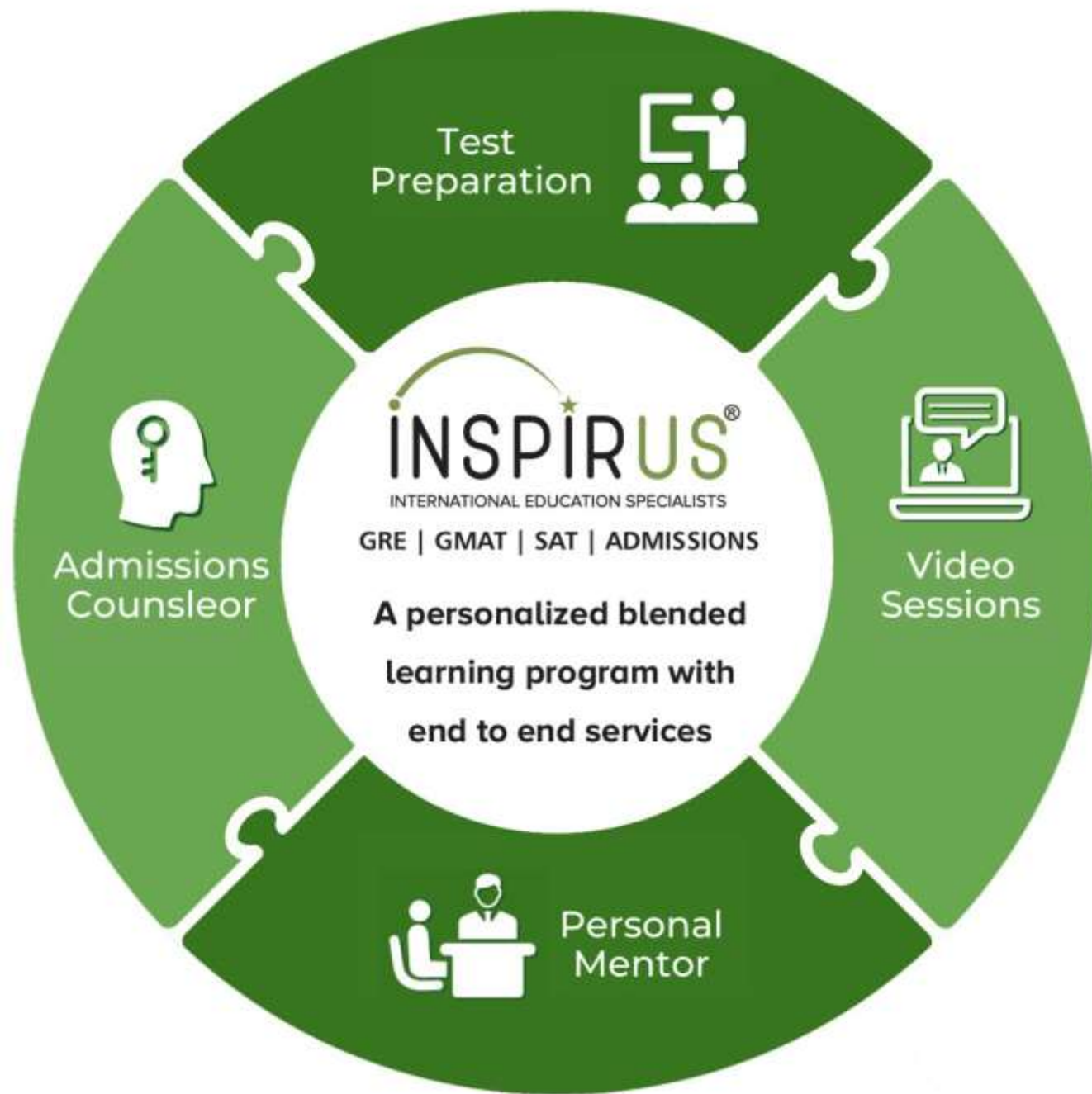


GMAT

Critical Reasoning

2



INSPIRUS “RIPE” STRATEGY for CR Questions:

Read the Question Stem and ascertain what will be the objective for the question.

Identify the *key components* of the passage, which are relevant for the question.

Predict an answer that can fit the requirement of the question in the context of the passage.

Eliminate the options that are irrelevant or do *not match* with the predicted answer.

STRENGTHEN vs WEAKEN

Both Strengthen and Weaken questions seek a *new piece of information* that, if added to the existing argument, will make the conclusion either *more likely to be true (Strengthen)* or *less likely to be true (Weaken)*.

