

Logical
Reasoning
Explanations

June 2007 LSAT

HARVARD
 **READY**

June 2007

Section 2

1. Question Type: Main Point

Conclusion: Not all efforts to increase business productivity are beneficial to the business as a whole.

Reasoning: Attempts to increase productivity can decrease the number of employees, which in turn not only harms the dismissed employees, but also the remaining employees' sense of security.

Answers:

- (A) The argument never makes any claim suggesting that if an action doesn't help, that it cannot be good.
- (B) This works – this is a pretty direct paraphrase of the conclusion noted above ('not all' help the business means that at least 'some' fail to help).
- (C) The argument never mentions anything requiring the owners to also be the employees.
- (D) While this is true (stated in the first sentence), it is not the main point – this is merely background information.
- (E) While this is true, this isn't the main point. This is the evidence supporting the main point.

Best Answer: (B)

2. Question Type: Parallel Flaw

Conclusion: Rosa's dogs are moderate barkers.

Reasoning: Labrador retrievers bark a great deal, while Saint Bernards bark infrequently, and Rosa's dog is a cross of the two.

Flaw: Just because something has parts of two different things doesn't mean that properties of those two things will be present in the result (and in this case, averaged out). A pair of pants half of which are made of classy dress pants, the other half of which are made of casual jeans won't be moderately classy – it'll just be weird.

Answers:

- (A) The second class of students here only refers to 'some' students, and with the same results (good grades). In the original argument, **all** dogs of **both** classes were accounted for.
- (B) This works – we have two classes of objects (type A and type B), both of which have opposing properties (extremely toxic and nontoxic), the mixture of which is presumed to be in the middle (moderately toxic).
- (C) This is actually valid – the argument doesn't refer to a 'mixture' of two things, but **individual** members of the family going to different schools.
- (D) This is also valid – while there is a 'mixture' of sorts here, the two properties aren't affecting each other.
- (E) This is a necessity/sufficiency flaw, but nothing to do with the 'mixture' flaw noted above (it doesn't conclude that something must be 'moderately well made' because it's both Kenisha's and Connie's).

Best Answer: (B)

3. Question Type: Inference/Main Point (Fill in Blank Variant)

Reasoning: The argument essentially sets up a comparison between two things: the end of a century and the end of a life. The argument establishes that people often act at the end of a century in a manner similar to how they would act at the end of a life. Upon establishing that people at the end of their life often look back upon their life, goes on to conclude that people at the end of a century...

Pre-phrase: ... people would look back upon that century.

Answers:

- (A) No – the parallel is to the end of a century, not the end of a life.
- (B) No, the argument never implies anything about such a fear.
- (C) No, if anything, we're looking on reminiscing about the *last* century.
- (D) This works – this a paraphrase of the pre-phrase noted above.
- (E) The argument never establishes anything about avoiding any particular events.

Best Answer: (D)

4. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: Ocksenfrey's prepackaged meals really are nutritious.

Reasoning: The report that said Ocksenfrey's prepackaged meals weren't nutritious was biased.

Flaw: For one, the argument attacks the source of a claim rather than their claims themselves. Even if Ocksenfrey's rivals are biased, they may nevertheless have reasonable grounds for their claims. Further, even if we presuppose that their bias necessarily makes their claims questionable, that doesn't mean that Ocksenfrey's foods are nutritious – it just means that we don't know that they're not.

Answers:

- (A) This works – paraphrase of flaw noted above.
- (B) There's no sample of products being used as evidence here – the only evidence provided is the rivals' potential bias.
- (C) Irrelevant – there is no negative publicity being generated against Danto here (nor would it be relevant even if there was).
- (D) The argument never claims nor depends upon any claim of Danto's being more nutritious.
- (E) The argument never goes as far as claiming this – it only goes as far as using the approval process as a basis for potential bias.

Best Answer: (A)

5. Question Type: Weaken

Claim: Earth's average temperature increase over the last century is the result of the buildup of minor gases in the atmosphere, which blocks outward heat flow from the planet.

Answers:

- (A) The source of the gases is completely irrelevant here.
- (B) This works – this shows that the actual warming occurred when there (mostly) was no such buildup of minor gases.
- (C) Subtle, but we don't necessarily care about a comparison between the last century and before – the claim is regarding events that occurred **over** the last century. In other words, if the radiation spiked up slightly in 1900, this would do much to the claim, which tries to explain the temperature increase **between** 1900 and 2000.
- (D) This doesn't provide an alternative explanation as to why there was an **increase** in the earth's temperature.
- (E) If anything, this strengthens the claim, as it shows that there **was** a notable increase in those gases to coincide with the earth's warming.

Best Answer: (B)

6. Question Type: Sufficient Assumption

Conclusion: Murray, who has both a Bachelor's and Master's degree, cannot be appointed to Executive Administrator.

Reasoning: He has a felony conviction, and no one with a felony conviction can be appointed to the board.

Flaw: Theme shift – the argument jumps from a premise that shows that Murray can't be appointed to the board, to a conclusion stating he cannot be appointed Executive Administrator. But do we know that the position is on the board? If it's not, then he might still be eligible for appointment.

Answers:

- (A) This only tells us who **would** be eligible, not who **wouldn't** be, so it doesn't help us much.
- (B) This works – if **only** people eligible for the board can be appointed to Executive Administrator, then given that Murray isn't eligible for the board, he wouldn't be eligible for the position either.
- (C) This only weakens the argument – it shows that something necessary for the board **isn't** necessary for the position, which highlights the possibility that one could be ineligible for the former, while eligible for the latter.
- (D) This doesn't prove that a felony conviction would **stop** him from getting the position.
- (E) This also doesn't prove that he's ineligible for the position – perhaps they might still allow him to get the position even if the charge is relevant?

Best Answer: (B)

7. Question Type: Inference

Answers:

- (A) This is an example of 'calculated self-interest', as Bobby is trying to look good in front of others. Not only does this not show motivation based on 'abstract principles', calculated self-interest is stated to be 'in contrast' to the most advanced kind of motivation.
- (B) Similar issue as with (A); the motive here is calculated self-interest more than any 'abstract principle'.

