

# CRITICAL REASONING PRACTICE SETS

## CRITICAL REASONING SET 1

**Time: 25 minutes—16 Questions**

Directions: For each question in this section, select the best of the answer choices given.

- One problem with labor unions today is that their top staffs consist of college-trained lawyers, economists, and labor relations experts who cannot understand the concerns of real workers. One goal of union reform movements should be to build staffs out of workers who have come up from the ranks of the industry involved.  
  
The argument above depends primarily on which of the following assumptions?
  - Higher education lessens people's identification with their class background.
  - Union staffs should include more people with first-hand industrial supervisory experience.
  - People who have worked in a given industry can understand the concerns of workers in that industry.
  - Most labor unions today do not fairly represent workers' interests.
  - A goal of union reform movements should be to make unions more democratic.
- Opening a plant in war-torn Country X is not inadvisable, despite what critics of the plan may say. Ten years ago we opened our plant in Country Y in the middle of a revolution; that plant has been generating substantial profits ever since.  
  
Which of the following is the author of the argument above most reasonably intending the reader to conclude?
  - Wars are profitable for the author's particular business.
  - Country X is a more politically stable nation than is Country Y.
  - Critics of the proposed plant in Country X are likely to be biased.
  - The proposed plant in Country X will generate profits despite the war.
  - The proposed plant in Country X will be more successful than the plant in Country Y.

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

3. Since the deregulation of the air travel industry in the late 1970's, air fares have been relatively low and the number of passenger miles flown has been increasing. In recent months, however, air fares have risen but the number of passenger miles flown is still going up.

Which of the following can most reasonably be inferred from the statements above?

- (A) The cost of air travel does not affect the number of passenger miles flown.
- (B) People are now flying to destinations that they formerly reached by train or by other modes of transportation.
- (C) Factors other than low air fares must be contributing to the rise in the number of passenger miles flown.
- (D) Takeovers in the deregulated air travel industry have been responsible for the rise in air fares.
- (E) Air fares can climb even higher without causing a drop in the number of passenger miles flown.

4. One Zydol capsule contains twice the pain reliever found in regular aspirin. A consumer will have to take two aspirin in order to get the relief provided by one Zydol. And since a bottle of Zydol costs the same as a bottle of regular aspirin, consumers can be expected to switch to Zydol.

Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the argument that consumers will be discontinuing the use of regular aspirin and switching to Zydol?

- (A) A regular bottle of aspirin contains more than twice as many capsules as does a bottle of Zydol.
- (B) The pain reliever in Zydol is essentially the same pain reliever found in regular aspirin.
- (C) Some headache sufferers experience a brief period of dizziness shortly after taking Zydol but not after taking regular aspirin.
- (D) Neither regular aspirin nor Zydol is as effective in the relief of serious pain as are drugs available only by prescription.
- (E) A Zydol capsule is twice as large as the average aspirin.

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5. At a certain college, graduate teaching assistants conduct discussion sections but have no input into grading. It has been suggested that graduate assistants be given some grading responsibility, but many undergraduates oppose that proposal. They argue that if grades are assigned by graduate assistants, regular full-time faculty will devote less time and attention to undergraduate work.

The information in the passage above answers which one of the following questions?

- (A) Are grades assigned by graduate teaching assistants inherently as fair as those given by regular faculty?
- (B) Are some undergraduates in favor of maintaining the full-time faculty's interest in their schoolwork?
- (C) May regular full-time faculty conduct discussion sections at the college?
- (D) Does graduate student contact with undergraduates' work make the grades assigned by regular faculty less valid?
- (E) Are regular faculty members in favor of giving graduate assistants some teaching responsibility?

6. Air travel is becoming increasingly more dangerous. In the last year there have been seven major collisions resulting in over 700 deaths, more deaths than in any previous year.

Which statement, if true, would most weaken the argument above?

- (A) Since the volume of air traffic has been increasing all the time, an increase in the number of deaths due to collisions does not necessarily mean greater danger.
- (B) The increase in collisions can be explained by statistical coincidence, hijackings, and unusual weather.
- (C) Mortality per passenger mile is lower for air travel than for any kind of surface transportation.
- (D) The increase in deaths due to collision in air travel has proceeded at a rate identical to that for deaths in all other major forms of transportation.
- (E) Last year the average number of passengers per flown plane was significantly lower than that of previous years.

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

7. According to a recent study, attending a single-sex high school aids an adolescent's physical growth. Cited as evidence is the finding that during the first two years of high school, the average boy in an all-boys school grew five inches, and the average girl in an all-girls school grew four inches.

The answer to which of the following questions is needed in order to evaluate the reasoning presented in the study?

- (A) Why was it that the first two years of high school were chosen as the focus of the study?
- (B) Did some of the boys in the study grow less than five inches while they were in high school?
- (C) How much do the average male student and the average female student in a co-educational school grow during their first two years of high school?
- (D) Did the girls in the study have as nutritious a diet as the boys during the time the study was being conducted?
- (E) What was the average height of the boys and the average height of the girls upon entering high school?

8. Although most people know that exercise is good for the body, few realize the extent to which it is valuable to the mind. The blood circulates more rapidly after physical exertion, thus allowing all of the body's organs to operate more efficiently. This increased activity enables the brain to receive more oxygen, thereby creating a higher capacity for concentration.

The main point in the argument above is that

- (A) the greater the amount of oxygen the brain receives, the better the brain functions.
- (B) exercise is a mental, as well as physical, activity.
- (C) exercise helps the brain more than it does the rest of the body.
- (D) people can greatly improve their powers of concentration by exercising more often.
- (E) exercise serves more than one purpose.

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9. Ernesto: Sales of VCRs—videocassette recorders—will decline in the next few years because the saturation level among U.S. households has virtually been reached.

Milton: Every year a greater number of popular feature films is released on cassette—at least 6 per month. Clearly VCR sales will remain constant, if not rise.

Which of the following is the best logical evaluation of Milton’s response to Ernesto’s argument?

- (A) He cites evidence that, if true, disproves the evidence cited by Ernesto in drawing his conclusion.
- (B) He points out a gap in the logic followed by Ernesto in drawing his conclusion.
- (C) He cites an issue ignored by Ernesto and which outweighs the issues raised by Ernesto.
- (D) He does not speak to Ernesto’s point because he fails to raise the issue of whether VCR sales may be linked to sales of other leisure-related products.
- (E) He fails to respond to Ernesto’s argument because he assumes that nothing will significantly retard the sale of VCR’s, which was the issue that Ernesto raised.

10. Archaeologists have discovered various paintings on the walls and ceiling of a Chinese cave whose entrance was blocked by a volcanic eruption in the 25th century B.C. and only recently cleared by an earthquake. Since the paintings depict warriors using Type C bronze weapons, these archaeologists have concluded that Type C bronze weapons were already widely used in this area by 2500 B.C., far earlier than was previously believed.

Which of the following pieces of additional evidence would most seriously weaken the archaeologists’ conclusion?

- (A) Another entrance to the cave remained clear until a second volcanic eruption 1,000 years after the first.
- (B) Archaeologists have evidence that Type C bronze weapons were in wide use in areas of present-day India as early as 2500 B.C.
- (C) Alternative methods of dating place the time of the volcanic eruption somewhat earlier, at around 3000 B.C.
- (D) Most experts believe that Type C bronze weapons were not in use anywhere in present-day China until 2000 B.C.
- (E) The paintings were very faded when the archaeologists found them, making identification of the depicted weapons difficult.

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

11. Considering the current economy, the introduction of a new brand of cereal is unlikely to expand total sales of cereal, but rather will just cause some existing buyers of cereal to switch brands. So it makes no sense for the Coolidge Corporation to introduce another brand of cereal, since they will only hurt sales of the brands of cereal they already produce.

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

- (A) Total sales of cereal will increase as the total population increases.
- (B) Many new brands of cereal sell extremely well for the first year of their existence.
- (C) Coolidge Corporation currently produces fewer brands of cereal than do its competitors.
- (D) Some cereal buyers regularly switch from brand to brand, even when no new brands have been introduced.
- (E) Research indicates that the new brand will attract more buyers of competitors' cereals than buyers of other Coolidge brands.

12. A public health official reported that 60 percent of the children at summer school have never had the measles or chicken pox, and that of this 60 percent not one child has ever been observed to eat the cheese served in the school lunches. From this he concluded that children who abstain from cheese products will protect themselves from most childhood disease.

Each of the following, if true, would strengthen the official's argument EXCEPT:

- (A) Medically speaking, whatever serves to inhibit measles and chicken pox will generally inhibit the entire spectrum of childhood diseases.
- (B) The observations the official carried out were extremely accurate, and all those observed to abstain from cheese at school did, in fact, abstain.
- (C) The children's eating habits are the same at school as anywhere else, and those who abstain from cheese products at school do so in general.
- (D) Recent research has pointed to a deficiency in cheese products as one of the major causes of measles and chicken pox infections.
- (E) Most cheeses and cheese products harbor bacteria that are known to be causative agents for many childhood diseases, such as measles and chicken pox.

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13. A confidential survey revealed that 75 percent of the employees of Company P are dissatisfied with their jobs. However, an investigation into working conditions at the company showed nothing uncommonly bad. Therefore, Company P's consulting firm concluded that the employees' dissatisfaction must result from an unusually high incidence of psychological problems on their part.

Each of the following, if true, casts doubt on the consulting firm's conclusion EXCEPT:

- (A) In the investigation of working conditions, no account was taken of the fact that for the past year many Company P employees worked on a joint venture with Company O, at Company O's facilities.
- (B) Workers in many companies are dissatisfied although there are no apparent problems with their working conditions.
- (C) The consulting firm's conception of what constitutes uncommonly bad working conditions is not identical to that of Company P's employees.
- (D) The reasons given by Company P's employees for their dissatisfaction varied greatly from employee to employee.
- (E) A battery of tests performed on Company P's employees one month ago revealed no significant psychological stresses or problems.

