

Assumptions Latest Questions

1. We know the following:

- a) Parents are reluctant to subject children to the pain of injections
- b) adults, who are at risk of serious complications from influenza, are commonly vaccinated
- c) A new influenza vaccine, administered painlessly in a nasal spray, is effective for children

From the above the author concludes that since nasal spray can be used effectively only on children and since children do not develop any serious complications from influenza, the widespread use of nasal spray vaccine does not have any serious health benefit.

This conclusion will hold true ONLY IF we can be sure that adults do not contract influenza from children. Only then will there be no significant health benefit in using the nasal spray.

A. Irrelevant. We know that this vaccine is effective only on children. Therefore even if this weren't true, it would not make any difference to the conclusion.

B. Irrelevant. Once again, assumptions about the working of the vaccine is irrelevant to the conclusion.

C. Irrelevant. We are discussing the benefits of using nasal spray vaccine. The price of the injectable vaccine does not concern us.

D. CORRECT. Let us try the negation of this. Adults contract influenza primarily from children than have influenza. IF the negation were true, then the conclusion would become incorrect as there would then be a huge benefit to using nasal sprays for kids.

E. We already know this to be true in the passage. "A new influenza vaccine, administered painlessly in a nasal spray, is effective for children." Therefore this becomes a fact and not an assumption.

2.

Goal This Year: To reduce the number of truckloads of refuse(garbage) to be incinerated to half of last year's number.

Which of the options are essential to achieve this goal?

Before we begin, let us say 1 ton of ash was generated per truckload of refuse(Garbage) last year.

A. This does not matter. As long sufficient refuse has been separated for recycling to ensure the amount of ash generated is half of last year, it does not matter if some materials that could be recycled are incinerated.

B. The cost of the process is irrelevant to the conclusion.

C. Please note, we only need to separate enough refuse for recycling to reduce the number of truckloads of refuse to be incinerated to half of last year's number. So if 60% percent of the refuse collected last year was recyclable and only 55% of the refuse collected this year can be recycled, our goal can still be reached.

D. CORRECT. The amount of refuse that will be recycled is being decided based on the amount of ash generated last year. Once the separation has been made, if the non-recyclable refuse produces 2 tons of ash per truckload(say) then our goal will not be met despite recycling last year 1 truck load of residue generated 1 ton of ash. This year (after u pick out recyclable waste), 1 truck-load generates 2 or 3 or even more tons of residue ash, then the city will not achieve its objective.

E. As long as we are able to separate out enough refuse to recycle it, this will not affect the goal. It is possible to have waste in excess of last year and still achieve our goal.

3.

Governor's Goal: to reduce crime rate

Governor's Plan: be harsher with the inmates by denying them access to college-level courses.

Argument Against the Plan: the people who took college level courses in prison committed fewer crimes once they were released from prison. So Governor's plan will backfire.

Assumption : it is clear that the argument assumes the prisoners committed fewer crimes BECAUSE they took college level courses in prison. This argument would crumble if we were told that the prisoners who are less likely to commit crimes are the ones who opt for the college-level courses.

A. Incorrect. If this were true, then the governor's plan for removing college-level courses would not have met with any resistance.

B. Irrelevant .The argument discusses whether inmates who have taken the courses are less likely to commit a crime than inmates who have not taken these courses. The comparison is not with the general population.

C. CORRECT. Let us negate this.

“ The group of inmates who chose to take college-level courses are already less likely than other inmates to commit crimes after being released”

If the above is true, then implementing the governor's plan will not have any counter effect,as the prisoners taking up the college level courses that are being scrapped are already less likely to commit crimes. Therefore the necessary assumption we need to make for the argument to hold is that all prisoners have an equal tendency to commit a crime before they take on the college level courses.

D. Irrelevant, We are not discussing High school courses here.

E. Irrelevant to the argument.

4.

Conclusion- the current average height of Tufe's Turfil sunflowers is undoubtedly at least partially attributable to changes in Tufe's environmental conditions

This means that the changes in the newly formed island's climate caused the sunflower plants to get shorter.

Assumption: Here we are assuming the sunflowers on Tufe's island are affected in comparison with the sunflowers on the mainland(kept as a standard for comparison).

What if the sunflowers on the mainland are in fact different from the original species (because of the weather conditions on the mainland) while the sunflowers on Tufe have grown to the normal height(and therefore are unaffected by the climate on Tufe island)?

A. Irrelevant. We are not discussing if the weather is beneficial. We want to know if it affects the natural growth of Turfil sunflowers.

B. Irrelevant. Once again, we are wondering about the height of sunflowers and not about the numbers.

C. CORRECT. Let us negate this.

“The mainland’s environment has changed in ways that have resulted in Turfil sunflowers on the mainland growing to be 40 centimeters taller than they did two centuries ago”.

This means the climate on the mainland changed too. How will the conclusion or evidence hold true in that case? Mainland could have become wetter which made the plants on the main island grow more and not the ones on the island grow less.

D. Irrelevant. We want to know if the weather conditions were “partially” responsible or not.

E. Irrelevant. This does not tell as anything new. Even if this were the only difference,this option neither strengthens nor weakens the conclusion.

5.

this is a good problem to which to apply the REVERSAL METHOD for assumptions:

- * REVERSE the assumption

- * the argument should be DESTROYED

the argument assumes that not as many televisions are being made domestically in borodia. (this is why they will have to import more.)

if we reverse (c), then the assemblers can put together TV's faster than before.

this means that FEWER of them will be able to make the SAME TOTAL NUMBER of televisions.

this severs the connection between the drop in the number of assemblers and the drop in the number of televisions produced, so the argument falls apart.

(c) is CORRECT.

6.

Fact 1: the quantity of rice produced per year is currently just large enough to satisfy domestic demand.

Fact 2. Teruvia’s total rice acreage will not be expanded in the foreseeable future nor will rice yields per

acre increase appreciably

Fact 3: Teruvia's population, however, will be increasing significantly for years to come

Conclusion: Teruvia will soon have to begin importing rice.

Now since the production of rice is not going to increase and the population will continue to rise, it only makes sense that Teruvia will soon run out of rice UNLESS as the population increases the people begin to consume less rice.

A. CORRECT. Negate this

"There is a pronounced trend of decreasing per capita demand for rice in Teruvia"
this would automatically destroy our conclusion and is therefore the assumption on which the argument depends.

B. Irrelevant. Since this is already the case, the amount of rice produced won't decrease and hence won't affect our conclusion.

C. Irrelevant. We know that the yield will remain constant.

D. We are concerned with the general population growth and not region wise growth.

E. Irrelevant.

7.

Conclusion: If these trends in fuel production and usage continue, therefore,

Sidurian reliance on foreign sources for fuel should decline soon.

Assumption: the only way the above conclusion can be true if is the rate of fuel consumption is either less than or equal to the rate of fuel production in Siduria. If the fuel production increased as stated in the passage but the rate of consumption were to exceed the rate of production, Siduria will still have to import fuel.

The only option that addresses this is A. A is CORRECT.

8.

Conclusion: In this case, therefore, since none of the seven small companies can afford to convert their production lines to a new set of manufacturing specifications, only the three large companies will be able to remain in business.

Assumption: We are told clearly that none of the small companies can afford the cost of conversion and therefore WILL have to go out of business. This is a fact and cannot be disputed. Is there any other way these small companies could stay in business? What if either one or all the seven small companies were already following the standards the government plans to implement?

A. Irrelevant. If conclusion discusses the state of the companies once the products are regulated. What

will happen to the large/small companies if the products are not regulated will not affect the conclusion in anyway.

B. Irrelevant. We already know the small companies are unable to absorb the cost of conversion. Whether this cost is greater for smaller companies is irrelevant to our conclusion.

C. Irrelevant.

D. We are discussing costs and not complexity.

E. CORRECT. Let us negate this:

All/few of the seven small companies currently manufactures the product to a set of specifications that would match those the government would institute if the industry were to be regulated.

This means that for all/few companies there will be zero cost of conversion and they can continue to stay in business. Without the assumption that none of the smaller companies currently follow government specification, the conclusion will not hold good.

9.

A. CORRECT. Let us negate the option

Let us assume that every time a job has to be reworked, the company sends in more reliable and competent mechanics. Then the reason that rework is successful is because of the increased skill of the mechanic rather than complex nature of the job.

B. Irrelevant. We are discussing if complex jobs require rework due to the nature of the job or other external factors. This option is irrelevant to the conclusion.

C. We already know this statement to be untrue. Passage states:

"Ace Repairs have to be reworked under the company's warranty"

D. The negation of this option would help negate the conclusion ONLY if the passage stated that the same mechanics who were penalised were sent for the rework. Since we do not know this to be true, this option is incorrect.

E. Irrelevant We are only discussing complex jobs that have required repair. Even though there exists a category of jobs which carries out first time jobs satisfactorily, it does not necessarily negate the fact that the other jobs failures needs concentration and requires rework.

10.

Conclusion- Derderia will not break its record for the new jobs created unless a record number of companies start up this year

Let us consider a situation where the above conclusion will not hold water:

let's say no. of companies started last year: 10

No. of jobs rolled out/company: 5

Total jobs last year: 50

No. of companies started this year: 6 (= less than 10)

No. of jobs rolled out/company: 20

Total jobs this year: 120 (= way more than 50)

looks like we've broken the jobs record, without breaking the record for the number of companies started. so we don't need to have a record number of startup companies.

A. New startups may create more jobs. But this does not answer why the startups need to be more than the number last year. What if a lesser number of startups began but added more jobs per startup than last year?

Also here is what negation of A tells us:

start up companies do not create more jobs than established companies.

Even if the negation were true, the conclusion is STILL valid.

B. choice (b) deals only with companies established last year, whereas the stated premise deals with companies established at any time before this year. the companies dealt with in choice (b), then, are only a small subset of the companies dealt with in the stated premise.

however, we don't need to make the assumption in choice (b), as it's irrelevant one way or the other: the companies founded last year are merely a subset of "previously established companies". therefore, since the stated premise already gives us the overall result for ALL previously founded companies, we have no need to be concerned with the results of smaller components of that population (such as (b)).

C. CORRECT. Fits the above scenario perfectly

D. it's dead out-of-scope. Any consideration of jobs lost is irrelevant.

E. Same as D :)

A. Irrelevant. Clearly we are not concerned with the conditions that existed while the paintings were created but rather with the conditions required to save those paintings.

B. Weakens. This weakens the conclusion slightly and does not provide any information about what would happen if the museums relaxed their standards.

C. Irrelevant. The passage clearly discusses the cost involved in storing renaissance paintings alone and not other objects.

D. CORRECT. Let us negate this:

Other materials in Renaissance oil paintings other than the paint are vulnerable enough to relatively wide fluctuations in temperature and humidity to cause damage to the paintings.

This would destroy the conclusion that "museums could relax their standards and save money without endangering their Renaissance oil paintings" as it states that despite oil paint not being affected by temperature fluctuations (like the study proves) other materials in the painting may be.

E. Irrelevant.

12.