- (C) The motivation here is also self interest (she doesn't want to get in trouble).
- (D) This could work – we definitely don't have self-interest or adherence to social norms here, and her motivation is a relatively 'abstract' concept.
- (E) The motivation here is social adherence (Leigh was pressured into doing this), which stands in contrast to what we're looking for (according to the stimulus).

Best Answer: (D)

8. Question Type: Inference/Main Point (Fill in Blank)

Reasoning: Electric cars are claimed to result in benefits for the environment, but unless we dam more rivers, the source of the electricity will be from nuclear or coal-fired power plants. These power sources create significant environmental damage on their own. So, the electric car...

Implied Conclusion: ...won't result in significant benefits for the environment, unless we dam more rivers?

Answers:

- (A) This works – it notes that the consequences will be worse than believed (i.e., they won't be as dramatic as expected) without going too far overboard.
- (B) The argument never mentions anything about popularity.
- (C) The argument doesn't establish any requirements for electric cars' overall success. Further, the entire line of reasoning is based on a scenario in which technical problems **have** been overcome.
- (D) The argument never goes as far as providing evidence that emissions will actually **increase** – just that they might not decrease **as** much.
- (E) Similar to (D), the argument doesn't go as far as showing that there will be **no** net reduction in environmental damage – just that it might not be **that** significant.

Best Answer: (A)

9. Question Type: Weaken

Conclusion: In the near future, we can expect a reversal of the trend that has had video game sales increase steadily over the past three years.

Reasoning: Historically, 75% of video games were purchased by people 13-16 years old, and the number of people in that age range is expected to steadily decline over the next decade.

Flaw: The argument doesn't account for a whole plethora of possibilities that could cause other age groups to buy video games. What if the people who were 13-16 at the time will continue buying games into older age? What if the companies start shifting their content toward older players?

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't weaken the argument – in fact, this falls in line with the argument (they're unlikely to play video games).
- (B) This also falls in line with the argument (there are sales declines in certain segments of the video game industry).

- (C) This actually supports the argument as well, as new entertainment options might not fall under ‘video games’, providing people an alternative to video games.
- (D) This supports the argument, as it shows there’s little reason for older or younger people to change their habits (the games aren’t changing, and if they’re not interested in them as-is...).
- (E) This works; if **recent** history shows that the trend in the age groups buying video games is shifting, this shows a shift to other age groups. Further, since the increase in sales has been over the last 3 years, this actually shows that the increase might have been as a result of other age groups in the first place.

Best Answer: (E)

10. Question Type: Main Point

Conclusion: Double-blind techniques should be used whenever possible in scientific experiments.

Reasoning: They help prevent misinterpretations, and scientists should try to prevent these.

Answers:

- (A) No – this is an issue that supports the idea that double-blind tests should be used.
- (B) This works – essentially a paraphrase of the conclusion noted above.
- (C) The argument never actually claims this happens (although it does imply it – either way, not the conclusion).
- (D) While true, this is the support for why scientists should use double-blind tests.
- (E) The argument never claims they’re effective in **ensuring** such objectivity – just that they **help** maintain it. Further, the conclusion isn’t that they’re effective, but that they **should** be used; if anything, the fact that they’re effective would be supporting that conclusion.

Best Answer: (B)

11. Question Type: Reasoning

Conclusion: What awaits us is likely just a change in the human mind as opposed to a devolution of it.

Reasoning: While people complain that certain electronic facilities are corroding our intellectual ability, similar complaints were made at the time that literacy was becoming widespread.

Pre-phrase: The complaints of several centuries ago are used as an example of a similar occurrence of complaints as we have today, but with a presumably different outcome from what people claim will happen.

Answers:

- (A) No, if anything, the argument is questioning whether these skills are really being destroyed by electronic media.
- (B) The argument never claims or illustrates the claim that intellectual abilities are ‘inseparable’ from anything.
- (C) This works – spread of literacy being the cultural change.
- (D) The argument never claims that these claims are **unwarranted**, just that they’re unlikely to be true.
- (E) The argument never dismisses this evidence.

Best Answer: (C)

12. Question Type: Parallel Reasoning

Conclusion: One cannot be obliged both to answer all questions truthfully and to keep all promises

Reasoning: In the case of promising to keep a secret and being asked to answer a question that can't be honestly answered without revealing the secret, one can't do both.

Diffusion: The argument concludes that two things cannot both always be done by providing a particular example highlighting that the two ideas may conflict with each other.

Answers:

- (A) This works in a similar manner – the argument concludes that two things can't always both be done by noting that they may conflict with each other.
- (B) This argument goes off in a different conclusion to note that something is necessary for something else (not that two things cannot always be done together).
- (C) The conclusion here is also different, as it doesn't show two things can't always be done together (just that they're at risk regardless).
- (D) This is a necessity/sufficiency line of reasoning – the evidence doesn't show that in a particular case two things can't be done together.
- (E) This is also a necessity/sufficiency line of reasoning – it notes that certain outcomes of an action are unacceptable, so the action shouldn't be undertaken. This doesn't show two things always be expected to happen together.

Best Answer: (A)

13. Question Type: Sufficient Assumption

Conclusion: Group M contains twice as many cans as does group L.

Reasoning: 50% of the aluminum contained in group M was recycled from group L. Cans don't vary in size and aluminum content, materials other than aluminum in a can are negligible, and all the cans in L were recycled into cans in M.

Flaw: While half of the aluminum in group M is recycled from group L, do we know that all the recycled material actually makes it to the new product? In other words, what if only 10% of recycled material is usable in the new product? That would significantly throw off the statistics presented.