In the case of *Strengthen*, the new info will prove that some *assumption is valid*. In the case of *Weaken*, the new info prove that the *assumption is invalid*.

COMMON TRAPS

One of the most common traps is the **Reverse Logic answer: the question asks us to weaken, but a trap answer choice strengthens the conclusion instead or vice-versa.**

These can be especially tricky if we misread the conclusion or otherwise get turned around while evaluating the argument.

Some options may **just repeat the argument** without adding any new evidence to support or weaken the argument.

Most of the wrong answers will have **No Tie to the Conclusion — they will neither strengthen nor weaken the conclusion.** Some of these will be more obviously wrong, but these answers can also be quite tricky.

COURSE OF ACTION

Conclusion: **X is the ideal or best solution / strategy to a situation.**

ASSUMPTION: **Benefits of X > Drawbacks of X**

SUPPORT THE ARGUMENT

1. Highlight the benefits of X
2. Mention the conditions that are favourable to X
3. Lack of drawbacks
4. Absence of better alternatives

WEAKEN THE ARGUMENT

1. Highlight the drawbacks of X
2. Mention the conditions that are unfavourable to X
3. Lack of benefits
4. Presence of better alternatives

Strengthen

Q1. A major health insurance company in Lagolia pays for special procedures prescribed by physicians only if the procedure is first approved as “medically necessary” by a company-appointed review panel. The rule is intended to save the company the money it might otherwise spend on medically unnecessary procedures. The company has recently announced that in order to reduce its costs, it will abandon this rule.

Which of the following, if true, provides the strongest justification for the company’s decision?

- (A) Patients often register dissatisfaction with physicians who prescribe nothing for their ailments.
- (B) Physicians often prescribe special procedures that are helpful but not altogether necessary for the health of the patient.
- (C) The review process is expensive and practically always results in approval of the prescribed procedure.
- (D) The company’s review process does not interfere with the prerogative of physicians, in cases where more than one effective procedure is available, to select the one they personally prefer.
- (E) The number of members of the company appointed review panel who review a given procedure depends on the cost of the procedure.

Support the idea of abandoning the review panel in order to save money.

Demerit of the review panel > Merit of the review panel

Hence, having the review panel incurs more money than NOT having the review panel

Q1. A major health insurance company in Lagolia pays for special procedures prescribed by physicians only if the procedure is first approved as “medically necessary” by a company-appointed review panel. The rule is intended to save the company the money it might otherwise spend on medically unnecessary procedures. The company has recently announced that in order to reduce its costs, it will abandon this rule.

Which of the following, if true, provides the strongest justification for the company’s decision?

(✗) Patients often register dissatisfaction with physicians who prescribe nothing for their ailments.

Not related to cost

(✗) Physicians often prescribe special procedures that are helpful but not altogether necessary for the health of the patient.

Tells us an advantage of having the panel. Reverse Logic.

(✓) The review process is expensive and practically always results in approval of the prescribed procedure. **Mentions a cost disadvantage of the review panel. HOLD.**

Not related to cost

(✗) The company’s review process does not interfere with the prerogative of physicians, in cases where more than one effective procedure is available, to select the one they personally prefer.

(✗) The number of members of the company appointed review panel who review a given procedure depends on the cost of the procedure. **Number of members -- irrelevant**

Strengthen

Q2. In parts of South America, vitamin-A deficiency is a serious health problem, especially among children. In one region, agriculturists are attempting to improve nutrition by encouraging farmers to plant a new variety of sweet potato called SPK004 that is rich in beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A. The plan has good chances of success, since sweet potato is a staple of the region's diet and agriculture, and the varieties currently grown contain little beta-carotene.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the prediction that the plan will succeed?

- (A) The growing conditions required by the varieties of sweet potato currently cultivated in the region are conditions in which SPK004 can flourish.
- (B) The flesh of SPK004 differs from that of the currently cultivated sweet potatoes in color and texture, so traditional foods would look somewhat different when prepared from SPK004.
- (C) There are no other varieties of sweet potato that are significantly richer in beta-carotene than SPK004 is.
- (D) The varieties of sweet potato currently cultivated in the region contain some important nutrients that are lacking in SPK004.
- (E) There are other vegetables currently grown in the region that contain more beta-carotene than the currently cultivated varieties of sweet potato do.


Support the idea of growing SPK004.

We already know the merits of the new crop.