A. CORRECT. Conclusion states that "Clearly, therefore, insurance companies are making a greater profit on collision-damage insurance in Greatport than in Fairmont" If it costs more at Greatport to repair damages than it does at Fairmont, then despite there being a lower number of collisions at Greatport, the companies may not make greater profit.

B. Let us consider the negation of this:
There are more motorists in Greatport than in Fairmont.

We know the number of collisions in Greatport are fewer. Therefore if there were an increased number of motorists and all other factors remained constant between Greatport and Fairmont, then this would STRENGTHEN the conclusion rather than weaken it.

C. This actually weakens the conclusion as more people reporting the accident = more money the insurance company has to pay.

D. Irrelevant. The comparison is between G and F.

E. Irrelevant. This assumption neither weakens nor strengthens the conclusion.

13.

This is a no-brainer. But let us start by negating options.

A. CORRECT.

People in western Africa developed staple crops that they stopped cultivating once rice and yams were introduced.

This at once destroys the conclusion that by establishing when rice and yams were introduced in Africa we could determine when the agricultural societies began.

B. Let us negate this

There are plants native to western Africa that, if domesticated, could serve as staple food crops.

Great. But do we know if these native plants were cultivated by the people in Western Africa? Since we do not know the answer to this, the conclusion could still be valid.

C. This is good information but neither strengthens or weakens the conclusion as we are specifically concerned with the Western African societies.

D. ok but how does it help with arriving at the conclusion? irrelevant.

E. We already know this. But we also know that these are supplementary food and that no agricultural society can exist without staple crops.

14.

year x: tax price went up by eight cents. sales fell by 10%

Year before x: tax price constant. Sales fell by 1%

Conclusion: the reason for the sales to fall from 1% to 10% is the 8 cent increase in the tax price.

A. Irrelevant.

year before x : pre-tax price went up. Tax price constant. Sales fell by 1%

year x: pre tax price same as previous year. tax price went up by eight cents. sales fell by 10%

year after x: pre tax price increased slightly but not as much as year before x.

Clearly this does not provide any correlation between increased tax price and decrease in sales.

B. Let us negate this:

The one percent fall in cigarette sales in the year prior to tax increase was not due to a smaller tax increase.

We know that the sales have decreased by 10% this year.

Even if the sales in the previous year HAD NOT decreased due to a tax increase, the conclusion "the reason for the sales to fall from 1% to 10% is the 8 cent increase in the tax price." still holds. Incorrect.

C. But why did the sales fall to 10% DURING the year of tax increase? Option C does not discuss this at all and only talks of years before and after tax increase.

D. CORRECT.

Let us negate this:

For the year following the tax increase, the pretax price of a pack of cigarettes was eight or more cents lower than it had been the previous year.

This would mean that the increased tax price was cancelled out by the decrease in the pretax price. So the overall price of a pack of cigarettes was lower or the same as before. This would destroy any relation that exists between increased tax price and the decrease in sales (as the total price for the customer remained the same)

E. Even if the pretax price did not rise and was constant, the overall price would have gone up and this could be sufficient reason for the decrease in sales.

15.

A. Irrelevant. The comparison is between jobs that require a degree and jobs that don't. Double. triple degree holders and their income is not relevant here :)

B. the comparison is between now and four years later. Not several years ago and the present.

C. CORRECT.

If the negation of this were to be true then once the scarcity no longer exists the high paying jobs wont exist either and the average salary may not increase.

D. let's say the average salary for non-degree jobs will increase over the next 4 years.

this would actually STRENGTHEN the argument (!), because it would provide another reason that the average salary would increase.

this is the complete opposite of the effect you're looking for; reversing the assumption should destroy the argument.

E. Irrelevant.

16.

Conclusion: people who have suffered a serious stroke on the left side of the brain without suffering any such impairment must have their language centres in the right half.

A. This maybe. But we are only concerned with whether a stroke affects the linguistic capabilities of a person.

B. Irrelevant. Once again, we are concerned with people suffering from stroke and that affecting their linguistic capabilities.

C. Irrelevant to the conclusion.

D. CORRECT. Let us negate this:

If there are language centres on the left side of the brain, any serious stroke affecting that side of the brain damages does not damage any of them.

This would destroy the conclusion. It would now be possible for a person to have the language centre in the left half, suffer a stroke that affected the left half of the brain and still retain linguistic capabilities

E. Since we are discussing people who have suffered a stroke which has damaged the brain, this option does strengthen the conclusion to an extent.

However, it is NOT A NECESSARY assumption. The negation of the option would still cause the conclusion to hold.

17.

A. CORRECT.

Let us negate A.

The quantities of dissolved salts deposited by rivers in the Earth's oceans have been unusually large during the past hundred years.

The conclusion says that by determining the increased salt levels in the ocean in the past 100 years and extrapolating it to how many centuries how such deposition would have caused the salt level in the ocean to rise to the current level, we can determine the age of the planet.

However, if there has been unusually large amounts of salt deposited in the last 100 years, this extrapolation would be inaccurate and the resulting age of the earth maybe far younger.

B. This is not relevant to the conclusion. We are concerned with how much salt these rivers deposit and not how much they contain. All rivers may have similar salt content, But have they deposited a constant amount in the ocean?

C. This would weaken the conclusion by indicating that there are other ways in which the salt levels of the ocean can increase.

D. This is irrelevant. We are discussing the effectiveness of the method at hand. Even if there were superior methods, our conclusion will remain unchanged.

E. To estimate the age of the oceans one will divide "ocean's current salt levels" A by "the resulting increase in salt levels in the oceans over the past hundred years" a.

If the biological activities are using up salt and have been doing so from the beginning at a constant rate then we have:

If biological activities use some of the salt, both quantities A and a will decrease correspondingly and the calculation should lead to the same result.

Whether or not "the salts carried into the Earth's oceans by rivers are used up by biological activity in the oceans" will not change the reasoning.

18.

A. Irrelevant to the conclusion.

B. Increasing fertility rates are once again, irrelevant. We want to know if the fertility rates are affected by the material in the tranquiliser.

C. CORRECT. Let us Negate this:

Any stress that female rhinoceroses may suffer as a result of being immobilized and handled has negative effect on their fertility.

This would give us an alternate reason for the fertility of the female rhinos decreasing on being immobilised. As you can see, with the negation, the conclusion "Probably, therefore, some substance in the tranquilizer inhibits fertility" instantly crumbles.

D. Since we are discussing fertility, we can safely ignore the male rhinos!

E. Since we do not have any information about the fertility rates in these mammals, this option does not help/harm the conclusion.

19.

The conclusion states that because the modern day analysis indicates low gold content and because the mining expeditions of the 16 century could not find any gold, the "methods used to determine the gold content of Frobisher's samples must have been inaccurate"

A. This weakens the conclusion to an extent by indicating that there was more gold on the island in 16th century than presently.

B. This weakens the conclusion to an extent by indicating that since the same parts of the island were not mined, they perhaps missed the gold rich soil.

C. Different does not necessarily mean inaccurate or less effective.

D. Irrelevant. We are discussing Kodlunarn Island only.

E. let us negate this

Gold was added to the soil samples collected by Frobisher before the samples were examined.

This would destroy the conclusion that the technique used by Frobisher was inaccurate and in fact indicate that while his technique was correct, the soil had been tampered with to indicate high gold content.

20.

A. This maybe. But the goal was to decrease the hazardous waste by half. This option does not tell us

anything about hazardous waste.

B. is irrelevant, as we have no information about how much waste is produced PER JET - not now, not then.

C. once again , this is irrelevant. The goal was to “reduce by half the total yearly amount of hazardous waste generated by its passenger-jet division”.

The other divisions are irrelevant to our argument.

D. We are discussing the waste output per pound per worker. The amount of time they spend working is irrelevant

E. CORRECT.

the production company's GOAL was to lower the TOTAL AMOUNT of hazardous waste produced.

the EVIDENCE is stated in terms of the amount PER WORKER, not the total amount.

Let us negate this option

“ The number of production workers assigned to the passenger-jet division was significantly less in 1994 than it was last year”

This tells us why the amount of waste per worker may have gone down despite the amount of hazardous waste being produced having remained the same or increased. This would cause the conclusion to crumble.

21.

This one is pretty simple. Let us try our favourite method of negation here:

A. Irrelevant. This does not answer whether cannabinoids help stimulate the appetite or not.

B. The passage does not require us to assume that cannabinoids are the ONLY substance that stimulate the appetite. Even if there were other substance that do so, the passage goes on to tell us that blocking cannabinoids caused the appetite to decrease. This option does to give us any reason why this may have happened.

C. Irrelevant. This was true both before and after the mice were injected with a chemical that blocked cannabinoids.

D. Irrelevant. Does it help stimulate appetite? Thats all we care to know.

E. CORRECT.

Let us negate this.

“The chemical that blocks cannabinoids from stimulating their brain receptors independently inhibits the appetite”

This clearly suggests that the loss of appetite was caused due to factors other than absence of cannabinoids. This destroys the conclusion.

22.

Let us assume that before 1992 there were 100,000 catchable lobsters in the sea.
Of 100,000 catchable lobsters, let us assume all 100,000 were legally harvested.

In 1996,

we know that the number of legally harvested lobsters were 91,000.

Therefore the passage states that that 9000 of the remaining lobsters (assuming there are still 100,000 catchable lobsters) were caught by illegal activities.

A. CORRECT.

let us negate this

The illegal lobster harvesting was so extensive that the population of catchable lobsters in

Belukia's territorial waters had sharply declined by 1996.

This tells us that the catchable population is no longer 100,000.

Let us assume its come down to 95,000. So going by this assumption, the number of lobsters illegally harvested comes to $95,000 - 91,000 = 4000$. This destroys the conclusion.

B. Maybe. But do we know if it has increased to 9000 tons?

C. Irrelevant. We already know this to be true from the passage.

D. Since the annual legal catch was 9000 tons less than the pre 1992, we already know this statement to be true.

E. This one may seem tempting. But we know that there "no reduction in the level of legal lobster fishing activity". Thus this option does not affect our conclusion.

23.

conclusion: Since the hotel taxes were lowered and yet the govt collected the same amount of money from thee hotels,it follows that more number of tourists stayed in Midville that year.

A. Irrelevant. While the tourists maybe aware of lowered hotel rates, the option does not tell us that more tourists came in because of it.

B. The prices in other cities is irrelevant.

C. CORRECT. Let us negate this:

"The average length of a tourist's stay in Midville hotels was longer last year than it had been the year before."

This tells us why the despite the number of tourists having remained the same or lesser than previous year,the hotels could have made more money thereby destroying the conclusion.

D. Irrelevant. The argument states that lowered taxes led to more number of tourists staying at Midville. We are not discussing Midville's marketing strategy here.

E. Tempting but please note that we are discussing lowered tax on hotel accommodation here. The price on the meals is irrelevant.

24.

This is pretty straightforward.

Premise: one candidate produced a half-hour-long advertisement. During the half hour the advertisement was aired, a substantial portion of the viewing public tuned into the advertisement.

Conclusion: many more people are interested in watching lengthy televised political messages than was previously thought.

