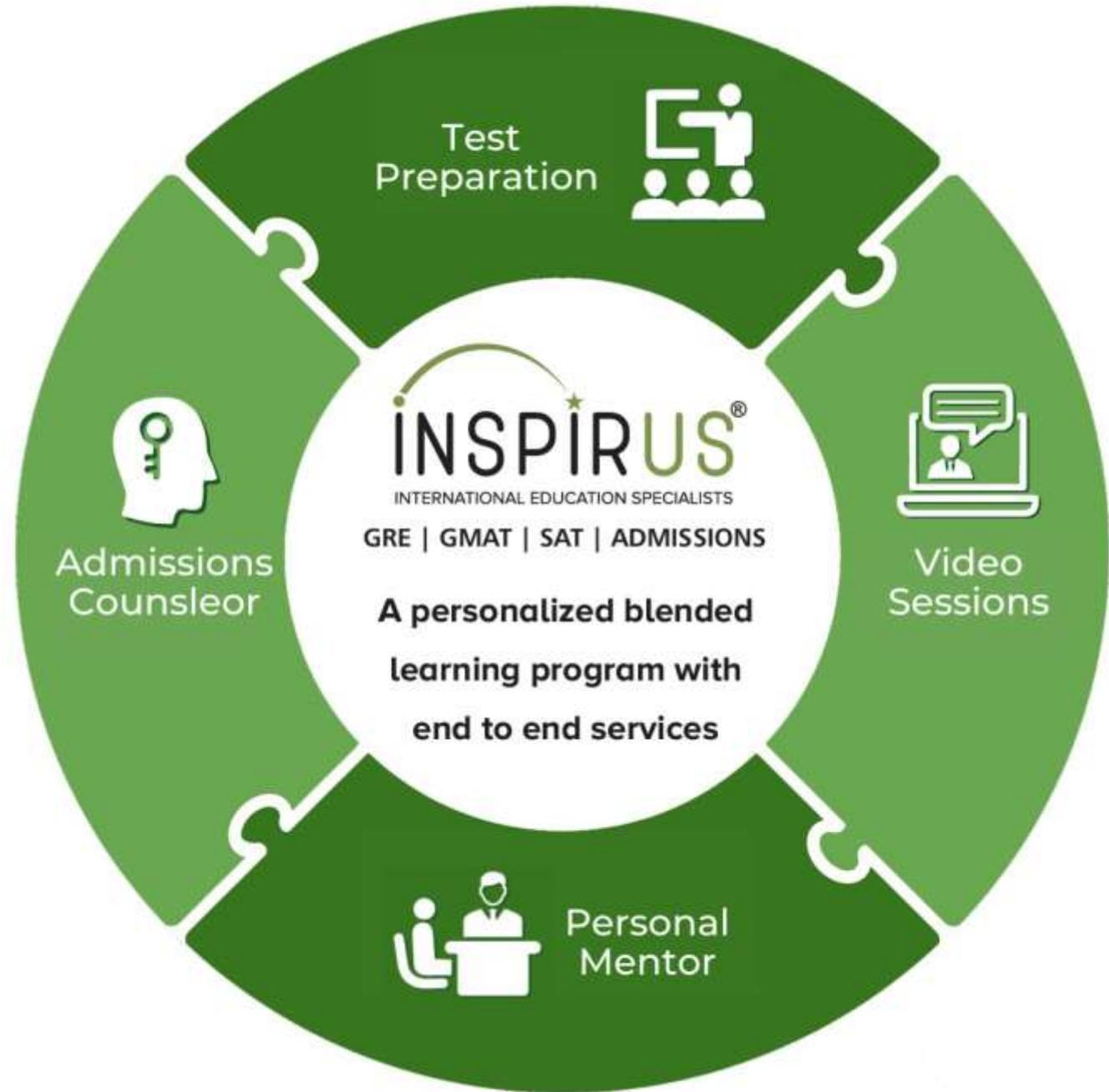


GMAT

Critical Reasoning

1



INTRODUCTION

- Critical Reasoning questions measure your skills in making an argument, evaluating an argument, and formulating a plan of action. The questions are based on materials drawn from a variety of sources. You don't need to be familiar with the subject matter to answer correctly.
- You will read a short passage and then answer a question related to the argument. For example, you may be asked to identify an answer choice that strengthens (or weakens) an argument, draw an inference or conclusion from the short passage, or complete the argument.
- Be certain you understand the statement or set of statements on which a question is based. Specifically, you will look for what is factual, what claims can be substantiated; and what is not said, but necessarily follows from what is said.
- Determine exactly what the question is asking. Read the question first, so you know what to look for. Make sure that you read all the answer choices carefully before choosing one.

FORMAT OF QUESTION

- In almost all cases (except one variant), we get a paragraph based on which a question is asked.
- The paragraph is referred to as the Argument.
- To understand the core of the Argument is to be halfway through the solution.
- Devote 60-70 seconds to fully understand the Argument and identify the kind of answer you need.

COMPONENTS OF AN ARGUMENT

CORE

- PREMISE
- CONCLUSION

ADDITIONAL

- BACKGROUND
- COUNTER-POINT

PREMISE

- A premise is information used by the author to support some claim or conclusion.
- Can be a fact or an opinion; can be a description, historical information, statistical or numerical data, or a comparison of things.
- Often signalled by words or phrases such as *because of, since, due to, as a result of...*
- All arguments contain at least one premise.

CONCLUSION

- A conclusion represents the author's main opinion or claim; can be in the form of a prediction, a judgment of quality or merit, or a statement of causality.
- Is supported by at least one premise
- Often signalled by words such as *therefore, thus, so, consequently...*
- Most (though not all) arguments contain a conclusion.
- Most questions revolve around the conclusion – one way or the other.

BACKGROUND

- Provides context to help understand the core.
- Almost always fact-based; can be in almost any form: historical information, numerical or other data, descriptions of plans or ideas, definitions of words or concepts, and so on.
- Present in Many but not all Arguments.