Therefore, the drawbacks must be less AND/OR the conditions must be favourable.


Q2. In parts of South America, vitamin-A deficiency is a serious health problem, especially among children. In one region, agriculturists are attempting to improve nutrition by encouraging farmers to plant a new variety of sweet potato called SPK004 that is rich in beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A. The plan has good chances of success, since sweet potato is a staple of the region's diet and agriculture, and the varieties currently grown contain little beta-carotene.

Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the prediction that the plan will succeed?


 (✓) The growing conditions required by the varieties of sweet potato currently cultivated in the region are conditions in which SPK004 can flourish. **Mentions favourable conditions. Hold.**

Colour is irrelevant.

 (✗) The flesh of SPK004 differs from that of the currently cultivated sweet potatoes in color and texture, so traditional foods would look somewhat different when prepared from SPK004.

 (✗) There are no other varieties of sweet potato that are significantly richer in beta-carotene than SPK004 is. **Catch term 'significantly'. There could be slightly richer varieties.**

 (✗) The varieties of sweet potato currently cultivated in the region contain some important nutrients that are lacking in SPK004. **Mentions a disadvantage. Weakens the argument.**

 (✗) There are other vegetables currently grown in the region that contain more beta-carotene than the currently cultivated varieties of sweet potato do. **Not related to SPK004.**

Weaken

Q3. Jackson City has outgrown its current fire station. The existing station cannot be expanded to fit the city's needs because of building code restrictions. Real estate in the area of the existing station is far more expensive than building space on the west side of the city. Since the price to purchase a building is a considerable portion of the total cost, it would be more economical to move the fire station to the west side of the city.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously undermines the arguments conclusion?

- (A) City residents have expressed approval of the plan to move the city's fire station to the west side of the city.
- (B) The fire station, if moved to the west side of the city, must still conform to Jackson City's citywide sanitation requirements.
- (C) If the fire station is moved to the west side of the city, insurance rates will skyrocket because the west side of the city has higher arson and vandalism rates.
- (D) If the fire station is moved to the west side of the city, residents there will have to contend with increased noise and traffic.
- (E) Ample water supply already exists to support the fire station on the west side of the city.

The conclusion says that “moving the fire station to the West side will be more **ECONOMICAL**”. To counter it, we have to mention a disadvantage of the strategy. Identify the **COST DEMERITS** of moving the fire station to the West side.

Q3. Jackson City has outgrown its current fire station. The existing station cannot be expanded to fit the city’s needs because of building code restrictions. Real estate in the area of the existing station is far more expensive than building space on the west side of the city. Since the price to purchase a building is a considerable portion of the total cost, it would be more economical to move the fire station to the west side of the city.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously undermines the arguments conclusion?

(✗) City residents have expressed approval of the plan to move the city’s fire station to the west side of the city. **Approval of the residents is irrelevant. If anything, it supports the strategy.**

(✗) The fire station, if moved to the west side of the city, must still conform to Jackson City’s citywide sanitation requirements. **Sanitation is irrelevant.**

✓ (✓) If the fire station is moved to the west side of the city, insurance rates will skyrocket because the west side of the city has higher arson and vandalism rates. **Mentions a cost DRAWBACK. Hold.**

(✗) If the fire station is moved to the west side of the city, residents there will have to contend with increased noise and traffic. **Drawback, yes, but traffic and noise are irrelevant.**

(✗) Ample water supply already exists to support the fire station on the west side of the city. **Mentions a benefit.**

Weaken

Q4. Wine Company Representative: The corks of red wine bottles pose a threat to the environment because they are treated with chemicals that are especially toxic in landfills. However, the new cork that our company developed, which will be adopted by the entire red wine industry, represents a solution. Since the new cork is natural and not treated with chemicals, when the industry completes its transition to the new cork, there will no longer be any threat to landfills from red wine corks.

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

- (A) The industry's transition to the new red wine corks will take years, allowing thousands of old corks to pollute landfills.
- (B) Even after the industry's transition to new corks, a large number of wine bottles with old corks will continue to be consumed.
- (C) The new corks take considerably longer to produce.
- (D) Production of the new cork emits more toxic fumes than were emitted in the production of the old cork.
- (E) The new corks are more expensive than the old corks.

Weaken

Q4. Wine Company Representative: The corks of red wine bottles pose a threat to the environment because they are treated with chemicals that are especially toxic in landfills. However, the new cork that our company developed, which will be adopted by the entire red wine industry, represents a solution. Since the new cork is natural and not treated with chemicals, when the industry completes its transition to the new cork, there will no longer be any threat to landfills from red wine corks.

