

# **GRE**

## **Verbal Reasoning Assessment**

### **Critical Reasoning**

#### **Answer Explanations**

1. **A** ----- Note that an assumption is like a premise in that if it is wrong the argument is invalid, and if it is right it supports the conclusion. If the statement in A is correct, it supports the idea that 'point and shoot' is not art, but if it is wrong, and choosing what to point the camera at involves 'art', then the argument is invalid. Hence, A is an assumption. The argument states that photography is not an art form because you only have to 'point and shoot'.
2. **C** ----- The first part in bold is a statement of a fact. It is not the opinion of the author or speculation, and neither does the author dispute this fact, and so choices A and D can be eliminated. The second part is not a fact; it is a suggestion of what might happen if the first-mentioned fact were **not** true. Hence E and B can be eliminated. The correct answer is C.
3. **E**----- The authorities conclude that measures to control mosquitoes have failed. We need to find something that does not contradict that conclusion. But first we need to find the four items that do cast doubt on that conclusion. If the disease is contracted in another country, or if numbers reported are increasing because of better tests or reporting methods, or simply because the human population is increasing, then we cannot conclude that control measures have failed. However, if the incidence of another mosquito-borne disease is increasing, it is more likely to indicate that mosquitoes are not controlled.
4. **E**---- The researchers are testing preference for one feature: the masculinity/femininity of the faces. However, if the faces have other differences, say race or size or age, then the subjects could be responding to that feature. In statement E, the correct answer, we have the possibility that the subjects are responding to age, a situation that is very damaging to the conclusion.
5. **A** ----- The conclusion refers to "modern women" a fact that suggests the authors think their work applies to all modern women. Hence they do assume what is stated in A.
6. **B** ----The conclusion concerns the supposed "powerful effects" of red color. However, if the observed results are due to the "power" of blue, the conclusion is not valid! The experimental design is flawed in that only two colors are used and the so-called positive effect of red cannot be distinguished from a possible negative effect of blue.
7. **D** --- The first part is a statement of the viewpoint of some people and as such could be called a position, a conclusion or something similar. Since it is not an assumption or a finding we can eliminate B and C. The author presents evidence to suggest that this point of view is not correct and so we can eliminate A. The second part is a finding of some research and is not an assumption, hence we can choose D.
8. **A** --- The counselor suggests that frequent arguments are a **cause** of marital disharmony. One way to weaken that conclusion is to show that the disharmony came before the

arguments (i.e. the disharmony caused the arguments). This is suggested in A which is the best answer.

- 9. C** ----- The Dean concludes that the number of postgraduates studying physics is likely to decline. To weaken that conclusion we need to show that there need not be a decline. The best answer is C because it shows that physics students mainly choose careers in applied areas rather than a career in pure science, and it is the pure science that is affected by the cuts. The number of undergraduate students is really irrelevant unless we know something about the percentage that continue in the same field (eliminate A). What is happening in Chemistry is not clearly linked to Physics (eliminate B). Even if staff members increase we cannot be sure that postgraduate students will increase as the staff might be teaching undergraduates or the move might be to improve the staff/student ratio (eliminate D).
- 10. B** ----- We are looking for something to strengthen the idea that people are unenthusiastic about campaigns related to animals that are not viewed in a positive light. Answer B relates a similar situation in which people were unenthusiastic about a creature until it was seen in a new (presumably positive) way. Giving a similar example is one way to support an argument, and it is the best option available here.
- 11. B** ----- The argument recommends that migraine sufferers should try to find the one trigger for their headaches and then avoid this trigger. This would still be a good plan even if the trigger did not always cause a headache – it is better to be safe than sorry – and so the best answer is B. The other choices present actual problems. If it is almost impossible to identify triggers then the recommendation is futile (eliminate A). This recommendation would be a problem if the triggers are so common that it is almost impossible to avoid (eliminate E). It is also a problem if the recommendation is for a person to avoid one trigger when, in fact there are many triggers for that same person (eliminate D). Internal hormonal triggers are not something that can be found and avoided (eliminate C).
- 12. E** ----- First look for the statements that help explain why there continues to be a large number of corner shops. Choice A suggests that they stock different things; B suggests that they are more conveniently located; C suggests their main business does not compete with supermarkets'; D suggests that they find favor with the community who would be likely to patronize them. The least relevant (and therefore what we are looking for) is the fact that they make home deliveries because it is not clear whether the supermarkets do the same.
- 13. C** ----- This argument depends on a cause-and-effect link between the football team's performance and the level of alumni contributions, doesn't it? In other words, it assumes that the alumni who contribute to the college are motivated to do so (at least to some extent) by their interest in the football team and its success. The correct response is (C).

