

ASSUMPTION QUESTIONS

06 2017

Q 552

A newly discovered painting seems to be the work of one of two seventeenth-century artists, either the northern German Johannes Drechen or the Frenchman Louis Birelle, who sometimes painted in the same style as Drechen. Analysis of the carved picture frame, which has been identified as the painting's original seventeenth-century frame, showed that it is made of wood found widely in northern Germany at the time, but rare in the part of France where Birelle lived. This shows that the painting is most likely the work of Drechen.

Which of the following is an assumption that the argument requires?

- (A) The frame was made from wood local to the region where the picture was painted.
- (B) Drechen is unlikely to have ever visited the home region of Birelle in France.
- (C) Sometimes a painting so resembles others of its era that no expert is able to confidently decide who painted it.
- (D) The painter of the picture chose the frame for the picture.
- (E) The carving style of the picture frame is not typical of any specific region of Europe.

Q 581.

Although the school would receive financial benefits if it had soft drink vending machines in the cafeteria, we should not allow them. Allowing soft drink machines there would not be in our students' interest. If our students start drinking more soft drinks, they will be less healthy.

The argument depends on which of the following?

(A) If the soft drink vending machines were placed in the cafeteria, students would consume more soft drinks as a result.

(B) The amount of soft drinks that most students at the school currently drink is not detrimental to their health.

(C) Students are apt to be healthier if they do not drink soft drinks at all than if they just drink small amounts occasionally.

(D) Students will not simply bring soft drinks from home if the soft drink vending machines are not placed in the cafeteria.

(E) The school's primary concern should be to promote good health among its students.

Q 585.

Although there is no record of poet Edmund Spenser's parentage, we do know that as a youth Spenser attended the Merchant Tailors' School in London for a period between 1560 and 1570. Records from this time indicate that the Merchant Tailors' Guild then had only three members named Spenser: Robert Spenser, listed as a gentleman; Nicholas Spenser, elected the Guild's Warden in 1568; and John Spenser, listed as a "journeyman cloth-maker." Of these, the last was likely the least affluent of the three—and most likely Edmund's father, since school accounting records list Edmund as a scholar who attended the school at a reduced fee.

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

- (A) Anybody in sixteenth-century London who made clothing professionally would have had to be a member of the Merchant Tailors' Guild.
- (B) The fact that Edmund Spenser attended the Merchant Tailors' School did not necessarily mean that he planned to become a tailor.
- (C) No member of the Guild could become Guild warden in sixteenth-century London unless he was a gentleman.
- (D) Most of those whose fathers were members of the Merchant Tailors' Guild were students at the Merchant Tailors' School.
- (E) The Merchant Tailors' School did not reduce its fees for the children of the more affluent Guild members.

Q 590.

Economist: The most economically efficient way to reduce emissions of air pollutants is to tax them in proportion to the damage they are likely to cause. But in Country Y, many serious pollutants are untaxed and unregulated, and policy makers strongly oppose new taxes. Therefore, the best way to achieve a reduction in air pollutant emissions in Country Y would be to institute fixed upper limits on them.

Which of the following is an assumption of the economist's argument?

- (A) Policy makers in Country Y oppose all new taxes equally strongly, regardless of any benefits they may provide.
- (B) Country Y's air pollutant emissions would not fall significantly if they were taxed in proportion to the damage they are likely to cause.
- (C) Policy makers in Country Y strongly favor reductions in air pollutant emissions.
- (D) Country Y's policy makers believe that air pollutant emissions should be reduced with maximum economic efficiency.
- (E) Policy makers in Country Y do not oppose setting fixed upper limits on air pollutant emissions as strongly as they oppose new taxes.

Q 607.

Birds have been said to be descended from certain birdlike dinosaur species with which they share distinctive structural features. The fossil record, however, shows that this cannot be so, since there are bird fossils much older than the earliest birdlike dinosaur fossils that have been found.