14. Director: Our engineers are considering two different sites—one on the Abaco River and one on the Bornos River—for a hydroelectric plant. Although we have the technical expertise to build roughly the same plant in either place, producing roughly the same amount of electricity per hour, building the plant on the Abaco site will cost over twice as much money. With our budget currently in deficit, we should build the dam at the Bornos site.

Which of the following, if true, best explains the difference in building costs for the two proposed dam sites?

- (A) Many farms along the lower Bornos River valley would benefit from the controlled flow of water a dam would make possible.
- (B) The Abaco site is in an inaccessible area, requiring the building of new roads and the importation of laborers.
- (C) The Bornos site is near a large city whose residents could use the resulting lake for inexpensive recreation.
- (D) The Abaco site is in an area that contains many endangered species that would be threatened by the new dam.
- (E) The Abaco River has a relatively low volume of flow, making it impossible to expand an Abaco plant to meet future electricity needs.

## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

15. In 1988, 50 people with emotional disturbances underwent hypnosis to be cured of their mood swings. A followup survey in 1993 revealed that five had fairly stable emotional conditions at the time of the survey. These five subjects can therefore serve as models of the types of people for whom hypnosis is likely to be successful.

Which of the following, if true, casts the most doubt on the suitability of those five subjects as models in the sense described?

- (A) The five subjects have very different personalities and backgrounds.
- (B) Since 1988, the five subjects have experienced dramatic mood swings interspersed with periods of relative stability.
- (C) Those people who were still suffering from unstable emotional conditions at the time of the 1993 survey had shown no improvement since 1988.
- (D) Many psychologists are less concerned about a patient's mood swings than about the patient's willingness to express his or her problems and fears.
- (E) The emotional condition of most of the 45 subjects who were still unstable at the time of the 1993 survey had actually worsened since 1988.

16. The cause of the peculiar columnar growth pattern displayed by junipers growing near burning underground veins of lignite coal has never been convincingly explained. Until recently, the accepted theory posited that the abundance of carbon monoxide in the local atmosphere caused the columnar growth. However, a new theory holds that the cause is the persistent heat present near these underground fires which, while not intense enough to inflame the trees, can nonetheless change their normal growth pattern.

The existence of which of the following would provide the strongest support for the new theory?

- (A) A columnar juniper growing in an atmosphere of intense heat and an absence of carbon monoxide
- (B) A normal juniper growing in an atmosphere of intense heat and an absence of carbon monoxide
- (C) A columnar juniper growing in an atmosphere of normal heat and a high concentration of carbon monoxide
- (D) A normal juniper growing in an atmosphere of intense heat and a high concentration of carbon monoxide
- (E) A columnar juniper growing in an atmosphere of intense heat and a high concentration of carbon monoxide

**STOP! END OF SET**

ANSWERS ON  
THE NEXT PAGE →

**ANSWER KEY**

1. C
2. D
3. C
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. C
8. E
9. E
10. A
11. E
12. D
13. D
14. B
15. B
16. A

## CRITICAL REASONING SET 2

**Time: 25 minutes—16 Questions**

Directions: For each question in this section, select the best of the answer choices given.

1. Although air pollution was previously thought to exist almost exclusively in our nation's cities, the recent increase in the number of persons suffering from illnesses attributed to excessive air pollution leaves us no choice but to conclude that other, nonurban areas are now affected.
2. Statistics show that although consumption of low-calorie, alternative sweeteners has gone up in each of the past five years, so has the percentage of the population that is obese. According to sugar manufacturers, this shows that the low-calorie, alternative sweeteners are not effective weight loss aids.

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

- (A) The nation's cities have seen a marked decrease in levels of air pollution.
- (B) The nation has experienced a sharp decrease in the number of people moving out of its cities.
- (C) Illnesses due to air pollution are among the least common causes of death to urban dwellers.
- (D) Many illnesses previously thought unrelated to air pollution are now considered to be caused by it.
- (E) As a result of the problems in urban areas, nonurban areas have passed strict pollution control measures.

Which of the following assertions, if true, would most weaken the sugar manufacturers' conclusion?

- (A) Many people who use low-calorie, alternative sweeteners eat some foods that are not low-calorie.
- (B) Some low-calorie, alternative sweeteners can increase the appetite, making a person eat more than he or she normally would.
- (C) Many people use low-calorie, alternative sweeteners to accompany a well-balanced, low-calorie diet.
- (D) Obesity has declined among people who have consistently used low-calorie, alternative sweeteners.
- (E) The rise in the consumption of low-calorie, alternative sweeteners is primarily due to an increase in the number of users rather than an increase in the amount each user consumes.

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3. It has long been a commonplace in medical literature that the ingestion of drug L, in combination with the application of lotion M, causes the appearance of adverse reaction O. Recently, however, doubts have been cast on the role of lotion M in the appearance of adverse reaction O.

Which one of the following research findings could most reasonably have created the doubts referred to above?

- (A) The appearance of adverse reaction O following the ingestion of drug L and the application of lotion M
- (B) The absence of adverse reaction O following the ingestion of drug L and the application of lotion M
- (C) The ingestion of drug L and the appearance of adverse reaction O in the absence of lotion M
- (D) The absence of adverse reaction O following the ingestion of drug L without the application of lotion M
- (E) The disappearance of adverse reaction O following the ingestion of drug L and the application of lotion M

4. The candy manufacturer's claim that employee "theft" costs the company thousands of dollars a year in potential sales is greatly overstated. Most of the candy eaten on the job and not paid for is eaten one piece at a time, by workers who would not be willing to buy an entire box of it anyway.

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

- (A) The workers eat only defective candies that could not be sold.
- (B) Candy eaten by employees represents lost potential sales to nonemployees.
- (C) A few workers account for most of the candy that is eaten but not paid for.
- (D) Most of the candies eaten by employees are consumed during the holiday season, when production outputs are at their highest.
- (E) The amount of candy eaten by employees is only a small fraction of the candy sold by the company.

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5. U.S. officials complain that the country's trade deficit with Japan is due to the fact that Japan's markets are not open enough to imports and investment. Japanese officials reply that the United States should concentrate on improving its school systems and investing more money in scientific research and worker training.

It can be inferred from the statements above that the Japanese officials most probably hold which of the following opinions?

- (A) The United States should open its own markets to more imports and investment.
- (B) The trade deficit between the United States and Japan is more the result of poor American industrial performance than Japan's import restrictions.
- (C) The trade deficit between the United States and Japan is a result of Japan's closed markets.
- (D) U.S. school systems foster a mistrust of Japan that prevents U.S. businesspeople from negotiating intelligently with Japan.
- (E) Better education and worker training can help shrink the trade imbalance, but should not be counted on to close the gap entirely.

6. Children who attend private high schools may initially feel that they can succeed without doing the work required, but as they grow older they realize the necessity of serious study. Each year the overwhelming majority of students disciplined for plagiarism and cheating on their exams is found in the freshman class.

The argument above would be most weakened if which of the following were true?

- (A) As they move up in grade, students learn how to cheat without being caught.
- (B) First-time offenders for plagiarism and cheating on exams are not disciplined.
- (C) The proctors for freshman exams are the least vigilant.
- (D) Acts of vandalism are most often committed by members of the sophomore class.
- (E) Public school students are no less likely than private school students to believe that they can succeed in life without working hard.

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

7. The conflict between an artist's work and the context in which it is placed is a traditional problem in aesthetics. Recent exhibits have given it a new urgency. Too often a painter's canvases have been hung in an improper context because the gallery managers have not understood what the painter envisioned as the work's proper environment.

As an attempt to solve the problem described above, it would be most reasonable to

- (A) bring artists and gallery managers into closer contact, so as to increase the artist's input into the way the exhibit is held
- (B) provide brochures at the exhibit that describe the artist and how he or she intended the exhibit to look
- (C) redesign galleries so that their decor contains nothing that would distract the audience from the works themselves
- (D) provide a uniform environment for all the works in an exhibition so that they appear within the same context
- (E) instruct gallery managers in the fine points of aesthetic theory so that they will be able to tell what, if anything, a painting means

8. To improve the physical fitness of its students, School District 4 instituted a policy whereby students would be given extra credit in physical education for extracurricular athletic activities. School officials call the program a success, since participation in after school sports has doubled since the program was instituted.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the claim of the school officials?

- (A) Most students who joined after school sports did so only to get extra credit.
- (B) Most children who are in poor physical condition cannot be persuaded to join after school sports by such an incentive program.
- (C) Few students who joined after school sports during the extra credit program will continue to play the sport after the school year ends.
- (D) Most of the new athletes are students who had never before participated in after school sports.
- (E) Fitness set show no significant improvement in the physical condition of students after they join after school sports.

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9. It takes 4 weeks for a team of 5 professional window washers working regular full-time hours to properly clean every window of the Empire State Building. The building's owner demands that all the windows always be clean. Yet even if the 5 washers work consistently throughout their regular work week, they will not be able to finish cleaning all the windows before some windows will again need cleaning.

It can be correctly inferred on the basis of the statements above that which of the following must be true?

- (A) If an Empire State Building window is to be kept clean, it must be cleaned by a professional window cleaner.
- (B) The owner's demand for proper cleaning of all the windows will never be fulfilled.
- (C) If a team of 5 window washers cleans all the Empire State Building's windows in less than 4 weeks, some of the windows will not be properly cleaned.
- (D) In order to ensure that all of the Empire State Building's windows are clean, the owner must have his window washers work overtime.
- (E) Some Empire State Building windows must be cleaned more frequently than once every four weeks if they are to be kept clean.

10. Cultural anthropologists who have been observing and interviewing customers in retail stores have announced a definitive theory of consumer purchasing behavior.

Which of the following, if true, would be least likely to represent a benefit of the theory to retailers?

