

1) Answer: B

This is an assumption question. Jonathan points out an increase in traffic through a major intersection and complains about a likely increase in fumes and congestion. Daria's response, though it isn't stated explicitly, is that 1,000 vehicles per day isn't that much of an increase. Her evidence: She sees enough vehicles go through the intersection to suggest that 1,000 is a typical hour. The underlying assumption is that her experience is, in fact, typical--that 1,000 cars usually go through the intersection per hour. That may suggest that the increase in congestion and fumes is slight, on a percent increase basis.

- (A) Daria isn't considering the pattern of the traffic light, just the vehicle volume.
- (B) This is correct. This is her assumption – that 50 vehicles per three minutes is typical. If it is, she's right to question Jonathan's concern. If it is unusually high, her argument is weak.
- (C) This is something like an assumption of Jonathan's argument, not of Daria's.
- (D) Daria is questioning Jonathan's assessment, not agreeing with it, as this choice would suggest.
- (E) This is far outside of the scope, which is specific to the number of cars passing through the intersection over various periods of time.

2) Answer: A

This is an evidence question. The argument is that there are societal benefits to the use of mind-enhancing drugs, such as giving poor students an advantage on university admissions exams. We're looking for a piece of evidence that, affirmed or denied, would strengthen or weaken the argument:

- (A) This is correct. The argument admits that there are risks in using certain substances, but then focuses on the possible benefits. If the risks outweigh the benefits, the example seems much weaker, and there is a reason to "categorically avoid mind-enhancing drugs."
- (B) The argument focuses on benefits accruing to poor students. If the same benefits can be had by richer students, that doesn't affect the fact that poor students using certain substances can study more effectively with them.
- (C) This is irrelevant, as the benefit referred to in the argument is based on "the responsible use of these substances."
- (D) This is outside of the scope, as it only touches a couple of areas, while it seems logical that most areas would benefit from being able to "concentrate longer and focus better."
- (E) The argument focuses on performance on admissions exams; while it is natural to link those to actual admissions decisions, it is outside the scope of this argument.

3) Answer: B

This is a strengthen question. It is similar, however, to an explanation, as the argument contains an apparent paradox. Developed countries will cut emissions by 50%, developing countries by 23%, but the 23% cuts will be more demanding on a per-capita basis. The evidence given is that developing countries will need more resources to continue growing. Presumably, developed nations will not need their resource consumption to grow at the same rate. Consider each choice:

- (A) This choice describes one target of emissions cuts, but in developed nations. It doesn't explain why developing nations will be hit harder.
- (B) This is correct. If emissions in developing countries start at so low a point, they would need to grow very rapidly to get anywhere close to the level of developed nations. As the resource demands in those countries grow, any cut at all--let alone 23%--in emissions would be a great burden.
- (C) This choice distinguishes some developing nations from other developing nations. The contrast we're concerned with is developing vs. developed nations.

- (D) This may be true, but it doesn't tell us why emissions cuts would be so much more harmful. If anything, it may mean the cuts would be less harmful, as they would disproportionately touch the ruling class.
- (E) This is something that is partly assumed by the argument, but without additional information (in the form of details regarding emissions levels, as in (B)) it doesn't strengthen the argument.

4) Answer: D

This is a weaken question. The argument is that owners of certain properties who wish to avoid development on those properties should take advantage of conservation easements, which prevent development, and give the owners substantial tax benefits. The argument assumes that, as a way of preventing development, the tax benefits of an easement are preferable (probably in dollar terms) than simply renting the property and continuing to own it. Consider each choice:

- (A) This is irrelevant; all trusts that purchase lands under easements would achieve the same end regarding development, whether they re-sell the property or not.
- (B) The population density of an area has nothing to do with the argument; presumably, most areas have low density before they are developed.
- (C) The argument isn't about what owners can do, it's about what they should do--the fact that they can split up their land does not mean that's the route they should take.
- (D) This is correct. If more financial benefits accrue to owners who rent property than those who donate an easement, those owners prevent development (as desired) and get more money.
- (E) The argument is concerned with the benefits of specific land owners; the effect on other lands based on easement decisions is out of the scope of this question.

5) Answer: D

This is an explanation question. As usual in this type of question, there is an apparent paradox. In the second sentence, it appears that deforestation contributes to huge amount of greenhouse gas emissions--half of Santilia's total. The next sentence suggests that Santilia's total greenhouse gas emissions is a small number--less than 1% of the global total. The correct answer will explain how greenhouse gas emissions are a concern in Santilia despite representing such a small amount of the global total:

- (A) This may be true, but it doesn't explain the large percentage of emissions stemming from deforestation.
- (B) This choice doesn't address deforestation, nor does it have a clear connection to Santilia's total greenhouse gas emissions (industrial pollutants may fall into that category, but GMAT questions are usually more straightforward when you are expected to make a connection like that).
- (C) This explains a possible remedy for deforestation, but it doesn't resolve the difference in claims regarding the country's emissions.
- (D) This is correct. Since Santilia is a small country, it can have a serious emissions problem but still represent a small amount of the world's total. That the country was once covered with rainforest also explains how deforestation makes up such a large portion of the total.
- (E) The influence of activists has little to do with the accuracy of their claims, which is the concern of this question.