- The Premise and the Conclusion follow from the Background.

COUNTER POINT

- Opposes or goes against the author's premise / conclusion in some way
- Often signalled by transition words such as *however, yet, but...*
- Typically, the transition word will be found somewhere between the counter point and the conclusion (though the two sentences may not be right next to each other)
- Present Occasionally and not in Most Arguments.

IDENTIFY THE COMPONENTS

The expansion of the runways at the Bay City Airport will allow for larger planes to travel to and from Bay City. These new planes will create a large amount of noise, a nuisance for residents who live near the airport. However, many of the residents in this neighbourhood work in construction, and the contract to expand the runways has been awarded to a local construction company. Thus, the expansion of the runways will lead to an increased quality of life for the residents of this neighbourhood.

The expansion of the runways at the Bay City Airport will allow for larger planes to travel to and from Bay City.

These new planes will create a large amount of noise, a nuisance for residents who live near the airport.

However, many of the residents in this neighbourhood work in construction, and the contract to expand the runways has been awarded to a local construction company.

Thus, the expansion of the runways will lead to an increased quality of life for the residents of this neighbourhood.

Fact = Background / Premise

BACKGROUND

Negative Effect = Purpose Unclear = Premise or Counter-Point.

COUNTER POINT

Could be either the Premise or the Counter-Point.

PREMISE

Main Point / Outcome that follows from the third statement.

CONCLUSION

INSPIRUS “RIPE” STRATEGY for CR Questions:

- **R**ead the Question Stem and ascertain what will be the objective for the question.
- **I**dentify the *key components* of the passage, which are relevant for the question.
- **P**redict an answer that can fit the requirement of the question in the context of the passage.
- **E**liminate the options that are irrelevant or do *not match* with the predicted answer.

ASSUMPTION

- An assumption is something that *the author must believe to be true* in order to draw a certain conclusion, but *does not state* in the argument.
- Thus, it is the missing link between the premise and the conclusion. As a result, it is also called the Missing Premise.
- The assumption itself might not necessarily be true in the real world.
- The only requirement is that the *author* has to believe it's true in order to make his or her claim.

