

CR-01 VCR07570

1. <https://gmatclub.com/forum/the-technological-conservatism-of-bicycle-manufacturers-is-117503.html>

The technological conservatism of bicycle manufacturers is a reflection of the kinds of demand they are trying to meet. The only cyclists seriously interested in innovation and willing to pay for it are bicycle racers. Therefore, innovation in bicycle technology is limited by what authorities will accept as standard for purposes of competition in bicycle races.

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

- A. The market for cheap, traditional bicycles cannot expand unless the market for high-performance competition bicycles expands.
- B. High-performance bicycles are likely to be improved more as a result of technological innovations developed in small workshops than as a result of technological innovations developed in major manufacturing concerns.
- C. Bicycle racers do not generate a strong demand for innovations that fall outside what is officially recognized as standard for purposes of competition.
- D. The technological conservatism of bicycle manufacturers results primarily from their desire to manufacture a product that can be sold without being altered to suit different national markets.
- E. The authorities who set standards for high-performance bicycle racing do not keep informed about innovative bicycle design.

Argument Construction

Situation

Bicycle racers are the only consumers willing to pay for innovations in bicycle technology. Manufacturers therefore innovation to the standards established for competitive bicycle racing.

Reasoning

What is being assumed in this argument? This argument implies a connection between what bicycle racers want and what bicycle manufacturers make. The passage states that only racers are interested in innovation and to pay for it. Bicycle manufacturers have determined it is not worthwhile to produce innovative bicycles that do not meet official standards. What is the implied interaction? It is reasonable to assume that racers must not be interested in buying models that, while innovative, do not meet official standards for racing; they will pay only for those innovations that are acceptable in competition.

- A. The argument concerns innovation in bicycle technology. It is not about the entire market for all bicycles, so no assumption is made about traditional bicycles.
- B. The passage does not discuss where the best innovations are likely to be created, so no assumption about small workshops versus large manufacturers is made.
- C. **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the conclusion's underlying assumption that bicycle racers do not buy bicycles they cannot use for racing.
- D. The passage does not discuss different national markets; no assumption can be made about them.
- E. The passage does not indicate what the authorities do or do not know; this statement is extraneous to the passage and cannot be assumed.

The correct answer is C.

CR-02 VCR07635

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/correctly-measuring-the-productivity-of-service-workers-is-complex-co-239542.html>

Correctly measuring the productivity of service workers is complex. Consider, for example, postal workers: they are often said to be more productive if more letters are delivered per postal worker. But is this really true? What if more letters are lost or delayed per worker at the same time that more are delivered?

The objection implied above to the productivity measure described is based on doubts about the truth of which of the following statements?

- A. Postal workers are representative of service workers in general.
- B. The delivery of letters is the primary activity of the postal service.
- C. Productivity should be ascribed to categories of workers, not to individuals.
- D. The quality of services rendered can appropriately be ignored in computing productivity.
- E. The number of letters delivered is relevant to measuring the productivity of postal workers.

Argument Evaluation

Situation

In considering how best to measure productivity, the assumption is made that the more letters postal workers deliver, the more productive they are. This assumption is then challenged: What if the number of delayed and lost letters increases proportionately with the number of letters delivered?

Reasoning

Which statement would NOT be accepted by those objecting to the measure? The point of the objection is that the number of letters delivered is, by itself, an inadequate measure of postal workers' productivity. The challenge introduces the issue of the quality of the work being performed by suggesting that the number of misdirected letters should also be taken into account. The challenge is based on rejecting the idea that quality can be ignored when measuring productivity.

- A. The argument uses postal workers as an example; the challenge does not question the fairness of the example.
- B. Letter-delivery is assumed to be the primary activity of postal workers because their productivity is measured on that basis; the challenge does not reject this point.
- C. The argument does discuss a category of workers, postal workers, rather than individuals; the challenge does not reject this point.
- D. **Correct.** This statement properly identifies the point that is the basis of the challenge to the measure; the objection does NOT accept the position that quality can be ignored in evaluating productivity.
- E. There is no doubt that counting letters delivered is part of measuring productivity; the challenge is to its being the only measure.

The correct answer is D.

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/pretzel-vendor-the-new-license-fee-for-operating-a-pretzel-stand-outs-150404.html>

Pretzel vendor: The new license fee for operating a pretzel stand outside the art museum is prohibitively expensive. Charging typical prices, a vendor would need to sell an average of 25 pretzels per hour to break even. At my stand outside city hall, I average only 15 per hour. Therefore, I could not break even running a pretzel stand outside the art museum, much less turn a profit.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the pretzel vendor's argument?

- A. There is currently no license fee for operating a pretzel stand outside city hall.
- B. Pretzel vendors who operate stands outside the art museum were making a profit before the imposition of the new license fee.
- C. The number of pretzel stands outside the art museum is no greater than the number of pretzel stands now outside city hall.
- D. People who buy pretzels at pretzel stands are most likely to do so during the hours at which the art museum is open to the
- E. Fewer people passing the art museum than passing city hall are to buy pretzels.

Reasoning

Given the facts the vendor has stated, what would make it less likely that the vendor could break even running a pretzel stand outside the museum? The vendor says that to break even, it would be necessary to sell more pretzels per hour outside the art museum than outside city hall. Therefore, look for an answer choice suggesting that the vendor could not sell that many pretzels outside the art museum. To strengthen the argument, the correct answer must present evidence that goes beyond what the vendor has already stated.

- A. A license fee outside city hall would not affect the vendor's need or ability to sell 25 pretzels an hour outside the art museum to break even.
- B. If vendors were making a profit before the license fee was imposed, there might be enough demand for pretzels to allow a profit even with the license fee
- C. Fewer pretzel stands outside the art museum would mean less competition. Therefore, it might be easier for the vendor to make a profit.
- D. Even if many more people buy pretzels while the museum is open than when it's closed, the vendor might still sell at least 25 pretzels an hour, on average, whether it's open or closed.
- E. **Correct.** If the vendor only sells 15 pretzels an hour outside city hall, and fewer people want pretzels outside the art museum than outside city hall, then it would be hard for the vendor to sell 25 pretzels an hour outside the art museum.