- 14.D** ----- The clear intent of the reimbursement policy is to prompt pregnant women and people at risk of heart disease to schedule more-frequent professional dental cleanings — a procedure that may help prevent preterm labor or heart disease. But the policy will carry its intended result only if those subscribers act accordingly. Of the five choices, (D) provides the best evidence that they will do so. The correct response is (D).
- 15.D** ----- The evidence that Paul presents serves to refute Diane's prediction of a population shift away from regions with harsh climates and toward coastal areas — a prediction with which he expressly disagrees. The correct answer is (D).
- 16.B** -----The argument concludes that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between listening to classical music and getting restful sleep. But this conclusion is based merely on the statistical correlation cited in the first sentence. One way to discredit the conclusion is to provide evidence that something else results in restful sleep. That's exactly what choice (B) accomplishes, by pointing out another possible cause: bedtime reading. The correct response is (B).
- 17.E**----- Comparatively high test scores among Nesbit County's senior class constitutes some evidence that Nesbit County's public schools provide better education than those in Jasper County. The argument for enrolling a child in a private school rather than a public school is weaker because it depends on the additional, unsubstantiated assumption that a low teacher-to-student ratio results in a higher-quality education. Moreover, current school-enrollment trends in Jasper County schools suggest that public schools are becoming more appealing — and private schools less appealing — in terms of teacher-to-student ratio. The correct response is (E).
- 18. A**----- Answer choices C and D weaken the analyst's argument. Answer choice E is irrelevant, because we do not know how the analyst believes Company A's stock will perform in comparison to its industry peer group over the next 5 to 7 years. It's possible that the analyst does not expect Company A to remain the leader for very long, so we cannot assume he expects it will outperform the sector. Choice B is not conclusive because it indicates the patent is on a new product and we do not know if the patent is for a product consumers will demand. Answer choice A is the best one available. If the revenues increase and the expenses decrease, then the company can significantly increase its profits and be more likely to enjoy a high rate of appreciation on stock price.
- 19.B** -----Answer choices D and E actually strengthen the argument – which is the opposite of what the question asks you to do. Answer choice C is completely irrelevant to the argument. Acme could still be the best product, even if most people don't intend to use it. Answer choice A certainly does not bode well for the quality of Acme's aspirin, but it is nonetheless possible that competing brands are even more addictive. Answer choice B is correct. It weakens the passage's argument by providing a reason that people called might have been biased, thus undercutting its implied assumption that a sample of 10 people will produce unbiased results

**20. E-----** Answer choice E can be easily, directly, and correctly inferred from the statement that the dogs bark and howl every time their owner lets them outside. The rest of this passage is "decoy" material. You may have noticed 2 other techniques employed by the GMAT writers in this question. The first trick is to have an unqualified authority comment on a controversy. In this case, we have no reason to believe a CPA would be an expert on canine behavior. Since we have no reason to believe the CPA's analysis is correct, there is no support for choice D. The second trick is to present extreme or emotionally loaded statements. Answer choice A is too extreme to be a correct answer choice on the GMAT.

**21. D ----** Choice D is correct because it neatly summarizes the main theme of the passage. We can instantly eliminate answer choice A because the passage never states how the increased penalty affects citizens. Choice B is too extreme, and overly negative. (Such answer choices are rarely correct on the GMAT.) Besides, the overall theme of the passage is positive; the negative tone of choice B is out of keeping with it. Answer choice C is incorrect because the author stated only that adherence to the law would prevent the price of gasoline from rising further. He never said that this action would **lower** gas prices. E introduces a comparison never mentioned or implied in the argument.

**22. A ----- The correct answer is A.** Reread the last sentence of the passage. The author contends that Scopes should not have been tried for his "crime" because he "did not break the law on his own initiative." The implication is that a person whose crime is originally suggested by another should not be held responsible for that crime.

**23. C ---** The correct answer is C. We cannot conclude that. There are other factors. B is out of scope. D – is too extreme. E - This information is not supported by the given argument. C - Explains why interviews are important.