Example

Mr Brown is the best person for the job as he is the most experienced candidate.

OPINION = CONCLUSION

FACT = PREMISE

Most Experienced
Candidate

THEREFORE



Best Candidate

Assumption: Experience is the only criterion for the job.

Assumptions fill a gap in the argument. A correct assumption makes the argument stronger:

Why does Maximum Experience necessarily make someone the best candidate? Why does the author not check any other quality in the candidate?

Assumption

Q1. During the past 20 years, computer scientists focused increasingly on starting and running successful businesses. However, since businesses must be profitable, computer scientists must focus on developing products that generate profit. Consequently, computer science has lost its creative aspect.

Which of the following assumptions is most necessary in order for the conclusion above to be drawn from the argument above?

- (A) All computer programs must lack creativity in order to be well received.
- (B) Some computer scientists entirely disregarded creativity and chose instead to pursue profit.
- (C) A program cannot be both creative and profitable.
- (D) Computer scientists are obsessed with the profitability of their work.
- (E) Non-profit institutions use large amounts of software.

Assumption

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Assumption

Q2. When the state of Tennessee passed a law prohibiting the teaching of the theory of evolution in its public schools, leaders of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) persuaded John T. Scopes, a teacher in Dayton, Tennessee, to teach evolution in his classroom in order to test the law in court. However, because Scopes did not break the law on his own initiative, he should never have been brought to trial.

Which of the following is an assumption underlying the conclusion of the passage above?

- (A) Those who commit crimes at the suggestion of others should not be held responsible for their actions..
- (B) Both Scopes and the ACLU leaders should have been tried for breaking the law.
- (C) The ACLU leaders, rather than Scopes, should have been brought to trial.
- (D) Groups like the ACLU should not encourage criminal activities as a means of testing laws..
- (E) Tennessee did not have the right to make the teaching of evolution a crime.

Assumption

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- (D) Groups like the ACLU should ~~not~~ encourage criminal activities as a means of testing laws..
- (E) Tennessee did not have the right to make the ~~teaching of~~ evolution a crime.

THE NEGATION TECHNIQUE

- On harder questions, we might find ourselves stuck between two answer choices. In such cases, we can try the Negation technique.
- An Assumption is something that the author must believe to be true in order to draw his or her conclusion.
- Thus, if we negate the correct Assumption, then the author's argument will be weakened.
- As it's time-consuming, use it when you are stuck between 2 answers.

Assumption

Q3. Generally, scientists enter their field with the goal of doing important new research and accept as their colleagues those with similar motivation. Therefore, when any scientist wins renown as an expounder of science to general audiences, most other scientists conclude that this popularizer should no longer be regarded as a true colleague.

The explanation offered above for the low esteem in which scientific popularizers are held by research scientists assumes that.

- (A) serious scientific research is not a solitary activity, but relies on active cooperation among a group of colleagues
- (B) research scientists tend not to regard as colleagues those scientists whose renown they envy
- (C) a scientist can become a famous popularizer without having completed any important research
- (D) research scientists believe that those who are well known as popularizers of science are not motivated to do important new research
- (E) no important new research can be accessible to or accurately assessed by those who are not themselves scientists

Assumption

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Assumption

Q4. A researcher discovered that people who have low levels of immune-system activity tend to score much lower on tests of mental health than do people with normal or high immune-system activity. The researcher concluded from this experiment that the immune system protects against mental illness as well as against physical disease.

The researcher's conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) High immune-system activity protects against mental illness better than normal immune-system activity does.
- (B) Mental illness is similar to physical disease in its effects on body systems.
- (C) People with high immune-system activity cannot develop mental illness.
- (D) Mental illness does not cause people's immune-system activity to decrease.
- (E) Psychological treatment of mental illness is not as effective as is medical treatment.

Assumption

Q4. ** A common question type also important for **STRENGTHEN / WEAKEN THE ARGUMENT** questions. The **CAUSE – EFFECT** question type.