6) Answer: C

This is a boldface question. The first sentence, including the first bolded statement, refers to an occurrence that will probably function as evidence. The second sentence is a claim made based on the occurrence in the first sentence. The third sentence--the second bold statement--partially contradicts the previous statement, suggesting that the same event will lead to an unexpected conclusion.

Each of the choices has a plausible characterization of the first statement; only one is correct on the second statement. The correct choice is (C), as it correctly describes the second statement as contradictory to the prediction in the previous sentence.

7) Answer: E

This is a weaken question. The argument in question is that meerkats are not acting in an altruistic manner when they stand on guard duty, because guard duty does not put them at greater risk of being killed. The underlying assumption is that the risk of being killed on guard duty is the only way in which this behavior could be considered altruistic. An alternative reason to consider the behavior altruistic would provide a weakener. Consider each choice:

- (A) This is irrelevant, as it has nothing to do with the behavior of meerkats on guard duty.
- (B) In general terms, this addresses the assumption, but it doesn't give us any concrete reason why the meerkat may be altruistic.
- (C) This choice suggests that foraging for food is risky for meerkats, but as the passage claims, guard duty does not pose a greater risk.
- (D) This is irrelevant. We are concerned with the possible altruism of meerkats. This choice only tells us when meerkats affiliate with others.
- (E) This is correct. It describes a risk to meerkats who stand guard, in that by standing guard, they may miss out on opportunities to eat for themselves. That's a danger apart from the risk of being killed by a predator.

8) Answer: C

This is an inference question. There are two key findings in the passage: that automated toll rates are higher than manually collected toll rates, and that manually collected tolls do not increase as much during election years as other years. The inference (or conclusion) in the correct choice will likely have something to do with one of those. Consider each one:

- (A) This contradicts the claim in the passage, and there is no evidence to support it.
- (B) If anything, this is opposite of what we're looking for. The final sentence of the passage suggests that manually collected toll rates may be politically motivated, while automatic tolls are not. This statement claims the opposite.
- (C) This is correct. It is the most likely explanation of the election-year distinction, and the distinction in election years between manually collected tolls and automated tolls.
- (D) This may or may not be true. We know that manual toll rates increase more in non-election years than in election years, but not how those rates compare to automated tolls in the same years.
- (E) This statement may be true, but it goes far beyond the claims made in the passage. Thus it is not a reasonable inference to make.

9) Answer: E

This is an assumption question. The argument concludes that, as a result of taxes on newly built plants, companies will put more money into developing alternative energy sources. The underlying assumption is that the tax is substantial enough so that developing new technologies is a cheaper alternative to sticking with the newly built plants and paying the taxes. If you identify the assumption, you don't need to analyze each choice, as choice (E) neatly wraps up the link between the two sentences in the passage. (E) is the correct choice.

10) Answer: E

This is a weaken question. The proposal sets out to limit the negative effects of sprawl by requiring that infrastructure is in place before developers can build in an area. Consider each choice, looking for a reason why the proposal may not have positive results:

- (A) An increase in cost may not be a good thing, but if the population rapidly increased, it may be well be desirable to spend that much money on transportation. It's unclear whether this evidence would undermine the proposal.
- (B) This choice is far too general to be correct. Whether or not sprawl is rarely avoided does not indicate whether the proposal will have beneficial effects.
- (C) This choice would seem to reduce the demands of the proposal; however, the word "some" suggests that the proposal would still be necessary if such infrastructure were desirable.
- (D) This choice suggests a potential benefit of the proposal. There's no drawback here.
- (E) This is correct. If the proposal were enacted, there would be an unnecessary financial burden on either the city or on developers, making it more difficult to develop areas like this--areas that do not exhibit the characteristics of sprawl.

11) Answer: C

This is an explanation question, and also an "except" question, which tends to make things a bit harder. The passage describes the requirement that wheat flour be supplemented with folic acid so that pregnant women consume more folic acid, thus avoiding birth defects. Four of the choices will describe ways in which the supplementation limits birth defects; we're looking for the one that does not:

- (A) This describes a way in which pregnant women who did not consume enough folic acid will start consuming enough.
- (B) This choice suggests that the supplementation had a publicity effect that caused people to consume more folic acid.
- (C) This is correct. The important thing is that pregnant women consume folic acid, not which wheat flour distributors earn the most business.
- (D) This choice shows that supplementing wheat flour helped reach even those women who would not otherwise take recommendations.
- (E) This is yet another way in which the supplementation plan helped get more folic acid in the diets of pregnant women.