A. we are not interested in the effect the advertisement had on the people. Our only concern is do people want to watch the long advertisement or not. If we negate this statement "The candidate's ratings did not improve significantly as a result of the half-hour-long political advertisement" the conclusion can still be valid. Maybe people did tune in to watch the campaign but did not like what they saw.

B. Irrelevant. We are concerned with the length of the political message.

C. That's good. But do they want to do so in the form of lengthy televised political message? That's the crux of our argument that this option does not address.

D. Irrelevant. We already know a good amount of the population tuned in to watch the ad.

E. CORRECT.

Let us negate this:

Most of the viewers who tuned in to the candidate's half-hour-long advertisement last year changed channels after the first few minutes.

This would immediately destroy the conclusion that more people are interested in watching lengthy political messages.

25.

This one is quite easy. Once again, let us refer back to our old friend-negation

A. This actually weakens the conclusion stating that the nerve damage caused by other chemicals would be different from that caused by EB, indicating that we would be able to distinguish the reason for the nerve damage.

B. Irrelevant. Does EB cause nerve damage or do the new chemicals being used also cause it? This option does not help us confirm either of the questions.

C. CORRECT. Let us negate this.

If ethylene dibromide causes nerve damage, it takes two years or longer for that

damage to become detectable.

If this were true then we know that EB was NOT wrongly blamed and also that new chemicals do not cause nerve damage. This would collapse the conclusion.

D. we are talking about people who were “newly diagnosed”

E. strengthens the argument to an extent. But we will still have to assume that these plants do not have any external factors that could cause nerve damage.

26.

This problem may seem tough only due the way its been worded.

The summary, simple put is this: There are some people who are allergic to sulphites. Several wine makers do not add sulphites as preservatives to their wines.

Conclusion: therefore people suffering from allergic reactions can drink wine from such makers to avoid allergic reactions.

A. We are only concerned with sulphites and the allergy induced by them. We are not discussing any other “potentially allergic” substances.

B. We clearly know that people are allergic to sulphites that are added to preserve wine. That makes this option irrelevant.

C. This information is irrelevant.

D. Again,we are discussing allergic reactions to sulphites in particular. Not relevant to the conclusion.

E. CORRECT. Let us negate this.

Sulfites are naturally present in the wines produced by these wine makers in amounts large enough to produce an allergic reaction in someone who drinks these wines.

This clearly destroys the conclusion that such wines can be consumed by people with allergic reaction to sulphites.

Therefore option E is a critical assumption we need to make to arrive at this conclusion.

27.

A. Irrelevant. The comparison is between households with a built-clock in their microwave oven and household that have just the oven. The comparison is not between households with ovens and those without.

B. This information is irrelevant to the discussion. We are discussing the electricity consumption.

C. Additional information to the stimulus - not helpful in addressing the issue at hand. Even if the negation of this option were true, the conclusion will hold.

D. CORRECT. - stating that if an oven don't have a clock, the household will not install one is essential to the conclusion that houses without built in clocks in the microwave consume less electricity. The negation of this option would destroy the conclusion "Therefore, households whose microwave oven has no built-in clock use 45 kilowatt-hours per year less, on average, than do comparable households whose microwave oven has one"

Negation:

Households whose microwave oven does not have a built-in clock are more likely to have a separate electric

clock plugged in than households whose microwave oven has one.

E. - Additional information to the stimulus - Not quite relevant. True or not, this option does not affect the conclusion.

28.

The conclusion is : "Therefore, by selling the helium, the government can not only pay off that debt but reduce its overall debt as well"

Also its important to note that currently the govt can make 25% more money by selling helium than the current debt incurred due to it

Let us see which options support this conclusion.

A. This maybe. But does it mean that by selling the helium the govt will be able to pay off debts? We are not told.

B. Whether it is a significant portion of the total debt is irrelevant. We know that by selling of helium, the government can reduce its helium debts as well as a portion (whatever that maybe) of its total debts

C. This is completely out of scope.

D. CORRECT.

Let us negate:

Attempts to sell the government's helium will depress the market price of helium by more than 25 percent.

This would mean that the prices of helium would fall by the 25% margin and not allow the government to recover the debts it has incurred in purchasing and storing helium.

E. For the conclusion to fall apart, the loss incurred should be 25% more than the money spent in acquiring and storing helium. This seems highly unlikely and moreover is an assumption that's outside the passage.

29

Premise: a technology for preventing leaks of oil pipelines is being installed

Conclusion: as long as the above technology is effective, there will be no leaks and hence no danger to the fish.

Assumption: Are the leaks the only thing that may endanger the fish population when oil pipeline is constructed?

A. The conclusion talks of the dangers of constructing oil pipelines only. This is out of scope.

B. CORRECT.

Negation: Other than the possibility of a leak, there is a realistic pollution threat posed to the lake by the pipeline's construction.

This would mean that even if the anti leak technology was successful it would still destroy the fish population thereby causing the conclusion to fall apart.

C. This is already stated in the conclusion "provided the technology is effective" so we know that the conclusion is subject to the condition that the anti leak technology is successful. This neither strengthens nor weakens the conclusion.

D. Irrelevant. We are not concerned about other damages.

E. The passage discusses fish population in general and this is not specific to a certain species.

30.

Summary:

Coponia plans to increase the tax by 9 cents. This would in turn cause a 10 percentage point increase in the price of cigarettes.

A 10 percentage point increase in price has always caused the sales to dip by 4%.

Conclusion: therefore, rising the tax by 9 cents on a 90-cent packet of cigarettes will also cause the sales to decrease by 4%.

Note: it is essential that the overall price of the cigarettes increase to cause a decrease in sales. What if the cigarette companies decide to cut down their profit margin and absorb the extra 9-cent costs on the tax to prevent reduction in sales? In this case the overall price of the cigarettes will not rise and the sales will not fall.

Therefore option A is correct.

31.

The main conclusion here is by offering a rigorous fitness program of jogging and weight lifting to all employees, and requiring employees who are out of shape to participate, the company will save doctor bills and longer hospital stays that less fit employees usually incur.

Therefore it's more profitable for the company to invest in a fitness program.

A. This is irrelevant to the conclusion. We know already that less fit people incur higher medical bills.

B. This weakens the conclusion by stating that somehow the people asked not to participate in the program incur higher medical bills. This is a complete contradiction of what's stated in the passage.

C. CORRECT.

Let us negate it:

The strenuous activities required of out-of-shape employees by the program would by themselves generate medical expenses greater than any reduction achieved by the program.

This means that the fitness activity for out-of-shape employees will cost the company a whole lot more in terms of medical bills and more importantly, would be "greater than any reduction achieved by the program"

This completely destroys the conclusion

D. We already know this to be true.

E. While this is a good thing, it says the less fit employees will be at work more than the more fit employees (not required to participate in the program). This does not directly explain why the health insurance cost for the company will go down.

32.

If this is solved based on the negation technique A is a clear choice

Negation of A: The tetracycline deposits formed after the bodies were buried.

This destroys the conclusion that "tetracycline in their food probably explains the low incidence of typhus among ancient Nubians"

33.

Since the number of shops and workshops in Brindon County have reduced, the passage states that the output of Brindon Bolt Barn will also reduce.

Let us see the negation of which option would destroy this conclusion/

A. This is irrelevant. The passage tells us that the workshops were shut down in the recent months and the sales and revenue for next year will decrease.

B. Although this tells us to some extent that the amount of work for the workshops in Brindon County is not very high, therefore sales may not be much, we do not know if the Brindon Bolts operates only in Brindon County or outside of it.

C. We are concerned with the sales and revenue of Brindon Bolts Barn only.

D. This is out of scope. We need information about its sales and revenue.

E. CORRECT. Let us negate this:

The Brindon Bolt Barn is a company that gets the great majority of its business from customers outside Brindon County.

This means that although shops have shut in the Brindon county and its sales in the county maybe low, the overall sales of Brindon Bolt Barn will continue to be high as compared to last year.

34.

Conclusion: Since average homework time is 30 minutes, there is no need to impose limits on the amount as it does not eat into much of children's free time.

A. Even if this weren't true, the theorist's argument is that the children will have sufficient time to complete their homework as well as engage in free time activities.(irrespective of what those activities are)

B. This argument isn't about the effectiveness of homework. Rather its about whether a child can do homework as well as have time for other activities.

C. This would actually weaken the theorist's argument to an extent indicating that we need someone else other than teachers to decide the amount of homework (Exactly what he is arguing against)

D. CORRECT. Let us negate this:

In most schools, if not all, the homework assignments given are of a length that diverges widely from the average.

This would mean that children may have to spend more than 30 mins which might cut into their free time and thereby proving the point made by the editorials. This would destroy the conclusion.

E. The theorist does not state that free time activities are useless. This is out of scope.

35.

The crux of this argument is as below:

Public advocacy groups can directly pass on information to the public. This means that information services(the internet) present a more balanced picture of the complexities of political issues than any traditional news source presents

A. the argument does not discuss the reach of information services or newspapers. It simply says that through information services a more balanced picture can be given to the public.

B. This actually weakens the conclusion by stating that an unbiased view can also be obtained by sorting through several papers.

C. Correct. Let us negate this:

Information on political issues disseminated through information services comes almost entirely from advocacy groups that share a single bias.

This would mean that despite using information services the information will still be as (or more) biased than the ones got in the papers, defeating the purpose. This would effectively destroy the conclusion.

D. We already know this to be true.

E. Once again this weakens the conclusion by indicating that there is no need for an unbiased source.

36.

A. CORRECT.

Here's a diagram for this argument:

(# of rds-equipped stations increased 250-->600)

BUT

(apprx same # of rds radios in Vland)

THEREFORE

(apprx same # of people receiving rds signals in Vland)

if you make this diagram, it should be clear that there's a logical leap between the latter two statements: the author is assuming a direct correlation between the # of rds-equipped radios and the # of people who actually receive rds signals with those radios.

in order to make this connection, you need to assume that nobody, or almost nobody**, with an rds-equipped radio is now (in '96, that is) able to receive a signal but wasn't able to receive a signal back in '94. that's pretty much what A. says.

B. Irrelevant. As it does not directly discuss whether these people already had a RDS radio before the station was built, it does not fill the gap.

C. C is out of scope. It says that equipping a radio with the RDS feature does not decrease the range of the radio. But who cares? Even if it did, this would have been the case for 1994 as well as 1996. We need something that connects the data about radios and 94-96 with the claim that THE SAME NUMBER OF PEOPLE received the programming, even though no one bought new radios.

D. D is not an assumption - it is a fact. We are told that you cannot get this type of signal without the right equipment. An assumption must be something that is unstated.

E. Let's negate this:

The RDS radio stations in Verdland in 1996 all offered the same type of programming.
This does not affect our conclusion in any way and hence is irrelevant.

37.

a) Reverse this assumption:

The Sepphoris mosaics are composed exclusively of types of stones found naturally in the Sepphoris area

This is consistent with the conclusion. Note that the passage says the mosaics were "created" by traveling artisans which means that they could have used the locally available stones at Sepphoris to create the mosaics.

B.

reverse this assumption: let's say all the species are indigenous to some common region.

this doesn't destroy the argument; it's perfectly consistent with the idea of traveling artisans (who presumably would have come from that common region).

wrong answer.