LOW IMMUNE SYSTEM (CAUSE) → POOR MENTAL HEALTH (EFFECT)

For any Cause-Effect problem, there are two possible assumptions:

1. Something else is not leading to the same effect.
2. The reverse of the relationship is not true i.e. the Alleged Effect is not the Real Cause

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Assumption

Q5. If the airspace around centrally located airports were restricted to commercial airliners and only those private planes equipped with radar, most of the private-plane traffic would be forced to use outlying airfields. Such a reduction in the amount of private plane traffic would reduce the risk of midair collision around the centrally located airports.

The conclusion drawn in the first sentence depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Outlying airfields would be as convenient as centrally located airports for most pilots of private planes.

(B) Most outlying airfields are not equipped to handle commercial-airline traffic.

(C) Most private planes that use centrally located airports are not equipped with radar.

(D) Commercial airliners are at greater risk of becoming involved in midair collisions than are private planes.

(E) A reduction in the risk of midair collision would eventually lead to increases in commercial airline traffic.

Assumption

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(E) A reduction in the risk of midair collision would eventually lead to increases in commercial airline traffic.

Assumption

Q6. Bank depositors in the United States are all financially protected against bank failure because the government insures all individuals' bank deposits. An economist argues that this insurance is partly responsible for the high rate of bank failures, since it removes from depositors any financial incentive to find out whether the bank that holds their money is secure against failure. If depositors were more selective, then banks would need to be secure in order to compete for depositors' money.

The economist's argument makes which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Bank failures are caused when big borrowers default on loan repayments.
- (B) A significant proportion of depositors maintain accounts at several different banks.
- (C) The more a depositor has to deposit, the more careful he or she tends to be in selecting a bank.
- (D) The difference in the interest rates paid to depositors by different banks is not a significant factor in bank failures.
- (E) Potential depositors are able to determine which banks are secure against failure.

Assumption

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INFERENCE

- Inference questions require us to find an answer that MUST BE TRUE according to the information in the argument. [Not Likely to be true!]
- Most of the time, we will need to use only some of the information in the argument, though we may use all of it.
- Common Question Stems:
 - Which answer can be logically concluded?
 - The statements above most strongly support which of the following conclusions
 - Which answer can be “properly inferred”?
 - Which answer ‘must be true’ based upon the above statements?

EXAMPLE

In 2015, HUL Co Ltd enjoyed a 20% growth in revenues.

FACT 1 = PREMISE 1

However, the same year, the market share of HUL dropped by 5%.

FACT 2 = PREMISE 2

$$\text{Market Share Of HUL} \downarrow 5\% \quad \frac{\text{Revenues earned by HUL} \uparrow 20\%}{\text{Revenues earned by the industry} \uparrow > 20\%}$$

Inference: Revenue of the overall industry has increased by more than 20%.

If the value of the Ratio has dropped when the value of the Numerator has increased, the value of the Denominator must have increased.

However, if the Denominator increases by a percentage less than or equal to percentage increase in the value of the Numerator, the value of the Ratio cannot reduce.

Inference

Q7. A computer equipped with signature-recognition software, which restricts access to a computer to those people whose signatures are on file, identifies a person's signature by analyzing not only the form of the signature but also such characteristics as pen pressure and signing speed. Even the most adept forgers cannot duplicate all of the characteristics the program analyzes

Which of the following can be logically concluded from the passage above?

- (A) The time it takes to record and analyze a signature makes the software impractical for everyday use.
- (B) Computers equipped with the software will soon be installed in most banks.
- (C) Nobody can gain access to a computer equipped with the software solely by virtue of skill at forging signatures.
- (D) Signature-recognition software has taken many years to develop and perfect.
- (E) In many cases even authorized users are denied legitimate access to computers equipped with the software.

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Inference

Q8. Increases in funding for police patrols often lower the rate of crimes of opportunity such as petty theft and vandalism by providing visual deterrence in high-crime neighborhoods. Levels of funding for police patrols in some communities are increased when federal matching grants are made available.

Which of the following can be correctly inferred from the statements above?