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

- (A) The birdlike dinosaurs have no descendants.
- (B) There are no flightless dinosaur species that have the distinctive structural features shared by birds and birdlike dinosaurs.
- (C) There are no birdlike dinosaur fossils that are older than the bird fossils but have not yet been unearthed.
- (D) It could not have been the case that some birds were descendant from one of the bird like dinosaur species and other birds from another.
- (E) Birds cannot have been descended from dinosaur species with which the birds do not share the distinctive structural features.

Q 608.

City council member: Demand for electricity has been increasing by 1.5 percent a year, and there simply is no more space to build additional power plants to meet future demand increases. We must therefore begin to curtail usage, which is why I propose passing ordinances requiring energy-conservation measures in all city departments.

The city council member's proposal assumes which of the following?

- (A) Existing power plants do not have the capacity to handle all of the projected increase in demand for electricity.
- (B) No city departments have implemented energy-conservation measures voluntarily.
- (C) Passing ordinances designed to curtail electricity usage will not have negative economic consequences for the city.
- (D) Residential consumers are not responsible for the recent increases in demand for electricity.
- (E) City departments that successfully conserve energy will set a good example for residential and industrial consumers of electricity.

Q 616.

Infotek, a computer manufacturer in Katrovia, has just introduced a new personal computer model that sells for significantly less than any other model. Market research shows, however, that very few Katrovian households without personal computers would buy a computer, regardless of its price. Therefore, introducing the new model is unlikely to increase the number of computers in Katrovian homes.

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

- (A) Infotek achieved the lower price of the new model by using components of lower quality than those used by other manufacturers.
- (B) The main reason cited by consumers in Katrovia for replacing a personal computer is the desire to have an improved model.
- (C) Katrovians in households that already have computers are unlikely to purchase the new Infotek model as an additional computer for home use.
- (D) The price of other personal computers in Karovia is unlikely to drop below the price of Infotek's new model in the near future.
- (E) Most personal computers purchased in Katrovia are intended for home use.

Q 628.

Proposed new safety rules for Beach City airport would lengthen considerably the minimum time between takeoffs from the airport. In consequence, the airport would be able to accommodate 10 percent fewer flights than currently use the airport daily. The city's operating budget depends heavily on taxes generated by tourist spending, and most of the tourists come by plane. Therefore, the proposed new safety rules, if adopted, will reduce the revenue available for the operating budget.

The argument depends on assuming which of the following?

- (A) There are no periods of the day during which the interval between flights taking off from the airport is significantly greater than the currently allowed minimum.
- (B) Few, if any, of the tourists who use Beach City airport do so when their main destination is a neighboring community and not Beach City itself.
- (C) If the proposed safety rules are adopted, the reduction in tourist numbers will not result mainly from a reduction in the number of tourists who spend relatively little in Beach City.
- (D) Increasing the minimum time between takeoffs is the only way to achieve necessary safety improvements without a large expenditure by the city government on airport enhancements.
- (E) The response to the adoption of the new safety rules would not include a large increase in the number of passengers per flight.

Q 635.

Exposure to certain chemicals commonly used in elementary schools as cleaners or pesticides causes allergic reactions in some children. Elementary school nurses in Renston report that the proportion of schoolchildren sent to them for treatment of allergic reactions to those chemicals has increased significantly over the past ten years. Therefore, either Renston's schoolchildren have been exposed to greater quantities of the chemicals, or they are more sensitive to them than schoolchildren were ten years ago.

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

- (A) The number of school nurses employed by Renston's elementary schools has not decreased over the past ten years.
- (B) Children who are allergic to the chemicals are no more likely than other children to have allergies to other substances.
- (C) Children who have allergic reactions to the chemicals are not more likely to be sent to a school nurse now than they were ten years ago.
- (D) The chemicals are not commonly used as cleaners or pesticides in houses and apartment buildings in Renston.
- (E) Children attending elementary school do not make up a larger proportion of Renston's population now than they did ten years ago.