- (A) Retailers will be able to eliminate costly product displays that fail to increase sales.
- (B) Retailers will gain insight into how consumers determine whether or not to buy a particular product.
- (C) The new theory will make consumers aware of how product displays influence their purchasing decisions.
- (D) The new theory will determine what types of retail display gimmicks produce a negative reaction in consumers.
- (E) The new theory will explain why consumers often purchase at different stores goods that could be bought at just one store.

## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

11. Archaeologists have recently found, in various grave sites in the Mexican state of Veracruz, small ceramic animals with attached wheels. At first, this find might seem to discredit the belief that the wheel and its uses were unknown in pre-Colombian culture. On reflection, however, it would seem that the discovery actually bears out this belief. To be familiar with these toys and yet not to apply the principle of the wheel to daily tasks such as carting, transportation, and pottery making must indicate a lack of understanding of the wheel and its potential benefits.

Which of the following best expresses the argument made in the passage above?

- (A) If the pre-Colombian people of Veracruz had understood the principle of the wheel, they would not have attached wheels to ceramic animals.
- (B) If the pre-Colombian people of Veracruz had understood the principle of the wheel, they would have adapted it to everyday use.
- (C) If the pre-Colombian people of Veracruz had uses for the wheel in their everyday lives, they would have adapted the idea of the wheel from the wheeled ceramic figures.
- (D) The pre-Colombian people of Veracruz must have known of the wheel and its uses because they attached wheels to ceramic animals.
- (E) Since the pre-Colombian people of Veracruz did not know of the wheel or its uses, the ceramic animals found in the grave sites must be the remains of later cultures.

12. Doubling the cost of public transportation to compensate for money lost by declining ridership would be disastrous. The greater expense would only further discourage commuters who are already dissatisfied with the poor condition of buses and trains. If the fares are increased, many commuters will choose to drive their cars instead, causing pollution and traffic congestion. As a result, the city will lose money and become even more noisy and smog-filled than it is now.

Which of the following is an assumption made in advancing the argument above?

- (A) Commuters who decide to drive instead of using public transportation will not share rides with one another.
- (B) Commuters will not park their cars in garages and thereby spend more money than they would by using buses or trains.
- (C) The condition of public transportation will not improve as a result of the fare increase.
- (D) Commuters who use their own cars currently outnumber those who use buses and trains.
- (E) A significant number of people who now use public transportation have cars or can easily obtain them.

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13. The cost of transatlantic airfare has nearly doubled over the past five years, yet airlines are doing a booming business. Clearly, people today have more money to spend on vacations than they did five years ago.

All of the following, if true, would weaken the argument above EXCEPT:

- (A) Most people buying transatlantic tickets today use them for business trips, so airfare is refunded by their companies.
- (B) There are fewer airlines in existence today than five years ago.
- (C) People are taking shorter vacations and staying in cheaper hotels than they used to.
- (D) Crossing the Atlantic by ship requires more time than most people can afford.
- (E) Domestic airline flights have seen a steady increase in passengers.

14. Truck driver: The gasoline tax is too high and it must be lowered. It has been raised every year for the last five years, while other sales taxes have not. If the government persists in unfairly penalizing truck drivers, our increased operating costs will either hurt consumers or put us out of business.

State official: But your gasoline tax dollars maintain and improve the very roads you depend on. Without those additional revenues, road conditions would deteriorate, costing you and consumers much more in maintenance and repairs.

If the statements made above are true, the best characterization of the logical relationship between the two arguments is that the state official's response

- (A) points out that the truck driver's proposal will actually worsen the problem it is intended to solve
- (B) is circular, assuming the truth of its conclusion in order to justify its conclusion
- (C) points out that the truck driver is selfish because more people are aided by the gasoline tax than are penalized
- (D) is merely an attempt to excuse the government's policies without providing any justification for those policies
- (E) points to an inherent contradiction between the cause the truck driver cites and the effects the truck driver thinks will follow from the cause

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

15. Archaeologists recently unearthed a prehistoric statuette, portraying the figure of a woman, that had been carved from a mastodon bone. A team of researchers carefully studied the statuette, which they named the Venus of Orleans. Since it was similar in shape and design to another bone carving, the so-called Venus of Grenoble, they concluded that in all likelihood it was carved at the same time, about 70,000 years ago. Skeptics point out, however, that carbon-14 testing indicates that the recently discovered statuette is only about 50,000 years old.

Which of the following, if true, would tend most to weaken the force of the skeptics' objection?

- (A) Carbon-14 dating places the age of the Venus of Grenoble at 70,000 years.
- (B) No other, similar, statuettes have been found at the site where the Venus of Orleans was unearthed.
- (C) The carbon-14 dating process is unreliable for objects dating from before 60,000 BC.
- (D) The carbon-14 dating process has provided unreliable dates for many objects older than 100,000 years.
- (E) Some speculation persists that the Venus of Orleans was carved out of the femur or thigh bone of a prehistoric ox.

16. The study of foreign languages is finally becoming a serious endeavor in U.S. education. The number of American college students enrolled in non-English language courses has increased by 20 percent over the last five years. Spanish, with over 500,000 students, is the most popular; its enrollment has increased by 30 percent. Meanwhile, enrollment in Japanese and Russian has nearly doubled, and now comprises eight percent of total foreign language study. Clearly there is now an increased interest in foreign language study. When these students join the work force, they will enhance not only U.S. businesses' ability to compete internationally but also our country's reputation abroad.

The answer to which of the following questions would be LEAST relevant to evaluating the above claims?

- (A) Do students enrolled in foreign language classes continue their studies long enough to attain competence in those languages?
- (B) By what percentage has overall enrollment in U.S. colleges and universities increased over the past five years?
- (C) Does a significant number of students of foreign languages go into professions in which the ability to speak other languages is useful?
- (D) Has the study of "dead" languages like Latin and Ancient Greek increased at a similar rate to that of modern languages?
- (E) How does the percentage increase in foreign language enrollment over the past five years compare to previous increases in enrollment?

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ANSWERS ON  
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**ANSWER KEY**

- 1. D**
- 2. D**
- 3. C**
- 4. B**
- 5. B**
- 6. A**
- 7. A**
- 8. E**
- 9. E**
- 10. C**
- 11. B**
- 12. E**
- 13. E**
- 14. A**
- 15. C**
- 16. D**

## CRITICAL REASONING SET 3

**Time: 25 minutes—16 Questions**

Directions: For each question in this section, select the best of the answer choices given.

1. In 1980, 13 percent of the Arbican population moved from urban areas to suburban areas. This percentage steadily declined, until, in 1990, it reached 3 percent.

If the statements above are true, all of the following statements concerning Arbicans between 1980 and 1990 could also be true EXCEPT:

- (A) The number of Arbicans moving from suburban areas to urban areas also decreased.
- (B) The Arbican population increased, and so did the number of Arbicans moving from urban to suburban areas.
- (C) The Arbican population decreased, and so did the number of Arbicans moving from urban to suburban areas.
- (D) The Arbican population decreased, and the number of Arbicans moving from urban to suburban areas remained the same.
- (E) The Arbican population increased, and the number of Arbicans moving from urban to suburban areas remained the same.

2. The Kapoor Meatworks has a virtual monopoly on expensive, gourmet delicacies. In order to expand their market, they intend to offer a budget line of less costly delicacies. Such a product is virtually unknown, and they realize that its success depends upon a heavy advertising campaign. They have decided to finance the advertising with the profits from their gourmet line.

Which of the following, assuming each is a realistic possibility, would pose the most serious obstacle to the Kapoor Meatworks' project?

- (A) The introduction of a budget line of delicacies completely undercuts the sales of the gourmet line.
- (B) At the start, the company spends more on advertising than it makes from sales of the budget line delicacies.
- (C) When the budget line delicacies grow in popularity, competitors enter the budget delicacies market and Kapoor does not have a monopoly in that market.
- (D) Many of the consumers who purchase the budget line are tempted to try the delicacies offered in the gourmet line.
- (E) Many of the stores that now carry Kapoor's gourmet line of delicacies are exclusive, and refuse to carry their budget line.

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

3. Recent statistics make it seem unlikely that the total consumption of electricity determines its cost to individual consumers. Recent increases in total consumption, especially during the hot summer months, have sometimes been accompanied by a decrease in the cost per unit and at other times by an increase.

Which of the following positions is best supported by the information presented above?

- (A) It must be the case that the cost of electricity to consumers is what determines the total consumption.
- (B) Even though a correlation exists between the total consumption of electricity and its cost to consumers, no causal relation exists.
- (C) Further investigation into the way these statistics were gathered is certainly called for.
- (D) The cost of electricity depends upon something other than the total consumption of electricity.
- (E) The cost-per-unit of electricity to consumers is dependent on the total electricity consumption.

4. In a nature reserve in India, people are sometimes attacked by tigers. It is believed that the tigers will only attack people from behind. So for the past few years many workers in the reserve have started wearing masks depicting a human face on the back of their heads. While many area residents remain skeptical, no worker wearing one of these masks has yet been attacked by a tiger.

Which of the statements below, if true, would best support the argument of those who advocate the use of the mask?

- (A) Many workers in the nature reserve who do not wear the masks have been attacked recently by tigers.
- (B) Workers in other nature reserves who wear similar masks have not been attacked recently by tigers.
- (C) No tigers have been spotted on the nature reserve in recent years.
- (D) Many of the workers who wear the masks also sing while they work in order to frighten away any tigers in the area.
- (E) The tigers have often been observed attacking small deer from in front rather than from behind.

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5. Since Arlene Hodges was installed as president of the Caralis corporation, profits have increased by an average of 11 percent per year. During the tenure of her predecessor, the corporation's profits averaged a yearly increase of only 7 percent. Obviously Ms. Hodges' aggressive marketing efforts have caused the acceleration in the growth of Caralis' profits.