The correct answer is E.

CR-04

VCR000738

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/when-a-city-experiences-a-sharp-decline-in-population-the-city-s-tax-142347.html>

When a city experiences a sharp decline in population, the city's tax revenues, which pay for such city services as police protection and maintenance of water lines, also decrease. The area to be policed and the number and length of the water lines to be maintained, however, do not decrease. Attempting to make up the tax revenue lost by raising tax rates is not feasible, since higher tax rates would cause even more residents to leave.

The information given most strongly supports which of the following general claims?

- A. If, in a city with sharply declining population, police protection and water line maintenance do not deteriorate, some other service previously provided by the city will deteriorate or be eliminated.
- B. If a city's tax rates are held stable over a period of time, neither the population nor the levels of city services provided will tend to decline over that period.
- C. If a city's population declines sharply, police protection and water line maintenance are the services that deteriorate most immediately and most markedly.
- D. A city that suffers revenue losses because of a sharp decline in population can make up some of the lost tax revenue by raising tax rates, provided the city's tax rates are low in relation to those of other cities.
- E. A city that is losing residents because tax rates are perceived as too high by those residents can reverse this population trend by bringing its tax rates down to a more moderate level.

Reasoning

What conclusion does the information suggest about cities in general? The information suggests that in cities, a population decline tends to reduce overall revenues that fund city services without reducing the need for two specific services: police protection and water lines. It also says that raising tax rates causes further population declines and does not raise revenues. But we are not told how overall revenues are distributed among city services, nor how the distribution might change. Even if overall funds decline, revenues for some specific city services could remain the same, while revenues for other services are severely cut.

- A. **Correct.** If police protection and water lines have not deteriorated as population has declined, then probably the funding for them has been preserved. Therefore, funding for some other services must be severely cut, since (as the argument states) making up tax revenue lost due to population decreases is not feasible.
- B. Although increased tax rates cause population declines, a city's population and total tax revenue may for other reasons even if tax rates are stable.
- C. No specific information is given about how other city services would be affected by population declines. Therefore, we have no basis on which to compare any resulting deterioration to that of police protection and water lines.
- D. We are told that raising tax rates in a city with declining revenues does not increase revenues, and none of the information given suggests any exceptions to this principle.
- E. Reducing high tax rates to moderate levels may not attract many new residents, since other cities may have moderate tax rates as well; furthermore, those other cities may have better city services or other more attractive features.

The correct answer is A.

CR-05

VCR000905

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/the-cause-of-the-wreck-of-the-ship-edmund-in-a-severe-storm-142473.html>

The cause of the wreck of the ship Edmund Fitzgerald in a severe storm on Lake Superior is still unknown. When the sunken wreckage of the vessel was found, searchers discovered the hull in two pieces lying close together. The storm's violent waves would have caused separate pieces floating even briefly on the surface to drift apart. Therefore, the breakup of the hull can be ruled out as the cause of the sinking.

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/the-cause-of-the-wreck-of-the-ship-edmund-in-a-severe-storm-142473.html>

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

- A. Ships as large as the *Edmund Fitzgerald* rarely sink except in the most violent weather.
- B. Underwater currents at the time of the storm did not move the separated pieces of the hull together again.
- C. Pieces of the hull would have sunk more quickly than the intact hull would have.
- D. The waves of the storm were not violent enough to have caused the ship to break up on the surface.
- E. If the ship broke up before sinking, the pieces of the hull would not have remained on the surface for very long.

Reasoning

What must be true in order for the given premises to justify the conclusion that the broken hull did not sink the ship?

The ship wrecked in a storm. If the hull was in separate pieces during the storm, the waves would have made the pieces drift apart. But the two pieces of the hull were found close together. Therefore, the argument concludes that the hull must not have been in separate pieces when the ship sank. This assumes that since the two pieces of the hull were found together, the storm waves never made them drift apart.

- A. This need not be true for the premises to justify the conclusion. It is perfectly compatible with the argument that large ships often sink in calm weather for example, due to factors such as icebergs or naval battles.
- B. **Correct.** The argument assumes that the pieces of the hull never drifted apart in the first place and hence that underwater currents did not move them back together again.
- C. If the pieces of the hull had sunk quickly, they would have had little time to drift apart. Therefore, they might have been found together even if the ship's hull had broken in the storm.
- D. Even if the waves had been violent enough to potentially break up the ship, they might not actually have done so. For instance, the ship may have sunk before the waves were able to break it up.
- E. As in C, if the pieces of the hull had not remained on the surface for long, they would have had little time to drift apart.

The correct answer is B.

CR-06

VCR001283

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/press-secretary-our-critics-claim-that-the-president-s-recent-highway-144229.html>

Press Secretary: Our critics claim that the president's recent highway project cancellations demonstrate a vindictive desire to punish legislative districts controlled by opposition parties. They offer as evidence the fact that 90 percent of the projects canceled were in such districts. But all of the canceled projects had been identified as wasteful in a report written by respected nonpartisan auditors. So the president's choice was clearly motivated by sound budgetary policy, not partisan politics.

Which of the following is an assumption on which the press secretary's argument depends?

- A. Canceling highway projects was not the only way for the president to punish legislative districts controlled by opposition parties.
- B. The scheduled highway projects identified as wasteful in the report were not mostly projects in districts controlled by the president's party.
- C. The number of projects canceled was a significant proportion of all the highway projects that were to be undertaken by the government in the near future.
- D. The highway projects canceled in districts controlled by the president's party were not generally more expensive than the projects canceled in districts controlled by opposition parties.
- E. Reports by nonpartisan auditors are not generally regarded by the opposition parties as a source of objective assessments of government projects.