- (A) Areas with little vandalism can never benefit from visual deterrence.
- (B) Communities that do not increase their police patrols are at higher risk for crimes of opportunity late at night.
- (C) Visual deterrence is the most effective means of controlling petty theft.
- (D) Federal matching grants for police patrols lower the rate of crimes of opportunity in some communities.
- (E) Only federal matching grants are necessary to reduce crime in most neighborhoods

Inference

Q8. ** Chain of Action Problem

FUNDING FOR POLICE PATROLS → LOWER CRIME RATE

FEDERAL GRANTS → FUNDING FOR POLICE PATROLS

Hence, FEDERAL GRANTS → LOWER CRIME RATE

Which of the following can be correctly inferred from the statements above?

(A) Areas with little vandalism can never benefit from visual deterrence.

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Inference

Q9. Large national budget deficits do not cause large trade deficits. If they did, countries with the largest budget deficits would also have the largest trade deficits. In fact, when deficit figures are adjusted so that different countries are reliably comparable to each other, there is no such correlation.

If the statements above are all true, which of the following can properly be inferred on the basis of them?

- (A) Countries with large national budget deficits tend to restrict foreign trade.
- (B) Reliable comparisons of the deficit figures of one country with those of another are impossible.
- (C) Reducing a country's national budget deficit will not necessarily result in a lowering of any trade deficit that country may have.
- (D) When countries are ordered from largest to smallest in terms of population, the smallest countries generally have the smallest budget and trade deficits.
- (E) Countries with the largest trade deficits never have similarly large national budget deficits.

Inference

Q9. Large national budget deficits do not cause large trade deficits. If they did, countries with the largest budget deficits would also have the largest trade deficits. In fact, when deficit figures are adjusted so that different countries are reliably comparable to each other, there is no such correlation.

National Budget Deficit and Trade Deficit are not related. So, one will not impact the other.

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Inference

Q10. Meteorite explosions in the Earth's atmosphere as large as the one that destroyed forests in Siberia, with approximately the force of a twelve-megaton nuclear blast, occur about once a century. The response of highly automated systems controlled by complex computer programs to unexpected circumstances is unpredictable. **Which of the following conclusions can most properly be drawn, if the statements above are true, about a highly automated nuclear-missile defence system controlled by a complex computer program?**

- (A) Within a century after its construction, the system would react inappropriately and might accidentally start a nuclear war.
- (B) The system would be destroyed if an explosion of a large meteorite occurred in the Earth's atmosphere.
- (C) It would be impossible for the system to distinguish the explosion of a large meteorite from the explosion of a nuclear weapon.
- (D) Whether the system would respond inappropriately to the explosion of a large meteorite would depend on the location of the blast.
- (E) It is not certain what the system's response to the explosion of a large meteorite would be, if its designers did not plan for such a contingency.

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Inference

Q11. High levels of fertilizer and pesticides, needed when farmers try to produce high yields of the same crop year after year, pollute water supplies. Experts therefore urge farmers to diversify their crops and to rotate their plantings yearly. To receive governmental price-support benefits for a crop, farmers must have produced that same crop for the past several years. **The statements above, if true, best support which of the following conclusions?**

(A) The rules for governmental support of farm prices work against efforts to reduce water pollution.

(B) The only solution to the problem of water pollution from fertilizers and pesticides is to take farmland out of production.

(C) Farmers can continue to make a profit by rotating diverse crops, thus reducing costs for chemicals, but not by planting the same crop each year.

(D) New farming techniques will be developed to make it possible for farmers to reduce the application of fertilizers and pesticides.

(E) Governmental price supports for farm products are set at levels that are not high enough to allow farmers to get out of debt.

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Inference

Q12. United States hospitals have traditionally relied primarily on revenues from paying patients to offset losses from unreimbursed care. Almost all paying patients now rely on governmental or private health insurance to pay hospital bills. Recently, insurers have been strictly limiting what they pay hospitals for the care of insured patients to amounts at or below actual costs.

Which of the following conclusions is best supported by the information above?

