

New York is Not Sufficient...on the GMAT or in the Super Bowl

I am writing this from New England — Vermont to be precise — so maybe you think that I am a bit biased as far as the Super Bowl goes. But I KNOW that I am biased when it comes to my LOVE for Data Sufficiency. That love is pure and ever-lasting.

So while I may not be able to convince you that the New York Giants are *not sufficient* to win the Super Bowl on February 5th, I bet that I can give you a quick memory device to think about for Data Sufficiency.

It is as simple as this: on a Yes/No Data Sufficiency question, if you get both a “No” and “Yes” then you have NY – which stands for New York and those of us near Boston know that New York is Not Sufficient.

If you get just an “N” that is fine: it could stand for Nebraska or Norfolk, Virginia or Nunavut. If you get just a “Y” that works as well: it could be Yellowstone National Park or Yakima, Washington. I have nothing against any of these places. It is only when you get an “N” and a “Y” that you have “New York” home of the **hated** Yankees, Giants, Jets, Nicks, Rangers, Mets, and Islanders. So it takes both an “N” and a “Y” to be not sufficient in my book.

Here is an example:

Will the combined final score in the game be greater than 65?

(1) The combined final will be a prime number less than 70

(2) The combined final score will be greater than Eli Manning’s quarterback rating, which is 60

Answer? Let’s work it out.

Start with statement number 1. We need to have a combined final score of *less than 70 that is also a prime number* in order to satisfy statement one.

If we play Devil’s advocate here we can quickly get a “No”. There are many prime numbers that are less than 70 and less than 65 as well. The number 7 is a prime number that is less than 70 and less than 65.

Once you have the “No,” play devil’s advocate and work now for a “Yes.” A ‘yes’ here is a prime number that is less than 70 but greater than 65. Is there such a number? Well there are only 2 possibilities, 67 and 69. Sixty-nine is not prime, but 67 is...This gives us a “Yes” for statement one.

So we have a “No” and a “Yes” that means an “N” and “Y” written on our paper on test day and NY = New York and that is not sufficient.

What about statement 2? This statement is similar. In this case we can easily get a “Yes” because there are many prime numbers that are greater than 60 and greater than 65. Now we need to work for a “No.” It turns out that 61 is a prime number and it is larger than 60 but smaller than 65 so that gives us a “No” as well. NY = New York = Not Sufficient.

Finally we can take the two statements together. The prime numbers now need to be between 60 and 70. Actually our two examples were already between 60 and 70 so those same numbers can still be used. We get a “No” with the prime number 61, which is not greater than 65, and a “Yes” with the prime number 67.

Say it with me one more time. “No” and “Yes” = NY = New York = Not sufficient.

The answer here is E.

My Prediction: Patriots beat the Giants by 7 and Tom Brady wins his fourth. Go Pats!