C. reverse this

motifs that appear in the Sepphoris mosaics that also appear in the mosaics of some

other Roman city

This actually strengthens the conclusion rather than destroying it.

D.

reverse this assumption: let's say that there are some animal figures that are not readily identifiable.

this has no effect whatsoever on the argument, which is concerned only with some of the animal figures (i.e., the ones that weren't native to the local area).

wrong answer.

E. CORRECT

reverse this assumption: let's say there was a common repertory of mosaic designs.

in this case, that repertory - since it was a common repertory - would have included animal figures from all over the place. (at the very least, it would be quite unreasonable to expect a common repertory to have been restricted to animal figures from the sepphoris area in particular.)

this destroys the argument, because, were there such a repertory, then artists local to sepphoris would have followed it as well, creating the exotic designs despite their status as natives in the area.

38.

the first premise states, as fact, the following correlation:

higher vitamin/minerals in bloodstream <--> better lung function

The loophole:

if smokers get higher levels of the vitamins/minerals into their bloodstreams, then based on the premise they will also have better lung function. The argument is therefore airtight, provided the smokers can get the vitamins and minerals into their bloodstreams to begin with.(absorption)

That's the only missing link here - all that's mentioned in the argument is intake, which is an entirely separate matter from absorption into the bloodstream. We need to look for an option that can close this gap.

A)Irrelevant. it speaks of vitamins and minerals in general, not the special vitamins and minerals mentioned in the passage.

B)Strengthens the premise which we already know to be true

C)Irrelevant as we are only discussing how lung capacity of a smoker can be improved. People suffering from vitamin deficiency (smokers or non smokers) who have other health problems are not relevant here.

D)irrelevant, as cessation of smoking doesn't affect the issue (the effect of the vitamins/minerals) at all.

E)CORRECT because it takes care of the connection between intake and absorption, by establishing that the smokers' intake of vitamins and minerals will actually make it into the bloodstream.

Let's negate this option:

Smoking introduces into the body chemicals that prevent the helpful vitamins and minerals from entering the bloodstream.

This would destroy the conclusion by stating that despite smokers increasing their vitamin intake it will not help improve their lung function.

39.

A. Let's negate this:

"The "Thank you" messages would not have the same impact on regular patrons of a restaurant as they would on occasional patrons of the same restaurant".

This means that the message must have a positive effect on group and a negative effect on the other.

Even if the messages do not have the same impact on regular patrons as they do on occasional patrons, the average income from tips would still increase. The group on which the messages have had a positive effect will continue to tip more.

B. CORRECT.

Let's negate this:

"Regularly seeing "Thank you" written on their bills would lead restaurant patrons to revert to their earlier tipping habits."

This means that the reason the patrons tipped more was because the messages were a one off thing. Seeing the message with the bill regularly will not have the same impact anymore.

Therefore the assumption that seeing the message regularly will not cause the patrons to revert to their previous tipping habit is essential to the conclusion.

C. We already know that the patrons are tipping more. The reason that they are doing so is not relevant to the conclusion and is definitely not the assumption on which the argument relies.

D. The argument says that the "Tips on these bills were an average of three percentage points higher than tips on bills without the message."

Since the comparison is within the same hotel, between bills with messages and bills without, even if rate at which people tip food servers in Pennsylvania varied with how expensive a hotel was, it still does not destroy the conclusion.

E. We know that there was an average three point increase in the tips. Even if this option weren't true i.e "Not all patrons of the Pennsylvania restaurants in the study who were given a bill with "Thank you" written on it left a larger tip than they otherwise would have."

the conclusion still holds.

40.

A. Many scientists make this assumption, of course – but its not an assumption on which the explanation depends. The explanation concerns the scientists' motivation, not their style of doing research.

B. This statement gives another reason that scientists may reject a populariser, but because it is not the reason implied in the passage, it is not assumed.

C. Even if this is true, it does not address the core issue of the argument, what scientists believe about the motivation of popularisers.

D. CORRECT. This statement properly identifies an assumption on which the explanation for scientists' rejection of popularisers depends.

E. The passage is not concerned with whether non-scientists can understand new research, but rather with the beliefs and motivations of scientists who reject popularisers as colleagues.

41.

A. The argument concerns innovation in bicycle technology. It is not about the entire market for all bicycles, so this claim about traditional bicycles is not assumed.

B. The passage does not discuss where the best innovation are likely to be created, so no assumption about small workshops versus large manufacturers is made

C. CORRECT. This statement identifies information that appropriately fills the gap in the reasoning as stated in the passage.

D. This claim provides an explanation of manufacturers' technological conservatism that is quite different from the explanation indicated in the passage.

E. The passage does not indicate what the racing authorities do or do not know about bicycle innovation – even though it suggests that they may be reluctant to approve every possible innovation for racing purposes.

42.

Sharon makes a general statement claiming that if a person knows 50 workers, it is likely that at least one of them is unemployed. This generalization is not likely to be true if unemployment were concentrated in certain geographic isolated areas.

A. Sharon's argument is about 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. If unemployment were concentrated in geographically isolated segments of populations, then randomly selected individuals would not have an equivalent chance of knowing an unemployed person. Instead, based on geographic factors, some individuals would be much more likely to know unemployed workers than would other individuals. In this case, Sharon's conclusion crumbles.

C. Although Sharon's argument is compatible with saying that even more than 90% of the population is unemployed, nothing suggests that she assumes this is true.

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 consistent with a normal rate of unemployment.

E. Irrelevant. We do not know if such a fear has any consequence. Maybe the person will work harder to keep his job or maybe he will bungle it up. The negation of this option would still cause Sharon's conclusion to hold.

43.

Premise: Because no employee wants to be associated with bad news in the eyes of a superior, information about serious problems at lower levels is progressively softened and distorted as it goes up each step in the

management hierarchy.

Conclusion: The chief executive is, therefore, less well informed about problems at lower levels than are his or her subordinates at those levels.

Assumption: The chief executive is less well informed about problems because his subordinates soften and distort the information at each level (based on the premise) indicating that problems have no other way of reaching the chief executive other than through his subordinates.

A. is tempting to choose because it seems like a pretty good assumption to make in the real world; Answer A is **wrong**, though, because how the problems "should" be solved doesn't tell me anything about how well-informed the chief executive is about those problems.

B. is tempting to choose because it sounds like a good way to resolve the problem described in the argument. Answer B is **wrong**, though, because we weren't asked to resolve the problem; we were asked to articulate a belief (an assumption) of the author who is pointing out the problem.

C. is tempting to choose because it sounds like a pretty good assumption to make in the real world. Answer C is **wrong**, though, because the ability to solve a problem still doesn't tell me anything about how well-informed the chief executive is about those problems.

D. **CORRECT.** because this is exactly the assumption that the author makes to draw his conclusion. If CEOs really can't get info from anyone other than their subordinates, and if those subordinates don't want to tell them any bad news, then those CEOs are not going to be well-informed about problems.

E. wrong, because it weakens the argument: if some subordinates are speaking up, then the bosses aren't less well-informed. We were asked to find an assumption, and an assumption is something the author must believe to be true in order to draw that conclusion. If the answer choice actually weakens the conclusion, then that answer can't be a valid assumption

44.

Conclusion: Personalities unsuited to the requirements of the job will be eliminated from consideration during the interview.

Assumption: such personalities can be identified during the interview process.

We need to look for an option that addresses this assumption.

A. This is simply restating the premise. We already know that "interview is an essential part of a successful hiring program".

B. There is nothing in the passage that makes the comparison between job development and interview.

Option C is CORRECT.

"Interviewers can accurately identify applicants whose personalities are unsuited to the requirements of the job"

Clearly addresses the assumption made by the argument.

Let's try negating this option:

Interviewers **cannot** accurately identify applicants whose personalities are unsuited to the requirements of the job"

Now the entire conclusion made above crumbles, if the interviewers cannot identify suited/unsuited personalities for the job then the purpose of an interview is lost. This proves option C is CORRECT.

D. It can be the only factor or it can be one of the many factors assessed in an interview. All we know is that it is a factor. The conclusion will remain strong irrespective of whether the negation of this statement is true.

E. We are not concerned with what was important in the past.

45.

Fact: Bank depositors in the United States are all financially protected against bank failure because the government insures all individuals' bank deposits

Premise: Since depositors do not lose any money if the banks fail, they do not care about the soundness of the investment the bank makes.

Conclusion: If the government did not insure the depositors' money, the depositors would take more care in understanding the bank policies, thereby making the banks more secure.

This conclusion is clearly based on the assumption that "the depositors would take more care in understanding the bank policies and hence will be able to determine which is a safer bank".

Let's look for an option that strengthens this assumption.

A. How bank failures are caused is irrelevant.

B. Irrelevant. The passage does not assume the number of accounts per bank per depositor anywhere.

C. Once again, the passage does not assume this. There is no connection made to the amount deposited versus the care taken by the depositor to pick a bank.

D. Irrelevant. Even if the opposite were true i.e. "The difference in the interest rates paid to depositors by different banks is a significant factor in bank failures" it would still make no difference to the economist's argument which indicates that depositors become complacent on being assured of their money back despite bank failures.

E. CORRECT. This is the basis of the conclusion made by the economist. If potential depositors are unable to determine which banks are secure against failure, then the entire conclusion that removal of government insurance will make banks safer would crumble.

46.

A. This is irrelevant. We do not care about commercial fish. Our concern is the porpoise alone.

B. CORRECT

negating it, we have

"When disoriented, harbor porpoises are significantly more likely to be killed by other boats."

This would destroy the conclusion that "The alarms, therefore, are saving the lives of harbor porpoises in those waters."

C. Although this might strengthen the use of alarms, its not an assumption. This is simply a fact stated in support of the plan i.e the premise.

D. Irrelevant. Even if the harbor porpoises were not the largest in number at the time the alarm was installed, it does not affect the conclusion.

E. We talking about the safety of the porpoises and not the costs involved. This is irrelevant.

47.

An assumption that supports a conclusion, though unstated, is NECESSARILY TRUE. In other words, the conclusion must directly depend on the information from the assumption. In this argument, the conclusion states that drivers who equip their vehicles with radar detectors are more likely to exceed the speed limit regularly than are driver who do not. The only factual basis (i.e. premise) for this conclusion is that 33% of vehicles ticketed for exceeding the speed limit were equipped with radar detectors, while only 3% of drivers on Maryland highways equip their vehicles with radar detectors.

The only information provided is about the percentage of vehicles equipped with radar and the percentage of ticketed vehicles equipped with radar; the conclusion, however, makes a sweeping generalization about the regular driving behavior of individuals with radar-equipped vehicles. When the GMAT creates such a "jump" or "gap" in the logic of an argument, the assumption will often "fill in" the missing information.

In order for the conclusion to be valid, it must be true that these ticketed drivers exceed the speed limit on a regular basis. This is satisfied by option B.

48.

The argument very clearly assumes that the newly thin people will continue to consume the same number of calories that the people whose weight is normally at that level do. Thereby they are unable to burn as many calories as the people whose weight is normally at that level and regain their original weight.