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

- (A) The industry's transition to the new red wine corks will take years, allowing thousands of old corks to pollute landfills.
- (B) Even after the industry's transition to new corks, a large number of wine bottles with old corks will continue to be consumed.
- (C) The new corks take considerably longer to produce.
- (D) Production of the new cork emits more toxic fumes than were emitted in the production of the old cork.
- (E) The new corks are more expensive than the old corks.

As the new cork is natural, transitioning to the new cork will eliminate any threat to landfills.
To counter it, we have to mention a disadvantage of the strategy.
Why will the threat to landfill exist even after the transition to the new cork?

Q4. Wine Company Representative: The corks of red wine bottles pose a threat to the environment because they are treated with chemicals that are especially toxic in landfills. However, the new cork that our company developed, which will be adopted by the entire red wine industry, represents a solution. Since the new cork is natural and not treated with chemicals, when the industry completes its transition to the new cork, there will no longer be any threat to landfills from red wine corks.

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

- (A) ✗ The industry's transition to the new red wine corks will take years, allowing thousands of old corks to pollute landfills. **Tempting. But the argument talks about the benefit after the transition. Time not given.**
- (F) ✓ Even after the industry's transition to new corks, a large number of wine bottles with old corks will continue to be consumed. **Hence, the threat will exist even after the transition. HOLD.**
- (C) ✗ The new corks take considerably longer to produce. **Time of production is IRRELEVANT.**
- (D) ✗ Production of the new cork emits more toxic fumes than were emitted in the production of the old cork. **Severe problem, YES. But not related to landfills.**
- (E) ✗ The new corks are more expensive than the old corks. **Cost is irrelevant.**

CAUSE-EFFECT

CONCLUSION: X is the Cause and Y is the effect.

ASSUMPTION: Y does not happen for any other reason.

Y does not lead to X.

SUPPORT THE ARGUMENT

1. If X doesn't happen, Y doesn't happen either.
2. Something else (Z) does not cause Y.
3. Y is not the actual cause OR Y does not lead to X.

WEAKEN THE ARGUMENT

1. Something else (Z) causes Y.
2. Y happens even if X does not.
3. The reverse of the relationship is true, i.e. Y causes X.

Strengthen

Q5. Three years after the Hydraulic Falls Dam was built, none of the six-fish species native to the area was still reproducing adequately in the river below the dam. Because the dam reduced the average temperature of the water from approximately 40 degrees to approximately 10 degrees, biologists have hypothesized that sharp increases in water temperature must be involved in signalling the affected species to begin their reproduction activities

Which of the following statements, if true, would most strengthen the scientist's hypothesis?

- (A) The native fish species were still able to reproduce in nearby streams, where the annual temperature range remains approximately 40 degrees.
- (B) Before the dam was built, the river annually overflowed its banks, creating temporary backwaters that were used as breeding areas for the local fish population.
- (C) The lowest temperature ever recorded in the river prior to dam construction was 30 degrees, whereas the lowest river temperature after construction was completed has been 40 degrees.
- (D) Non-native fish species, introduced after the dam was completed, have begun competing with the native species for food.
- (E) Five of the species of fish native to the dam area are not known to be native to any other river.

The conclusion says that “reduced water temperature is related to lower reproduction of the fish”.

To support the conclusion, we can prove that:

(1) Something else is not causing the lower reproduction of the fish.

(2) If the water temperature remains constant, the reproduction rate will not decrease.

Q5. Three years after the Hydraulic Falls Dam was built, none of the six-fish species native to the area was still reproducing adequately in the river below the dam. Because the dam reduced the average temperature of the water from approximately 40 degrees to approximately 10 degrees, biologists have hypothesized that sharp increases in water temperature must be involved in signalling the affected species to begin their reproduction activities

Which of the following statements, if true, would most strengthen the scientist’s hypothesis?

✓ (A) The native fish species were still able to reproduce in nearby streams, where the annual temperature range remains approximately 40 degrees. **Similar to point 2. Hold.**

✗ (B) Before the dam was built, the river annually overflowed its banks, creating temporary backwaters that were used as breeding areas for the local fish population. **Talks about breeding in the backwater, not the river.**

✗ (C) The lowest temperature ever recorded in the river prior to dam construction was 30 degrees, whereas the lowest river temperature after construction was completed has been 40 degrees.