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't fix the flaw, and thus wouldn't show that M does in fact have twice the cans of L.
- (B) This doesn't do anything – we're not concerned with aluminum quality.
- (C) Yes; if we know that 100% of the aluminum is recovered, then we know that all of group L makes up only half of group M, making group M twice as big.
- (D) We're not too concerned about where the aluminum in L came from – this doesn't prove anything regarding how large group M is.

(E) We're not concerned with other material recyclability – this has no bearing on our conclusion.

Best Answer: (C)

14. Question Type: Weaken

Conclusion: What destroys the lysozyme enzyme is not heat, but microwaves (which happen to generate heat).

Reasoning: When milk is heated in a microwave to a certain temperature it loses as much as half its lysozyme, while heating the milk through conventional heat sources will allow it to keep nearly all its lysozyme.

Flaw: There's nothing blatant here, but we're essentially looking for a reason to believe that perhaps it **is** the heat that destroys the enzyme.

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't change much – we already know that heating milk in a microwave oven kills lysozyme. This doesn't make it any more likely that it's the heat vs. the microwaves that's destroying it.
- (B) Irrelevant – we're not concerned with replacing them, but simply with what destroys them in the first place.
- (C) This doesn't change whether or not it's the heat causing the lysozyme to be destroyed.
- (D) Taste is largely irrelevant to what causes destruction of the lysozyme.
- (E) This works – it shows that it **could** be the heat, just that heating by microwave makes certain parts much hotter than the eventual temperature (which is what could be killing the lysozyme).

Best Answer: (E)

15. Question Type: Sufficient Assumption

Conclusion: Every year it will be necessary for all high-risk individuals to receive a vaccine for a different strain of the virus.

Reasoning: Each year's vaccination will only protect against the virus strain deemed most likely to be prevalent that year.

Flaw: Just because each year the vaccination will be for the most prevalent strain, does that mean every year there must be a new vaccination administered? What if the same virus strain will be prevalent for more than one year?

Answers:

- (A) The number of individuals doesn't do much for us here in terms of whether these individuals will need to be vaccinated.
- (B) This doesn't do much, as it doesn't affect whether people will actually need a new vaccine every year.
- (C) This wouldn't prove much – in fact, we already know that the vaccines that will be administered will only protect against one strain (the one deemed most likely to be prevalent).
- (D) Yes – if we assume that each year there will be a completely new strain, then we'd be able to conclude that individuals would need to be vaccinated every year (as the vaccination will only work for that year).

- (E) This doesn't prove that we'll actually need to vaccinate every year – just that doing so might be a relatively smooth process.

Best Answer: (D)

16. Question Type: Disagree

Answers:

- (A) Neither really questions whether research might reveal this – Taylor clearly states it does (but happens to question the claim), while Sandra makes no reference to it.
- (B) While Taylor does claim that this is impossible, Sandra doesn't necessarily say that in **this** case it's possible – just that it could be possible in **some** cases.
- (C) While Taylor definitely agrees with this (as far as Taylor's concerned, one can never expect great precision), Sandra never claims that one **can** expect such precision from **this** particular study.
- (D) Yes – Taylor clearly states this is impossible, while Sandra claims that 'many' disciplines can obtain extremely precise numbers that shouldn't be inherently suspect.
- (E) Neither makes any claims about 'the majority of claims made by scientists', nor is any such statement based on 'inherently suspect claims usually [being] false'.

Best Answer: (D)

17. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: We should make the protection of our clients' confidentiality our highest priority.

Reasoning: Several computer experts maintained that the most serious threat faced by institutions such as hospitals is unauthorized access to confidential data.

Flaw: Limited scope – the argument takes commentary by computer experts that would be presumably limited to computer issues, and makes a broad conclusion about the most important thing overall. But what if non-computer issues (that the computer experts may not be aware of) are more important, such as reducing emergency room wait times?

Answers:

- (A) The argument never discusses any particular solutions here, let alone confuses them with causes.
- (B) This works – the experts cited are **computer experts**, but the conclusion drawn is about what is 'most important' in general.
- (C) There's no cause claimed on the basis of a correlation here – the argument simply presents a threat as-is.
- (D) The argument doesn't draw any conclusions about a 'group' (the conclusion is regarding the best course of action for the specific hospital).
- (E) No – the argument's conclusion is limited to the hospital specifically. The argument never makes any claims about 'all institutions'.

Best Answer: (B)

18. Question Type: Inference

Answers:

- (A) We don't know this – the argument never actually says anything about the scientists reluctant to accept the global warming hypothesis (except for the fact that they have motive to hold such a position).
- (B) Yes – we do have reason to believe this. The argument establishes that **nothing** brings more recognition than to overthrow conventional wisdom, and that the predictions of global warming are 'widely accepted'. Hence, there is substantial motive to discredit global warming.
- (C) The argument never makes this claim – at best, it states that **not many** find evidence that global warming is **unlikely**. That doesn't mean there is conclusive evidence that it **is** true.
- (D) We don't know this – the argument provides no basis for claiming that they **didn't** present any alternative hypothesis.
- (E) We don't know that this is the primary factor driving global warming research. We know that recognition provides significant motive, but that doesn't mean that it's actually the primary motivator.

Best Answer: (B)

19. Question Type: Strengthen (EXCEPT)

Conclusion: The success of the Land Party in '35 was due to the combination of addressing concerns of agricultural and small business groups and those groups' existing economic problems.

Reasoning: The economic woes of those years hit those groups hardest, and the Land Party specifically targeted those groups.

Flaw: Causal – so there is a correlation between the Land Party targeting groups having trouble and their political success, but perhaps something else caused the Land Party's victory that was completely unrelated (maybe they rigged the election)?

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't do much, as it focuses on distressed **urban** groups. Even if this is true, this doesn't change much – they might have still targeted agricultural areas or other distressed groups, in which case it puts into question why they lost previously ('35 was their **only** victory).
- (B) This works, as this covers up a subtle shift in the argument that assumes that people will actually vote for candidates that focus on their problems.
- (C) This strengthens the correlation, as it notes their successes **actually** came from the disadvantaged sectors they were targeting.
- (D) This supports the argument by noting that this is how they differed from the competition. If everyone targeted those groups, then it would put into question whether targeting those groups is what led to the Land Party's victory.
- (E) This shows that targeting those specific groups would have had a greater effect, as those groups were more likely to vote.