A. CORRECT. Negating this we find "Large number of very overweight people who have dieted down to a new weight tend to continue to consume substantially fewer calories than do people whose normal weight is at that level." this would make our assumptions untrue and would allow the very over weight people to maintain their new weight.

B. Negation of B

the metabolism of people who are usually not overweight are not able to vary than the metabolism of people who have been very overweight.

Since the argument has already established that the metabolic rates of the usually overweight don't much vary with dieting, the real force of negating B is the metabolic rates of those who are not usually overweight don't much vary with dieting. But this doesn't weaken the conclusion that the usually overweight will regain weight. It doesn't say anything whatsoever about the usually overweight.

C. Negation "The amount of calories that a person usually burns in a day is not determined more by the amount that is consumed that day than by the current weight of the individual."

This simply tells us that the amount of calories burned depends on the current weight of the individual I.e the metabolism or equally on the amount eaten as well as the calorie intake.

However, the premise already tells us that the metabolism of overweight individual that has lost weight through dieting is lower than that of an individual who is normally at that weight.

D. Irrelevant. Whether such a chemical exists or not, it will in no way affect the conclusion which discusses people who have lost weight primarily through dieting.

E. Irrelevant. The conclusion talks about people who are overweight and have lost weight, not people with normal weight.

49.

the entire argument can be summed up as follows:

top managers use intuition more than do midlevel or lower-level managers

-->

intuition is MORE EFFECTIVE

there's a huge, glaring hole there: the argument has connected "top managers use intuition more" with "it's a more effective way of decision making". these 2 specifics are entirely different from one another, and NEED to be bridged for the argument to hold up.

in fact, you should get into the habit of regarding ANY two specifics that are even remotely different (such as "drivers who speed" and "drivers who receive speeding tickets") as completely different things. under that criterion, it's a no-brainer to choose the assumption that bridges the gap.

A. Irrelevant. The passage already suggests that Methodical, step-by-step reasoning is employed by managers for decision making.

B. Irrelevant. "top managers used intuition significantly more than did most middle- or lower-level managers" indicates that both top level managers and middle level managers have the ability to use either intuitive reasoning or methodical, step-by-step reasoning in making decisions.

C. Irrelevant. Even if this were true, it wouldn't explain why "intuition is actually more effective than careful, methodical reasoning"

D. Irrelevant. The comparison is between the success of the methods used by top managers versus middle level and low level managers.

E. CORRECT. This explain why intuition is considered a more successful way of decision making than step-by-step reasoning by indicating that the managers who employ the former (Top managers) are more successful.

50.

The argument concludes that since the evaluated cookware is superior to all other cookware advertised in Kitchen, lending the magazine name to the line of cookware will DECREASE the revenue of the magazine as the reputation of the magazine will not suffer.

The argument assumes that reputation alone is responsible for generating revenue.

Let's use the negation technique to find which option destroys the conclusion.

A. Negation:

Other line of cookware is superior to that which will carry the Kitchen name.

This does not affect the conclusion. We are clearly told that among all the cookware advertised in Kitchen, the one Kitchen is lending it's name to is of the highest quality. Therefore it is unlikely that the readers of Kitchen will be put off by a product that is not advertised in Kitchen if it's of a superior quality.

B. Negation:

Kitchen will license the use of its name for any products other than the line of cookware.

Unless we are explicitly told that the quality of these products is below the expected standard, it does not affect the conclusion.

C. CORRECT

Negation:

Makers of cookware will find Kitchen a less attractive advertising vehicle because the magazine's name is associated with a competing product.

This gives us a reason why the revenue of Kitchen might decrease despite the line of cookware it is lending its name to being of superior quality.

If the competing cookware lines refuse to advertise in the Kitchen, it will lose its advertisement revenues from those companies.

D. Negation:

Consumers who are regular readers of Kitchen magazine will be attracted to the cookware by the Kitchen name.

This would further strengthen the conclusion rather than weaken it.

E. Kitchen is not one of the most prestigious cooking-related magazines.

This neither strengthens nor weakens the conclusion. We are simply concerned with how Kitchen's plan of lending its name will affect revenues.

51.

A. This is irrelevant. The question is whether writing VOID on the check will deter the production of counterfeit checks.

B. Once again, this is out of scope. Irrespective of the denomination for which the fake checks are made, will issuing checks with dots too small to be picked up by the electronic scanner used by counterfeit checks, help?

C. CORRECT.

This tells us that a layman will not be able to distinguish between a counterfeit check and real one as the dots used on the real check will be too tiny for the naked eye to catch.

D. This strengthens the plan slightly by telling us that the cost of such new checks will be no more than the old ones.

E. This also strengthens the plan by telling us that the electronic scanners in the near future will not be able to duplicate such tiny dots.

Assumptions Part 2

1.

The Police Commissioner's proposal hopes to decrease the number of crimes in city Y by shifting police officers from low-crime to high-crime districts. His proposal is based on data that demonstrate that crime decreases when additional police officers are moved into a district. However, the data do not mention anything about the effect on the districts from which the police officers were removed. The commissioner's plan is based on the assumption that the movement of police officers will not have any adverse effects on the low-crime districts.

(A) While it is encouraging that a similar plan worked successfully in City X, this fact is certainly not essential for the success of the plan in City Y. The cities may be so different as to make the comparison meaningless.

(B) The police commissioner's proposal is focused solely on decreasing the number of crimes in city Y. The severity of the crimes has no bearing on whether the commissioner's proposal will succeed or not.

(C) The actual numerical distinction between high and low-crime areas of the city is immaterial to the commissioner's proposal. For instance, if the number of crimes committed in all high crime districts was only double (instead of more than triple) the number of crimes committed in low crime districts, the proposal could still be valid.

(D) It would be practically beneficial to the commissioner's plan if there were more low crime than high crime districts in city Y. This would enable the movement of police officers to every high crime district. However, this is not necessary to achieve the commissioner's goal of decreasing the total number of crimes in city Y. Even if there were more high-crime districts than low-crime districts in city Y, police officers could still be shifted to some (though not all) high-crime districts, and thereby possibly reduce the total number of crimes in city Y.

(E) CORRECT. The police commissioner's proposal would not make sense if districts of the city from which police officers are removed experience significant crime increases shortly after the removal of those officers. This would at least partially, if not fully, negate the reduction in the number of crimes in the high-crime districts. This choice establishes that, in fact, the low-crime districts do NOT suffer from significant crime increases after the removal of some officers--an essential assumption upon which the commissioner's proposal depends.

2.

The argument concludes that rising sea levels caused by global warming will destroy major coastal population centers and displace millions of people. Any assumption in support of this conclusion would have to corroborate that these events will definitively take place.

(A) CORRECT. If new technological developments in the next century allow people to divert rising seas from the world's cities (i.e., population centers), cities will not be destroyed and millions of people will not be displaced. Thus, a necessary assumption is that these technologies will not be developed.

(B) A simple awareness of the steps to reduce emissions in no way undermines the argument's conclusion, as this answer choice does not describe any action being taken by individuals. Additionally, greenhouse gases are never mentioned as the primary by-product of human activity that causes global warming, and are therefore not sufficient to address the argument.

(C) The argument never suggests that all coastal population centers are similarly affected; this choice is too extreme and overreaching for the argument's conclusion.

(D) This might be true, but it is not an assumption on which the conclusion rests. Instead, this answer choice is simply an inference that might be drawn from the premises.

(E) The idea that human activity is the sole cause of global warming is neither suggested nor assumed by the argument. In addition, the wording "sole cause" is too extreme.

3.

As an advertisement, this passage attempts to entice the reader into purchasing a new HitItFar driver by touting its benefits, both implied or explicit. The key to answering this question is to be able to analyze each claim to determine whether it is implied, explicitly stated, or neither.

(A) By asking the reader rhetorically "isn't it time you added power ... and distance ... [by switching to the HitItFar driver]?", the advertisement implies that the use of the club will add "power ... and distance" and, hence, will improve one's play.

(B) CORRECT. The advertisement states that the 12 major championships winner have recently switched to the new driver. There is nothing in the passage to imply that any of them were using the driver at the time of their victories; hence, this claim is neither implied, nor made explicitly, in the passage.

(C) It is a reasonable assumption that professional golfers, particularly those skilled enough to win a major championship, are experts and know what constitutes a great club. The advertisement makes this implication and reinforces it by citing the recent decision of these golfers to switch to the HitItFar driver; this provides an implicit expert endorsement for the HitItFar driver.

(D) The point of the advertisement is to prompt the reader into purchasing a new driver to replace his or her old driver in order to "add power and distance"; this implies that the new driver is superior to the reader's existing driver.

(E) This claim is explicitly stated in the first sentence of the passage.

4.

The researchers claim that Delta-32 prevents its carriers from contracting the Plague. They support this claim by noting that a strikingly large percentage of descendants of Plague survivors carry the mutation. We are asked to find an assumption underlying the claim.

(A) The argument is specific to the relationship between Delta-32 and resistance to the Plague. Other diseases are irrelevant.

(B) Again, the argument is specific to the relationship between Delta-32 and resistance to the Plague. Other diseases are irrelevant.

(C) Delta-32 may have existed in its current form before the sixteenth century and the merit of the argument would not change.

(D) The argument does not claim that Delta-32 prevents all bacteria-caused disease.

(E) CORRECT. The researchers claim that Delta-32 prevented its carriers from contracting the Plague on the basis of its presence in descendants of Plague survivors. But it is theoretically possible that these descendants carry the mutation Delta-32 because the Plague mutated the genes of their ancestors. In order to claim that the mutation prevented the Plague, we must assume that the Plague did not cause the mutation Delta-32.

5.

The author concludes that one will only be able to determine the age of a Brazilian ash by counting its rings if the temperature in the tree's environment never exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit. The author bases this conclusion on the fact that the tree loses rings when the temperature exceeds that level. However, if the number of rings lost by a Brazilian ash at high temperatures can be predicted, it may be possible to determine the age of a tree even if the temperature exceeds 95 degrees.

(A) The argument says nothing about precipitation. This answer choice is out of scope since it would require a number of other assumptions to make it relevant to the argument's conclusion.

(B) Whether other trees share this feature is irrelevant; the argument focuses only on the Brazilian ash.

(C) The number of days of excessive heat needed to cause the tree to lose rings is irrelevant.

(D) The thickness of the rings is irrelevant.

(E) CORRECT. The conclusion is that the rings will be a reliable measure only if the temperature never exceeds 95 degrees. This is true only if there is no way to predict how many rings would be lost when the temperature does exceed 95 degrees. (If it were possible to predict this, one might be able to assess the age of a tree using its rings even if the temperature had exceeded 95 degrees.)

6.

The conclusion of this argument is that the national identification system ("using licenses for purposes not directly related to operating a motor vehicle") is un-American. The basis for this claim is that such a system would allow the government to restrict the liberty of its people. The necessary assumption is one that connects restrictions on liberties to the concept of "un-American" policies.

(A) The author never mentions future presidential elections, or the role of the president in such a national identification system. Therefore, the conclusion that the national identification system is un-American does not depend on this assumption.