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

- (A) The corporation's new manufacturing plant, constructed in the past year, has resulted in a 15 percent increase in production capacity.
- (B) For each year of Ms. Hodges' presidency, the corporation's financial records show an increase in profits over the previous year.
- (C) During the tenure of Ms. Hodges' predecessor, the corporation began an advertising campaign aimed at capturing consumers between the ages of 24 and 35.
- (D) Since Ms. Hodges became president, the corporation has switched the primary focus of its advertising from print ads to radio and television commercials.
- (E) Just before he was replaced, Ms. Hodges' predecessor directed the acquisition of a rival corporation, which has nearly doubled the corporation's yearly revenues.

6. Although recently introduced with a wave of publicity, combined audio/video receivers are proving tough to sell. As a result, the manufacturers keep advertising, and offering handsome discounts. What the manufacturers have yet to see is that the public's reluctance isn't due to the price of the product; the public is still debating the even more fundamental question of -----.

Which of the following best completes the passage above?

- (A) whether the product is worth its price
- (B) whether there is a use for such a product
- (C) whether the models will soon become obsolete
- (D) whether the uses for such a product outweigh its high cost
- (E) whether more stylish models will appear in the future

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7. Although statistics and definitions are inexact, educated guesses put the number of refugees worldwide at well over 10 million. The overwhelming majority prefer to return to their native land than to emigrate to a foreign one. The millions of refugees from Afghanistan are sufficient proof: Despite the toll the war and subsequent fighting have taken on their country, very few have applied for permission to emigrate.

Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the argument above?

- (A) Most refugees are as reluctant to emigrate as are the refugees from Afghanistan.
- (B) The refugees from Afghanistan fled what they considered political oppression rather than economic disaster.
- (C) Most of the children born to refugees prefer to remain in their adoptive country rather than return to the land their parents left.
- (D) Although refugees flee their homes for a variety of different reasons, the overwhelming majority are looking for improved living conditions.
- (E) The number of refugees worldwide has risen dramatically over the last ten years.

**Questions 8 and 9 are based on the following.**

In spite of what its critics say, the new, expensive artificial kidney implant is a boon to modern medicine. These critics should remember that the first heart transplants stimulated an enormous amount of beneficial medical research, even though the transplant technique was later rejected in favor of less invasive surgical procedures.

8. The author defends the artificial kidney implant against the critics by
- (A) attacking her opponents' method of circular reasoning
  - (B) implying an analogy between the benefits of the artificial kidney implant and the benefits of the early heart transplants
  - (C) pointing out a contradiction implicit in their criticism of the implant's high cost
  - (D) criticizing the professional objectivity of her opponents rather than their claim
  - (E) implying an analogy between the critics' opposition to the artificial kidney implant and their opposition to the early heart transplants
9. Opponents of the artificial kidney implant could best defend their position against the author's argument by pointing out that
- (A) once perfected, the new artificial kidney implant will cost very little
  - (B) many of those who oppose the new artificial kidney implant have very good reputations in the scientific community
  - (C) the high cost of the new artificial kidney implant does not necessarily mean that its creators are incompetent or profligate
  - (D) the medical research that the artificial kidney implant will stimulate is similar to the research stimulated by the heart transplants
  - (E) the fact that one medical innovation stimulated beneficial research does not mean that all such innovations will do so

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10. The population increase over a given year is always calculated as a percentage of the previous year's population, with a population decrease being recorded as a negative increase. In 1990 Essex County and Union County both experienced a population increase of more than 3 percent. In 1991 Essex County and Union County both experienced a population increase of 1.5 percent. In 1992 Union County experienced a negative increase in population of -1.7 percent. Essex County had 209,100 residents in 1990 and 209,000 residents in 1992.

If the information above is accurate, which of the following must be true?

- (A) Both counties experienced positive population increases in the years 1990 and 1991, yet both experienced negative population increases in 1992.
- (B) In 1992 more people moved from Union County to Essex County than moved from Essex County to Union County.
- (C) In 1990 there were more people living in Union County than in Essex County, but in 1992 there were more people living in Essex County than in Union County.
- (D) Both counties experienced negative population increases in the years 1990 and 1991, yet both experienced positive population increases in 1992.
- (E) Both counties experienced positive population increases in the years 1990 and 1991, yet while Essex County experienced a positive increase in 1992, Union County had a negative increase.

11. Chef: An ordinance ought to be passed banning midtown street vendors from selling food within a certain proximity to restaurants. With their high rents and costs, restaurants cannot be expected to compete with the vendors. Even in cases where these vendors sell food completely different from the restaurant's bill of fare, the price differential is enough to attract to the vendors customers who would otherwise have eaten in the restaurants.

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

- (A) The food served in midtown restaurants is better than that sold by street vendors.
- (B) Most street vendors who sell food would suffer losses from being forced to move to other locations.
- (C) Most customers who eat in midtown do so on expense accounts, and do not pay for their own meals.
- (D) There are not enough police officers to enforce regulations requiring street vendors to move a certain distance from restaurants.
- (E) The average profit on food sold by a street vendor is roughly the same percentage as that on food served in restaurants.

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

12. It has been against the law for federal agencies and federal contractors to discriminate against a qualified job applicant because of a disability. Now that Congress has approved legislation to expand these existing provisions to cover private industry as well, the number of disabled people who are involuntarily unemployed will drop substantially.

The author of the above argument must be assuming which of the following?

- (A) Many congressmen were reluctant to pass the new legislation to prevent discrimination against the disabled.
- (B) Some private employers in the past deliberately chose not to hire qualified but disabled job applicants.
- (C) The federal government currently employs more disabled people than does private industry.
- (D) The approved legislation would stop discrimination against the disabled in the public and private sectors.
- (E) Many disabled people voluntarily choose to remain unemployed.

13. The manufacturer of DTF claims its product reduces facial wrinkles and wishes to sell it as a pharmaceutical. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), however, has ordered lengthy and costly experiments to determine whether DTF truly reduces facial wrinkles. The manufacturer, a small cosmetics firm, lacks the resources to carry out the required research and will probably comply with less rigorous FDA regulations by labeling DTF a cosmetic.

Which of the following can be most reasonably inferred from the statements above?

- (A) Cosmetics are among the products not regulated by the FDA.
- (B) Only established pharmaceutical firms have the capital required to enter new products in the market.
- (C) The makers of DTF thought they would sell greater quantities of their product if it were a pharmaceutical rather than a cosmetic.
- (D) The FDA regulates claims made about pharmaceuticals more strictly than claims made about cosmetics.
- (E) DTF has very little effect, if any, on facial wrinkles and would not have received FDA approval.

**STOP! END OF TEST**

14. Homeowner: Recent drops in the value of our homes are due to the undesirability of living near the recently opened 24-hour bus depot.

Transportation official: The police, not the bus depot, are at fault. Survey data shows that most prospective homeowners avoid the community because of its high crime rate.

Which of the following, if true, would be the most effective rebuttal that the homeowner could make to the argument put forward by the transportation official?

- (A) The community's crime rate has risen nearly as quickly as the value of homes has fallen, over the same period of time.
- (B) Those homeowners whose homes are situated in the immediate area of the bus depot must endure constant noise.
- (C) The constant activity and commerce generated by the bus depot has made the community a favored hangout for thieves and other criminals.
- (D) The community's police force has not seen a pay raise or increase in manpower for the last five years.
- (E) The surveys of prospective homeowners did not include questions concerning the desirability of living in a community with a 24-hour bus depot.

15. Plant Y thrives in environments of great sunlight and very little moisture. Desert X is an environment with constant, powerful sunlight, and almost no moisture. Although Plant Y thrives in the areas surrounding Desert X, it does not exist naturally in the desert, nor does it survive long when introduced there.

Which of the following, if true, would be most useful in explaining the apparent discrepancy above?

- (A) Desert X's climate is far too harsh for the animals that normally feed on Plant Y.
- (B) For one week in the fall, Desert X gets consistent rainfall.
- (C) The environment around Desert X is ideally suited to the needs of Plant Y.
- (D) Due to the lack of sufficient moisture, Desert X can support very little plant life.
- (E) Plant Y cannot survive in temperatures as high as those normally found in Desert X.

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## PRACTICE SETS AND EXPLANATIONS

16. The World Automobile Association (WAA) publishes a list of the "Best and Worst Drivers of the World," ranking the drivers of every nation according to the number of traffic deaths per mile driven in that country.

Each of the following, if true, would by itself provide a logical objection to using the WAA's ranking as a representation of the quality of drivers in each nation EXCEPT:

- (A) The roads in some countries are in bad repair and are therefore more dangerous than roads in other countries.
- (B) The average driver in industrialized countries can afford to maintain his or her car in better condition than can the average driver in less developed countries.
- (C) Some countries contain hundreds of thousands of miles of road while other countries contain relatively few miles of road.
- (D) Minor accidents that would cause little injury in many countries are often fatal when they occur in extremely mountainous countries.
- (E) Because of differences in national economies, the average car in some countries contains many more passengers than does the average car in other countries.

**STOP! END OF SET**

ANSWERS ON  
THE NEXT PAGE →

**ANSWER KEY**

1. D
2. A
3. D
4. A
5. E
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. E
10. A
11. C
12. B
13. D
14. C
15. E
16. C

# CRITICAL REASONING EXPLANATIONS

## CRITICAL REASONING EXPLANATIONS SET 1

### Answer Key:

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 7. C  | 13. D |
| 2. D | 8. E  | 14. B |
| 3. C | 9. E  | 15. B |
| 4. A | 10. A | 16. A |
| 5. B | 11. E |       |
| 6. A | 12. D |       |

### 1. C

The Conclusion: Union reform movements should build staffs out of workers who have come up the ranks.

The Evidence: Union movements are currently suffering from a problem: Their staffs consist of college-educated professional types who don't understand the concerns of the worker.