Reasoning

What must be true in order for the press secretary's premise to support the conclusion that the president's choice was not partisan politics? The passage discusses two opposing arguments: an attack by critics, and a rejoinder by the press secretary. The critics' evidence that the president's choice was motivated by political bias is that 90 percent of the canceled projects were in opposition districts. To overcome this evidence, the press secretary only cites an apparently unbiased, authoritative report that indicated that all of the canceled projects were wasteful. For this response to be good, however, the press secretary must assume that it is not the case that most of the districts that the report indicated as wasteful were supportive of the president. If most were supportive, then the fact that the vast majority of canceled projects were from opposition districts would suggest a partisan motive.

- A. The press secretary's argument suggests that the president had no interest in punishing opposition districts. Therefore, it does not assume that the president had other ways to do so.
- B. **Correct.** If this were false, then it would make no sense for the press secretary to cite the report in denying that the president's choice was biased; it would in fact undermine the press secretary's rejoinder.
- C. Even if all the projects canceled were chosen for sound budgetary reasons, only a small proportion of all governmental highway projects may have been canceled.
- D. If the canceled projects in districts controlled by the president's party were more expensive, that might indicate that more money would have gone to those districts had they not been canceled, which would suggest that the motivation for canceling them probably was not partisan politics, which is the claim that the press secretary is arguing for.
- E. The press secretary's argument assumes that the report by the nonpartisan auditors was unbiased, not that the opposition parties must regard it as such.

The correct answer is B.

CR-07

VCR001308

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/environmental-organizations-want-to-preserve-the-land-q1-10117.html>

Environmental organizations want to preserve the land surrounding the Wilgrinn Wilderness Area from residential development. They plan to do this by purchasing that land from the farmers who own it. **That plan is ill-conceived:** if the farmers did sell their land, they would sell it to the highest bidder, and developers would outbid any other bidders. On the other hand, these farmers will never actually sell any of the land, provided that farming it remains viable. But farming will not remain viable if the farms are left unmodernized, and most of the farmers lack the financial resources modernization requires. And that is exactly why **a more sensible preservation strategy would be to the farmers to modernize their farms to the extent needed to maintain viability.** In the reasoning above, the two **boldface** portions play which of the following roles?

- A. The first assesses the goal held by certain environmental organizations; the second presents the goal that the reasoning concludes should be adopted instead.
- B. The first assesses the goal held by certain environmental organizations; the second presents the strategy that the reasoning concludes has the best chance of reaching that goal.
- C. The first is the conclusion reached about one strategy for attaining a certain goal; the second presents the strategy that the reasoning advocates.
- D. The first is the main conclusion toward which the reasoning is directed; the second presents a strategy that is called sensible but for which no support is offered.
- E. The first is the main conclusion toward which the reasoning is directed; the second is a consideration raised in order to support that conclusion.

Reasoning

What roles do the two boldfaced statements play in the passage? The passage starts by presenting a goal and a strategy for reaching that goal. The first boldfaced statement is a rejection of that strategy. The passage then presents a premise that supports the first boldfaced statement as a conclusion. Next, the passage describes other factors that suggest an alternative strategy. Finally, the second boldfaced statement presents and recommends that alternative strategy.

- A. The first statement assesses not the goal, but rather a strategy for reaching the goal; the second presents not another goal, but rather another strategy for reaching the same goal.
- B. The first statement assesses not a goal, but rather a strategy for reaching a goal.
- C. **Correct.** The first statement presents the conclusion that one strategy is ill-conceived; the second statement presents and advocates an alternative strategy.
- D. The main conclusion is not that the first strategy should be rejected, but rather that the alternative strategy should be accepted.
- E. E The idea that the first strategy should be rejected is used to support the idea that the alternative strategy should be accepted, not vice versa.

The correct answer is C.

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/historian-in-the-drindian-empire-censuses-were-conducted-annually-to-221110.html>

Historian: In the Drindian Empire, censuses were conducted annually to determine the population of each village. **Village census records for the last half of the 1600s are remarkably complete.** This very completeness makes one point stand out; in five different years, villages overwhelmingly reported significant population declines. Tellingly, each of those five years immediately followed an increase in a certain Drindian tax. This tax, which was assessed on villages, was computed by the central government using the annual census figures. Obviously, **whenever the tax went up, villages had an especially powerful economic incentive to minimize the number of people they recorded;** and concealing the size of a village's population from government census takers would have been easy. Therefore, the reported declines probably did not happen.

In the historian's argument, the two portions in **boldface** play which of the following roles?

- A. The first presents a finding to support the position the historian seeks to establish; the second is a consideration that has been used to argue against that position.
- B. The first provides a context for certain evidence that supports the position that the historian seeks to establish; the second is a judgment advanced to support that position.
- C. The first is a position that the historian seeks to establish; the second is evidence that has been used to argue against that position.
- D. The first is an assumption that the historian explicitly makes in support of a certain position; the second is that position.
- E. The first is a claim that the historian rejects; the second is a conclusion drawn to justify that rejection.

Reasoning

What roles do the two boldfaced statements play in the passage? The first boldfaced statement provides background information about the census records. The passage says that the situation described by the first boldfaced statement makes a certain observation stand out. To explain that observation, the passage then argues that the records were probably falsified; the second boldfaced statement presents a hypothesis about economic incentives that supports that argument's conclusion. Therefore, the second boldfaced statement is a premise in the argument.

- A. The historian seeks to establish the position that the records were falsified, and the hypothesis about economic incentives explains why they would have been falsified.
- B. **Correct.** The completeness of the records provides a context for the evidence supporting the conclusion that the records were falsified; the hypothesis about economic incentives supports the same conclusion by explaining why the records would have been falsified.
- C. The passage does not argue that the records are complete, but simply states that they were; the hypothesis about economic incentives is not used to argue that the records are incomplete, but rather that they are inaccurate.
- D. The completeness of the records does not support the hypothesis that the villagers had an economic incentive to record fewer people when the tax went up.
- E. The historian does not deny that the records are complete, but rather that they are accurate.