✗ (D) Non-native fish species, introduced after the dam was completed, have begun competing with the native species for food. **Native vs Non-native is irrelevant.**

✗ (E) Five of the species of fish native to the dam area are not known to be native to any other river.

Known/Not know is irrelevant.

Strengthen

Q6. Galanin is a protein found in the brain. In an experiment, rats that consistently chose to eat fatty foods when offered a choice between lean and fatty foods were found to have significantly higher concentrations of galanin in their brains than did rats that consistently chose lean over fatty foods. These facts strongly support the conclusion that galanin causes rats to crave fatty foods.

Which one of the following, if true, most supports the argument?

- (A) The craving for fatty foods does not invariably result in rats choosing those foods over lean foods.
- (B) The brains of the rats that consistently chose to eat fatty foods did not contain significantly more fat than did the brains of rats that consistently choose clean foods.
- (C) The same chemical components are present in both fatty and lean foods.
- (D) The rats that preferred fatty foods had higher concentrations of galanin in their brains before they were offered fatty foods.
- (E) Rats that metabolize fat less efficiently than do other rats develop high concentrations of galanin in their brains.

The conclusion says that “Galanin (cause) leads to Craving/Consumption of Fatty Food (Effect)”.

To support the conclusion, we can prove that:

(1) Craving/Consumption of Fatty Food is not due to some other factor (Z).

(2) Craving/Consumption of Fatty Food does not lead to Higher Galanin in the brain.

Q6. Galanin is a protein found in the brain. In an experiment, rats that consistently chose to eat fatty foods when offered a choice between lean and fatty foods were found to have significantly higher concentrations of galanin in their brains than did rats that consistently chose lean over fatty foods. These facts strongly support the conclusion that galanin causes rats to crave fatty foods.

Which one of the following, if true, most supports the argument?

✖ The craving for fatty foods does not invariably result in rats choosing those foods over lean foods. **Not relevant.**

✖ The brains of the rats that consistently chose to eat fatty foods did not contain significantly more fat than did the brains of rats that consistently choose clean foods. **Presence of Fat in Brain is irrelevant.**

✖ The same chemical components are present in both fatty and lean foods. **Chemical component is irrelevant.**

✔ The rats that preferred fatty foods had higher concentrations of galanin in their brains before they were offered fatty foods. **Similar to the conclusion and point 2. Hold.**

✖ Rats that metabolize fat less efficiently than do other rats develop high concentrations of galanin in their brains. **Metabolism is irrelevant.**

Weaken

Q7. In Colorado subalpine meadows, nonnative dandelions co-occur with a native flower, the larkspur. Bumblebees visit both species, creating the potential for interactions between the two species with respect to pollination. In a recent study, researchers selected 16 plots containing both species; all dandelions were removed from eight plots; the remaining eight control plots were left undisturbed. The control plots yielded significantly more larkspur seeds than the dandelion-free plots, leading the researchers to conclude that the presence of dandelions facilitates pollination (and hence seed production) in the native species by attracting more pollinators to the mixed plots.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously undermines the researchers' reasoning?






- (A) Bumblebees preferentially visit dandelions over larkspurs in mixed plots.
- (B) If left unchecked, nonnative species like dandelions quickly crowd out native species.
- (C) Seed germination is a more reliable measure of a species' fitness than seed production.
- (D) Soil disturbances can result in fewer blooms, and hence lower seed production.
- (E) In mixed plots, pollinators can transfer pollen from one species to another to augment seed production.

The conclusion says that “Presence of Dandelion (cause) leads to More Pollination / Higher Seed Production (Effect)”. To weaken the conclusion, we can prove that:

- (1) Pollination/Seed production is related to some other cause.
- (2) More pollination / seed production does not attract more dandelion. (Unlikely)

Q7. In Colorado subalpine meadows, nonnative dandelions co-occur with a native flower, the larkspur. Bumblebees visit both species, creating the potential for interactions between the two species with respect to pollination. In a recent study, researchers selected 16 plots containing both species; all dandelions were removed from eight plots; the remaining eight control plots were left undisturbed. The control plots yielded significantly more larkspur seeds than the dandelion-free plots, leading the researchers to conclude that the presence of dandelions facilitates pollination (and hence seed production) in the native species by attracting more pollinators to the mixed plots.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously undermines the researchers’ reasoning?