If the author believes that hiring up-from-the-ranks workers (an idea introduced in the conclusion) will cure that problem, he must be assuming that these former workers do understand workers' real concerns.

There's no need to assume that higher education lessens people's identification with their class background (A), since the author hasn't said that the lawyers, economists, and experts who don't understand workers come from a working class

background. Supervisory experience (B) isn't the same as coming up through the ranks. Labor unions having problems, which the author admits, isn't the same as (D) most of them unfairly representing workers' interests. That's an overstatement. "Democratic" (E) is a new term, and one the argument doesn't need.

### 2. D

The Conclusion: None is stated, but as the question stem alerts us, one is implied.

The Evidence: A plant opened in Country Y during a revolution ten years ago has always generated substantial profits.

The author draws an analogy between the two plants, since the one in Country Y has made money, so too, she implies, will the one in Country X.

The author's point is that the plant can be successful

despite the war, not that (A) the plant will be successful because of the war. The author presents the two countries as similar, so she's not arguing that (B) one is more stable than the other. The author is attacking her opponents' argument, but not (C) their motives. She makes no judgment (E) as to which plant will be more successful. Remember, comparing and contrasting things that are considered equivalent in the stimulus is a common wrong answer type for inference questions.

**3. C**

**The Conclusion:** There is none stated. One is implied, though, and we're to locate it among the answer choices.

**The Evidence:** Since deregulation, low air fares have correlated with increased miles flown. Recently prices have risen, but the number of passenger-miles flown is still increasing.

The passage begins with a correlation and then breaks it in the next sentence. What can you infer from this? Not very much, you may have thought, and you'd be right: the key to this question is not drawing an unwarranted sweeping conclusion from the evidence. What you can safely conclude is that the air fare doesn't, by itself, determine the amount of air travel.

That air-fares don't have any effect on air travel (A) is too strong. We can't infer why passenger-miles flown have increased (B); it might be at the expense of other forms of transportation, but it might not be. The author merely states that the air fares have risen recently, but never mentions a cause (D) like "takeovers." So far, the recent rise in air fares hasn't reduced passenger-miles flown, but that doesn't mean (E) that a further increase won't.

**4. A**

**The Conclusion:** Consumers can be expected to switch to Zydol.

**The Evidence:** Although one has to take two aspirins to get the relief provided by one Zydol, nevertheless a bottle of Zydol costs the same as a bottle of aspirin.

The implication is that Zydol is more cost-effective than aspirin: you get a much better bargain with a bottle of Zydol. But if the aspirin bottle contains more than twice as many tablets as the Zydol bottle, then it's the aspirin bottle that gives you more pain reliever for your money.

The argument concerns which is the better bargain, not which is the better pain reliever. Thus it doesn't matter (B) that the ingredient is the same. (C) points to some consumers who won't want Zydol. Perhaps, but one, these may be very few, and two, this doesn't attack the author's reasoning, which is based on cost. Pain sufferers who don't have a doctor's prescription are left with the same choice between Zydol and aspirin, so (D) doesn't weaken Zydol's case against aspirin. Even if you make an unwarranted leap and assume that there may be fewer of the large Zydol pills (E) per bottle, choice (A) clearly does a better job of arguing along this line.

**5. B**

**The Undergraduates' Conclusion:** If grades are assigned by graduate assistants, regular full-time faculty will devote less time to undergraduate work.

**Their Evidence:** There really isn't any: just the idea that giving grading responsibilities to graduate students will somehow move regular full-time faculty away from the undergraduates' work.

The only thing to do is go through the choices to see which question we can answer. Since the undergraduates are against the proposal, it's safe to conclude that they want the full-time faculty to stay interested in their work. We have no information about the fairness of graduate assistants' grades (A). All we know about the discussion sections (C) is that graduate assistants now hold them; we aren't told whether or not full-time faculty may hold them. (D) asks about the validity of the faculty's grades. We know that some people have proposed that graduate assistants be given some grading responsibility, but that doesn't imply (D) that they believe the faculty's grades have been made less valid by the graduate students' "contact" with undergraduates. And we're told absolutely nothing about (E) the faculty's opinion of the proposal.

**6. A**

The Conclusion: Air travel is becoming more dangerous.

The Evidence: In the last year there have been seven collisions and over 700 deaths, the highest number of deaths ever.

We want something that suggests that the increase in fatalities doesn't prove an increase in danger. If more and more people are traveling by airplane, an increase in the number of deaths doesn't prove that air travel is becoming more dangerous. The question of how dangerous air travel is can't be answered unless we know the proportion, not the number, of passengers who get killed.

The author's contention isn't undermined by (B) the reasons for the lack of safety. Pointing out more dangerous methods of transportation (C) doesn't deny that the danger of air travel is increasing. Likewise, the fact that other forms of transportation are also getting more dangerous (D) doesn't dent the author's claim. Fewer passengers per plane (E) means more collisions, but we already know how many collisions there were.

**7. C**

The Conclusion: Attending a single-sex high school promotes growth.

The Evidence: During the first two years, the average student in an all-boys school grew five inches and the average girl in an all-girls school grew four inches.

The question stem tells you that something has been left out of the argument. The conclusion compares single-sex schools to coed schools, but the evidence only cites data from single-sex schools. Until we know how much the average student grows in co-educational schools, we have no evidence that the growth in single-sex schools is greater.

Even if we knew the answer to (A) we'd still have no evidence from the coed schools. (B) is a rather silly question: we're dealing with average growth, so we'd expect some boys to grow more than the average and

some less. The reasons for the growth difference between boys and girls (D) isn't relevant to the growth differences between coed and single-sex schools. Since the study is only interested in how much students grow during the first two years of high-school, it's irrelevant how tall they are to start with (E).

**8. E**

The Conclusion: Exercise is good for the mind as well as for the body.

The Evidence: Exercise increases the speed at which blood circulates, allowing the brain to receive more oxygen and thus concentrate better.

The main point is the conclusion, that exercise is good for the mind as well as the body. More generally, exercise serves more than one purpose.

(A) goes out on a limb; the author's point is the beneficial effects of exercise, not the unlimited benefits of oxygen. While exercise aids mental activity, it's not (B) a mental activity as such. Whether exercise aids the brain more or less than the rest of the body (C) isn't discussed. This is a classic wrong answer type: the choice that compares two items the stimulus treats equally. While the author argues that exercise is beneficial to the mind, "greatly improving" concentration (D) is an overstatement.

**9. E**

Ernesto's Conclusion: VCR sales will decline.

Ernesto's Evidence: The saturation level for households has been reached.

Milton's Conclusion: VCR sales won't decline.

Milton's Evidence: More and more films are released on videotape.

Milton simply ignores Ernesto's argument that the saturation point has been reached for VCR's. He concentrates on the new cassettes coming out, but the availability of new cassettes doesn't mean people need buy or will buy more recorders. Milton ignores the relevant issue of saturation raised by Ernesto, and

simply assumes that sales of VCR's will continue as before.

Milton's evidence doesn't disprove Ernesto's evidence (A). The videos appearing each year have nothing to do with whether the saturation point in VCR ownership has been reached. "Finding a gap" (B) in an argument means demonstrating that the evidence doesn't lead to the conclusion; Milton merely brings up some irrelevant information that has nothing to do with Ernesto's reasoning. Milton does cite an issue that Ernesto ignored (C), but the claim that this issue "outweighs" the issue of saturation is unsupported. Milton does fail to speak to Ernesto's point (D) but not for the bizarre reason given here. Ernesto has absolutely nothing to say about "other leisure-related products" there's no reason for Milton to raise this issue.

**10. A**

The Conclusion: People must already have been using Type C weapons in this area by 2500 B.C.

The Evidence: Depictions of the weapons exist on the walls of a cave that was sealed off in 2500 B.C.

We need to show that the paintings either don't depict weapons that were in use or that the paintings were made after 2500 B.C. The archaeologists are assuming that there was only one entrance to the cave. If there's another entrance to the cave that was only sealed much later, then people could have entered the cave and made the paintings long after the first entrance was sealed.

If anything, the existence of the weapons in India (B) might be considered to strengthen the argument, since it shows Type C weapons were in existence as early as 2500 B.C. Pushing the date of the eruption back (C) also strengthens the argument by making it likely that the paintings were done even earlier than claimed. Without some evidence to back it up, the opinion of the experts (D) isn't worth much. That identification was difficult (E) is not the same as its being uncertain or controversial.

**11. E**

The Conclusion: Introducing a new cereal will only hurt the brands Coolidge already produces, so Coolidge shouldn't introduce another brand of cereal.

The Evidence: The introduction of a new brand of cereal doesn't increase the total number of cereal buyers, but only encourages those who already buy cereal to switch brands.

There's an assumption here: that the new brand will only attract those who currently buy other brands of Coolidge's cereal. If the new brand steals buyers from competitors' cereals, then it will help Coolidge by adding to its total sales.

Even if the population does increase and total cereal sales with it (A), a new brand might still hurt the sales of Coolidge's established cereals. The new cereal may sell well (B), but if that just means it's stealing lots of buyers from other Coolidge cereals, what good is it? The fact that Coolidge has only a few brands (C) doesn't make it likely that a new cereal brand would steal buyers from competitors' brands rather than from other Coolidge brands. Neither does the fact that some brand switching is usual even when a new brand isn't introduced (D).

**12. D**

The Conclusion: Not eating cheese protects children from childhood diseases.

The Evidence: All the children at summer school who have never had measles or chicken pox have also never eaten the cheese served in the school lunches.

The author deduces a causal relationship: not eating cheese leads to protection from childhood diseases. I hope you saw that this has numerous holes. Four of the choices help to fill those holes; the fifth does not. That fifth choice is (D). If research shows that abstaining from cheese products is a major cause of some childhood diseases, then the health official's claim that children can protect themselves from disease by not eating cheese is flat-out wrong.