The correct answer is B.

CR-09 VCR002697

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/in-1992-outlaw-fishing-boats-began-illegally-harvesting-lobsters-from-87758.html>

In 1992 outlaw fishing boats began illegally harvesting lobsters from the territorial waters of the country of Belukia. Soon after, the annual tonnage of lobster legally harvested in Belukian waters began declining; in 1996, despite there being no reduction in the level of legal lobster fishing activity, the local catch was 9,000 tons below pre-1992 levels. It is therefore highly likely that the outlaw fishing boats harvested about 9,000 tons of lobster illegally that year.

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

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/in-1992-outlaw-fishing-boats-began-illegally-harvesting-lobsters-from-87758.html>

- A. The illegal lobster harvesting was not so extensive that the population of catchable lobsters in Belukia's territorial waters had sharply declined by 1996.
- B. The average annual lobster catch, in tons, of an outlaw fishing boat has increased since 1992.
- C. Outlaw fishing boats do not, as a group, harvest more lobsters than do licensed lobster-fishing boats.
- D. The annual legal lobster harvest in Belukia in 1996 was not significantly less than 9,000 tons.
- E. A significant proportion of Belukia's operators of licensed lobster-fishing boats went out of business between 1992 and 1996.

Reasoning

What must be true in order for the given information to justify the conclusion that the outlaw fishing boats harvested about 9,000 tons of lobster in 1996? The argument is that since the legal catch was 9,000 tons lower in 1996 than the total annual catch was before 1992, even though the level of legal lobster activity did not decline, the illegal catch in 1996 must have been about 9,000 tons. Despite the fact that the conclusion says about 9,000 tons, this is still a rather specific number. How can such a specific number be inferred? The argument must be assuming that the total annual catch was roughly the same in 1996 as it had been before 1992. Furthermore, there would be no justification for inferring such a specific number regarding the illegal lobster catch, unless the argument assumed that the number of catchable lobsters in 1996 was not dramatically different from the number in 1992, since the level of illegal lobster activity was not known (as appears to be the case, since the argument is intended to make an inference related to that level of activity). Consider the answer choices and find one that expresses or follows from the assumption.

- A. **Correct.** If illegal lobster harvesting had been so extensive that the population of catchable lobsters in Belukia's territorial waters had sharply declined by 1996, then the number of catchable lobsters would have been dramatically different that year from what it had been in 1992, and it would be impossible to infer, from the premises given, such a specific number as is given in the conclusion.
- B. The argument does not discuss how many lobsters have been caught illegally each year since 1992, but rather how many were caught in 1996 specifically.
- C. Whether the illegal catch in 1996 was higher or lower than the legal catch, it still could have been 9,000 tons.
- D. The annual legal catch before 1992 could not have been less than 9,000 tons, but the legal catch in 1996 could have been.
- E. The argument says there was no reduction in the amount of legal lobster activity. Therefore, it does not assume that any lobster boats went out of business.

The correct answer is A.

CR-10

Hard

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/printwell-s-ink-jet-division-manufactures-ink-jet-printers-17206.html>

Printwell's Ink Jet Division manufactures ink-jet printers and the ink cartridges they use. Sales of its ink-jet printers have increased. Monthly revenues from those sales, however, have not increased, because competition has forced Printwell to cut the prices of its printers. Unfortunately, Printwell has been unable to bring down the cost of manufacturing a printer. Thus, despite the increase in printer sales, the Ink Jet Division must be contributing less to the company's profits than it used to.

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

- A. Ink-jet printers in regular use frequently need new ink cartridges, and Printwell's printers only accept Printwell's ink cartridges.
- B. Unlike some competing companies, Printwell sells all of its printers through retailers, and these retailers' costs account for a sizable proportion of the printers' ultimate retail price.
- C. Some printer manufacturers have been forced to reduce the sale price of their ink-jet printers even more than Printwell has.
- D. In the past year, no competing manufacturer of ink-jet printers has had as great an increase as Printwell in unit sales of printers.
- E. In the past year, sales of Printwell's ink-jet printers have increased more than sales of any other type of printer made by Printwell.

Reasoning

What would make it least likely that the Ink Jet Division is contributing less to the company's profits than it used to? Printwell's ink-jet printer sales have increased, but manufacturing expenses per printer have not fallen. Therefore, total expenses for printer manufacturing have increased. But total monthly revenues from the printer sales have not increased. Therefore, total monthly profits from the printers must have fallen. The argument concludes that total profits from the Ink Jet Division have fallen. But, since the Ink Jet Division also produces ink cartridges, this reasoning assumes that profits from the ink cartridges have not increased enough to compensate for the lower profits from the printers. Therefore, look for an answer option that undermines this assumption by suggesting that profits from the ink cartridges have increased.

- A. **Correct.** This suggests that Printwell's ink-cartridge sales have increased along with its ink-jet printer sales, which might compensate for the falling profits from the printers.
- B. The retailers' added costs would probably make the Ink Jet Division less profitable, not more profitable.
- C. Even if ink-jet printer profits have fallen less than those of some other manufacturers, they may still have fallen.
- D. Printwell's monthly revenues from ink-jet printer sales have not increased, but costs per printer sold have not decreased. Therefore, this evidence that Printwell has been selling more ink-jet printers supports the argument's reasoning that Printwell's total profits from ink-jet printer sales must have fallen.
- E. As in option D, evidence that Printwell has been selling more ink-jet printers supports the argument's reasoning that Printwell's total profits from ink-jet printer sales must have fallen.

The correct answer is A.