- (A) Although the advance of technology has made expensive medical procedures available to the wealthy, such procedures are out of the reach of low-income patients.
- (B) If hospitals do not find ways of raising additional income for unreimbursed care, they must either deny some of that care or suffer losses if they give it.
- (C) Some patients have incomes too high for eligibility for governmental health insurance but are unable to afford private insurance for hospital care.
- (D) If the hospitals reduce their costs in providing care, insurance companies will maintain the current level of reimbursement, thereby providing more funds for unreimbursed care.
- (E) Even though philanthropic donations have traditionally provided some support for the hospitals, such donations are at present declining.

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EXPLAIN THE PARADOX

- Discrepancy questions consist mostly of premises and not conclusions. Mostly, two premises will be presented, and they will be contradictory in some way.
- Sometimes, the argument will include indicator words such as “Surprisingly, Yet, However, Nevertheless etc.” Most discrepancy question stems will include some form of the words “explain” or “resolve” and the vast majority will also contain the words “if true.”
- Our task on Discrepancy questions is to find an answer that resolves or fixes the discrepancy — that makes all of the information make sense together. In short, we are trying to find a third premise that will help the two Premises to make sense together.
- **The most common Trap Options involve:**
 - Out of Scope: It will address one of the premises, but it won’t actually resolve the discrepancy between the two premises.
 - Reverse Logic: The option highlights or points out the discrepancy rather than providing new information to show that there really isn’t a discrepancy.

Explain The Discrepancy (Paradox)

Q13. A discount retailer of basic household necessities employs thousands of people and pays most of them at the minimum wage rate. Yet following a federally mandated increase of the minimum wage rate that increased the retailer's operating costs considerably, the retailer's profits increased markedly.

Which of the following, if true, most helps to resolve the apparent paradox?

(A) Over half of the retailer's operating costs consist of payroll expenditures; yet only a small percentage of those expenditures go to pay management salaries.

(B) The retailer's customer base is made up primarily of people who earn, or who depend on the earnings of others who earn, the minimum wage.

(C) The retailer's operating costs, other than wages, increased substantially after the increase in the minimum wage rate went into effect.

(D) When the increase in the minimum wage rate went into effect, the retailer also raised the wage rate for employees who had been earning just above minimum wage.

(E) The majority of the retailer's employees work as cashiers, and most cashiers are paid the minimum wage.

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Explain The Discrepancy (Paradox)

Q14. A recent article in one of the nation's leading newspapers noted that despite the government's warning about peanut butter likely being contaminated by salmonella and the government's subsequent recall of a limited amount of peanut butter, 90% of grocery store shoppers surveyed said that they did not plan to change their peanut butter purchasing habits. Nevertheless, roughly two months after the limited recall and one month after the leading newspaper published its article, the country's peanut butter manufacturers reported that same-store sales to grocery store shoppers fell 75% year-over-year.

Which of the following, if true, best explains the apparent paradox above?

- (A) The initial survey of shoppers failed to consider the effect of subsequent cuts in the price of peanut butter.
- (B) Fearing additional instances of contamination and subsequent lawsuits, many retailers that sold peanut butter removed the product voluntarily from their shelves.
- (C) A report similar to the report that appeared in the leading newspaper appeared in one of the nation's tabloid magazines on the same day.
- (D) Days before the newspaper conducted its survey, a widely-respected bacterial research specialist published an op-ed article in a major newspaper arguing that the threat from salmonella-infected peanut butter was smaller than the government would later contend.
- (E) A study published after the government recall of some peanut butter stated that individuals intended to change the type of Jelly and bread they purchased.

Explain The Discrepancy (Paradox)

Q14. A recent article in one of the nation's leading newspapers noted that despite the government's warning about peanut butter likely being contaminated by salmonella and the government's subsequent recall of a limited amount of peanut butter, 90% of grocery store shoppers surveyed said that they did not plan to change their peanut butter purchasing habits. Nevertheless, roughly two months after the limited recall and one month after the leading newspaper published its article, the country's peanut butter manufacturers reported that same-store sales to grocery store shoppers fell 75% year-over-year.

Which of the following, if true, best explains the apparent paradox above?

(A) The initial survey of shoppers failed to consider the effect of subsequent cuts ~~to~~ the price of peanut butter.