12) Answer: A

This is a flaw question--similar to a weaken question. The plan is to attract first-time customers with coupons they can use at any retailer. Consider each choice:

- (A) This is correct. If the coupons lead retailers to make choices that make it less likely first-time customers will buy the company's products, the coupons will have been counter-productive and the plan will have failed.
- (B) This choice suggests a way in which the company will make the plan more likely to succeed.
- (C) Like (B), this is another bit of evidence that suggests the company's plan is likely to succeed.
- (D) This choice addresses a possible problem, but claims that employees will be trained to handle coupons like the ones on which the company's plan hinge.
- (E) This supports the plan's likelihood of success. If first-time buyers are influenced by price, a coupon would make them more likely to choose the company's products.

13) Answer: A

This is an explanation question. The information in the passage suggests that genetic evidence links ancient chickens from the Americas to Polynesian chickens, and also to chickens in Europe and Asia. We're looking for a choice that explains why the genetic signature for the ancient and Polynesian chickens is the same as that of the European and Asian chickens.

- (A) This is correct. If explorers took chickens that were related to the ancient chickens from the Americas, then bred them in Europe, it would explain the presence of the same genetic signature.
- (B) The use of the chickens is completely off-topic.
- (C) This is a general statement that doesn't explain or contradict the studies in the passage. Usually, such general statements are incorrect.
- (D) This choice suggests that chickens similar to Polynesian chickens may be in Asia for some time, but the words "may be" make the choice much weaker.
- (E) The study suggests that chickens first appeared in the Americas because they were introduced by someone other than the Spanish. If that's the case, it doesn't matter when the Spaniards introduced chickens to the Americas.

14) Answer: E

This is an inference question. The passage suggests that, since oxpecker birds are commensal species with large mammals, they benefit from the creatures that are attracted to the mammals' fur, but the mammals themselves are neither helped nor harmed by the relationship. Consider each choice, looking for a reasonable inference:

- (A) This choice gets the commensal relationship exactly backwards.
- (B) This is clearly wrong. If oxpecker birds feed on ticks, fleas, and flies, clearly the ticks, fleas, and flies are neither benefiting nor neutral in their relationship with the oxpecker birds.
- (C) This choice is too extreme. The passage only describes this relationship; it doesn't tell us that it is exclusive.
- (D) This is also too extreme. It may be true in some instances, but the three sentences of the passage don't provide enough evidence to reasonably deduce this.
- (E) This is correct. It merely restates the definition of commensalism in terms of the role of the mammals in their relationship with oxpecker birds.

15) Answer: B

This is an explanation question. The passage describes the various benefits of jets--their fuel efficiency, comfort, and ability to fly higher and faster than smaller planes--but then notes that turboprop planes are enjoying a resurgence. We're looking for a choice that resolves the apparent paradox.

- (A) This choice addresses one of the benefits of jet travel, but it doesn't suggest why turboprop planes have overtaken jets despite the other clear advantages.
- (B) This is correct. While it acknowledges the benefits of jet travel, it relates their very popularity with an increasing price that makes other alternatives more attractive.
- (C) This is a common form of incorrect choice. Just because the same phenomenon is observed elsewhere does not explain why it is occurring as described in the passage.
- (D) This is off-topic. It doesn't matter who owns the planes. We're looking for a choice that explains why jets are losing popularity despite several benefits.
- (E) This choice suggests one cost of travel by jet, but it doesn't suggest that turboprop planes escape the same fate, nor does it confirm that the increase in cost is enough to offset the benefits of jet operation and travel.

16) Answer: D

This is an inference question. The passage suggests several ways in which dogs are superior to human methods of detecting seizures. We don't know how dogs can detect seizures, but we know some things about their behavior when they do detect seizures, and we know they can do so even when in another room. We also find out that epileptics do not display any number of "noticeable" changes before undergoing a seizure. Consider each choice, looking for a reasonable inference:

- (A) The passage says nothing about accuracy of prediction, so this is not a reasonable inference.
- (B) The passage is limited to information about seizures, so we know nothing about heart attack detection.
- (C) This is one possible explanation of dogs' seizure detection abilities, but it is not supported by the passage, since there are other ways in which dogs might detect the onset of a seizure.
- (D) This is correct. It is based directly on the information that dogs do not have to be in the same room as a patient. We don't know how they detect the onset of a seizure, but we know it isn't reliant on visual information.
- (E) This choice reverses causality. The dog stares intently in response to the onset of a seizure; the seizure does not occur because the dog stares intently.