Q 642.

Many people suffer an allergic reaction to certain sulfites, including those that are commonly added to wine as preservatives. However, since there are several winemakers who add sulfites to none of the wines they produce, people who would like to drink wine but are allergic to sulfites can drink wines produced by these winemakers without risking an allergic reaction to sulfites.

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

- (A) These winemakers have been able to duplicate the preservative effect produced by adding sulfites by means that do not involve adding any potentially allergenic substances to their wine.
- (B) Not all forms of sulfite are equally likely to produce the allergic reaction.
- (C) Wine is the only beverage to which sulfites are commonly added.
- (D) Apart from sulfites, there are no substances commonly present in wine that give rise to an allergic reaction.
- (E) Sulfites are not naturally present in the wines produced by these winemakers in amounts large enough to produce an allergic reaction in someone who drinks these wines.

Q 650.

In an experiment, each volunteer was allowed to choose between an easy task and a hard task and was told that another volunteer would do the other task. Each volunteer could also choose to have a computer assign the two tasks randomly. Most volunteers chose the easy task for themselves and under questioning later said they had acted fairly. But when the scenario was described to another group of volunteers, almost all said choosing the easy task would be unfair. This shows that most people apply weaker moral standards to themselves than to others.

Which of the following is an assumption required by this argument?

- (A) At least some volunteers who said they had acted fairly in choosing the easy task would have said that it was unfair for someone else to do so.
- (B) The most moral choice for the volunteers would have been to have the computer assign the two tasks randomly.
- (C) There were at least some volunteers who were assigned to do the hard task and felt that the assignment was unfair.
- (D) On average, the volunteers to whom the scenario was described were more accurate in their moral judgments than the other volunteers were.
- (E) At least some volunteers given the choice between assigning the tasks themselves and having the computer assign them felt that they had made the only fair choice available to them.

Q 657.

The average hourly wage of television assemblers in Vernland has long been significantly lower than that in neighboring Borodia. Since Borodia dropped all tariffs on Vernlandian televisions three years ago, the number of televisions sold annually in Borodia has not changed. However, recent statistics show a drop in the number of television assemblers in Borodia. Therefore, updated trade statistics will probably indicate that the number of televisions Borodia imports annually from Vernland has increased.

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

- (A) The number of television assemblers in Vernland has increased by at least as much as the number of television assemblers in Borodia has decreased.
- (B) Televisions assembled in Vernland have features that televisions assembled in Borodia do not have.
- (C) The average number of hours it takes a Borodian television assembler to assemble a television has not decreased significantly during the past three years.
- (D) The number of televisions assembled annually in Vernland has increased significantly during the past three years.
- (E) The difference between the hourly wage of television assemblers in Vernland and the hourly wage of television assemblers in Borodia is likely to decrease in the next few years.

06 2016

Q 95.

Commentator: The theory of trade retaliation states that countries closed out of any of another country's markets should close some of their own markets to the other country in order to pressure the other country to reopen its markets. If every country acted according to this theory, no country would trade with any other.

The commentator's argument relies on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) No country actually acts according to the theory of trade retaliation.
- (B) No country should block any of its markets to foreign trade.
- (C) Trade disputes should be settled by international tribunal.
- (D) For any two countries, at least one has some market closed to the other.
- (E) Countries close their markets to foreigners to protect domestic producers.

Q 114.

Last year all refuse collected by Shelbyville city services was incinerated. This incineration generated a large quantity of residual ash. In order to reduce the amount of residual ash Shelbyville generates this year to half of last year's total, the city has revamped its collection program. This year city services will separate for recycling enough refuse to reduce the number of truckloads of refuse to be incinerated to half of last year's number.

Which of the following is required for the revamped collection program to achieve its aim?