Best Answer: (A)

20. Question Type: Reasoning (Technique)

Conclusion: The claim that there is evidence of citywide opposition to the new water system on the basis of the Neighbors Association's supposed opposition is questionable.

Reasoning: While the Neighbors Association did pass a resolution against the new water system, only 25 out of 350 members actually voted (of which only 15 opposed the system). These votes also happen to represent less than 1% of the populace.

Answers:

- (A) The argument doesn't establish that any particular group is more likely to vote – just that the group that did vote doesn't necessarily represent the populace.
- (B) The argument doesn't go as far as claiming that statistical data can be used to support *whatever* view someone wants to support.
- (C) The original argument never claimed that the truth of a given set of premises *guarantees* the truth of any particular conclusion.
- (D) The argument never claimed that any particular evidence set is *impossible* to disconfirm (in fact, it doesn't make any claims regarding its disconfirmability at all).
- (E) This works – the argument does attempt to show the statistical sample is too small (only 25 out of 350 actually voted, and they represent less than 1% of populace).

Best Answer: (E)

21. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: Trading my sports car in for a minivan would lower my risk of having an accident.

Reasoning: Minivans and sedans larger than sports cars have very low accident rates as compared with sports cars.

Flaw: Causal – while there is a correlation between larger cars and lower accident rates, does that necessarily mean that the former actually *causes* the latter? What if, for example, careful drivers are unlikely to buy sports cars, and happen to have lower accident rates because they're careful? In other words, it might be the driver that's the cause of the car choice and the accident rate, in which case changing the car without changing the driver's behavior wouldn't do much.

Answers:

- (A) This works – it is essentially a general description of the flaw noted above.
- (B) We don't know the sample size, so we can't say any particular sample here is too narrow.
- (C) The argument never draws any conclusions stating that anything is *certain* – the conclusion simply says that a risk is *lowered*.
- (D) There are no conditions noted here as being sufficient or necessary for a result.
- (E) The sources used as evidence here are not identified, so we cannot make any calls on whether they are well-informed.

Best Answer: (A)

22. Question Type: Inference

Answers:

- (A) While we do know that isolation makes it **less** likely that resident participation will elicit a positive official response, we only know that without such isolation politicians would be **more** likely to provide such a response. Not that this would be 'likely' overall.
- (B) We don't know anything about what 'should' be done – perhaps it's better that resident participation in politics be discouraged?
- (C) We have no information in the stimulus to be able to say that any particular factor is **most** important. We only have a factor that **influences** participation (but we don't know that it's the **greatest** influence).
- (D) Yes – we do know that a lack of thorough political coverage is what causes isolation, which is one source of discouragement of participation. Hence, we do have reason to believe that providing thorough coverage would remove one cause of such isolation (as a result reduce it), which would reduce one cause of resident discouragement.
- (E) We don't know that a lack of discouragement would **cause** politicians to be less isolated. If anything, it seems that a lack of isolation would cause less discouragement. This tries to play off the idea of a contrapositive, but then the idea of 'cause' should be left out (to say that if residents are not discouraged, then politicians aren't isolated would have some merit to it).

Best Answer: (D)

23. Question Type: Sufficient Assumption

Conclusion: Actions that would be reasonably expected to leave people's well-being unchanged are 'right'.

Reasoning: If something increases well being, then it's morally right. If, and only if, something reduces well being, then it's morally wrong.

Flaw: The premises don't actually show that something that leaves well-being unchanged is morally right. If anything, it only shows that something that leaves well-being unchanged is **not** wrong (because 'morally wrong' actions **require** reduction of well-being). If we knew that something that is not wrong was necessarily right, then this could work.

Diagrammed:

IncreaseWellBeing → MorallyRight
 -MorallyRight → -IncreaseWellBeing

DecreaseWellBeing ↔ MorallyWrong
 -MorallyWrong ↔ -DecreaseWellBeing

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't prove that actions that don't do anything are 'right'.
- (B) Touches on the right idea, but this doesn't prove that if it's not wrong, that it must be right.
- (C) This works – as noted above, the argument provides evidence to show that an action that does nothing is not wrong, so if we know that actions that are not wrong are necessarily right, then the argument works.
- (D) Whether or not such actions actually exist does nothing to show that such actions are 'right'.

(E) This doesn't show that actions that **don't** have **any** consequences are necessarily right.

Best Answer: (C)

24. Question Type: Necessary Assumption (Principle Variant)

Conclusion: Designer interaction with consumers is superior to survey data.

Reasoning: Survey data may tell why a feature wasn't liked, but it will not explain how to improve it.

Flaw: Do we know that designers **need** consumer input on how things should be done? What if they only need them to tell them what's wrong, while their input on improvements is useless?

Answers:

- (A) This works. The argument does conform to the idea that consumer input can help. If it couldn't, then the argument wouldn't be providing any substantive reason for why consumer interaction is superior to survey data.
- (B) The argument is trying to show that designer interaction is **better** than surveys – we don't need to assume that companies actually conduct extensive surveys.
- (C) This isn't necessary – even if they aim to appeal to the mass market, the argument could still hold.
- (D) We don't have to go as far as saying that features will be unappealing – just that consumers might be able to help make features **more** appealing.
- (E) We don't have to assume anything about which parts are being affected.

Best Answer: (A)

25. Question Type: Paradox

Discrepancy: While the academy (which was a major sponsor of both painting and sculpture) discouraged innovation in the arts, painting showed significant innovation while sculpture did not.