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/agricultural-societies-cannot-exist-without-staple-crops-several-food-21776.html>

Agricultural societies cannot exist without staple crops. Several food plants, such as kola and okra, are known to have been domesticated in western Africa, but they are all supplemental, not staple, foods. All the recorded staple crops grown in western Africa were introduced from elsewhere, beginning, at some unknown date, with rice and yams. Therefore, discovering when rice and yams were introduced into western Africa would establish the earliest date at which agricultural societies could have arisen there.

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

- A. People in western Africa did not develop staple crops that they stopped cultivating once rice and yams were introduced.
- B. There are no plants native to western Africa that, if domesticated, could serve as staple food crops.
- C. Rice and yams were grown as staple crops by the earliest agricultural societies outside of western Africa.
- D. Kola and okra are better suited to growing conditions in western Africa than domesticated rice and yams are.
- E. Kola and okra were domesticated in western Africa before rice and yams were introduced there.

Reasoning

What must be true in order for the given information to justify the conclusion that knowing when rice and yams arrived in western Africa would establish the earliest date that agricultural societies could have arisen there? The argument is that agricultural societies require staple crops, and there were no recorded staple crops in western Africa before rice and yams were introduced there. Therefore, no agricultural societies could have arisen there before rice and yams were introduced. This assumes there were no unrecorded staple crops in western Africa before rice and yams. Therefore, look for an answer option that expresses or follows from this assumption.

- A. **Correct.** This follows from the assumption discussed above, that there were no earlier, unrecorded staple crops in western Africa before rice and yams.
- B. The argument assumes that no plants actually were domesticated as staple crops in western Africa, not that there are no plants suitable for such domestication.
- C. The argument assumes that early agricultural societies outside western Africa grew rice and yams as staple crops, but not necessarily the agricultural societies.
- D. The argument says that kola and okra are not staple crops. Therefore, it does not matter how well they grow in western Africa compared to rice and yams.
- E. Kola and okra are not staple crops, but if they ever had been, this claim would undermine the argument. Therefore, it's not an assumption on which the argument depends.

The correct answer is A.

CR-12 VCR003842

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/the-percentage-of-households-with-an-annual-income-of-more-than-9003.html>

The percentage of households with an annual income of more than \$40,000 is higher in Merton County than in any other county. However, the percentage of households with an annual income of \$60,000 or more is higher in Sommer County.

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

- A. The percentage of households with an annual income of \$80,000 is higher in Sommer County than in Merton County.
- B. Merton County has the second-highest percentage of households with an annual income of \$60,000 or more.
- C. The percentage of households with an annual income between \$40,000 and \$60,000 is higher in Merton County than in Sommer County.
- D. The total number of households with an annual income of more than \$40,000 is greater in Merton County than in Sommer County.
- E. Average annual household income is higher in Sommer County than in Merton County.

Reasoning

What follows from the statistics about annual household incomes in the two counties? We can infer that in Merton County, the percentage of households with incomes above \$40,000 is higher than in Sommer County. Therefore, the percentage with incomes below \$40,000 must be lower. And we are told that the percentage with incomes above \$60,000 is also lower in Merton County than in Sommer County. Since the percentage with incomes below \$40,000 and the percentage with incomes above \$60,000 are both lower in Merton County than in Sommer County, the remaining percentage, with incomes between \$40,000 and \$60,000, must be higher in Merton County than in Sommer County.

- A. We have no information about the percentage of households with incomes of \$80,000 or higher in either county. It's even possible that no household in either county has an income of \$80,000 or higher.
- B. Some third county could also have a higher percentage of households with incomes above \$60,000 than Merton County does, even though Merton County has the highest percentage of households with incomes above \$40,000.
- C. **Correct.** This can be deduced as explained above.
- D. We have no information about the total numbers of households in the two counties, only about the percentages with different income levels.
- E. Since a higher percentage of households in Sommer County than in Merton County have incomes below \$40,000, average annual household income might also be lower in Sommer County.

The correct answer is C.

CR-013

VCR003941

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/a-product-that-represents-a-clear-technological-advance-over-competing-157502.html>

A product that represents a clear technological advance over competing products can generally command a high price. Surprisingly, perhaps, **the strategy to maximize overall profit from a new product is to charge than the greatest price the market will bear**. Many companies charge the maximum possible price for such a product, because they want to make as much profit as they can and technological advances tend to be quickly surpassed. The drawback is that **large profits on the new product give competitors a strong incentive to quickly match the new product's capabilities**.

In the argument above, the two portions in boldface play which of the following roles?

- A. The first is the position the argument advocates; the second presents grounds for rejecting an alternative position.
- B. The first is the position the argument advocates; the second is an alternative position that the argument rejects.
- C. The first presents a strategy for achieving a certain goal; the second presents a drawback to that strategy.
- D. The first presents a strategy for achieving a certain goal; the second presents grounds for preferring a different goal.
- E. The first presents a strategy that, according to the argument, is ineffective; the second presents a way of improving the effectiveness of that strategy.

Reasoning

What roles do the two boldfaced portions play in the passage? The passage's first sentence just introduces the general topic of prices for new, technologically advanced products. In the second sentence, the first boldfaced portion explicitly recommends a strategy for maximizing overall profit from such products. The third sentence describes a popular alternative strategy. In the fourth sentence, the second boldfaced portion explicitly describes a drawback of that alternative strategy.

- A. **Correct.** The argument advocates the strategy recommended in the first boldfaced portion; the second boldfaced portion states a drawback of an alternative strategy and thus presents grounds for rejecting the position that the alternative strategy is effective.
- B. The second boldfaced portion is not an alternative position, but rather a reason for rejecting an alternative position.
- C. The second boldfaced portion presents a drawback not to the strategy presented in the first boldfaced portion, but rather to an alternative strategy.
- D. The second boldfaced portion does not present any reason to prefer a goal other than maximizing presents a drawback to a strategy for attaining that goal.
- E. The first boldfaced portion presents a strategy the argument recommends, and the second presents a reason why an alternative strategy might be ineffective.