17) Answer: D

This is an evidence question. The argument is that, because of the various benefits that go to oil companies and road maintenance, the "true price" of gas is supported by the government. This means that drivers of inefficient vehicles aren't paying their fair share. We're looking for a choice that has an outcome that would either strengthen or weaken the argument (that is, "evaluate the argument").

- (A) This is irrelevant to the comparison between high- and low-mileage vehicles.
- (B) This is related to the topic at hand, but not very directly. The amount spent on gas depends not only on gas efficiency, but also on number of miles driven. Since we don't know whether high- or low-mileage vehicle drivers drive more miles, we can't evaluate the argument with this bit of information.
- (C) This is off-topic, though it does relate to things in the argument. It doesn't matter how oil companies make their money--the point is that, thanks to government support, the price of gas is lower than it would otherwise be.

- (D) This is correct. The argument is essentially claiming that the benefits of those "hidden costs" are to the advantage of inefficient vehicle drivers. If we knew whether some of those benefits really were accruing to certain types of drivers, we would be better able to evaluate the argument.
- (E) This is irrelevant--the argument is about how certain governmental policies affect the price of gas, not whether the listed mechanisms are the only ways it does so.

18) Answer: E

This is a boldface question. Read carefully for the structure of the argument. The first bolded statement is a claim made by the geologist. The second is the conclusion of the argument, which relies on that claim in the first bolded statement. You'll rarely be able to predict the exact words used in the answer choices, but once you've figured out how the bold statements function, you should be able to identify a choice that matches reasonably well. In this case, choice (E) is correct. Only (B) and (E) refer to the second statement as a conclusion; (B) mistakenly refers to the first statement as something weighing against the conclusion.

19) Answer: C

This is a strengthen question. The argument claims that, because of the evidence in a burial site, both the conquering Egyptians and the conquered Nubians shared in the ruling of Nubia. The argument assumes that all of the evidence from the burial site stems from an era after Egypt conquered Nubia. If some of the evidence predated that time, the fact that some people were buried according to Nubian tradition would not say anything about who ruled the region after Egypt took over. Consider each choice, looking for one that strengthens that assumption:

- (A) This choice doesn't have to do with the burial of Egyptians or Nubians, so it is outside of the scope.
- (B) This choice is also outside of scope, as it has to do with burials in Egypt, where the local culture and the ruling culture were (as far as we know from the passage) the same.
- (C) This is correct. This confirms the assumption that the evidence from the burial site pertains to the period after Egypt took over, solidifying the claim that Nubians had some control over burial practices even after the area was conquered.
- (D) The number of people buried at the site is unimportant; the focus is on the burial practices used.
- (E) Given the reference in the passage to "high-ranking Egyptians," it seems likely that the argument refers mainly to colonial officials. Thus, the claim that few others moved to Nubia is not relevant to the argument.

20) Answer: B

This is a weaken question. The argument makes a rather odd claim. Much of the passage concerns the benefits of municipal bonds, including a suggestion that Northopolis issue such a bond. Then the conclusion is that the city will pay for new school buildings with tax revenues. Money from bond issues is not the same thing, so it's unclear what one has to do with the other. To weaken the argument, that distinction--the assumption that issuing a bond will somehow increase tax revenues--must be made clear. Consider each choice:

- (A) This is irrelevant, as it doesn't address either the bond issue or the effect of "reluctance" on tax revenues.
- (B) This is correct. It relates the existence of the proposed bond issue to tax revenues, which would decrease as a result of the bond issue.
- (C) This is irrelevant, as it doesn't address tax revenues.
- (D) Again, this choice is irrelevant; the cost of the buildings is not what the conclusion of the argument is about.
- (E) This is outside of the scope. If anything, it weakens the argument by suggesting that the bond issue will not have a direct impact on local finances.

21) Answer: B

This is a weaken question. The experts' proposal involves expanding opportunities for women so that affected women will have fewer children, thus limiting the size of the population peak that the same experts have predicted. We're looking for a choice that suggests that the proposal will not limit the size of the peak or cause it to occur earlier. Consider each one:

- (A) This is irrelevant. If the proposal 20 years ago was not followed (and we don't know whether it was or not) the fact that it was made doesn't tell us whether it would be effective or not today.
- (B) This is correct. The proposal is based on the assumption that greater opportunities could be arranged for women in developing countries. If the maximum possible opportunities are already present, and have been built into the prediction, the proposal will not bring about any changes in the population peak.
- (C) The argument is concerned primarily with developing countries, not industrialized countries.
- (D) It doesn't matter whether the goal is desirable; the question is concerned with whether the goal will be attained.
- (E) This is outside of the scope. It may be true, but it doesn't bear on whether the proposal will have the desired effect.