-  (A) Bumblebees preferentially visit dandelions over larkspurs in mixed plots. **Dandelion vs Larkspur -- Irrelevant**
-  (B) If left unchecked, nonnative species like dandelions quickly crowd out native species. **Irrelevant**
-  (C) Seed germination is a more reliable measure of a species’ fitness than seed production. **Irrelevant terms**
-  (D) Soil disturbances can result in fewer blooms, and hence lower seed production. **Gives an alternative cause for the same effect. Hold.**
-  (E) In mixed plots, pollinators can transfer pollen from one species to another to augment seed production. **Irrelevant.**

Weaken

Q8. It is widely assumed that people need to engage in intellectual activities such as solving crossword puzzles or mathematics problems in order to maintain mental sharpness as they age. In fact, however, simply talking to other people – that is, participating in social interaction, which engages many mental and perceptual skills – suffices. Evidence to this effect comes from a study showing that the more social contact people report, the better their mental skills.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the force of the evidence cited?

- (A) As people grow older, they are often advised to keep exercising their physical and mental capacities in order to maintain or improve them.
- (B) Many medical conditions and treatments that adversely affect a person's mental sharpness also tend to increase that person's social isolation.
- (C) Many people are proficient both in social interactions and in solving mathematical problems.
- (D) The study did not itself collect data but analyzed data bearing on the issue from prior studies.
- (E) The tasks evaluating mental sharpness for which data were compiled by the study were more akin to mathematics problems than to conversation.

The conclusion says that “More social contact (Cause) leads to Better Mental Skills (Effect)”.

To weaken the conclusion, we can prove that:

(1) Better Mental skills is due to some other factors.

(2) Mental Skills (Cause) leads to Social Contact (Effect).

Q8. It is widely assumed that people need to engage in intellectual activities such as solving crossword puzzles or mathematics problems in order to maintain mental sharpness as they age. In fact, however, simply talking to other people – that is, participating in social interaction, which engages many mental and perceptual skills – suffices. Evidence to this effect comes from a study showing that the more social contact people report, the better their mental skills.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the force of the evidence cited?

❌) As people grow older, they are often advised to keep exercising their physical and mental capacities in order to maintain or improve them. **Not relevant**

✅) Many medical conditions and treatments that adversely affect a person's mental sharpness also tend to increase that person's social isolation. **Poor mental skills lead to Lower Social Contact. Similar to (2). Hold.**

Irrelevant ❌) Many people are proficient both in social interactions and in solving mathematical problems.

Irrelevant ❌) The study did not itself collect data but analyzed data bearing on the issue from prior studies.

Irrelevant ❌) The tasks evaluating mental sharpness for which data were compiled by the study were more akin to mathematics problems than to conversation.

Practice

Strengthen

Q9. Near Chicago, a newly built hydroponic spinach “factory,” a completely controlled environment for growing spinach, produces on 1 acre of floor space what it takes 100 acres of fields to produce. Expenses, especially for electricity, are high, however, and the spinach produced costs about four times as much as washed California field spinach, the spinach commonly sold throughout the United States.

Which of the following, if true, best supports a projection that the spinach-growing facility near Chicago will be profitable?

- (A) Once the operators of the facility are experienced, they will be able to cut operating expenses by about 25 percent.
- (B) There is virtually no scope for any further reduction in the cost per pound for California field spinach.
- (C) Unlike washed field spinach, the hydroponically grown spinach is untainted by any pesticides or herbicides and thus will sell at exceptionally high prices to such customers as health food restaurants.
- (D) Since spinach is a crop that ships relatively well, the market for the hydroponically grown spinach is no more limited to the Chicago area than the market for California field spinach is to California.
- (E) A second hydroponic facility is being built in Canada, taking advantage of inexpensive electricity and high vegetable prices.

Strengthen

Q9. Near Chicago, a newly built hydroponic spinach “factory,” a completely controlled environment for growing spinach, produces on 1 acre of floor space what it takes 100 acres of fields to produce. Expenses, especially for electricity, are high, however, and the spinach produced costs about four times as much as washed California field spinach, the spinach commonly sold throughout the United States.

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- (✗) A second hydroponic facility is being built in Canada, taking advantage of inexpensive electricity and high vegetable prices.

Strengthen

Q10. Pro-Tect Insurance Company has recently been paying out more on car-theft claims than it expected. Cars with special antitheft devices or alarm systems are much less likely to be stolen than are other cars. Consequently, Pro-Tect, as part of an effort to reduce its annual pay-outs, will offer a discount to holders of car-theft policies if their cars have antitheft devices or alarm systems.

Which of the following, if true, provides the strongest indication that the plan is likely to achieve its goal?