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't necessarily explain why the painting had more innovation if the academy (the source of the funding) discouraged it.
- (B) Similar issue as with (A) – while this showed a discrepancy in funding, it doesn't explain why there was innovation if the sponsor of the funding discouraged innovation.
- (C) This works – this showed that there were far more unsponsored paintings than unsponsored sculpture that wouldn't have been under the influence of the academy that discouraged innovation.
- (D) This doesn't show why there was innovation in one but not the other.
- (E) This shows both arts are in the same boat – it doesn't explain why painting showed innovation while sculpture did not.

Best Answer: (C)

Section 3

1. Question Type: Inference

Answers:

- (A) No, there's no sacrifice of comfort for the sake of appearance.
- (B) Close, as there is an action motivated for the sake of appearance here. However, there is no sacrifice.
- (C) This works – we have a sacrifice of 'sensual comfort' (the wine tastes worse) for the sake of appearance.
- (D) There's no sacrifice for the sake of appearance here.
- (E) While there is an appearance based motive here, there's no sacrifice of 'sensual comfort'.

Best Answer: (C)

2. Question Type: Paradox (EXCEPT)

Discrepancy: While Jimmy replaced his heater with one rated as highly efficient, his gas bill actually increased.

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't seem to do much – so what if it uses a smaller percentage of the gas?
- (B) This works, as it shows there is higher consumption (hence, higher bill).
- (C) This works, as it also shows higher consumption.
- (D) This works, as a higher rate would increase his gas bill.
- (E) This works as well, as this also shows higher consumption.

Best Answer: (A)

3. Question Type: Disagreement

Answers:

- (A) Neither questions whether this is art – simply whether it is a 'portrait'.
- (B) Neither questions whether this work can be ascribed to Quinn.
- (C) Close, but Arnold doesn't claim that it bears a 'recognizable resemblance' to Sulston – just that it's 'maximally realistic' (which may be true in some other way).
- (D) Carolyn doesn't necessarily disagree with this point.
- (E) Yes – according to Carolyn it's not a portrait (it violates one of her claimed requirements for a portrait), while according to Arnold it is a 'maximally realistic portrait'.

Best Answer: (E)

4. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: These companies use of motivational posters to boost their employees' motivation to work productively is unlikely to achieve its purpose.

Reasoning: Almost all the employees of these companies are already motivated to work productively.

Flaw: The companies' goals are explicitly stated as to **boost** their employees' motivation. Even if their employees are already motivated, their motivation might still be boosted (i.e. they might be made **more** motivated).

Answers:

- (A) The conclusion isn't concerned with companies that **don't** currently use these posters – only with the ones that do.
- (B) No, the argument makes no claims regarding corporations in general – the conclusion is limited to those that are using these posters.
- (C) Irrelevant – the argument never claims the posters won't have **any** benefits – just that it won't meet its' **intended** benefits.
- (D) Irrelevant – the argument makes no claims (whether implicitly or explicitly) about **other** attempts to improve productivity.
- (E) Perfect – essentially a paraphrase of the flaw noted above.

Best Answer: (E)

5. Question Type: Sufficient Assumption

Conclusion: The early entomologist, in claiming that the ants were bringing food to their neighbors, was wrong.

Reasoning: The ants were actually emptying their own colony's dumping site.

Flaw: False dichotomy – just because the ants were emptying their own dumping site, could they not also be bringing food to their neighbors? Do we know that the two are mutually exclusive?

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't prove that the ants weren't carrying food to the other ants.
- (B) This also doesn't prove that they **weren't** carrying food over.
- (C) This works. If this is true, then it becomes impossible for them to be carrying food (as no food could be found in the dumping site).
- (D) Irrelevant – even if they didn't carry them into their colony, the first ants **still** could have been bringing the other ants food (regardless of whether they brought it into their colony or accepted it).
- (E) Even if he retracted his conclusion, his conclusion might have still been right, so this doesn't prove that his conclusion was necessarily wrong.

Best Answer: (C)

6. Question Type: Inference (Principle Variant)

Answers:

- (A) No; this argument provides no reason to believe that this is the **only** way. In fact, it doesn't even establish that this **does** reduce traffic accidents.

- (B) This works; we have an apparently altruistic action here (donating cars) that benefits the person performing it (Jablonski).
- (C) No; we have no reason to believe anything about young drivers here.
- (D) We don't know whether this is **usually** the case; just that it happens to be the case in this scenario.
- (E) For one, we don't know whether Jablonski was actually successful in encouraging better driving; for two, the stimulus provides no reason to believe that community support is **necessary** for this.

Best Answer: (B)

7. Question Type: Disagree

Answers:

- (A) Marla makes no comment on whether taking great chances is or isn't desirable.
- (B) This works; Marla claims that living without ever risking anything isn't actually a life of moderation as 'living moderately requires moderation in one's moderation'. According to Antonio, one can live a life of moderation by never deviating from the 'middle course' (and not taking risks).
- (C) Neither disagrees with whether this is possible (so long as those virtues are 'moderate', Antonio might be okay with it).
- (D) Neither discusses the frequency with which one should deviate from moderate life.
- (E) Antonio does imply that some spontaneity is positive; Marla, however, makes no comment on the matter.

Best Answer: (B)

8. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: Fabric-Soft is the most effective fabric softener out there.

Reasoning: A test with over 100 consumers showed that consumers prefer towels washed with Fabric-Soft over towels washed without any fabric softener.

Flaw: The argument's evidence only shows that Fabric-Soft is preferred to **no fabric softener**. This doesn't show that it's any better than **other** fabric softeners.

Answers:

- (A) Irrelevant – this wouldn't change the fact that the vast majority still prefer the one with Fabric-Soft.
- (B) Irrelevant – we're not concerned with harm to the environment, only with the effectiveness of the fabric softener.
- (C) Similar to (B) – the conclusion is regarding how effective it is (not how **cost** effective it is).
- (D) Similar to (B) and (C) – the conclusion is regarding how effective it is (not how **cost** effective it is).
- (E) Perfect – essentially a paraphrase of the flaw noted above. If they didn't compare it to other fabric softeners, how could they conclude that Fabric-Soft is better?