22) Answer: E

This is an explanation question. The apparent paradox is that, while the price of rice effectively declined, rice consumption also declined. Consider each choice in turn, looking for a reason why this might occur:

- (A) This doesn't tell us anything about the effect of the coupons.
- (B) The amount of fluctuation is outside the scope; we're concerned with the effect of lowering the price of rice.
- (C) That the average consumption of rice declined is not important; the study described in the passage included a control group, to which the households given coupons were compared.
- (D) This choice suggests that some families did not purchase rice with their coupons; however, this doesn't explain why they would also purchase less rice.
- (E) This is correct. If these families had money to purchase preferable rice substitutes, they may have increased or kept constant their consumption of rice and rice substitutes, but shifted some of their consumption from rice to substitutes because of the coupons.

23) Answer: D

This is an evidence question, only with an atypical format for the answer choices. Each one is simply a statement; it doesn't begin with "Whether." The argument hinges on the difference between students at rural and suburban schools and those at urban schools. The result mentioned in the question is that the difference between those two groups of students, in terms of driving under the influence, is explained by the distances between housing and sources of liquor. We're looking for a choice that would either strengthen or weaken that claim. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) If we knew that "all" students didn't purchase alcohol from these sources, this might cast some doubt on the claim, but "many" leaves an awful lot to be desired. It doesn't directly affect the argument.
- (B) This is a different comparison--students vs. non-students. We need a choice that focuses on the comparison drawn in the passage.
- (C) Enrollment doesn't matter, since the argument is phrased in terms of likelihood that a certain student would drive under the influence, not the absolute number of students.

- (D) This is correct. The conclusion was drawn based on police records. If this choice is true, students driving under the influence near rural and suburban universities are more likely to be caught doing so (and thus appear in police records) than their counterparts at urban universities.
- (E) The density of bars and liquor stores doesn't matter; it doesn't address the distance traveled, or amount driven under the influence, of the students in these areas.

24) Answer: A

This is an "evaluate the argument" question. In a sense, we're looking for an assumption, just in a different format than in assumption questions. This argument claims that, because U.S. cities are not bicycle-friendly, U.S. cities cannot implement European-style bicycle sharing programs. Each choice has two possible outcomes ("whether" it is the case, or it is not the case), so we're looking for a choice in which one of the outcomes would have an impact on the argument. Consider each in turn:

- (A) This is correct. If an increase in the number of bicyclists could change attitudes toward bicyclists, a bicycle-sharing program may well solve the problem suggested in the argument.
- (B) This is not important; it doesn't matter if people (car-drivers or not) can operate bicycles if cities are too hostile to bicyclists.
- (C) This is outside the scope. The problem described in the passage is not the lack of bicycle lanes, it is the culture of U.S. cities.
- (D) As with (B), this is not relevant, since it doesn't address the issue of hostility to bicyclists.
- (E) This comparison is outside of the scope, as we're concerned only with the viability of bicycle-sharing programs in large U.S. cities.

25) Answer: C

This is a Fill In The Blank question, so look for the answer that fits most clearly within the scope of the argument. Testing for PSA is beneficial because it diagnoses prostate cancer very early on, even before symptoms are present. Based on the structure of the last sentence, there must be some reason why PSA testing is not beneficial for men over 75. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) This is irrelevant; presumably, men who already have prostate cancer would not be tested for early signs of prostate cancer.
- (B) It is not clear from this choice whether additional tests are so taxing that it isn't worth identifying and possibly treating prostate cancer; one suspects the opposite is the case.
- (C) This is correct. Based on the passage, it would appear that if prostate cancer is diagnosed only by PSA testing, it is in a very early stage. It would likely take some time before it becomes symptomatic. If someone is unlikely to develop symptoms, there is no reason to test for, and possibly treat, the cancer.
- (D) This choice is not specific to men over 75; in fact, the false-positive rate is already mentioned in the passage.
- (E) Like (B), it isn't clear that this drawback is enough to make testing not worthwhile. It also isn't directly relevant to the claim that men over 75 "would probably not benefit"--they may well benefit, even if the test is very expensive.

26) Answer: E

This is an explanation/paradox question. From a quick reading, the two reports seem to claim that 80% of electronics were manufactured in China, and 38% of products were made in other places. Clearly that's incorrect--there must be more to the story. The distinction is in the Wall Street Chronicle claim, which is limited to "major" electronics manufacturers. The second claim does not make that distinction. Thus, it would appear that, while 20% of products sold in the U.S. made by "major" electronics manufacturers did not come from Chinese manufacturers, a greater percent of products sold in the U.S. by non-major manufacturers did not come from China.

Think of it like a weighted average question. All manufacturers are either major or non-major. If 20% of the major company sales were non-China made and 38% of total sales were non-China made, then non-major sales must have been greater than 38% non-China made. Choice (E) is the only option consistent with that conclusion. If the products of non-major manufacturers are more than 38% non-China made, they must be much less than 80% made in China. Thus, (E) is correct.