(B) Whether the government will soon, or will ever, start curtailing the activities of dissidents is irrelevant to this argument: that the national identification system is un-American simply because it restricts the liberties of U.S. citizens. Even if the government does not abuse the power the national identification system provides, the system could still be considered un-American.

(C) CORRECT. This choice connects the concept of "un-American" policies to restrictions on liberties, essentially defining blanket restrictions on citizens as un-American.

(D) Whether Americans are willing to give up their right to travel freely is irrelevant to this argument: that the national identification system is un-American simply because it restricts the liberties of U.S. citizens. Even if Americans were willing to give up their right to move about without identification, the system could still be considered un-American.

(E) While the author may be inclined to agree that Americans should resist the government regulation of their lives that the national identification system represents, this argument does not depend on such an assumption. In fact, the author makes a distinction between the national identification system and "licenses for purposes...directly related to operating a motor vehicle," so it is possible that the author considers some government regulation reasonable.

7.

The argument presents the facts of an apparent change in a magazine's cover features since the new publisher took control. While a gossip columnist hailed the change, newspaper editorials disagreed and concluded that the publisher favored profit over reporting. The editorials are the opponents of the gossip columnist; since their conclusion is about the publisher's desires, there must be an assumption connecting the publisher to the covers.

(A) This choice is irrelevant, as it is not connected to the conclusion. The activities of celebrities have nothing to do with the publisher's interests.

(B) CORRECT. Since the conclusion concerns the publisher's desires based on the content of the magazine covers, the editorials have to assume that the publisher decides who is to be a cover subject. If not, there is no connection between the covers and the publisher's interests.

(C) This choice is the opposite of a necessary assumption. For the editorials to conclude that the publisher prefers profits to reporting, they have to assume that the two are mutually exclusive.

(D) "Some" means "at least one," so this is not a powerful statement in any direction. Furthermore, even if several such stars were running for political office, it is not at all necessary to assume that to conclude that the publisher was more interested in profits.

(E) This choice is not correct. While it is true that the editorials must assume model and movie star covers are likely to sell more copies, it does not have to be assumed that such covers will result in the sale of triple the number of copies, or any other specific number.

8.

The conclusion of the argument is that renewable sources of energy, chiefly solar and wind, will be less risky for certain utilities than nonrenewable sources, such as oil and gas. The basis for this claim is that the renewable sources will provide stable, low-cost supplies of energy, whereas the prices for nonrenewable sources will fluctuate according to availability. We are asked to find an assumption underlying this argument. In order for this argument to be valid, it must in fact be true that these renewable sources of energy will provide stable, low-cost supplies.

(A) The utility companies' claim has to do with the supply risk of the new energy sources, not with how these sources are received by the public.

(B) If no new supplies of traditional energy sources are found, then it is true that perhaps these nonrenewable supplies will continue to fluctuate in price in a risky manner. However, the argument does not depend upon any assumption about the future discovery of oil and gas supplies.

(C) CORRECT. If we assume that weather patterns are consistent and predictable, then with the stated premises, we can conclude that solar and wind power will be less risky than oil and gas. If, on the other hand, weather patterns are not consistent and predictable, then solar and wind power are not reliable and thus will not provide "stable energy supplies at low cost." Thus, the argument's conclusion directly depends on this assumption.

(D) To reach the required conclusion, it is not necessary to assume that the conversion technology for new sources is not more expensive than the present technology.

(E) This choice does not directly affect the argument. Whether or not energy produced through combustion can be made less risky, the new energy sources might still be less risky than the older sources.

9.

We are given two premises based on survey results: first, vanilla is the best-selling flavor of ice cream and, second, those who prefer chocolate usually don't order vanilla. The author concludes that vanilla-flavored candy should sell better than chocolate-flavored candy. The author bases this conclusion on the assumption that it is valid to extend the survey's results beyond ice cream to include candy.

(A) As a stand-alone, this choice makes common sense but, in the argument, it would undermine the author's conclusion. We are asked to find an assumption upon which the author relies, which means the correct assumption should support the author's conclusion.

(B) This choice is either irrelevant at best (the survey does not address children specifically) or would undermine the author's conclusion, at worst. We are asked to find an assumption upon which the author relies, which means the correct assumption should support the author's conclusion.

(C) Preferences for flavors neither vanilla nor chocolate are outside of the scope of this argument.

(D) This choice addresses only ice cream preferences; it does not provide any information to tie ice cream preferences to candy preferences.

(E) CORRECT. This assumption supports the author's conclusion by tying ice cream preferences directly to candy preferences.

10.

The conclusion of the argument is that the media are wrong in saying that the economy is entering a phase of growth and prosperity. The basis for that claim is that the number of people filing for bankruptcy has increased every month for the last six months and that bankruptcy lawyers are busier than they have been in years. In order for this argument to be valid, however, the author has to assume that the increase in the number of bankruptcies is a result of the state of the economy and not the result of something unrelated.

(A) This statement does not have to be true for the claim that the media are wrong about the economy to hold. Even if unemployment rates are useful indicators of growth and prosperity, the media could still be wrong about the economy (e.g., if there are other indicators that show problems in other areas).

(B) This does not have to be true for the conclusion to hold. Productivity could be a good measure of economic growth, but the media could still be wrong about the economy (e.g., if there are other indicators that show problems in other areas).

(C) CORRECT. This has to be true for the conclusion to hold. If legislation has recently been passed that makes it easier to obtain bankruptcy, then the evidence cited would be less relevant. The increased number of bankruptcies could have been the result of the easier process rather than of a poor economy.

(D) This does not have to be true for the conclusion to hold. An increase in the number of bankruptcy lawyers would not explain the increase in the number of bankruptcy filings.

(E) This does not have to be true for the claim that the media are wrong about the economy to hold. Even if the media did not often misrepresent the current state of economic affairs, the argument that the media are wrong might still hold.

12.

The correct answer is B.

The conclusion of the argument is that Michelangelo must have completed the painting between 1507 and 1509. The basis for that claim is that the painting depicts a coin that did not exist before 1507 and that it contains a pigment that Michelangelo ceased using in 1509. We are asked to find an assumption that completes the logic of this argument.

Choice A is incorrect. We do not need to assume that no stocks of the pigment existed after 1509. The argument is concerned only with the year in which Michelangelo stopped using the pigment.

Choice B is correct. In order to conclude that the painting must have been completed before 1509 on the basis of the pigment, we must assume that he did not begin the painting before 1509 using the old pigment and complete the painting after 1509 with the new pigment.

Choice C is incorrect. The fact that the general public knew of the coin in 1507 is irrelevant to the conclusion.

Choice D is incorrect. The fact that the panel cannot be tested for age does not relate to either the coin or the pigment, the two bases for the conclusion.

Choice E is incorrect. Whether Michelangelo's painting style changed during this period does not relate to either the coin or the pigment.

12.

The conclusion of the argument is that "Company X's fuel costs this year will be significantly higher than they were last year. Why? Because some of the company's plants switched from oil to natural gas when the price of gas was lower, and now the price of gas has outstripped the price of oil. We are asked to find an assumption that is necessary for the argument to work.

(A) Whether Company X has the money to cover its costs does not affect the amount of those costs.

(B) We do not need to assume that the costs cannot be offset by reducing expenditures in other areas in order for Company X's costs to be higher.

(C) We do not need to assume that gas will never be cheaper than oil in order for Company X's costs to be higher.

(D) CORRECT. The author does not take into account the fact that only "some" of the company's plants converted to natural gas. Some of the plants, then, still use oil, which is now cheaper. So in order to conclude that the company will have to spend more on fuel, the author must assume that the extra cost of the natural gas for the plants that converted is at least as much as the cost of the oil for the plants that did not.

(E) We do not need to assume that the price of oil will not suddenly rise in order for the argument to work.

13.

The advertisement discusses the merits of Avian Oculars, explaining that they are reasonably priced and contain several popular features. The advertisement concludes, however, by encouraging readers to use Avian Oculars in order to see some of the world's rarest bird species. A proper assumption must reasonably connect these diverse ideas.

(A) The argument states that Avian Oculars are lightweight, but makes no direct comparison to traditional binoculars.

(B) Although the advertisement is geared toward bird watchers, nothing indicates that Avian Oculars should be used only by bird watchers. Even if Avian Oculars were used by individuals other than bird watchers, no information in the advertisement would be undermined.

(C) CORRECT. The conclusion of the advertisement is that, by using Avian Oculars, the reader will see some of the world's rarest bird species on his or her next bird watching trip. In order for this to be true, the reader would have to have access to these rare bird species. Even the best

bird watching technology would prove useless to view a particular species of bird if the species were not present.

(D) This choice is true, but it is not an assumption. Remember, an assumption is an unstated piece of information that ties a conclusion to its premises. This particular answer choice is simply a stated premise from the second sentence of the argument.

(E) This argument presents one specific product, Avian Oculars, which is specifically designed with birding enthusiasts in mind. From this information, we cannot assume that birding enthusiasts themselves determined the specifications of Avian Oculars, nor can we make any assumptions about who determines the specifications of other products.

14.

The basic structure of this argument is fact that "mold is almost always found in places where there is substantial moisture," so therefore, to avoid mold and the resultant mold poisoning, then people should take steps to prevent wet areas. This argument assumes that wet areas occur first, causing mold to grow. Conversely, this assumption requires that the mold growth itself does not occur first, creating wet areas as a result.

(A) CORRECT. The argument depends on the assumption that the reason mold and wetness are observed together is that wet areas cause mold growth. If the reverse causation (mold causes wetness) were true, then keeping all plumbing in good condition to prevent leakage would do little to prevent the growth of mold. This choice eliminates the alternate causation.

(B) If most homeowners know enough about plumbing to determine whether theirs is in good condition, then the recommendation made in this argument would be more useful. However, this is not an assumption on which the argument depends.

(C) Even if mold could grow in dry areas, the fact that mold is almost always found in wet areas is still valid. This is the fact upon which the argument is based, so the argument does not depend on the unnecessarily absolute assertion that mold cannot grow in dry areas.

(D) Even if some varieties of mold are harmless, the conclusion of this argument, that "one should make sure to keep all internal plumbing in good condition to prevent leakage" and minimize mold growth, could still be valid. Therefore, this argument does not depend on the unnecessarily absolute assertion that no varieties of mold are harmless.

(E) Whether mold spores can be filtered from the air may be relevant to a conclusion about the health effects of mold in the home, but it is not directly relevant to this conclusion, that "one should make sure to keep all internal plumbing in good condition to prevent leakage" and minimize mold growth.

15.

The conclusion of the argument is that the majority of American citizens believe in the death penalty while the majority of Filipino citizens do not. This conclusion is based solely on the fact that the death penalty is legal in the United States while it is now illegal in the Philippines. The argument assumes that there is a link between the legal status of capital punishment and the beliefs of the majority of citizens.

(A) While the number of murders per year might influence beliefs about capital punishment, there is certainly no necessary correlation. Moreover, the difference in the number of murders per year in the United States and the Philippines has little relevance without knowing the relative populations of the two countries.

(B) CORRECT. It is possible that the legal status of capital punishment in the United States and the Philippines does NOT align with how the majority of citizens in those countries view the death penalty. For example, it may be that the governing bodies of one or both countries are out of touch with the views of the populace. The argument assumes that this is NOT the case.