**24. E-----** (A) doesn't connect to the sharks' age. Choice (B) just restates part of the prompt. Choice (C) just restates the other part of the prompt. Choice (D) doesn't connect to either portion of the discrepancy. Choice (E) touches on both parts: it says that if sharks are older than we thought, there are fewer of them than we thought. That's a good reason to protect them from overfishing.

Logical proof: A logical proof is not always possible on "explain" questions, but we can use the negation test to confirm (E), in this case. Suppose that sharks reproduced more *quickly* than had previously been assumed: that would *lessen* the need to protect sharks. Since the negation would add to the mystery and contradict the opinion of "some parties," we have confirmation that the non-negated (E) would, indeed, resolve the mystery. The correct answer is (E).

**25. E----** Creating a filter: we have multiple arguments here. Opinion-charged words can be our guides. The phrase "many people blame" kicks off one argument. Then, the phrase, "yet clearly," kicks off an opposing viewpoint. On the basis of those observations alone, we can construct a filter to evaluate the answer choices. The boldfaced sentence gives the opinion of many people, and then the rest of the prompt is the pundit's

counterargument.

Applying the filter: matching our prediction with the answer choices, we find that it's present in (E). The correct answer is (E).

- 26.D** ---- The missing connection is between "law-breaking" and what constitutes art. The author assumes that you can be an artist only if you're not a lawbreaker. The clause, "painting graffiti is inherently an act of rebellion and law-breaking," may sound like an opinion, but it's a piece of evidence in this argument.

Applying our filter: answer choices (A) through (D) all touch on both graffiti and the law in some fashion. The one that matches our expectation most closely is (D). It doesn't use the word law-breaking, but it hits on the key matter, the conditional definition of art: it's not art if the maker is a rebel.

Logical proof: we can prove our answer using the second step of the Critical Reasoning Strategy, logical proof. We apply the negation test. If the statement in choice (D) not true--it's art regardless of whether the creator is a rebel or whether it's legal or why it's done--then the argument in the prompt crumbles. That's proof that the argument assumes the statement in choice (D). The correct answer is (D).

- 27. A--** Applying the filter: (A) is relevant; if competitors also slash, our plan might not work. Then, as per our prediction, we might not actually get more customers. We'll keep (A) in. Choice (B) is not relevant; we have no reason to think ads are better in-house or out-of-house. Choice (C) is not relevant to whether the plan will work; whatever product or service we're pricing low is what's supposedly going to win the customers and those customers are the ones we're going to have to keep and win back profits from. Choice (D) contradicts the information we've been given; it is explicitly part of the plan that we suffer losses in the short term. Choice (E) is irrelevant; whether a different plan might work is relevant to what plan might be best, but it's not relevant to whether this plan specifically will work, which is the question at hand.

- 28.A** ---- Applying the filter: choice (A) matches our filter; since, 1) the number of people is not increasing, but 2) the travel per person is increasing. Choice (B) misses the target; even if the airport stimulated interest in early morning flights, would people necessarily fly more overall or just shift their flight preferences? Choice (C) doesn't connect to 1) or 2). Choice (D) is tempting. If flights in the future have more seats, they might be more profitable. But this explanation fails to connect both 1) and 2): if the population isn't growing, why should double the number of flights be profitable? Choice (E) is also out, as it also fails to explain how we can profitably double flights. We're left with (A).

Logical proof: we can apply the negation test to choice (A). If the percentage of the population of prime traveling age went down in the future, we would have a good reason to doubt the plan. Choice (A), indeed, is material to the argument. The correct answer is (A).

**29.C** -- Creating a filter: The two pieces of our mystery are 1) the percentage enrolled in the program hasn't increased, even though 2) the campaign appeared to work... Youngsters *remembered* the advertising. Further, the campaign convinced them of the importance to having a plan. Perhaps there is some other consideration that hasn't been included here, an overlooked problem? We'll look for an "overlooked problem" but above all expect the correct answer to touch on both 1) and 2). Choice (C) connects to both 1) and 2). The outreach could appear to work but fail to increase enrollment if the youngsters never learned how to enroll. The correct answer is (C).