It's important that the author be able (A) to infer from measles and chicken pox (in the evidence) to other childhood diseases. Also necessary is that the observations be accurate (B) and the students' behavior at home mirror their behavior at school (C). Each of those speaks to the legitimacy of the correlation. Most important, though, is that there really be (E) a causal connection, rather than just a correlation, between cheese eating and childhood illness.

### 13. D

**The Consulting Firm's Conclusion:** The employees' dissatisfaction is all in their heads.

**Its Evidence:** 75 percent of the employees are dissatisfied. An investigation showed no uncommonly bad working conditions.

We need the one choice that doesn't weaken the consulting firm's conclusion; that's a good tip that the conclusion isn't solidly based. The mere fact that the complaints vary doesn't hurt the firm's conclusion that the complaints are based on psychological problems. In fact, it might even strengthen the firm's argument: every employee has his or her own mental hang-up, so every employee comes up with his or her own irrational complaint.

If many employees had been working at a different company's facilities (A), then it could be these facilities, not mental problems, that are responsible for the complaints. If the situation in Company P is fairly normal (B), there's no need for the firm to hypothesize an unusual incidence of psychological problems among the workforce. If the firm's definition of uncommonly bad conditions differs from that of the workers (C), then the firm may well have overlooked the real causes of employee dissatisfaction. And if a battery of tests (E), showed no significant psychological problems, then the very cause cited by the firm is attacked.

### 14. B

**The Director's Conclusion:** We should build the dam at the Bornos site.

**Her Evidence:** Although the same plant can produce the same amount of electricity in either site, building at Abaco will cost twice as much money.

Looking at the question stem first here really helps you narrow your focus when reading the stimulus. The only thing you're interested in is why the Abaco site will cost more than twice as much as the Bornos site. The stimulus doesn't give you any hint as to how the sites are different, so you'll have to rely on the correct answer to provide a complete explanation by itself. If the Abaco site is in the middle of nowhere, and requires constructing new roads and importing laborers, then of course it's going to be more expensive to build there.

The benefits of the Bornos plant to farms (A) don't explain its lower cost of construction. Neither do the benefits to nearby city residents (C). Possible environmental damage caused by a plant built at Abaco (D) is another reason for building at Bornos, but it's a different reason. The problem or issue of expansion (E), like the environment, might merit consideration, but it's not a factor in determining the cost of building.

### 15. B

**The Conclusion:** These five people can serve as models for the type of person who can be helped by hypnosis.

**The Evidence:** A study showed that these five previously disturbed hypnosis subjects had stable emotional conditions.

The survey only found that at the time of the study the five seemed to be doing OK. Remember, these people were originally suffering from mood swings; maybe the study just caught them on a good day. If that's the case—if since 1988 these people have been experiencing dramatic mood swings and occasional periods of health—then hypnosis hasn't really helped them and they're not good models.

The author presented the people as models of different types of people who can be helped, not as a single model of a single personality type, so they needn't be similar (A). It doesn't matter that the other

45 people who underwent hypnosis didn't get better (C); the argument is based on and concerns only the five who were stable. (E) fails to weaken the argument for the same reason. The concern of many psychologists (D) is well outside the scope. We need a statement that speaks about hypnosis and these five subjects.

**16. A**

The New Theory's Conclusion: Heat (from the burning coal) causes columnar growth in junipers near burning underground coal veins.

The New Theory's Evidence: None really, except the correlation of columnar growth with these areas with underground fires.

The Old Theory's Conclusion: The abundance of carbon monoxide causes columnar growth.

The Old Theory's Evidence: None really, except the correlation of columnar growth with these areas with high carbon monoxide.

When you scan the choices, you see that each presents a case of the cause with or without the effect or the effect with or without the cause. Since the two theories are in opposition, weakening the old theory is a way of strengthening the new one. Bearing in mind from the lesson the key issues in a causal argument, we recognize that a case of columnar growth where the cause claimed by the new theory (heat) is present, but the cause claimed by the old theory (carbon monoxide) is absent strengthens the new theory at the expense of the old.

A case (B) where we get the new theory's alleged cause (intense heat), without the alleged effect (columnar junipers) is of no help at all. A columnar juniper in an atmosphere with high carbon monoxide but no extra heat (C) strengthens the old theory. A case with both alleged causes without the expected effect (D) weakens both theories. Likewise columnar growth in the presence of both causes (E) does nothing to promote one theory over the other.

## CRITICAL REASONING EXPLANATIONS SET 2

### Answer Key:

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 7. A  | 13. E |
| 2. D | 8. E  | 14. A |
| 3. C | 9. E  | 15. C |
| 4. B | 10. C | 16. D |
| 5. B | 11. B |       |
| 6. A | 12. E |       |

### 1. D

The Conclusion: Nonurban areas are now affected by air pollution.

The Evidence: An increase in the number of persons suffering from illnesses attributable to air pollution.

If more illnesses are now considered to be caused by air pollution then it's possible for people who had been sick for what were considered other reasons to account for the increase in the number of people suffering from illnesses caused by air pollution. The general health of the population hasn't necessarily declined, just been reclassified, and so air pollution hasn't necessarily affected non-urban areas. The GMAT testmakers are fond of this trick .

(A) "decreased air pollution in the cities" doesn't weaken an argument that says it's rising outside cities. (B) says fewer people are moving out of cities, and this has no clear effect. The new sufferers from air

pollution would be nonurban, so the idea that not many urban dwellers die from air pollution (C) won't weaken the argument. Antipollution measures (E) are irrelevant. There could still be lots of pollution in nonurban areas, pollution that floated out from urban areas, for example.

### 2. D

The Sugar Manufacturers' Conclusion: Low-calorie sweeteners aren't effective in helping people lose weight.

The Sugar Manufacturers' Evidence: Statistics show that although the consumption of these sweeteners has gone up, so has the percentage of obese people.

The manufacturers assume that the sweeteners are in some way responsible for the public's failure to lose weight. But if the consumers of the sweeteners aren't becoming more obese, then, despite the increase in the percentage of the public that is overweight, those using alternative sweeteners actually lost weight.

Another possible cause for weight gain (A) weakens the argument but it doesn't go as far as (D) which says that those who use the sweeteners have actually lost weight. (B) strengthens the manufacturers' claim, saying that some low-calorie sweeteners actually increase appetite. (C) tells us nothing about how effective low-calorie sweeteners may or may not be. And the sugar manufacturers' claim doesn't depend on an increase in the amount each user consumes (E) rather than an increase in the number of users.

**3. C**

The Conclusion: There are new doubts as to the role of lotion M in the appearance of reaction O.

The Evidence: This is what we're looking for: what caused the doubts?

In (C), lotion M is absent, yet O has taken place with drug L. O in the absence of M suggests that M is superfluous and casts the doubt we need.

(A) has drug L plus lotion M resulting in reaction O, just as was always thought. (B), in which O is absent despite the use of L and M, and (E), in which reaction O goes away following the use of L and M, each cast doubt on the whole commonplace, not just lotion M. (D), in which L doesn't cause O in the absence of M, would cast doubt on the role of L, and lend credence to the idea that M causes O. Watch out for au contraire choices on strengthen/weaken questions!

**4. B**

The conclusion: Candy manufacturers don't really lose thousands every year in potential sales through workers eating candy.

The evidence: workers eat the candy one piece at a time and wouldn't buy a whole box anyway.

The argument as stated assumes that the candy would, if not eaten, only be sold to the people who are eating it—the workers. We can undermine this assumption by pointing out that the candy could easily be sold to other people.

If the workers only eat candy that couldn't be sold (A), then the manufacturers probably aren't losing

potential sales. This is an au contraire choice. It doesn't matter how many workers are eating the candy (C); what's important is how much is disappearing and whether it could be sold if it weren't being eaten. The issue of when the candy is eaten (D) is irrelevant to whether the company is losing potential sales. Even if the eaten candy is a small fraction of the candy sold (E), it could still represent a substantial loss of potential sales money.

**5. B**

The Conclusion: We need to infer a conclusion from the evidence provided.

The Evidence: The Japanese respond to a claim that their closed markets are responsible for the trade deficit with the claim that the U.S. needs to improve schools and to spend more money on research and training.

Inferably, the Japanese think that changes the US should make would help shrink the deficit. So they likely believe the deficit exists because the US's industrial performance—a function of things like education, research, and training—is poor.

The Japanese don't address U.S. markets (A); they focus on U.S. industrial performance. It is the US officials' opinion (C), that the deficit results from Japanese protectionism. The Japanese don't say what specifically is wrong with US schools (D), just that they need improvement. Neither have they implied (E) that something in addition to improving industrial performance is necessary.

**6. A**

The Conclusion: Private high school kids start out willing to let academics "slide," but they learn the value of serious study as the years go by.

The Evidence: Most kids caught and punished for cheating are freshmen.

The assumption is that upperclassmen don't cheat as much, but if they learn how to cheat without getting caught the link between evidence and conclusion is severed.

A policy of going easy on first offenders (B) has no impact on the logic—the statistics remain the same. (C) could somewhat weaken the argument by implying that upperclassmen don't cheat as much as freshmen because upper-class proctors are more vigilant, but we're starting to argue on behalf of the choice. It could also strengthen the argument by implying that a higher percentage of upperclassmen who cheat get caught. Vandalism (D) has nothing to do with the matter at hand. Equally irrelevant is (E)'s distinction between private and public school students' attitudes towards life.

**7. A**

The Conclusion: Paintings are too often hung in inappropriate contexts.

The Evidence: (actually more of an explanation) Gallery managers don't know what context would be proper.

To solve the problem, we'd want to bring the managers and artists together so that the artist can have a say in how the paintings are hung. This eliminates the gallery managers' ignorance, which is the root cause of the problem.