- (A) The decrease in the risk of car theft conferred by having a car alarm is greatest when only a few cars have such alarms.
- (B) The number of policyholders who have filed a claim in the past year is higher for Pro-Tect than for other insurance companies.
- (C) In one or two years, the discount that Pro-Tect is offering will amount to more than the cost of buying certain highly effective antitheft devices.
- (D) Currently, Pro-Tect cannot legally raise the premiums it charges for a given amount of insurance against car theft.
- (E) The amount Pro-Tect has been paying out on car theft claims has been greater for some models of car than for others.

Strengthen

Q10. Pro-Tect Insurance Company has recently been paying out more on car-theft claims than it expected. Cars with special antitheft devices or alarm systems are much less likely to be stolen than are other cars. Consequently, Pro-Tect, as part of an effort to reduce its annual pay-outs, will offer a discount to holders of car-theft policies if their cars have antitheft devices or alarm systems.

Which of the following, if true, provides the strongest indication that the plan is likely to achieve its goal?

☒ The decrease in the risk of car theft conferred by having a car alarm is greatest when only a few cars have such alarms.

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☒ Currently, Pro-Tect cannot legally raise the premiums it charges for a given amount of insurance against car theft.

☒ The amount Pro-Tect has been paying out on car theft claims has been greater for some models of car than for others.

Strengthen

Q11. A recent spate of launching and operating mishaps with television satellites led to a corresponding surge in claims against companies underwriting satellite insurance. As a result, insurance premiums shot up, making satellites more expensive to launch and operate. This, in turn, had added to the pressure to squeeze more performance out of currently operating satellites.

Which of the following, if true, taken together with the information above, best supports the conclusion that the cost of television satellites will continue to increase?

- (A) Since the risk to insurers of satellites is spread over relatively few units, insurance premiums are necessarily very high.
- (B) When satellites reach orbit and then fail, the causes of failure are generally impossible to pinpoint with confidence.
- (C) The greater the performance demands placed on satellites, the more frequently those satellites break down.
- (D) Most satellites are produced in such small numbers that no economies of scale can be realized.
- (E) Since many satellites are built by unwieldy international consortia, inefficiencies are inevitable.

Recent Accidents → Increase in insurance claims → Increase in Insurance Premium → Increase in launching/operating cost of satellites → More pressure on existing satellites

PROVE: More pressure will lead to Higher Cost

Assumption: More Pressure → More Accidents → cycle continues

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Strengthen

Q12. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it was believed in many coastal American cities that the waterfront was an undesirable location for residential buildings. As a result, much of the waterfront in these cities was never developed aesthetically and instead was left to industry and commerce. Today, however, waterfront properties are generally seen as prestigious, as evidenced by the large sums paid for homes along the beach front. A developer who wishes to make a large profit would be wise to buy urban waterfront lots and erect residential buildings on them.


Which of the following, if true, most supports the claim made about urban waterfront properties?

- (A) People today have more money, relatively speaking, to spend on real estate than they did in previous centuries.
- (B) Homeowners will be willing to spend large sums on residential properties in traditionally industrial or commercial districts.
- (C) Many urban waterfront lots are available for purchase.
- (D) Many coastal American cities are encouraging developers to rehabilitate the waterfront through tax incentives.
- (E) Properties in interior residential districts in coastal American cities are significantly more expensive than those along the waterfront.

Developer who makes a Waterfront Property will earn a large profit.
Assumption: Customers are willing to pay large amounts to buy waterfront properties.

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Which of the following, if true, most supports the claim made about urban waterfront properties?

- (A) People today have more money, relatively speaking, to spend on real estate than they did in previous centuries.
-  (B) Homeowners will be willing to spend large sums on residential properties in traditionally industrial or commercial districts.
- (C) Many urban waterfront lots are available for purchase.
- (D) Many coastal American cities are encouraging developers to rehabilitate the waterfront through tax incentives.
- (E) Properties in interior residential districts in coastal American cities are significantly more expensive than those along the waterfront.

Strengthen

Q13. In response to viral infection, the immune systems of mice typically produce antibodies that destroy the virus by binding to proteins on its surface. Mice infected with a herpesvirus generally develop keratitis, a degenerative disease affecting part of the eye. Since proteins on the surface of cells in this part of the eye closely resemble those on the herpesvirus surface, scientists hypothesize that these cases of keratitis are caused by antibodies to herpesvirus.

Which of the following, if true, gives the greatest additional support to the scientists' hypothesis?