 (B) Fearing additional instances of contamination and subsequent lawsuits, many retailers that sold peanut butter removed the product voluntarily from their shelves.

(C) A report similar to the report that appeared in the leading newspaper appeared in one of the nation's tabloid ~~magazines~~ on the same day.

(D) Days ~~before~~ the newspaper conducted its survey, a widely-respected bacterial research specialist published an op-ed article in a major newspaper arguing that the threat from salmonella-infected peanut butter was smaller than the government would later contend.

(E) A study published after the government recall of some peanut butter stated that individuals intended to change the type of Jelly ~~and bread~~ they purchased.

Explain The Discrepancy (Paradox)

Q15. As a result of implementing an experimental farming system that combined aggressive new fertilization, deep irrigation, and speculative pesticides, the yield on crops at a farm in central California grew consistently and considerably over the past six years. However, yields this year unexpectedly plummeted, causing the farm's owners considerable financial difficulties.

Which of the following statements, if true, best explains the unexpected drop in yield?

(A) As a result of a serious and recent economic recession, the market for the products the farm produced shrank in size during the past year.

(B) Other farms that began using the experimental system at about the same time also reported an unexpected plummet in yields this year.

(C) The central California region where the farm in question is located experienced a drought 9 years ago, 3 years ago, and this past year.

(D) A different experimental system, used on a different crop, failed after two years at a farm in Iowa. Scientists later discovered that chemicals involved in this different system slowly poisoned the soil.

(E) Significant and sustained increases in agricultural productivity eventually lead to an exhaustion of important nutrients in land.

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Explain The Discrepancy (Paradox)

Q16. The average age of residents in Sunset city is well over 70 years of age and the populace is composed almost entirely of retirees with extremely few families that have young children. However, Sunset City is also known for its many boutiques that specialize in selling clothing for infants and toddlers. **Which of the following, if true, best reconciles the seeming discrepancy described above?**

- (A) The children's clothing boutiques in Sunset City purchase their clothing from wholesalers in Sunrise City, where there are several families with small children.
- (B) The few children that do live in Sunset City do not have particularly large wardrobes.
- (C) The residents of Sunset City are known to spend more on healthcare than residents of nearby cities.
- (D) The residents of Sunset City are generally wealthy and are known to spend large amounts of money buying gifts for their grandchildren and great grandchildren living in other cities.
- (E) Sunset City is not located on a major highway.

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Explain The Discrepancy (Paradox)

Q17. A milepost on the towpath read “21” on the side facing the hiker as she approached it and “23” on its back. She reasoned that the next milepost forward on the path would indicate that she was halfway between one end of the path and the other. However, the milepost one mile further on read “20” facing her and “24” behind.

Which of the following, if true, would explain the discrepancy described above?

- (A) The numbers on the next milepost had been reversed.
- (B) The numbers on the mileposts indicate kilometers, not miles.
- (C) The facing numbers indicate miles to the end of the path, not miles from the beginning.
- (D) A milepost was missing between the two the hiker encountered.
- (E) The mileposts had originally been put in place for the use of mountain bikers, not for hikers.

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Explain The Discrepancy (Paradox)

Q18. A factory manager at Artitus Industries suggested that tools be assigned to individual employees rather than shared within each workshop. Employees with their own tools would have more incentive to maintain the tools properly, as each employee would suffer all of the costs of improperly maintaining his or her tools. However, several months after Artitus began assigning tools to individual employees in one of its two workshops, it was found that the shared tools in the other workshop had been better maintained. **Which of the following, if true, most helps to explain the Artitus's finding?**

- (A) If one user of shared tools fails to keep them in perfect condition, others are likely to begin to neglect the tools even more, with the result that the tools soon become unusable.
- (B) When tools are shared, the condition of any individual tool affects all users at least somewhat.
- (C) An employee using shared tools might be able to increase productivity by neglecting to maintain them.
- (D) More companies assign tools individually than share them among employees.
- (E) The damage from any individual user's failure to properly maintain tools is more difficult to determine with shared tools than with individual tools.

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Thank you