(C) and (D) both play with the gallery's decor, but making it uniform or insignificant won't help if the artist has a particular decor in mind. (B)'s suggestion of brochures isn't good enough. Describing the appropriate environment isn't the same as providing it. And there's no reason to assume (E) that if a manager knows what the work means he'll be able to tell what context the painter had in mind.

**8. E**

The School Officials' Conclusion: A program intended to increase the physical fitness of students has been a great success.

The Evidence: Participation in after-school sports has doubled since the program began.

It's assumed that participation in after-school programs necessarily leads to better physical fitness. Denying this weakens the argument. Maybe the after-

school sports are pool and bowling, which provide little physical conditioning.

The students' motivation (A) is irrelevant: the end result of the program is what's important here. The school officials' claim concerns students in general, not just ones in poor condition (B), so the program could still be a success even if the truly sickly don't join. How long students take part in after-school sports (C) doesn't really matter. And (D)'s claim strengthens the argument by making it reasonable that the policy has encouraged the new athletes.

**9. E**

The Conclusion: Even if the five washers work consistently throughout the regular week, they won't finish cleaning before some windows again need cleaning.

The Evidence: It takes four weeks for the team of five washers to clean every window.

What can we conclude? If any given window can be revisited four weeks later, yet some of them already need cleaning, then some windows won't stay clean if attended to only once every four weeks. They get dirty more quickly than this.

(B), (C), and (D) are wrong because they ignore the possibility of two teams working, or of washers working overtime. There's no reason why the owner's demand couldn't be fulfilled (B) by having 2 teams of 5 washers or by having one team work overtime. For all we know, one team working overtime could properly clean all the windows in less than 4 weeks (C). Contrary to (D), it may be that 3 teams of washers working part-time can accomplish the task. As for (A), no distinction between professional and amateur washers has been or can be made.

**10. C**

The Conclusion: A group of anthropologists claim to have formulated a "definitive" theory of consumer purchasing behavior.

The Evidence: There isn't any provided.

You need the choice that would be least likely to

represent a benefit of the theory to retailers. This is an inference question, one where you will infer benefits of the theory. Clearly, if the theory makes consumers aware of how displays influence them, they will be less at the mercy of crafty retailers. This is a benefit to consumers, not retailers.

(A) and (D) point out that retailers will be able to use the new theory to display products to maximum advantage by cutting costs and pleasing customers. (B) names the overall benefit of the new theory: it will tell retailers why shoppers buy a particular product. And (E), if true, would help a retailer maximize the amount of shopping that customers do in his or her particular store.

**11. B**

**The Conclusion:** The pre-Columbian people of Veracruz must not have understood the principle and uses of the wheel.

**The Evidence:** Ceramic animals with attached wheels were found in Veracruz grave sites. Yet this culture did not use the wheel for tasks like carting, transportation, and pottery-making.

The author argues that these people didn't understand the wheel because they didn't employ it in their everyday activities. Thus, if these people had understood the uses of the wheel, they would have used it in their daily lives.

The author never hints that if they understood the wheel they wouldn't have used it on the animals (A). Nor does the author argue that they didn't have uses for the wheel (C); it's that they didn't understand the wheel enough to make use of it in their daily lives. As for (D), the author states the opposite, that they must not have known of the wheel's uses despite the wheels on the animals. (E) is way off topic—the author doesn't even hint that the animals came from a later culture.

**12. E**

**The Conclusion:** If the cost of public transportation is doubled, the city will lose money and become even more noisy and smog filled.

**The Evidence:** The added expense will deter commuters from using trains and buses—they will drive instead, resulting in pollution and congestion.

To state that the fare increase would have a major impact on the level of pollution and congestion by increasing the use of private cars, the author must assume that enough people have ready access to cars to make this impact.

People could, contrary to (A), share rides and still have a great negative impact on pollution and congestion, so long as the number of cars increases significantly. The amount of money commuters spend (B) isn't the issue—the effect on the city is. Even if public transportation conditions did improve (C), people would have already abandoned commuters in the system. Nor does the author have to assume that cars outnumber those in buses and trains (D). The actual numbers aren't a part of this argument.

**13. E**

**The Conclusion:** People have more money to spend on their vacations.

**The Evidence:** Airlines are doing fine even though they're charging high fares to cross the Atlantic.

The idea that domestic flights are also booming doesn't sever the connection between booming business and vacation money—it shows more booming business.

The fact that most of the flights presented as evidence aren't bought by vacationers (A) breaks the connection between booming business and vacation money. Airlines can do a booming business even if business as a whole is down, as long as (B) there are fewer airlines. If people are skimping elsewhere (C), then even if they're paying a lot for airfare, they needn't have more vacation money. And if in many cases people have no choice but to fly (D), they must pay the higher fares no matter how little money they have.

**14. A**

The Truck Driver's Conclusion: The gas tax must be lowered.

The Truck Driver's Evidence: Increased costs will either put the truckers out of business or will hurt consumers.

The Official's Conclusion: The tax must remain.

The Official's Evidence: Highways will fall into disrepair without tax revenues, costing truckers and consumers even more.

The official wants the trucker to realize that cutting gas taxes won't help, but will likely raise costs for both industry and consumers. So she's arguing that the trucker's proposal, if carried out, will actually make matters worse.

A circular argument (B) is more or less a restatement of the conclusion—that's not what's happening here. The official doesn't accuse the trucker of selfishness (C); moreover, the trucker also warns of the harm done to consumers by the gas tax. The official does provide justification of the tax policy (D): the revenue pays for road upkeep. There's no inherent contradiction between high taxes and the destruction of the trucking industry (E); nor does the official claim there is.

**15. C**

The Skeptics' Conclusion: The Venus of Orleans isn't 70,000 years old.

The Skeptics' Evidence: Carbon-14 testing indicates that the statue is only about 50,000 years old.

The skeptics contend that the 70,000 year dating is false. As evidence they present carbon-14 dating results which show the statuette to be only 50,000 years old. This argument is weakened if results from carbon-14 dating are unreliable when the object pre-dates 60,000 BC. Basically, if the archaeologists are right, the skeptics' tests are worthless. So the issue is still open and the skeptics' evidence is greatly weakened.

(D) works along similar lines, but no one believes the statuette to be over 100,000 years old. (A) deals with the other statuette and, rather than casting doubt on its date, affirms it. The skeptics' argument doesn't rely on other statuettes having been found (B) or on the material of which the statuette is composed (E).

**16. D**

The Conclusion: Foreign language study is becoming a serious endeavor in American education. When foreign language students enter the work force, they will help businesses to compete internationally and enhance the US's reputation abroad.

The Evidence: The number of US college students in language courses has increased 20 percent over the last five years.

Neither a "no" nor a "yes" answer to the question about dead languages would have any relevance whatsoever to the author's argument.

Let's see how answers to the others would affect the argument. If students only took brief courses (A), they probably wouldn't enhance the U.S.'s reputation or ability to compete. If overall enrollments are way up in the last five years, (B) then a 20 percent increase in the number of language students wouldn't have as great an impact or indicate a change in students' perception of foreign language study. If the students don't use the languages (C), it can't help their employers or the country's reputation. And if this 20 percent increase is smaller than those in previous years (E), the idea that language study is considered more seriously now is weakened.



## CRITICAL REASONING EXPLANATIONS SET 3

### Answer Key:

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 7. A  | 13. D |
| 2. A | 8. B  | 14. C |
| 3. D | 9. E  | 15. E |
| 4. A | 10. A | 16. C |
| 5. E | 11. C |       |
| 6. B | 12. B |       |

#### 1. D

The Conclusion: We need to find an anticonclusion, something that could not be true based on the evidence.

The Evidence: 11 percent of Arbicans moved from urban to suburban areas in 1980, and this percentage fell steadily until it was down to 3 percent in 1990.

If the total population decreased, and the percentage moving from urban to suburban areas decreased, then the number of Arbicans moving couldn't remain the same; it would also have to decrease.

That while the percentage decreased, so too did the actual number (A), is consistent with the information we're given. That the population increased, along with the number moving, (B), is also possible. The population and the number moving decreasing (C), is fine. And if the population is increasing while the number moving stays the same (E), the percentage would have to dip as we were told.

#### 2. A

The Conclusion: Kapoor Meatworks has decided to offer a budget line of delicacies in order to expand their market.

The Evidence: Kapoor has a monopoly on expensive delicacies and wants to expand into budget delicacies. Its success depends on heavy advertising, which will be funded by profits from their gourmet line.

If the ads for the new budget line attracted customers who were already buying Kapoor's gourmet line, then they'd be spending money to attract customers they already have. There would be no expanded market.

A company is likely to spend more to advertise a new product (B), and if the ads work, then Kapoor's market will expand. No one expects Kapoor's new line to be a monopoly forever (C), and so the fact that other companies may enter the market isn't a serious obstacle. If they can attract new customers to their

budget line, these people may buy their gourmet line (D), and so their market should really expand. The reluctance of the stores to carry the new line (E) is an obstacle of sorts, but it only means that Kapoor will have to find new retail outfits for the budget line: it's not as serious as the obstacle in (A).

**3. D**

The Conclusion: It's unlikely that the cost of electricity to individuals is determined by total consumption of electricity.

The Evidence: Recent increases in consumption have been accompanied by upward and downward fluctuations of cost per unit.

If the cost of electricity isn't influenced by total consumption, it must be influenced by something else: that's very reasonable.

We only know that cost isn't determined by consumption; we can't, from this, just infer the reverse (A). The evidence—the second sentence—tells us that there's no correlation (B). There's no reason to doubt the validity of the statistics, (C). And the author is trying to prove that the cost to customers is not dependent on total consumption, so (E) just turns this around.

**4. A**

The (Implied) Conclusion: The masks prevent the tigers from attacking the people who wear them.

The Evidence: For the past few years many workers have worn these masks and none of them has been attacked by a tiger.