27) Answer: D

This is a weaken question. The President's claim is that switching to an online process caused a decline in sales because customers were unable to work with the online process. The VP's response counters that the decline is industry-wide, and thus not attributable to specifics of their own company. We're looking for a reason why the President's claim may be correct. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) This choice directly strengthens the VP's response by making the industry-wide decline even more specific to Broad Street.
- (B) The advantages of the online process are irrelevant, as the apparent problem with it is customers' inability to work with it.
- (C) Broad Street's reputation is irrelevant, as the dispute is whether a sales decrease was caused by a switch to an online order process or a widespread decline in sales.
- (D) This is correct. It points out something typically associated with the VP's claim, and shows that something different occurred. Further, what actually happened--one-quarter of customers not ordering--is consistent with the President's argument.
- (E) Whether some of Broad Street's competition did the same thing that Broad Street did does not tell us whether an industry-wide decline was responsible for Broad Street's lagging sales.

28) Answer: E

This is a weaken question. Kyle's argument addresses only half of Sajitha's claim. She points out the effect of the new label and new ads. He responds only to the claim about the new ads, showing why the ads probably didn't cause the first part of the increase in sales. An obvious weak point of his response, then, is that the new label may have had the effect Sajitha claimed it did. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) This doesn't limit the effectiveness of Kyle's claim, which points out that the ads wouldn't have caused a sales increase in early 2000.
- (B) This choice suggests an external cause of the sales increase, but it isn't strictly within the scope of Kyle and Sajitha's dispute. A better choice would have to do with something Sajitha's claim implied.
- (C) By focusing on the advertising campaign, this choice doesn't affect the validity of Kyle's response.
- (D) Experimentation may benefit or not benefit Lodgewood. Like (B), it's an external cause to the dispute between Kyle and Sajitha.
- (E) This is correct. We're looking for something having to do with the new label, and this choice gives us a reason why, in line with Sajitha's claim, the data shows a rise starting in early 2000.

29) Answer: B

This is a weaken question. The plan's goal is to increase revenues; the method of doing so is to increase mid-week DVD rentals. The plan appears to rest on two premises: Extended return dates will bring in more customers during the week, and those customers will rent again on Friday when they return their mid-week rentals. To attack the argument, we only need to attack one of those two claims. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) This isn't relevant. If the plan is implemented, more clerks could be hired.
- (B) This is correct. The argument rests on the claim that mid-week renters will rent again on Friday. This choice suggests that that is unlikely.
- (C) This doesn't matter. The argument is concerned with those who do rent during the week.
- (D) This doesn't directly weaken the argument, which relies on the inducement to renters on Monday and Tuesday, as well.
- (E) This is outside the scope of the argument, which is limited to whether the plan under consideration would be effective, not whether it is the most effective possible plan.

30) Answer: C

This is a weaken question. The shift from the first sentence to the second makes the assumption clear. The argument relies on the underlying claim that, because wind power produces the fewest pollutants, it is the best choice. More probably, there are other considerations. The correct choice will likely point out some other consideration that may outweigh the level of pollutants.

- (A) A reference to an earlier (or different) report is almost always wrong; we have no way of comparing the validity of the two reports. Anyway, it doesn't address the assumption.
- (B) The level of government investment is similar to a separate report, as in (A). If anything, it strengthens the claims of wind power supporters, but to be a strengthener, we must assume that the government is making a valid choice.
- (C) This is correct. This is a strong reason why wind power may not be the best choice for new rural areas.
- (D) This is an irrelevant comparison. The evidence in the argument compares wind power to other green energy alternatives. If anything, this point strengthens the argument, but not very effectively.
- (E) The frequency of reports has no effect whatsoever on the argument.

31) Answer: B

This is a strengthen question. The proposal involves releasing a new line of small, high-mileage, and hybrid vehicles, which don't appear to have previously been the company's strong suit. The argument assumes that releasing the new line will have the effect of increasing revenue without losing its current customer base. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) This choice suggests that the company has a lot of improvements to make, but it doesn't tell us whether those improvements, as suggested by the consultants, would have the desired impact.
- (B) This is correct. The survey (a "reliable" one, so we don't have to worry about sampling issues) addresses the potential concern that the company would lose its previous customers, who were not customers of smaller or hybrid vehicles.
- (C) This weakens the argument somewhat, suggesting that perhaps this car company's sales lagged only because of industry-wide declines.
- (D) This is irrelevant. The argument is concerned with revenue, not with costs.
- (E) As with (D), this choice is not relevant to expanding "revenue" base. Profit margins consider both revenue and cost. In order for this choice to be correct, we would need to know that developing this type of vehicle would cause revenues to shrink, not just profits.

