than do standard keyboards.
- (C) The number of businesses and government agencies that use EFCO keyboards is increasing each year.
- (D) The more training and experience an employee has had with the standard keyboard, the more costly it is to train that employee to use the EFCO keyboard.
- (E) Novice typists can learn to use the EFCO keyboard in about the same amount of time that it takes them to learn to use the standard keyboard.

Argument Evaluation

Situation Compared to the standard typewriter keyboard, the EFCO keyboard promotes faster typing while producing less fatigue. Replacing standard keyboards with EFCO keyboards promises immediate reduction of typing costs.

Reasoning *What point would weaken the conclusion about reduced typing costs?* Whenever a word such as *immediate* is part of an argument, it is wise to be alert. Given the comparison with the standard keyboard, it is logical that over the longer term the EFCO keyboard will save money. What problems might there be initially that would counteract the possibility of *immediate* savings? Personnel must first be retrained on the new EFCO keyboard, and it is possible that the costs of the training could offset any short-term savings. If the more experience employees have had with the standard keyboard, the more costly the initial training, then adopting the new keyboard could have high short-term costs that preclude *immediate* savings.

- A The greater ease of changing from the standard keyboard to the EFCO keyboard for typists experienced in both would support, not weaken, the conclusion.
- B The fewer repairs required by EFCO keyboards should save money in the long run; immediate costs will not go up since the price of both keyboards is the same. The conclusion is not weakened.
- C The increasing use of EFCO keyboards supports the conclusion, suggesting that other offices have found the switch advantageous.
- D **Correct.** This statement properly identifies information that weakens the conclusion that savings will be immediate.
- E For new typists, training time is the same for both keyboards; this statement does not weaken the conclusion.

The correct answer is D.