We can't be sure that the masks are responsible for this situation. The tigers might no longer be attacking people at all. To strengthen the case for the masks we need evidence that the tigers are still attacking humans, though not attacking humans wearing masks.

Evidence about other reserves (B) can't help us—it's just more of the same. Perhaps there were no tigers spotted (C) because they are no longer on the reserve. In that case masks have nothing to do with worker

safety. And maybe it's the singing (D), and not the masks, that has prevented the tiger attacks. Both (C) and (D) are *au contraire* choices. Tigers attacking deer (E) doesn't tell us anything about the tigers' behavior with regard to humans, much less humans with masks.

**5. E**

The Conclusion: Hodges's aggressive marketing efforts were responsible for the growth in profits.

The Evidence: Profits have increased under Hodges.

The author is assuming first, that Hodges is in fact responsible for the increase, and second, that it's her marketing efforts in particular that are responsible. If Hodges's predecessor was responsible for acquiring a rival company, and if this has nearly doubled the yearly revenues, then we have no reason to believe that Hodges is responsible for the increase in profits.

Production capacity (A) is off the point, since higher production capacity need not mean greater profits. Yes, profits have risen under Hodges (B), but the argument concerns why this is so. We don't know whether the campaign spoken of in (C) was successful. Since there is no evidence that the new strategy (D) has not been profitable, it's possible that this switch was in fact the aggressive marketing strategy and is responsible for the increased profits. That would make (D) a strengthener.

**6. B**

The Conclusion: The real obstacle to selling the combined receivers is not price, but \_\_\_\_\_.

The Evidence: Combined audio/video receivers aren't selling, despite heavy advertising and discounts.

We need something that would plausibly prevent people from buying the product that doesn't have to do with, and is even more fundamental than, price—something like whether these products actually have a use.

Since the reason doesn't have to do with price, (A) and (D) are both out. Will the models soon be obsolete in function or design, (C) and (E)? While

these are plausible questions a consumer might ask before purchasing a new product, neither is as fundamental as, let alone more fundamental than, price.

**7. A**

The Conclusion: The overwhelming majority of the world's refugees prefer to return to their own countries than emigrate to another country.

The Evidence: Of the millions of Afghani refugees, only a few have applied for emigration to other countries.

This is an argument from a sample, so the key issue of representativeness should come to mind. In order for this evidence about Afghani refugees to support a conclusion about refugees in general, Afghanis must be representative of refugees in general.

The author is not concerned with the reasons that lead people to flee their native countries (B), only with whether these refugees would prefer to return home or to emigrate. The desires of the children of refugees (C) are irrelevant; the argument concerns the desires of refugees themselves. Whether refugees become refugees for a variety of reasons or for one overwhelming reason (D) has no effect on this question. The number of refugees may have risen or fallen in the past decade (E), but either way it has no bearing on the question of where most refugees would like to end up.

**8. B**

The Conclusion: The new kidney implant will be good for modern medicine.

The Evidence: (It's in the form of an analogy) The first heart transplants, although later rejected, stimulated beneficial medical research.

The implication is that despite its drawbacks, the new kidney implant will also benefit medical research. So the author draws an analogy between the new kidney implant and the first heart transplants. The heart transplant brought benefits despite its drawbacks, and, therefore, so will the kidney implant.

Seeing that the author argues by analogy allows us to eliminate (A), (C), and (D), which miss this crucial point. And the analogy is based on the benefits that heart transplants brought to medical research, not on the critics' opposition (E). We have no way of knowing that the critics are the same people in both cases.

**9. E**

Beneficial research is not necessarily a consequence of every medical innovation. Although the first heart transplant stimulated such research, there is no guarantee that the new kidney implant will do so. That claim was the only support given for the new implant, so the argument is disarmed.

The idea that, once perfected, the implant will cost very little (A), won't aid opponents of the new implant. Neither will (C), which defends the people who created the implant; nor will (D), that the research the new implant will stimulate will be similar to that stimulated by the first heart transplants. That many who oppose the new implant are reputable scientists (B) doesn't mean that they can't be mistaken.

**10. A**

The Conclusion: There's no conclusion; it's "story-time." We have to draw an inference.

The Evidence: In 1990 and 1991, both Union and Essex saw an increase in population. In 1992, the population of Union shrank by 1.7 percent. There were fewer residents in Essex in 1990 than in 1992.

For Union, 1990 and 1991 were years of growth, while 1992 was a year of decline. Since the number of residents in Essex declined over the three years, and since the first two years were years of growth, the third (1992) must have been a year of decline. If it wasn't, there'd be no way that the population could have dropped by 100 residents over the three-year period.

We have no evidence that (B) the changes in population were due to people moving back and forth between the counties. We don't know anything

about the number of people in Union County, so we can't make any comparisons (C). That both counties had negative increases in 1990 and 1991 (D) directly contradicts the stimulus. And as we saw in discussing correct choice (A), it's impossible for Essex to have had (E) a positive increase in 1992.

**11. C**

The Conclusion: Street vendors should be banned near restaurants.

The Evidence: Restaurants can't compete with the vendors because vendors have lower expenses and fewer costs to pass on to customers.

The assumption here is that the cheaper cost of vendor food attracts customers. But if most midtown customers don't pay for their own meals, then the higher prices that restaurants charge aren't an issue.

Even if restaurant food is better (A), the price difference may still draw customers to the vendors. The author doesn't claim that moving won't hurt the vendors (B); it's the restaurants she's concerned about. The argument is that a ban should be enacted, not that it can be enforced (D). And that the percentage of food sales that is profit is the same for restaurants and vendors (E) doesn't have any effect on the argument. The vendors' advantage isn't due to a higher mark-up.

**12. B**

The Conclusion: The number of involuntarily unemployed disabled people will drop substantially.

The Evidence: Federal employers have been unable to discriminate against qualified disabled job applicants. Congress has now approved legislation that puts the same prohibition on private employers.

Here the author must assume that at least some private employers chose to discriminate against the disabled—if this weren't so, then her assertion that the number of involuntarily unemployed disabled will go down would be unjustified. In order for a ban on discrimination to have an effect, there must have been discrimination.

The history of the legislation (A) is outside the scope, since we're only concerned with its consequences. The author needn't assume anything about the relative number of disabled people employed by the two sectors (C). We only know how the legislation will affect hiring, so (D) its stopping discrimination in general isn't assumed. And the author doesn't assume anything about the voluntarily unemployed disabled (E).

**13. D**

The Conclusion: The manufacturer will probably label DTF a cosmetic.

The Evidence: The manufacturer claims that DTF reduces wrinkles and wants to sell it as a pharmaceutical. The FDA requires lots of expensive tests for new pharmaceuticals. The manufacturer lacks resources.

If the manufacturer decided to label DTF as a cosmetic because it can't afford the pharmaceutical testing, then it must be true that the FDA doesn't require the same strict tests to regulate cosmetics as it does for pharmaceuticals.

We'd go too far by inferring that the FDA doesn't regulate cosmetics at all (A): the stimulus refers to "less rigorous" regulations. Just because this particular cosmetics firm doesn't have the capital (B) doesn't mean that only established pharmaceutical firms can launch new products. The manufacturer may have wanted to sell DTF as a pharmaceutical, not to sell more (C), but to sell at a higher price. And the actual facts about DTF's effectiveness (E) are unknown to us—we can't infer anything about them.

**14. C**

The Homeowner's Conclusion: The drop in property value in the area is due to the bus depot.

The Homeowner's Evidence: There isn't any.

The Transportation Official's Argument: The police are responsible for the drop in property values.

The Official's Evidence: Most home-buyers are put off by the area's high crime rate.

We need to weaken the official's causal argument by clearing the police of blame or showing that the bus depot is actually responsible for the area's high crime rate. If the bus depot attracts criminals, it's at least partially responsible for crime in the area, and ultimately for declining property values. So the official's cause is actually an effect of the homeowner's cause.

A correlation between falling property values and a rising crime rate (A) strengthens the official's claim. There's no evidence that noise pollution is responsible for lowering property values (B); while this could be the case, the survey evidence points to crime. That the police force has not seen a raise in pay or numbers in nine years (D) would if anything support the official's claim, by implying that police may be less able to control crime. And shortcomings in the survey (E) may be pertinent, but this fails to address the official's central issues of crime or the police.

**15. E**

The Discrepancy: We're led to expect that Plant Y would thrive in Desert X. The plant likes lots of sunlight and little moisture, which is just what the desert has. So why doesn't this plant thrive in this desert?

That Desert X has high temperatures and that Plant Y can't live in such high temperatures gives us additional evidence—it's a perfectly fine explanation of why Plant Y wouldn't thrive in Desert X. And by picking up on the fact that Y is a desert (which are often very hot places), this explanation works from the information given, as good GMAT explanations do.

The absence of a predator (A), far from decreasing the likelihood of a plant's survival, seems more likely to increase it. We have no reason to suspect (B) that one week of rainfall per year is too much for Plant Y to withstand. The fact that it can easily grow elsewhere (C) is irrelevant to the question of why it doesn't grow in Desert X. And the information about Desert X provided in (D) doesn't help us, since we're not concerned with plant life in general, but only with Plant Y.

**16. C**

The WAA's Argument: The number of traffic deaths per mile driven is an accurate indication of the quality of a country's drivers.

We need the statement that would not provide a logical objection to the WAA's conclusion. While it's probably true that countries with more miles of road are likely to have more traffic deaths, the ranking of deaths is per mile driven.

The wrong choices are all valid objections because they point to reasons other than drivers' ability for the number of deaths per mile driven. The difference in road safety from one country to another (A) is a factor in accidents. How well a car is maintained (B) also has an influence on whether its driver has an accident. A difference in terrain (D) means good drivers in mountainous countries may be more likely to have a fatal accident. And a higher number of passengers per car (E) might lead to a high number of traffic fatalities, even where the frequency of accidents is very low.