**30.E**----- Applying the filter: Answer choice (A) is irrelevant to whether or not restaurant #2 can attract people away. Choice (B) doesn't matter: whether hypothetical restaurant #3 could draw people away doesn't impact whether restaurant #2 could draw people away. Choice (C) doesn't matter: it concerns what would happen after the plan worked, and we are concerned with whether it would work. Choice (D) tells us that lines ultimately lose customers. Maybe so, but restaurant #1 is good enough that even with the loss, the lines stay long. And it doesn't have anything to do with whether restaurant #2 can draw away patrons from #1. So (D) is out. What about (E)? We're wondering whether we can draw enough people to restaurant #2. Maybe the movie theater is enough of a magnet that they don't want to go over to #2. And we note, reviewing the prompt, maybe they don't want to drive. They have already parked for the movie, for example. It's the only option with a basic relevance to the waiter's position.

**31.B** --- Applying the filter: The promising choices are (B) and (E), both of which hit on the idea of "cultural, not genetic." Choice (A) doesn't touch on either key point, so it's out. Choice (C) talks about species, not populations, and if it's relevant to the cultural vs. genetic question at all, it would weigh in on the wrong side, for genetics. Choice (D) is neutral to the argument: a lack of contact doesn't help us differentiate between behaviors and genes, since both behaviors and genes are isolated in their own ways. Choice (E) concerns mating dances, and we have no evidence connecting mating dances and singing styles, so it doesn't strengthen the conclusion about singing styles. That leaves us with choice (B).

**32.D** --- Creating a filter: how can we predict what goes in the blank? It must not contradict what has come before and it should finish the expression of the idea. The key is that the virus is on the computer even though the scanning software hasn't detected it. We could imagine that there is a defect in the scanner, or an ingenious design to the virus. We could decide on the prediction, "The virus has outsmarted the security systems," as our filter.

Applying the filter: Do any answer choices match our prediction? Choice (A) somewhat does, but rather vaguely. Choice (B) doesn't address why the virus wasn't detected. Choice (C) also doesn't seem to address why the virus wasn't detected, though we might be able to read something into the term "backdoor." Choice (D) would definitely constitute outsmarting the security system. Choice (E) involves outsmarting, but not in a

way that would necessarily obscure detection. We're left with (D). We confirm the logic: the correct answer must give an explanation for how a virus might have gone undetected by security systems. Choice (D) is the only option.

**33. B.** Creating a filter: **a prediction of the correct answer, even a vague or unrealistic prediction, is a most powerful filter to evaluate answer choices.** Predicting isn't always easy, but on this question, there are many reasons why insurance companies might have to pay more for losses in Springfield than in Shelbyville. Maybe the thieves in Springfield are more skilled and they manage to steal more per theft than in Shelbyville. That possibility is unlikely to be an answer choice, but we can still use it: "thieves in Springfield are more skilled and steal more."

Applying the filter, we evaluate the answer choices. Choice (B) is actually pretty close to our prediction. Choice (C) involves auto rates, which wouldn't shed light on this question without further information. (D) and (E) also involve comparisons with other things that we know nothing about, so they cause problems rather than solve problems. Back to (A), we can see it doesn't directly concern whether companies profit more from fewer thefts. Notice that our prediction was quite different from choice (B), but it was similar enough to help us spot (B) quickly.

Logical proof: we can use analysis by extreme cases to establish that choice (B) is correct. If the losses per theft were *identical* in Shelbyville and in Springfield, the conclusion would be true and the argument would stand; if they were *wildly different*, the conclusion could be false. The correct answer is (B).

**34. E---**Creating a filter: we pay special attention to the emotionally charged phrases "perfect case" and "he should consider." The "perfect case" describes the viewpoint of the farmer, while "he should consider" describes the viewpoint not of the farmer, but of the author of the paragraph. From those two fragments alone, we can infer that what goes in the blank will be a reason the new technique might not work or be so good for this farmer. Can we be more specific? Indeed: the author says "there are risks." So the correct answer will probably highlight a risk that the farmer may have overlooked.

Applying the filter: choice (A) gives a risk, though it is not exactly a continuation of the passage, since it brings in new concepts, prices and profit. Choice (B) contradicts the data we have been given, which tells us that the technique will do what it's designed to do. Choice (C) describes a new risk, so it passes the filter. Choice (D), like (B), contradicts data we are given to work with, namely, that the farmer considers his plot ideal. Choice (E) describes a risk of this new technique, so it passes the filter. We are down to choices (C) and (E). Can we establish that one is better? Yes: the author says that "complete extermination might bring new risks." Choice (E) is specifically a risk of complete extermination, whereas (C) is not. When you're trying to decide between two answer choices, look for a critical detail that makes one objectively superior to the other. The correct answer is (E).