The correct answer is A.

CR-014 VCR005068

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/a-recent-poll-found-that-over-80-percent-of-the-residents-of-nalmed-pr-47330.html>

Which of the following most logically completes the argument?

A recent poll found that over 80 percent of the residents of Nalmed Province favored a massive expansion of the commuter rail system as a means of significantly reducing congestion on the province's highways and were willing to help pay for the expansion through an increase in their taxes. Nevertheless, the poll results contain an indication that expansion of the rail system, if successfully completed, might be unlikely to achieve its goal of reducing congestion, because_____.

- A. most people in favor of expanding the rail system reported less congestion during their highway commute as the primary benefit they would experience
- B. of the less than 20 percent of residents not counted as favoring the expansion, about half claimed to have no opinion one way or the other
- C. the twice-daily periods of peak congestion caused by people commuting in cars have grown, over the past 20 years, from about an hour each to about two hours each
- D. expanding the commuter rail system will require the construction of dozens of miles of new bed
- E. the proposed expansion would make commuting by rail possible for many people who live in one suburb and work in a different suburb of the province's main city

Reasoning

What most supports the claim that the poll data indicate that the rail system expansion may not reduce congestion?

The expansion will not reduce highway congestion unless it results in fewer people driving during congested periods, such as rush hours when many people commute. Therefore, look for an answer option that takes the poll results as suggesting that not many drivers would switch to commuting on the expanded rail system.

- A. **Correct.** This shows that the poll data indicate that most of the residents who favor the new rail system plan to keep commuting by car—thus still contributing to highway congestion.
- B. The fact that 10 percent of the residents "have no opinion" provides no evidence that the poll data indicate the rail system expansion would not reduce congestion.
- C. The claim that the time needed for daily commutes has doubled says nothing at all about the interpretation of the poll data—and therefore nothing about what the poll data might indicate about the possible failure of the rail expansion to reduce congestion. It is thus irrelevant.
- D. This claim says nothing at all about the interpretation of the poll data and is incorrect because irrelevant.
- E. This claim says nothing at all about the interpretation of the poll data and is incorrect because irrelevant.

The correct answer is A.

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/editorial-in-krenlandian-newspaper-krenland-s-steelmakers-are-losing-227457.html>

Editorial in Krenlandian Newspaper:

Krenland's steelmakers are losing domestic sales because of lower-priced imports, in many cases because foreign governments subsidize their steel industries in ways that are banned by international treaties. But whatever the cause, the cost is ultimately going to be jobs in Krenland's steel industry. Therefore, it would protect not only steelmaking companies but also industrial employment in Krenland if our government took measures to reduce cheap steel imports.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the editorial's argument?

- A. Because steel from Krenland is rarely competitive in international markets, only a very small portion of Krenlandian steelmakers' revenue comes from exports.
- B. The international treaties that some governments are violating by giving subsidies to steelmakers do not specify any penalties for such violations.
- C. For many Krenlandian manufacturers who face severe international competition in both domestic and export markets, steel constitutes a significant part of their raw material costs.
- D. Because of advances in order-taking, shipping, and inventory systems, the cost of shipping steel from foreign producers to Krenland has fallen in recent years.
- E. Wages paid to workers in the steel industry in Krenland do not differ significantly from wages paid to workers in many of the countries that export steel to Krenland.

Reasoning

What would make it least likely that government measures to reduce cheap steel imports would protect both steelmakers and overall industrial employment in Krenland? The editorial's reasoning is that cheap steel imports are hurting steelmakers and steelmaking jobs. Since steelmaking jobs contribute to industrial employment, the editorial infers that government measures to protect steelmaking jobs will also help protect industrial employment in general. But this inference may be incorrect if the measures would reduce employment in industries other than steelmaking. Therefore, look for an answer option that suggests how measures to reduce cheap steel imports might hurt other Krenlandian industries.

- A. If Krenland exports very steel, then Krenlandian steelmakers will not be hurt, even if other nations retaliate with restrictions against Krenlandian steel imports. Therefore, this would strengthen the editorial's argument.
- B. This is compatible with the success of the strategy that the editorial's argument suggests. Even if the treaties do not specify any penalties, they may not forbid whatever penalties Krenland's government chooses to impose. Thus the government may be able to act as the editorial recommends without any special risk of international sanctions.
- C. **Correct.** This suggests that reducing cheap steel imports would hurt other Krenlandian industries by driving up their raw material costs, which in turn could reduce employment in those industries and thereby reduce overall industrial employment in Krenland—contrary to what the editorial's conclusion claims.
- D. This fact is compatible with the success of the strategy that the editorial suggests. It helps explain why the imports hurt domestic steelmakers. But it provides no reason to think that the import-reduction strategy would be ineffective in attaining its objectives.
- E. This fact is compatible with the success of the strategy that the editorial suggests. The editorial says that the imports are cheaper than Krenlandian steel. Therefore, reducing these cheaper imports could help protect Krenlandian steelmakers, even if wage differences do not account for the imports' lower prices.

The correct answer is C.

CR-016 VCR005518

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/southington-university-s-fund-raisers-succeeded-in-getting-donations-f-222967.html>

Southington University's fund-raisers succeeded in getting donations from 80 percent of the potential donors they contacted this year. This rate would be the expected rate if the only potential donors contacted were those who have donated in the past. But good fund-raisers constantly contact less likely prospects in an effort to expand the donor base. Thus the high success rate, far from showing that the fund-raisers did a good job, shows insufficient canvassing effort.