- (A) This year, no materials that city services could separate for recycling will be incinerated.
- (B) Separating recyclable materials from materials to be incinerated will cost Shelbyville less than half what it cost last year to dispose of the residual ash.
- (C) Refuse collected by city services will contain a larger proportion of recyclable materials this year than it did last year.
- (D) The refuse incinerated this year will generate no more residual ash per truckload incinerated than did the refuse incinerated last year.
- (E) The total quantity of refuse collected by Shelbyville city services this year will be no greater than that collected last year.

06 2015

Q 21.

In recent years, many cabinetmakers have been winning acclaim as artists. But since furniture must be useful, cabinetmakers must exercise their craft with an eye to the practical utility of their product. For this reason, cabinetmaking is not art.

Which of the following is an assumption that supports drawing the conclusion above from the reason given for that conclusion?

- (A) Some furniture is made to be placed in museums, where it will not be used by anyone.
- (B) Some cabinetmakers are more concerned than others with the practical utility of the products they produce.
- (C) Cabinetmakers should be more concerned with the practical utility of their products than they currently are.
- (D) An object is not an art object if its maker pays attention to the object's practical utility.
- (E) Artists are not concerned with the monetary value of their products.

Q 41.

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

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

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

Q 46.

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

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

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

Q 48.

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

The argument depends on which of the following assumptions?

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

Q 56.

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

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

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

Q 75.

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

The conclusion drawn above is based on the assumption that

- (A) problems should be solved at the level in the management hierarchy at which they occur
- (B) employees should be rewarded for accurately reporting problems to their superiors
- (C) problem-solving ability is more important at higher levels than it is at lower levels of the management hierarchy
- (D) chief executives obtain information about problems at lower levels from no source other than their subordinates
- (E) some employees are more concerned about truth than about the way they are perceived by their superiors

Q 77.

A recent report determined that although only 3 percent of drivers on Maryland highways equipped their vehicles with radar detectors, 33 percent of all vehicles ticketed for exceeding the speed limit were equipped with them. Clearly, drivers who equip their vehicles with radar detectors are more likely to exceed the speed limit regularly than are drivers who do not.

The conclusion drawn above depends on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Drivers who equip their vehicles with radar detectors are less likely to be ticketed for exceeding the speed limit than are drivers who do not.
- (B) Drivers who are ticketed for exceeding the speed limit are more likely to exceed the speed limit regularly than are drivers who are not ticketed.
- (C) The number of vehicles that were ticketed for exceeding the speed limit was greater than the number of vehicles that were equipped with radar detectors.
- (D) Many of the vehicles that were ticketed for exceeding the speed limit were ticketed more than once in the time period covered by the report.
- (E) Drivers on Maryland highways exceeded the speed limit more often than did drivers on other state highways not covered in the report.

Q 96.

Although parapsychology is often considered a pseudoscience, it is in fact a genuine scientific enterprise, for it uses scientific methods such as controlled experiments and statistical tests of clearly stated hypotheses to examine the questions it raises.

The conclusion above is properly drawn if which of the following is assumed?

- (A) If a field of study can conclusively answer the questions it raises, then it is a genuine science.
- (B) Since parapsychology uses scientific methods, it will produce credible results.
- (C) Any enterprise that does not use controlled experiments and statistical tests is not genuine science.
- (D) Any field of study that employs scientific methods is a genuine scientific enterprise.
- (E) Since parapsychology raises clearly satiable questions, they can be tested in controlled experiments.

Q 108.

Kale has more nutritional value than spinach. But since collard greens have more nutritional value than lettuce, it follows that kale has more nutritional value than lettuce.

Any of the following, if introduced into the argument as an additional premise, makes the argument above logically correct EXCEPT:

- (A) Collard greens have more nutritional value than kale.
- (B) Spinach has more nutritional value than lettuce.
- (C) Spinach has more nutritional value than collard greens.
- (D) Spinach and collard greens have the same nutritional value.
- (E) Kale and collard greens have the same nutritional value.