**35.D** ---- Creating a filter: we can make the following prediction. The citizen is assessing the value of this security program too narrowly, and the council member points out a benefit of the program the citizen hadn't considered. That's the filter: "benefit overlooked."

Applying the filter: Do any answer choices fit our prediction? Choice (A) is far off from our prediction. Choice (B) misses the main thrust of pointing out a benefit the citizen hadn't considered. And the council member says, "even if we granted that those odds didn't justify the costs," so with his main point he is specifically not arguing about the odds, as (B) indicates. Choice (C) and (E) are far off from our prediction. Choice (D) is close to our prediction, so we are left with the correct answer (D).

**36.E**—Evidence: more newspaper articles exposed as fabrications. Conclusion -- Publishers want to increase circulation, not print the truth. This makes sense only if we assume-E- that publishers decide what to print. If- E- weren't true and this decision were up to someone else, the argument would fall apart.

Since the argument claims an increase in made-up articles exposed, it's not necessary that they are a recent phenomenon, so—A—'S not assumed. B —goes too far—it's not necessary that every article be factually verifiable in order for there to have been an increase in fabrications. As for C the author's claim that "even minor publications " have fact checkers is meant to emphasize that the publications know they are not printing the truth, not that minor ones are better at fact checking than major ones. And brings admission of guilt which the author never mentions—the articles in question were exposed as frauds, not admitted to be frauds.

**37.B** ---This option indicates that abundance of food for the boreal owls' small animal prey (therefore abundance of small mammals) correlates with a smaller range for the boreal owls' there. That strengthens the explanation. A --talks of a comparison between different groups of boreal owls that is irrelevant. C—concerns a correlation between owls' need for food and the frequency with which owls hunt whereas the issue at hand is the range over which owls hunt. D—If one were to assume that boreal owls never hunt near a single location for weeks, that would not undermine the proposed explanation. And E tends to undermine the proposed explanation, because it suggests that boreal owls need not make up for the relative scarcity of prey by ranging over large areas.

**38.D** --- In attacking a paradox question, first read the prompt and understand the paradox in your own words. Here, we could say: *most people eat high food and get heart attacks, but the French eat high fat foods and don't get heart attacks*. Then, look for an answer choice that best resolves the paradox. Both (B) and (E) do the opposite: they make the paradox harder to explain. With (B), if folks in the US and France eat about the same amount of saturated fat, then why do Americans get heart disease but not the French? With (E), if French are eating high fat foods all the time, why aren't they getting heart disease? In other words, neither of these answers the question, and in fact, both of them simply would make it even harder to understand.

Answers (A) and (C) are off-the-wall irrelevant. Choice (A) says that cheese has more fat than cream, but the French are eating both of those, so it doesn't matter: either way, the French are eating high fat food. (C) Changes the topic to imports, which is completely unrelated to the direct relationship of diet and epidemiology.

Only (D) resolves the paradox. Since the French drink red wine, which in moderation cleans the arteries, this explains how they could eat high fat foods and have a much lower risk of heart disease.

**39. A---**This statement properly identifies evidence supporting the explanation. B—that a blow to the head can lead to aphasia just as a stroke can do is irrelevant. The argument is concerned with the explanation for the recovery of the capacity to use language. C—this provides no evidence about whether it is the right half of the brain's developing its latent capabilities that alleviate aphasia. D—any effect that a stroke may have on the body beyond aphasia is irrelevant to the argument. E—that language production and language comprehension are governed by different parts of the brain indicates nothing about the recovery of language capabilities by stroke-related aphasia patients is explained by the right side of the brain developing those capabilities.

**40. C—Correct**—this statement properly identifies a value that allows the high-priced hydroponic spinach to compete successfully with less expensive California spinach. A—The 25% reductions in operating costs cannot compensate for the much larger price difference---does not support the projection. B—knowing that the price of California spinach can go no lower does not help to explain how the hydroponic spinach can possibly compensate for the huge price difference between the two products. D—the case shipping is an advantage shared equally by the two types of spinach. E—the existence of a facility in Canada would make it less likely that the Chicago facility will be profitable, because the Canadian facility would be in competition with the Chicago facility.