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

- A. Among potential donors contacted by Southington University's fund-raisers, the majority of those who did not make donations were people who had made donations to the university in the past.
- B. The amount of money raised by Southington University's fundraisers this year was lower than the amount they had raised in any of the previous several years.
- C. Individual donations made to Southington University this year were, on average, slightly larger than were average individual donations made to many other universities.
- D. Fund-raisers contacting past donors are not only to get new donations but also to get names of potential new donors to contact.
- E. The majority of the donations that fund-raisers succeeded in getting for Southington University were from donors who had never given to the university before.

Reasoning

What would undermine the case made for the argument's conclusion? The argument's conclusion is that the high success rate is evidence that the fund-raisers did not try hard enough to contact new potential donors. The argument is that since normally such a high donation rate could have been achieved even if only previous donors had been contacted, the fund-raisers must not have tried hard enough to contact people outside this group. But this reasoning neglects the possibility that the fund-raisers did contact lots of people who previously hadn't donated. If they had done that, one would expect the overall donation percentage to be lower than 80 percent. The 80 percent rate they actually achieved might mean, then, that they were unusually successful in getting donations from previous non-donors. Therefore, look for an answer option that suggests that that might have happened.

- A. This answer option is compatible with the case the argument makes and does not weaken it. Given the argument's suggestion that the fund-raisers contacted almost nobody other than previous donors, then it is to be expected that most of the contacted people who to make donations would be previous donors.
- B. If the fund-raisers did not raise much money this year, that would be further evidence that they did not try hard enough--which would strengthen rather than weaken the case the argument makes.
- C. This is compatible with the case the argument makes. To the extent that it is some evidence of effort on the part of Southington's fundraisers, at best it weakens the argument only very slightly. This is because we are not given information that would contextualize this new information and make clearer its significance. For example, have Southington University's fund-raisers always raised much larger average individual donations than other universities' fundraisers? Were there special circumstances this year (e.g., a centenary), resulting in higher average donations from Southington's typical donors than from most other universities' donors? Thus the information in this answer option does not significantly weaken the case the argument makes that Southington's fund-raisers might not have tried hard enough.
- D. This does not weaken the argument. It is a highly general claim about fund-raisers, not specifically about Southington's fund-raisers. We are not given information about the extent to which this was true of Southington's fund-raisers this year. Moreover, even if Southington's fund-raisers got the names of potential new donors to contact, this would not indicate that the fund-raisers actually contacted these potential donors.
- E. **Correct.** If most of the donations were from people who hadn't donated before, then the fund-raisers must have contacted lots of those unlikely prospects and been quite successful in persuading them to donate.

The correct answer is E.

Cr19 VCR005704

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/frobisher-a-sixteenth-century-english-explorer-had-soil-samples-from-69072.html>

Frobisher, a sixteenth-century English explorer, had soil samples from Canada's Kodlunarn Island examined for gold content. Because high gold content was reported, Elizabeth I funded two mining expeditions. Neither expedition found any gold there. Modern analysis of the island's soil indicates a very low gold content. Thus the methods used to determine the gold content of Frobisher's samples must have been inaccurate.

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

- A. The gold content of the soil on Kodlunarn Island is much lower today than it was in the sixteenth century.
- B. The two mining expeditions funded by I did not mine the same part of Kodlunarn Island.
- C. The methods used to assess gold content of the soil samples provided by Frobisher were different from those generally used in the sixteenth century.
- D. Frobisher did not have soil samples from any other Canadian island examined for gold content.
- E. Gold was not added to the samples collected by Frobisher before the samples were examined.

Reasoning

What additional information must be implicit in the argument if it is to justify the conclusion that the methods for determining the gold content in the soil samples were inaccurate? The argument is that after the gold content in soil samples from the island was determined using these methods, high gold content was reported. But neither the subsequent expeditions nor modern soil analysis found any significant gold in the soil. Therefore, the initial methods for determining the gold content must have been inaccurate. This reasoning assumes that the soil samples used were representative of the island's soil; that the gold content found was reported accurately; and that the subsequent expeditions and the modern soil analysis prove that there wasn't really much gold in the island's soil when Frobisher took the samples. Therefore, look for an answer option that expresses or follows from one of these assumptions.

- A. By citing a modern soil analysis as evidence of how gold was in the soil, the argument assumes that the gold content of the island's soil is not lower today than it was in the sixteenth century.
- B. The argument does need to assume this. In fact, information to the contrary—that is, that both mining expeditions mined the same part of the island—would, if included in the argument, make it better.
- C. The issue of whether the methods used were accurate or not is quite separate from the issue of whether those methods were standard in the sixteenth century. Therefore, the argument does not need any assumption concerning the latter issue.
- D. The argument is not about any samples Frobisher may have taken on other islands, only those he took on Kodlunarn Island.
- E. **Correct.** To conclude that the methods that found gold in the samples were inaccurate, the argument needs to assume that the samples accurately reflected the content of the island's soil—but they would not do so if extra gold had been added. Thus the argument must assume that no gold was added.

The correct answer is E.

CR-018 VCR014016

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/electric-utilities-pay-less-for-low-quality-coal-per-ton-146779.html>

Electric utilities pay less for low-quality coal per ton delivered than for high-quality coal. Yet more low-quality coal than high-quality coal must be burned to generate the same amount of electricity. Moreover, per ton of coal burned, low-quality coal generates more ash than does high-quality coal, and the disposal of ash is becoming more and more expensive.

The considerations above, if true, most strongly support which of the following claims?

- A. A coal-burning utility might not be assured of benefiting economically by always adhering to the policy of keeping its overall coal purchasing costs as low as possible.
- B. In those regions where the cost of disposing of coal ash is negligible, it is more expensive for coal-burning utilities to use high-quality coal than low-quality coal.
- C. Transportation costs represent a smaller proportion of the cost per delivered ton for low-quality coal than for high-quality coal.
- D. It is no less expensive to dispose of a ton of coal ash that results from the burning of high-quality coal than it is to dispose of a ton of coal ash that results from the burning of low-quality coal.
- E. In regions where coal-ash disposal is the least expensive, reserves of low-quality coal are likely to decline at a faster rate than are reserves of high-quality coal.