Best Answer: (E)

9. Question Type: Necessary Assumption

Conclusion: The recent claims that the Tasmanian tiger is not extinct are false (i.e. it **is** extinct).

Reasoning: The Tasmanian tiger's natural habitat was overtaken, and no hard evidence of its survival in the region exists.

Flaw: Just because there's no trace of it in **this** region, does that mean that it doesn't exist at all? What if it can be found in another region?

Further, there's the minor issue of absence of evidence – just because they can't find evidence of its existence, does that mean that it doesn't exist? What if they're hidden very well?

Answers:

- (A) We don't have to assume **that** is how they were made extinct. Even if this didn't happen, the argument could still work if they were made extinct via some other manner.
- (B) We don't have to assume this – the lack of carcasses might also be explained by decay, for example.
- (C) We don't have to assume that **every** naturalist in the area has looked for the Tasmanian tiger. If Bob was being lazy and just sat back, the argument could still work.
- (D) This works – we **must** assume the Tasmanian tiger didn't just migrate to a different habitat. If it did, then it might not be extinct (even though it couldn't be found in its original habitat).
- (E) We don't have to assume this – the argument could allow for experienced naturalists to have made those sightings (and for them to be wrong).

Best Answer: (D)

10. Question Type: Inference/Main Point (Fill in Blank)

Reasoning: Advertisers find that people develop positive feelings about things they don't like if those things are pictorially linked to things they do like.

Implied Conclusion: Advertisers are likely to... pictorially link things they're trying to sell to things that people generally like?

Answers:

- (A) No – minimizing prose won't necessarily maximize pictorial links (which is what we're looking for).
- (B) Close, but this doesn't account for the method of linking them to products people already like.
- (C) We don't know that television is any more pictorial than are magazines.
- (D) No – this is supposed to be done by linking the things they're trying to advertise to other things people **like**.
- (E) Perfect – this would provide that pictorial link to things people already like.

Best Answer: (E)

11. Question Type: Necessary Assumption

Conclusion: Mercury levels in saltwater fish are higher now than they were 100 years ago.

Reasoning: Mercury in a bird's feathers reflects the mercury levels of the fish those birds eat, and bird feathers found in living birds today have double the mercury of bird feathers found from 1880's.

Flaw: For one, the argument overlooks the possibility that mercury in the feathers might decrease over time after the bird's death – if it did, then the birds' feathers back then might have had much more mercury than they do now.

For two, the argument also draws a conclusion about saltwater fish based on fish that the birds eat. But what if birds don't eat saltwater fish, but some other fish? If that was true, then we wouldn't be able to draw **any** conclusions about saltwater fish.

Answers:

- (A) No, if anything, we have to assume that it **was** as high – if the proportion of fish in a bird's diet was any different, we wouldn't be able to draw any conclusions about the fish based on mercury accumulation (as a smaller amount of fish eaten would result in less mercury, regardless of whether the fish themselves have more mercury).
- (B) No; we don't have to assume anything about what mercury in fish depends on. This wouldn't change anything regarding how much mercury they did or didn't have.
- (C) We don't have to assume that it's **essential** – even if it wasn't, the argument would still hold.
- (D) We don't have to assume this – in fact, we arguably have to assume that they **were** fully grown (so as to make a valid comparison to the feather's found today).
- (E) Yes – we must assume that the preservation process didn't itself reduce the mercury in the feathers. If it had, then similarly to the first flaw found above, the birds back then might have originally had more mercury in them than was found today.

Best Answer: (E)

12. Question Type: Main Point

Conclusion: It's more like that the similarity between semiautobiographical novels X and Y are coincidental than the result of plagiarism.

Reasoning: Both authors are from similar backgrounds and have led similar lives.

Answers:

- (A) No – while true, this is used to support that the similarity is likely the result of coincidence.
- (B) No – while some **may** suspect this to be the case, the main point is that it's likely just a coincidence.
- (C) Similarly to (A), this is merely support for the conclusion noted above.
- (D) Yes – convolutedly, this is a paraphrase of the conclusion noted above.
- (E) The conclusion isn't that such suspicions are unwarranted (they may be warranted, just not true).

Best Answer: (D)

13. Question Type: Strengthen

Conclusion: Cognitive psychotherapy is likely to be more effective at helping patients overcome psychological problems than forms of psychotherapy that focus on changing unconscious beliefs and desires.

Reasoning: Cognitive psychotherapy focuses on changing a patient's conscious beliefs, and only conscious beliefs are under the patient's direct conscious control.

Flaw: So what if only conscious beliefs are under the patient's conscious control? Do we know that we need to affect those things that are under the patient's direct conscious control to be effective at helping the patients?

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't show that cognitive psychotherapy is any better than other psychotherapies.
- (B) This works – if we assume that it's difficult to be effective without affecting states that are under a patient's conscious control.
- (C) This doesn't help show it's actually any better than any of the other psychotherapies. It'd be like saying that a car is faster than other cars because it's red, and then 'supporting' that by pointing that it's the only car that is red.
- (D) This is very close, but the issue here is that the psychotherapies that **focus** on changing unconscious beliefs and desires **might** help change a patient's conscious beliefs (which would be under a patient's direct control). If such was the case, then this would make the other psychotherapies no worse than cognitive psychotherapy. The difference between this and (B) is that answer choice (B) notes that a **focus** on mental states under the patient's direct control is needed (and these other psychotherapies are instead **focused** on unconscious beliefs that are not under the patient's direct control).
- (E) This is a moot point – even if they can't be controlled without the aid of psychotherapy, the whole premise of the argument is that we **have** the aid of psychotherapy.

Best Answer: (B)

14. Question Type: Necessary Assumption (Principle Variant)

Conclusion: Universities should only use open-source software.

Reasoning: Open-source software better matches the values embodied in academic scholarship, which is central to the mission of universities.

Flaw: So what if it's a better 'match' in terms of values? Do universities necessarily have to use software that intellectually resembles the academic process?