32) Answer: E

This is a weaken question. The goal of the plan is to increase revenues; the marketing strategists believe this will happen by closing the flagship store and focusing on smaller satellite stores. The underlying assumption is that the high rent of the flagship store (and, perhaps, other costs associated with maintaining the location) is not worth the resulting revenues. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) This choice suggests that the satellite stores are capable of doing everything the flagship store can do, so it doesn't cast doubt on the plan.
- (B) There's no apparent distinction between the flagship stores and the satellite stores here; there's nothing directly relevant to revenues.
- (C) This choice is also not directly relevant. It suggests there is some connection between opening flagship stores and opening satellite stores, but it's not clear what that has to do with revenue.
- (D) This would seem to strengthen the plan, if anything; the satellite stores are more consistent than the flagship. However, it still isn't directly relevant: Consistency doesn't necessarily translate into higher revenues.
- (E) This is correct. It shows that the revenues of the satellite stores are dependent on the results of the revenues of the flagship store. If the flagship store were closed, the revenues of the satellite stores would likely be affected.

33) Answer: D

This is a weaken question. The Prime Minister desires to aid the local economy (that's the desired consequence) by providing free rice. The underlying assumption is that, if people can't buy the rice they need, the economy will suffer; if people can buy the rice they need, the economy will be helped. Consider each choice in turn:

- (A) This strengthens the argument: The coupons will make people more confident in the economy.
- (B) This, if anything, strengthens the argument; the subsidized rice will not cost the government as much as it might otherwise. For the most part, though, it is not relevant to the argument.
- (C) Again, this appears to strengthen the argument--it shows how important rice is to citizens. Like (B) though, it isn't directly related to the economy.
- (D) This is correct. While the argument emphasizes the importance of the domestic market, this choice shows us that the export market has a direct effect on the health of the domestic economy. If the government acquires a large amount of rice, it is likely that rice exports will be curtailed by that amount, thus harming the economy.
- (E) This is irrelevant; the argument would still be valid if only a large percentage of citizens required the coupons.

34) Answer: C

When a question asks you to "account for a finding," the finding itself must be somewhat unexplained, even a paradox. In this case, we know there are two causes for the decrease in the otter population: pollution and habitat destruction. Because legislation has had more to say about pollution, it makes sense that the effects of pollution would go down, meaning that habitat destruction is the bigger problem. But the argument tells us that pollution remains the bigger problem.

Choice (A) doesn't help--the cost of the legislation doesn't tell us about its effectiveness. (B) is irrelevant, as we care only about sea otters. Similarly, (E) is too general.

Choice (C) is correct. If habitat destruction had almost reached its maximum by 1970, it's only reasonable that it didn't increase by a very large percentage between 1970 and 1990. (E) may sound similar, but it is less directly related. Not only does it discuss legislation (not the specific destruction of habitats), but the endpoint is 1960, not 1970, as it is in the question and in (C).

35) Answer: E

The explanation for the decrease in class size is "a decrease in mobility among the elderly during the winter months." We're looking for a choice that suggests that this decrease in mobility really occurs, and that it is limited to the winter months as the argument claims.

Choice (A) strengthens the argument, but not the explanation: If there are fewer classes and class size is still smaller, there must be a dramatic drop in the number of people who attend such classes. (B) is irrelevant, as we're concerned with month-to-month differences. (C) is irrelevant as well, since we don't know where these classes are offered.

36) Answer: D

The argument is straightforward. Marine workers recognize that dolphin sightings increase the popularity of a beach, so they think that more dolphin sightings will lead to more popularity. However, given the limits of the information given, the argument assumes that whatever leads to more dolphin sightings will not itself counteract the positive benefit of the larger number of sightings.

To weaken the argument, we need to find a reason why that assumption is false. Choices (A) and (B) strengthen the plan's likelihood of success, while (C) and (E) are not relevant. Choice (D), however, is exactly what we're looking for. It tells us that the proposed method (further domesticating the dolphins) is not what attracts people to Nine Mile beach. (D) is correct.

37) Answer: E

To weaken the plan, look for what the plan assumes. The fishermen think that selling at a lower price and marketing as a low-fat alternative will increase sales. If customers don't care about price, or don't care about fat intake, the plan has problems.

The only choice to address these weaknesses directly is (E), which tells us that customers aren't concerned about fat intake (their diet). Note that while the other four choices use many key words from the passage, they do not directly engage the fishermen's plan. CR answers are always very closely related to the scope of the passage. (E) is correct.

38) Answer: B

When looking to strengthen a plan or proposal, the most important assumption to confirm is often, "it will work." In this case, the plan is to set up farmstands to diversify, so that the acreage does not go solely to the production of apples. In order for that plan to work, there has to be some reason to believe that it will make money, that people will buy something other than apples.