Reasoning

What conclusion would the statements about utilities' coal-related expenses support? Low-quality coal costs less per ton, but burning low-quality coal generates electricity less efficiently and produces more ash, which utilities must pay an increasing amount to dispose of. It's unclear whether overall coal purchasing costs are lower with low-quality or high-quality coal, since the lower price per ton of the former may counterbalance the need to buy more tons to generate the same amount of electricity. Although ash disposal is becoming more expensive, we are not told how that expense compares to those of the other factors mentioned; it may be negligible.

- A. **Correct.** The information presented does not clearly support a conclusion about whether it's economically beneficial for coal-burning utilities to minimize their coal-purchasing costs. Therefore, utilities relying solely on this information cannot be assured that it is.
- B. Since high-quality coal burns more efficiently, the utilities can buy less of it to generate the same amount of electricity, potentially compensating for its greater expense per ton.
- C. The transportation costs per ton are probably about the same for low-quality coal as for high-quality coal. Therefore, they are probably a greater proportion of the cost per delivered ton of low-quality coal.
- D. We are given no information about whether the cost to dispose of a ton of coal ash depends on the type of coal burned to generate that ash.
- E. Even in the regions where coal-ash disposal is least expensive, it may still be expensive enough to encourage utilities to mine and burn more high-quality coal and thus generate less ash.

The correct answer is A.

CR-019 VCR006014

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/yorco-and-zortech-are-two-corporations-that-employ-large-numbers-of-fu-14846.html>

Which of the following most logically completes the argument?

Yorco and Zortech are two corporations that employ large numbers of full-time workers who are paid by the hour. Publicly available records indicate that Yorco employs roughly the same number of such hourly wage workers as Zortech does but spends a far higher total sum per year on wages for such workers. Therefore, hourly wages must be higher, on average, at Yorco than at Zortech, since_____.

- A. Zortech spends a higher total sum per year than Yorco does to provide its hourly wage workers with benefits other than wages
- B. the work performed by hourly wage workers at Zortech does not require a significantly higher level of skill than the work performed by hourly wage workers at Yorco does
- C. the proportion of all company employees who are hourly wage workers is significantly greater at Yorco than it is at Zortech
- D. overtime work, which is paid at a substantially higher rate than work done during the regular work week, is rare at both Yorco and Zortech
- E. the highest hourly wages paid at Yorco are higher than the highest hourly wages paid at Zortech

Reasoning

What would support the conclusion that hourly wages are higher at Yorco than at Zortech? If both companies employ the same number of full-time hourly wage workers, but Yorco spends more on wages for those workers, then on average, wages per full-time hourly wage worker are higher at Yorco than at Zortech. Consequently, the workers at Yorco must either get paid more per hour or else work longer hours than the workers at Zortech. Thus, if the workers at Yorco do not work longer hours, they must get paid more per hour. Therefore, to support the conclusion that the Yorco workers get paid more per hour, look for an answer option suggesting that they do not work longer hours.

- A. The argument is just about wages, not about other benefits.
- B. The argument is just about wages, not about the skills used to earn those wages.
- C. The argument is not about employees other than full-time hourly wage workers.
- D. **Correct.** This suggests that full-time hourly wage workers at Yorco do not work longer hours than those at Zortech. Therefore, it supports the argument's conclusion as explained above.
- E. Even if the highest hourly wages are higher at Yorco, the average hourly wages may be the same or lower—contrary to what the argument claims.

The correct answer is D.

CR-020 VCR006119

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/the-earth-s-rivers-constantly-carry-dissolved-salts-into-its-oceans-65775.html>

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

The Earth's rivers constantly carry dissolved salts into its oceans. Clearly, therefore, by taking the resulting increase in salt levels in the oceans over the past hundred years and then determining how many centuries of such increases it would have taken the oceans to reach current salt levels from a hypothetical initial salt-free state, the maximum age of the Earth's oceans can be accurately estimated.

<https://gmatclub.com/forum/the-earth-s-rivers-constantly-carry-dissolved-salts-into-its-oceans-65775.html>

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

- A. The quantities of dissolved salts deposited by rivers in the Earth's oceans have not been unusually large during the past hundred years.
- B. At any given time, all the Earth's rivers have about the same salt levels.
- C. There are salts that leach into the Earth's oceans directly from the ocean floor.
- D. There is no method superior to that based on salt levels for estimating the maximum age of the Earth's oceans.
- E. None of the salts carried into the Earth's oceans by rivers are used up by biological activity in the oceans.

Reasoning

What piece of information must be an implicit part of the argument in order for the argument to succeed? The proposed method assumes that the oceans were initially salt-free and that the amount of salt entering them in the past century was roughly the average amount that has entered them per century since they formed. Since the method relies solely on the rate at which rivers have deposited salt in the oceans, it also assumes that all or almost all salt in the oceans was deposited by rivers. Therefore, look for an answer option that follows from these assumptions.

- A. **Correct.** Since the argument assumes that the amount of salt entering the oceans in the past century has been typical and that rivers deposited all or almost all the salt in the oceans, it must also assume that the amount of salt rivers have deposited in the oceans in the past century has been typical.
- B. The argument assumes that the rate at which rivers have collectively deposited salt into the oceans in the past century has been typical, but different rivers could still have different salt levels from each other.
- C. As explained above, the argument assumes that all or almost all salt in the oceans came there from rivers, not out of the ocean floor.
- D. D Provided that the proposed method is accurate, there is no need for the argument to assume that it is also "superior" to any other methods—some of which might be not only accurate but also superior in virtue of being easier, cheaper, or more elegant.
- E. E The proposed method may yield an accurate result even if biological activity uses up some of the ocean's salts, as long as the rate at which that activity has occurred in the past century has been roughly the average rate since the oceans formed.

The correct answer is A.