Answers:

- (A) No – this isn't the basis of the argument, and may run counter. We don't know that open-source software is necessarily more advanced (nor is the advancement the reasoning cited).
- (B) Similar issue as with (A) – we don't know that open source is least expensive (there's no fees for using open source software, but perhaps there's much implementation costs associated with open-source software). Further, cost is not the basis of the reasoning the argument cites.

- (C) This works – the reasoning cited was that it best matches the university’s goals, and connects the argument by noting schools actually should go with the software that best matches the schools’ goals.
- (D) The argument never makes any claims (or rests any claims) regarding efficiency.
- (E) The argument never cites anything that (or makes any points regarding) blocks any particular achievement.

Best Answer: (C)

15. Question Type: Weaken

Conclusion: Psychological treatment lasting more than 6 months is more effective than shorter term treatment.

Reasoning: A fewer proportion of people who received 6 months of treatment or less claimed that the treatment made things “a lot better” (20%) when compared to people who received more than 6 months of treatment (36%).

Flaw: Causal flaw; we have a correlation established: longer therapy means better results. But does that mean that the former is what **causes** the latter? What if it’s reversed? What if there’s some other factor that causes people to go to therapy for longer, and to have better results (such as motivation)?

Answers:

- (A) This doesn’t do much – we don’t know what percentage in the other group had similar sentiment.
- (B) This just means that the sample size of that group was proportionally greater. This doesn’t do much in terms of whether the conclusion drawn is true or not, however.
- (C) This works – this shows that the group that is in therapy for longer is there **because** the treatment is working. In other words, it’s the success of the treatment causing the longer therapy, not the longer therapy causing the greater success.
- (D) The issue here is that this would be true for both groups, so wouldn’t bias either one against the other.
- (E) This doesn’t do much in terms of whether that additional treatment does or doesn’t help the patients.

Best Answer: (C)

16. Question Type: Inference/Main Point (Fill in Blank)

Reasoning: Nations aren’t literally persons and thus don’t have rights or responsibilities, but citizens need to ascribe to them such rights and responsibilities for the nations to survive.

Implied Conclusion: Thus, a nation... requires citizens to ascribe to it things that it doesn’t actually have?

Answers:

- (A) No, we don’t necessarily need something **other** than this false belief – perhaps this false belief would be sufficient?
- (B) This works – essentially a paraphrase of the implied conclusion noted above.
- (C) The argument never discusses anything to do with ‘praise’ or ‘blame’.
- (D) The argument never establishes anything regarding ‘worth’.

(E) The argument never makes any claims regarding thinking of a nation 'metaphorically'.

Best Answer: (B)

17. Question Type: Necessary Assumption

Conclusion: When exercising back muscles, it's important to exercise opposing sides of the spine equally.

Reasoning: Balanced muscle development is needed to maintain a healthy back, because muscles on opposing sides must pull equally in opposing directions to keep the back in proper alignment.

Flaw: Subtle theme shift, but the argument jumps from the necessity of having 'balanced muscle development', to concluding that it's important to 'exercise opposing sides of the spine equally'. But, do we know that balanced muscle development requires one to exercise the opposing sides of the spine equally? What if one can develop balanced back muscles with unequal exercise?

Answers:

- (A) We don't have to assume that this will be **enough** to keep the back in proper alignment – just that it's **necessary** to keep it in proper alignment (other things may be necessary as well, such as avoiding certain other injuries).
- (B) Yes – we must assume that unequal exercise will lead to unbalanced muscle development. If it didn't (i.e. if unequal exercise could lead to balanced development), then the argument is providing no substantive reason for why we need to exercise the muscles equally.
- (C) Similar issue as with (A) – we don't have to assume that equal exercise actually **will** result in a healthy back (generally or not), just that it's **needed** to maintain a healthy back.
- (D) We don't have to go as far as assuming irreparable damage in case of unequal exercise – just that it wouldn't be conducive to a healthy back.
- (E) We don't have to assume that **daily** exercise (or any exercise) is required – just that when someone **does** exercise, that they do it equally for both sides of the spine.

Best Answer: (B)

18. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: It is likely to be widely accepted that it is sometimes morally right to obstruct the police in their work.

Reasoning: It's almost universally accepted that one has a moral duty to prevent members of their family from being harmed, and as a result, few would deny that if a person was known by a family member to be falsely accused of a crime that it would be okay for that family member to lie to the police.

Flaw: There argument establishes one value here (moral duty to prevent family members from harm), but either ignored or arbitrarily overruled another potential value: a moral duty to help the police. In other words, what if it's widely recognized that helping the police is **more important** than helping a family member?

Answers:

- (A) The conclusion here isn't any broader than the evidence provided – the evidence highlights one example, and the conclusion is only regarding **some** cases.

- (B) This works – if other moral principles (such as helping the police) **were** recognized as overriding the obligation to help a family member, then the conclusion would be put in question.
- (C) The argument never made any claims regarding obstruction of **justice** – only regarding obstruction of the **police** in their work.
- (D) The argument doesn't necessarily go as far as assuming there **no** such obligation – it might allow for such an obligation, but simply assume that helping a family member is a more important obligation.
- (E) No – the argument doesn't rest on their knowledge being correct, just on their knowledge actually being there. In other words, regardless of whether they're actually correct, the argument still holds.

Best Answer: (B)

19. Question Type: Strengthen

Conclusion: Government intrusion into voters' lives will rarely be substantially reduced over time in a democracy.

Reasoning: Voters elect politicians who promise the government will help their most pressing problems, which requires money, which must come from taxes, which can be considered a form of government intrusion.

Flaw: There's a bit of a shift here – the argument establishes that voters elect politicians who **promise** something that will lead to government intrusion, but then concludes that democracy **will** extend government intrusion. But that assumes that politicians will actually keep their promises which would lead to government intrusion.