Choice (B) provides the best answer, confirming that there is a market in the region for things other than apples. Notice that (C) and (D) are decent answers. Both are important parts of the plan, but neither provide as much evidence that the plan will work as (B) will. In (C), we don't know that the passersby would buy anything, and in (D), we don't know that anything would be purchased, even if costs are low.

39) Answer: C

This is a classic example of a scope shift. The evidence (the first sentence) compares the Silver Bullet to other "high-speed trains." The conclusion compares it to all trains. Just because a train has few delays relative to other high-speed trains doesn't mean it has few delays (or is "efficient") compared to ALL trains. Look for a choice that points out the scope shift.

Choice (C) does that. If high-speed trains are often delayed, then argument is weakened. It exposes the flaw in the argument, which is along the lines of "Alex is the smartest 'D' student in the class." (C) is correct.

40) Answer: B

In nearly all arguments based on a plan or proposal, one underlying assumption is that the plan is feasible. When you read the argument, you might assume that it's possible to build a mechanism to do what is suggested and fit it into the overall workings of an automobile.

Alas, choice (B) indicates a very serious weakness: this isn't possible. Choices (A), (C), and (E) slightly weaken the plan. (A) and (C) provide reasons why the plan won't be hugely effective, but they don't cast doubt on the possibility that the plan will have environmentally-friendly results. (E) suggests the plan will be expensive, but without more details we don't know whether it would be prohibitively so. That leaves (B), which most weakens the plan, and is correct.

41) Answer: E

The scientists' argument contains a slight scope shift. The mayor argues that the seaweed farms are responsible "almost exclusively" for a decline in emissions. The scientists reply that seaweed farms "can only absorb" half the amount that the mayor attributes to them. But what if seaweed farms had some other benefit besides simply absorbing emissions? The mayor doesn't claim that the twenty percent reduction is due simply to absorption.

To weaken the argument, expose and contradict the assumption that absorption is the only way for seaweed farms to reduce emissions. Choice (E) is correct--if seaweed plants can be used as a low-emissions fuel source, they do in fact have more benefit than their emissions absorption.

42) Answer: E

The organization believes that by spicing up its newsletter, it will boost its popularity, counteracting the recent decline in membership. The underlying assumption is that one has anything to do with the other. If members are leaving the group for some other reason - say, a scandal concerning management of funds – spicing up the newsletter is unlikely to do any good.

Thus, in this strengthen question, we're looking for a choice that confirms the assumption. (E) is the only choice that does that, so it is correct.

43) Answer: D

The argument suggests that Kingsland companies outsource to foreign firms as a cost-saving measure, and that the cost savings are only worthwhile to them during recessions. One assumption the argument makes is that the same options are available to them at all times--the same mix of foreign and domestic options for outsourcing, or perhaps the same availability and cost of hiring employees. While this isn't explicitly an "assumption" question, many "evaluate" questions hinge on assumptions.

The assumption that the same options are available at all times is captured by (D), which is correct. It might seem obvious that, in most real-world situations, foreign firms are available at all times, but once the question raises it as a point that might be in question, you must consider the possibility that it is an assumption left unstated by the argument.

44) Answer: C

Without the presence of additional evidence or logic from an answer choice, the argument doesn't make complete sense. Lowering the cost of a drug doesn't necessarily mean that the seller of a drug would make "as much money as possible." The answer must explain why lowering the price would have this result, probably through drastically increased sales compared to the sales companies could expect if the prices were not lowered.

Sure enough, that's choice (C). It solidifies the logic that lowering the price leads to taking in more money, which is the drug companies' stated goal. The other choices are not as directly related to the narrow scope of the argument, which is such a key element of the correct answer choice is any Critical Reasoning question.

45) Answer: A

The argument gives us a positive and negative aspect to the low-cost insurance plan: The positive is that it costs less; the negative is that it does not cover something that can end up costing a lot of money itself. The scope of the argument is the cost of medical care under certain plans, so look for a choice that focuses on the financial aspect directly.

Choice (A) does this. To determine whether it's wise to "avoid" purchasing these plans, it's important to know whether the drawback is really worse than the benefits gained by opting for the low-price plan. If the additional cost is less than the amount saved by going with such a plan, the argument is not very strong.

Choice (B) may be tempting, but it strays from the narrow scope of the argument by ignoring the specific costs of certain types of treatment. (C) is off topic, as is (E). (D) may be tempting as well, but the argument tells us that brand-name drugs cost consumers a certain amount of money; it shuts out the possibility that generics are available by the terms of the argument. Choice (A) is correct.

46) Answer: A

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47) Answer: C

Without the presence of additional evidence or logic from an answer choice, the argument doesn't make complete sense. Lowering the cost of a drug doesn't necessarily mean that the seller of a drug would make "as much money as possible." The answer must explain why lowering the price would have this result, probably through drastically increased sales compared to the sales companies could expect if the prices were not lowered.

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