(C) Even if there were strong voices opposing the death penalty in the United States, the argument might still hold. The argument is based on the views of the majority of citizens in the United States, not on all US citizens.

(D) The argument addresses whether or not citizens of the United States and the Philippines believe in the death penalty. The reasons behind those beliefs, as presented in this choice, are irrelevant to the logic of the argument.

(E) The argument is centered on whether or not citizens of the United States and the Philippines believe in the death penalty. While the legal standard used to sentence criminals to the death penalty might impact why individuals hold certain beliefs, it has no impact on the logic of the argument.

16.

Although the premises of this argument suggest only a correlation between smoking and anxiety or nervousness, the argument has a causal conclusion: it concludes that smoking causes individuals to be anxious and nervous (i.e., that A causes B). Any assumption in a causal argument must support the causal "direction" of the conclusion, that A causes B as opposed to some other explanation. Often, assumptions support a causal conclusion either by eliminating an alternate cause for the conclusion (that C did not cause B) or by demonstrating that the causation, if one exists, is in the proper direction (that B did not cause A).

(A) The argument concludes that smoking causes anxiety and nervousness. Whether these maladies lead to more serious health problems is not relevant to the conclusion.

(B) CORRECT. For smoking to be the cause of anxiety and nervousness (i.e., that A caused B) it must be true that these individuals were not more likely to be anxious and nervous before they started smoking. If smokers had these preconditions, which contributed to their decision to begin smoking (i.e., that B caused A), our conclusion – that smoking causes these maladies – would be incorrect.

(C) The argument concludes that smoking causes anxiety and nervousness. The number of survey respondents is not relevant to the conclusion.

(D) The argument concludes that smoking causes anxiety and nervousness. The awareness of the health problems related to smoking is not relevant to the conclusion.

(E) The argument is not based on the immediate impact that smoking has on anxiety and nervousness. Moreover, the argument never compares some smokers to other smokers.

17.

The argument concludes that the stock of the firm will experience rapid growth. The basis for this claim is that the firm has shown strong historical performance that is likely to continue in the future. The stock will appreciate dramatically in the future as a result only if it has not already appreciated in anticipation of the company's expected growth.

(A) The argument focused on the potential for stock appreciation rather than company weight in the industry. A company with a large market share may well experience poor stock performance, while a company with a small market share may continue to grow and increase in value.

(B) Since the conclusion of the argument is made regarding the future outlook, it is not necessary to assume that the company had been growing, or had even existed, prior to the past 5 years. A new firm that has been in existence for only 5 years may well present an excellent investment opportunity.

(C) This statement is explicitly stated in the argument and therefore does not have to be assumed.

(D) CORRECT. If this assumption were not true, i.e. if the current stock price already reflects future growth prospects, then the premise that the company will experience high growth is certainly insufficient to warrant future stock price appreciation, since all of this growth would already be reflected in the current price. It is necessary to assume that the current price of Company X stock does not yet reflect the promising growth prospects of the firm, allowing the possibility that the stock price will rise further.

(E) Note that the argument makes a claim about the absolute return of stock X rather than its return relative to the industry. Therefore, to justify the rapid growth in the stock price, it is not necessary to assume that the company will outperform its competitors. For example, if the industry itself is growing very rapidly, other companies in the industry can experience just as rapid appreciation in stock prices.

18.

Antoine is alarmed that the number of children on antipsychotic medication has increased by 73 percent. Lucy begins her reply with "but," indicating that she is about to counter either Antoine's facts or his alarm; she accepts his facts but addresses his alarm. If the number of children taking antipsychotic medication is still within the normal range, the rate at which the total number has increased is not cause for alarm. Lucy uses information about adult use of such drugs to imply that the lower rate of antipsychotic drug use in children must also be normal.

(A) Lucy's argument is about a normal level of antipsychotic drug use; how rarely or frequently that level is exceeded is outside the scope of her argument.

(B) Lucy uses the percentage of adults taking antipsychotic medication to illustrate normal levels of the use of such drugs. It happens that the percentage of children taking such medication last year was lower than the percentage of adults, but her argument does not require the assumption that that will always be the case.

(C) CORRECT. If there is no difference between children and adults on the matter of antipsychotic drug use, then Lucy can legitimately use information about adult use of such drugs to imply that the lower rate of antipsychotic drug use by children must also be normal. On the other hand, if this assumption were not valid – for example, if children responded differently to the drugs, or if the rate of the drug use by adults is considered too high for children – then Lucy's statement would not be enough to address Antoine's alarm.

(D) Lucy's argument is not based on the figure Antoine cites and does not assume its accuracy or inaccuracy. Rather, her argument uses the relative adult and child rates of antipsychotic drug use to point out that Antoine's statistic is not inconsistent with a normal rate of such use in children.

(E) The fear of random violence by adolescents is not part of Lucy's argument; this statement is irrelevant.

19.

The question asks for an assumption made by the reader. The reader's conclusion is that academic rigor is in decline, based on the percentage of colleges granting a majority of their degrees in the liberal arts mentioned in the article. To draw this conclusion, the reader must assume that degrees not in the liberal arts were not as academically rigorous.

(A) It is not necessary for the reader to assume that the percentage will continue to drop. The reader's conclusion concerns the present. Assumptions must be both unstated and necessary.

(B) This extreme statement is not a necessary assumption. The reader does not have to assume that all colleges should do so; the conclusion only relies on an assumption that 5.5% is too low.

(C) CORRECT. To conclude that the low percentage of colleges granting the majority of their degrees in the liberal arts indicates a decline in academic rigor, the reader must assume that other degree programs required less academic rigor. If not, this evidence would not indicate a decline in academic rigor.

(D) This is not a necessary assumption. The relative importance of academic rigor is irrelevant to the reader's claim. That claim only asserts that academic rigor, in isolation, is in decline. The claim has nothing to do with its importance relative to other attributes.

(E) It is not necessary to assume anything specific about the schools that do not grant a majority of their degrees in the liberal arts, as they are not the subject of the evidence or the conclusion. The reader feels that the low percentage mentioned is evidence enough; it is not necessary to assume any arbitrary level below the 50% of degrees standard that the article and the reader use.

20.

The doctor concludes that federal legislation prohibiting the sale of video games to minors would help reduce the incidence of carpal tunnel syndrome. This conclusion hinges on the assumption that the only way for adolescents to access video games is to purchase the games themselves.

(A) Majority consensus in the legislature has no bearing on whether the recommended legislation would actually help to curb carpal tunnel syndrome.

(B) This argument states that "adolescents who play video games on a regular basis are three times as likely to develop carpal tunnel syndrome." Thus, the argument directly indicates that carpal tunnel syndrome does not affect all adolescents who play video games. Rather than an assumption, this answer choice is simply an inference drawn from the text.

(C) The fact that adolescents can develop carpal tunnel syndrome by means other than playing video games has no bearing on whether the recommended legislation would help to curb carpal tunnel syndrome.

(D) CORRECT. In order for the doctor's recommended legislation to reduce the incidence of carpal tunnel syndrome among adolescents, the prohibition from the purchase of video games must result in the actual possession of fewer video games. Thus, it must be assumed that parents will not simply purchase video games for their children.

(E) The fact that video games can benefit adolescents in other ways has no bearing on whether the recommended legislation would help to curb carpal tunnel syndrome.

21.

The management concludes that a 10% increase in gasoline prices will result in a 10% increase in revenues from the sale of gasoline. In order to reach this conclusion, we need to assume that the amount of gasoline sold will not drop despite the higher prices.

(A) CORRECT. This assumption is critical to justify the projection that a 10% increase in gas prices will result in a 10% increase in revenues from gasoline sales. Note that if this assumption does not hold, the management's projection will collapse. For example, if consumers switch to public transportation or simply start to drive less in response to the higher prices, the revenues of the company will not increase by the same amount as the increase in the sales price. In fact, if the decline in gasoline consumption is substantial (e.g. 20%) the company will experience lower rather than higher revenues.

(B) The issue of profits is irrelevant to the management's conclusion about revenues from the sale of gasoline.

(C) Since the management's projection concerns only the sales of gasoline, revenues of other business lines are beyond the scope of the argument.

(D) Since the management's conclusion concentrates on revenues, the issue of costs is beyond the scope of the argument.

(E) It is not necessary to assume that the supply of gasoline will decline, since the price increase can be driven by a variety of other factors, such as production costs, market environment, and others.

22.

The conclusion of the argument is contained in the last sentence, that "the methods that the prospector had used to determine the size of the oil deposit must have been inaccurate." The evidence provided is that the prospector reported a large oil deposit that was later determined to be much smaller in size. We are asked to find an unstated assumption that makes the conclusion valid based upon this evidence. In order to do this, we need to assume that there is not another reason why the prospector might have reported a larger oil deposit than actually existed.

(A) It is not necessary to the conclusion that a third party affirmed the company's determination that the oil deposit turned out to be small. The conclusion accepts that the oil deposit was indeed smaller than indicated by the prospector, and focuses on the cause of the discrepancy as opposed to the discrepancy itself.

(B) CORRECT. The argument concludes that the prospector's methods resulted in inaccurate measurements of the size of the oil deposit. This assumes that the prospector did not simply misreport or misrepresent the measurements, presumably for personal gain. This answer choice addresses the most plausible alternative explanation to the one given, and is necessary for the conclusion to stand based upon the evidence presented.

(C) The commercial feasibility or profitability of the oil deposit is not integral to the argument, or its conclusion. This statement is not an assumption that would support the conclusion.

(D) Whether or not the prospector utilized the same methods in regards to measuring the oil deposits in other locations is not relevant to the argument, or the conclusion.

(E) The fact that the company had a long operating history and experience in drilling oil wells is not relevant, in that the company's measurements of the size of the oil field are accepted as given in the argument.

The correct answer is B.

23.

This argument concludes that the city needs educational leadership that can solve problems, not create them. It illustrates this claim by discussing the prohibition on cell phones. This prohibition is given as an example of the leadership creating problems where none exist. The necessary assumption is one that bridges the logic gap between the premise and the conclusion.

(A) CORRECT. In order to use the issue of students having cell phones as an example of how the educational leadership creates problems where none exist, the author must assume that students having cell phones is not an important problem.

(B) The argument and its conclusion are not about students' needs. They concern the quality of educational leadership. Thus, this choice is irrelevant; it is not necessary for the argument to assume anything about students' needs.

(C) This choice is irrelevant; the argument does not concern faculty and staff cell phones, and thus no assumption about them is necessary. Assumptions must be both unstated and necessary to the conclusion.

(D) The argument and its conclusion are not about students' needs. They concern the quality of educational leadership. Thus, this choice is irrelevant; it is not necessary for the argument to assume anything about students' needs.

(E) The argument does not rank the various attributes of good educational leadership. It only discusses one quality. Thus, no assumption about the relative importance of attributes is necessary, and this choice is irrelevant.

24.