Best Answer:

- (A) This works – this covers up for the flaw noted above.
- (B) If anything, this weakens the argument as it shows that politicians will actually do something else in office (potentially not being intrusive).
- (C) This doesn't help – non-financial problems may also require money to resolve.
- (D) We don't have to assume anything about non-democratic countries for this to work.
- (E) Whether they promise what they 'think ought to be done' is irrelevant – it doesn't change whether they promise to do something that will intrude on people's lives, or whether they'll actually go through with such promises.

Best Answer: (A)

20. Question Type: Parallel Flaw

Conclusion: We should accept the proposal to demolish the old train station.

Reasoning: Preserving old buildings creates an impediment to new development, which is critical to economic health. Further, a group that opposes the proposal has no commitment to long term economic well being.

Flaw: The reasoning provided by the argument is that something should be done because the motives of a group saying otherwise are questionable. But just because they have questionable motives, does that mean that they're wrong?

Answers:

- (A) The argument neither provides **any** reasons for safeguarding works of art (the last sentence just reiterates that it should be done), nor criticizes any group's motives.
- (B) While the argument does provide reasons to undertake the action proposed, there's no flaw of criticizing a particular group's motives here.
- (C) This argument does commit a similar flaw – it suggests that something should not be done because of the motives of people advocating that it be done.
- (D) The conclusion here isn't based on the **motives** of the residents – but on the committee's obligation to avoid alienating those residents.
- (E) There's no rejection of a proposal on the basis of the motives of the person proposing it.

Best Answer: (C)

21. Question Type: Weaken

Conclusion: We must accept the fact that consumption of meat will soon be morally unacceptable.

Reasoning: Many more people can be fed with the grain used to produce meat than with the meat that such grain produces, grain yields are leveling off and no longer increasing, and the population is rapidly expanding.

Flaw: The argument shifts from a premise regarding 'animals raised on grain' to 'consumption of meat' in general. But, perhaps some meat can be produced from animals not raised from grain?

Answers:

- (A) This doesn't change anything regarding whether such practice would be 'acceptable'.
- (B) This works – if this is true, then it might be okay to eat such meat, as the land used couldn't provide any other farming benefits anyway.
- (C) This only strengthens the argument, as it shows meat becomes unnecessary.
- (D) This wouldn't change much, as we don't know whether this would actually happen, and as it would only stop **loss** of farmland (it wouldn't **increase** available farmland to meet increasing demand).
- (E) The argument never claims we'd have to rely **solely** on grain products – there may be other non-meat foods available.

Best Answer: (B)

22. Question Type: Inference

Answers:

- (A) This is a mistaken reversal – we know that if the price continues to increase, then their profitability will decrease. However, their overall profitability might decrease for a variety of reasons that have nothing to do with the price of coffee beans.
- (B) Same issue as with (A) – their overall profitability might decrease for a variety of other reasons.

- (C) Yes – we know that if the price of coffee beans increases, that they will either sell non-coffee products (which will decrease their overall profitability) or that its coffee sales will decrease (which will also result in a decrease in overall profitability). In other words, no matter what, overall profitability will take a hit.
- (D) No – if anything, it's the opposite. The price it pays for coffee beans cannot **increase** without a decrease in overall profitability (given that an increase in price will necessarily lead to a decrease in overall profitability [see (C)]).
- (E) We don't have to assume that one of these must be true. If the price it pays for coffee doesn't continue to increase, their coffee sales might still stay the same.

Best Answer: (C)

23. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: Political candidates' speeches are selfishly motivated and the promises made in them are unreliable.

Reasoning: The politicians' purpose in giving these speeches is to get themselves elected.

Flaw: Attack – the argument is attacking the motives of the politicians to question their actual statements. Regardless of the motive, however, their statements may be sincere.

Answers:

- (A) No, the argument never assumes that **unselfish** promises **are** reliable. Just that selfishly motivated ones are **not**.
- (B) The argument doesn't go as far as claiming that they're **never** kept. Just that they're unreliable.
- (C) There are no claims regarding cause here.
- (D) Perfect – essentially a paraphrase of the flaw noted above.
- (E) Close, but the argument makes no claims regarding whether the person is or isn't worthy of the office for which they're running; it only makes claims regarding whether the promises are reliable.

Best Answer: (D)

24. Question Type: Strengthen

Conclusion: Romantics that claim that people aren't born evil, but are made evil by imperfect institutions are wrong.

Reasoning: Institutions are merely collections of people.

Flaw: So what if institutions are collections of people? Can such collections of people not make otherwise 'innocent' people evil?

Answers:

- (A) The argument isn't dependent upon comparing how effective institutions are vs. individuals.
- (B) If anything, this weakens the argument, as it supports the idea that institutions are imperfect (which is part of the claim the argument is trying to refute).

- (C) Views on optimism have no relation or effect to this argument.
- (D) This doesn't show that institutions can't make people evil.
- (E) This works – if the whole can't determine properties of its parts, then institutions (which is a 'whole' made of people) can't determine properties of people (the 'parts').

Best Answer: (E)

25. Question Type: Flaw

Conclusion: The anthropologists claim that humans couldn't have survived prehistoric times without evolving the ability to cope with diverse natural environments is false.

Reasoning: A particular species **did** learn to cope with diverse natural environments, but went extinct.

Flaw: Necessity/Sufficiency – the claim the argument is trying to refute is that 'ability to cope' was **necessary** to survival. However, that doesn't mean that having 'ability to cope' will guarantee survival. The evidence regarding the particular species only shows that 'ability to cope' didn't guarantee survival, which simply shows that it wasn't **sufficient** for survival. This doesn't show that it wasn't necessary.

Answers:

- (A) Perfect – essentially a paraphrase of the flaw noted above.
- (B) The argument never establishes any particular characteristic that enabled a species to survive.
- (C) The argument never establishes any species that actually survived any given conditions.
- (D) Irrelevant – regardless of whether it had such characteristics, this would have no effect on whether 'ability to cope' is either necessary or sufficient for survival.
- (E) There's no particular condition that is claimed to have **caused** a particular result here (nor is it compared to a similar case).

Best Answer: (A)