The argument proposes that directing chiropractic treatment toward adults with severe back problems is the best way to minimize the proportion of the population that suffers from back pain. The argument assumes a high degree of overlap between those adults who suffer from severe back problems and all people who suffer from back pain, where the former group may comprise only a subset of the latter group. It also assumes that there is not another recommendation that could better accomplish the goal of minimizing back pain for a larger segment of the population than treating just those adults with severe back problems.

(A) The argument does not depend upon whether or not chiropractic treatment can or cannot be used in conjunction with other medical treatments. The fact that people could benefit from other forms of treatment aside from chiropractic care weakens the argument to a slight degree, and does not act as a supportive assumption.

(B) The relative degree of insurance coverage of chiropractic care compared with other medical treatments is not vital to the argument. Also, that insurance carriers cover chiropractic care to a lesser degree weakens the argument marginally, and does not act as a supportive assumption.

(C) CORRECT. This statement rules out the possibility that chiropractic care or other medical treatments could effectively prevent or lessen back pain among those people who have not yet developed severe back problems.

(D) That chiropractic treatment is more effective over time is irrelevant to the argument.

(E) The economic impact of severe back pain and other problems is not addressed in the argument. Instead, addressing back pain is treated as an intrinsic goal, with no mention of economic externalities.

25.

The argument presents the facts of an apparent change in a magazine's cover features since the new publisher took control. While a gossip columnist hailed the change, newspaper editorials disagreed and concluded that the publisher favored profit over reporting. The editorials are the opponents of the gossip columnist; since their conclusion is about the publisher's desires, there must be an assumption connecting the publisher to the covers.

(A) This choice is irrelevant, as it is not connected to the conclusion. The activities of celebrities have nothing to do with the publisher's interests.

(B) CORRECT. Since the conclusion concerns the publisher's desires based on the content of the magazine covers, the editorials have to assume that the publisher decides who is to be a cover subject. If not, there is no connection between the covers and the publisher's interests.

(C) This choice is the opposite of a necessary assumption. For the editorials to conclude that the publisher prefers profits to reporting, they have to assume that the two are mutually exclusive.

(D) "Some" means "at least one," so this is not a powerful statement in any direction. Furthermore, even if several such stars were running for political office, it is not at all necessary to assume that to conclude that the publisher was more interested in profits.

(E) This choice is not correct. While it is true that the editorials must assume model and movie star covers are likely to sell more copies, it does not have to be assumed that such covers will result in the sale of triple the number of copies, or any other specific number.

26.

The argument concludes that for-profit colleges enroll a greater proportion of financially disadvantaged students than do non-profit colleges. This conclusion is based on the fact that students at for-profit colleges draw a disproportionate share of federal and state financial aid. The argument assumes a link between the proportion of aid received and the proportion of financially disadvantaged students enrolled. In so doing, it assumes that there are not other possible reasons for the disproportionate aid distribution.

(A) The conclusion makes a claim about the differences between for-profit and non-profit colleges. Differences among non-profit colleges – such as public vs. private – are irrelevant to the argument.

(B) CORRECT. One alternative reason that might explain the disproportionate aid distribution is that for-profit colleges engaged in fraudulent practices to obtain unneeded financial assistance for their students. If this were true, then much of the aid was distributed based not on the actual financial situation of the students but on the ability of colleges to defraud federal and state governments. This answer choice asserts that this was NOT in fact the case, thereby eliminating this alternative explanation and highlighting a key assumption upon which the argument rests.

(C) The argument's claim is centered on proportions. The actual number of students receiving aid at for-profit vs. non-profit colleges is irrelevant to the conclusion.

(D) The relative educational quality of for-profit vs. non-profit colleges lies outside the scope of the argument, which is focused solely on differences in financial aid distribution.

(E) The issue addressed by the argument is the amount of financial aid distributed to students at two types of institutions. Whether students successfully repay their loans after college is immaterial to the claim made in the argument.

27.

Research indicates that there is a connection between being married and being happy and healthy. Media commentators have concluded that marriage causes happiness and health. However, one could reasonably conclude from the research that the cause and effect are the reverse: being happy and healthy makes a person more likely to get married.

(A) The research compared married people to unmarried people. Neither the researchers nor the media commentators made any distinction between newlyweds and those who had been married a long time, so this assumption is not necessary.

(B) The type of wedding is outside the scope of this argument. The research compared married people to unmarried people, but made no distinction based upon the type of wedding. Thus, this assumption is unnecessary.

(C) At first, this statement may seem necessary—after all, if the commentators conclude that marriage causes happiness, a lack of depression in married people would certainly support that conclusion. However, the statement is too extreme. One depressed married person does not invalidate the research indicating that, on average, married people are healthier and happier than non-married people.

(D) CORRECT. This statement eliminates the alternative interpretation of the research findings—that being happy and healthy makes a person more likely to get married.

(E) The research compared married people to unmarried people. Neither the researchers nor the media commentators made any distinction between harmonious marriages and combative marriages, so this assumption is not necessary.

28.

The text tells us only that Country X imposes heavy tariffs on imported goods and that Company Y believes it can increase long-term profits by opening a factory in Country X so it can avoid having to import its goods into Country X. We are asked to select an answer choice that is an assumption required for Company Y's belief to be valid.

(A) While this is a tempting answer, it is not necessary to assume that Company Y will be able to obtain all necessary permits. The text does not indicate whether Company Y will actually be able to implement the plan, only that the plan could increase profits if implemented.

(B) We are given no information about Company Y's activities in other countries.

(C) CORRECT. In order for Company Y to conclude that it can increase long-term profits by opening a factory in Country X, it must believe that a sustainable market exists for its products in that country. Otherwise, the new factory would not generate revenue and the company could not recoup the cost of the new factory.

(D) We are given no information about tariffs in Company Y's home country.

(E) We need not assume that labor costs are lower in Country X. It could be that labor costs in Country X are higher than those in Company Y's home country but the increased cost of labor is still less than the tariffs. This would result in a net savings for Company Y in Country X.

29.

The text tells us only that Country X imposes heavy tariffs on imported goods and that Company Y believes it can increase long-term profits by opening a factory in Country X so it can avoid having to import its goods into Country X. We are asked to select an answer choice that is an assumption required for Company Y's belief to be valid.

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in that country. Otherwise, the new factory would not generate revenue and the company could not recoup the cost of the new factory.

(D) We are given no information about tariffs in Company Y's home country.

(E) We need not assume that labor costs are lower in Country X. It could be that labor costs in Country X are higher than those in Company Y's home country but the increased cost of labor is still less than the tariffs. This would result in a net savings for Company Y in Country X.

30.

The conclusion of the argument is that companies should allow other manufacturers to license patented technology. The basis for that claim is that not doing so keeps prices high and harms the consumer. We're asked what the argument assumes ("presupposes") in drawing its conclusion. The correct answer will fill the logic gap between the idea that keeping prices high harms the consumer and that companies should allow other manufacturers to license patented technology. The conclusion is based on the assumption that companies have an obligation of some kind to do what's best for the consumer.

(A) This does not address the moral obligation to the consumers (i.e. "should") of the companies who produced the patented technology, the main point of the conclusion. Furthermore, even if companies could find legal ways to produce similar technologies, the patented technology could still command exorbitant prices, thereby harming the consumer.

(B) CORRECT. The conclusion only makes sense if companies have an obligation to act in the best interest of the customer, as this choice states.

(C) This generally follows along with the author's claim, but we are not required to assume this in order to reach the conclusion that companies who are granted patents are obligated to look out for the best interests of their customers.

(D) This addresses a tangential issue of whether or not consumers could notice the difference between a new patented technology and a possible imitation. This does not address the core issue of the obligation to the consumer.

(E) This does not address the obligation of the companies toward the consumers, or indeed the companies at all.

31.

The conclusion of the argument is that one need not worry about ingesting pesticides when purchasing produce from farms that use only organic pesticides. The basis for that claim is the fact that organic pesticides leave the surface of produce within a few hours of spraying. In order for this argument to be valid, we must assume that the organic pesticides do not harm the produce in any lasting way.

(A) This is unrelated to the argument since the conclusion speaks about not having to worry about ingesting produce on which only organic pesticides were known to be used.

(B) If anything, this statement runs counter to what the argument is saying. If produce that has been sprayed with organic pesticide reaches the final consumer within hours after it is picked, it is possible that the consumer does need be concerned about the pesticides.

(C) The conclusion of the argument is already limited to those farms which use "only organic pesticides."

(D) CORRECT. If a pesticide is capable of penetrating the skin of a fruit or vegetable then, while the organic pesticide will dissipate from the surface of the fruit in a few hours, it may remain inside the fruit. The author of this argument assumes that the pesticides cannot penetrate the skin.

(E) The issue of cost is unrelated to the argument's conclusion about pesticide residues.

32.

The conclusion of the argument is that the prediction of decreased consumer spending has not come to pass. The evidence for this is that there has been no corresponding increase in the amount of money set aside in savings accounts by the general public. This question asks us to find an assumption on which this argument is based. The author assumes that the mere fact that people generally have not been adding more money to their savings accounts means they have not cut down on their discretionary purchases (i.e., non-essential items). In order for this to be valid, we must assume that a savings account is the only mechanism by which someone would save any extra money when reducing discretionary spending.

(A) The state of the economy in the last few months has no bearing on the claim that a lack of extra money deposited in consumer savings accounts is evidence that consumer spending has not decreased.

(B) CORRECT. If there was an alternate explanation for the lack of increase in savings accounts, the claim that the decrease in spending has not taken place would be greatly weakened. This assumption guarantees us that at least one other possible explanation for the lack of increase in savings (i.e. an increase in stocks, certificates of deposit, or other savings vehicles) is NOT true.

(C) Assuming that salaries decreased would actually weaken this argument. If salaries decreased, that may explain the decrease in the amount of money being put aside in savings without necessarily implying a decrease in spending. People could be making less, spending the same, and therefore saving less.

(D) The lack of growth in business sectors has nothing to do with what consumers are doing with their money during the same time period.

(E) The argument says the prediction was made "even [for those whose] jobs were secure." People who find other employment, therefore, would still fall under the economists' prediction and would, if the prediction were true, be expected to cut discretionary spending and save more money.

33.

The conclusion is that nurses should examine patients to determine which deserve to be seen first by the doctors. The basis for this claim is that hospitals lack adequate numbers of physicians.

(A) The idea of having nurses make the initial examination does not depend on increasing the medical staff.

(B) The main premise for the conclusion was that patients ended up waiting due to an under-supply of doctors. There weren't enough doctors to perform the initial examination. If the doctors perform the initial examinations there will be no time saved.

(C) The conclusion rests on whether or not the nurses would be able to perform the examinations, not on what the result of them doing the examinations would be.

(D) The hospitals don't need to be fully staffed with nurses for the nurses to perform the initial examination.

(E) CORRECT. This argument is valid only if we assume that nurses are competent to determine which patients merit immediate treatment.

The correct answer is E.

34.

The correct answer is B. The conclusion of the argument is that "the scientists must have discovered the butterfly at night." Why? Because the butterfly's color matches the green of the foliage, and the butterfly is active only at night. In order for this argument to work, one has to assume that there is no way for the scientists to detect the butterfly during the day, despite its camouflage. If there is a way for the scientists to detect the butterfly during the day, the conclusion is no longer logical.