- (A) Other types of virus have surface proteins that closely resemble proteins found in various organs of mice.
- (B) There are mice that are unable to form antibodies in response to herpes infections, and these mice contract herpes at roughly the same rate as other mice.
- (C) Mice that are infected with a herpesvirus but do not develop keratitis produce as many antibodies as infected mice that do develop keratitis.
- (D) There are mice that are unable to form antibodies in response to herpes infections, and these mice survive these infections without ever developing keratitis.
- (E) Mice that have never been infected with a herpesvirus can sometimes develop keratitis.

Antibody to Herpesvirus (Cause) → Keratitis (Effect)
Hence, (1) There is no other cause of Keratitis, and
(2) In the absence of the antibody to Herpesvirus, the mice do not develop Keratitis.

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Weaken

Q14. A political party considered by many citizens extreme and incompetent is working hard at overcoming what it perceives as an unfair and prejudiced public image. The group believes it is stereotyped simply because it opposes any pre-emptive military action, which is unpopular, and calls for a 50% reduction in carbon emissions, a cut far more severe than most citizens want.

Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the party's belief about the source of its poor public image?

- (A) The current ruling political party, whose popularity is at near record levels, launched a pre-emptive military strike against a neighbouring country three weeks ago.
- (B) A neighbouring country recently suffered a surprise attack that devastated its country and polluted its environment.
- (C) A popular rival party bans unilateral attacks to defend the homeland and unconditionally supports a 60% reduction in carbon emissions.
- (D) A recent poll showed that a party whose most prominent candidate supports pre-emptive war and minimal carbon restrictions is quite popular.
- (E) Twenty years ago, a pacifist party successfully and popularly ruled the country.

Anti military action + Call for 50% reduction in Carbon Emission (CAUSE) → Less Popular (Effect)
Weaken the Cause – Effect relation.

There must be some other cause for the lack of popularity.

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Weaken

Q15. A large pharmaceutical company has recently developed an antibiotic that has been shown to be highly effective at treating a variety of infections. The drug is obtained from the scales of the rare tutu fish, which is only found in the wild reefs off Santo Island in the South Pacific. Since it takes the scales from 1000 fish to make a single kilogram of the antibiotic, it follows that continued production of the drug will lead to the extinction of the tutu fish.

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

- (A) The antibiotic made from the tutu fish's scales is only available by prescription.
- (B) Because tutu fish are rare, they are also expensive.
- (C) The inhabitants of Santo Island regard the meat of the tutu fish as a delicacy.
- (D) Tutu fish breed well in captivity, and can be cultivated on fish farms.
- (E) Santo Island is difficult to reach since it does not have an airstrip.

The production of the antibiotic will lead to extinction of the Tutu fish.

Weaken: There is a way to ensure proper growth of the Tutu Fish so that it does not become extinct.

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Weaken

Q16. Political Advertisement: Mayor Delmont's critics complain about the jobs that were lost in the city under Delmont's leadership. Yet the fact is that not only were more jobs created than were eliminated, but each year since Delmont took office the average pay for the new jobs created has been higher than that year's average pay for jobs citywide. So it stands to reason that throughout Delmont's tenure the average paycheck in this city has been getting steadily bigger.

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

- (A) The unemployment rate in the city is higher today than it was when Mayor Delmont took office.
- (B) The average pay for jobs in the city was at a ten-year low when Mayor Delmont took office.
- (C) Each year during Mayor Delmont's tenure, the average pay for jobs that were eliminated has been higher than the average pay for jobs citywide.
- (D) Most of the jobs eliminated during Mayor Delmont's tenure were in declining industries.
- (E) The average pay for jobs in the city is currently lower than it is for jobs in the suburbs surrounding the city.

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Weaken

Q17. An eyeglass manufacturer tried to boost sales for the summer quarter by offering its distributors a special discount if their orders for that quarter exceeded those for last year's summer quarter by at least 20 percent. Many distributors qualified for this discount. Even with much merchandise discounted, sales increased enough to produce a healthy gain in net profits. The manufacturer plans to repeat this success by offering the same sort of discount for the fall quarter.


Which of the following, if true, most clearly points to a flaw in the manufacturer's plan to repeat the successful performance of the summer quarter?

- (A) In general, a distributor's orders for the summer quarter are no higher than those for the spring quarter.
- (B) Along with offering special discounts to qualifying distributors, the manufacturer increased newspaper and radio advertising in those distributors' sales areas.
- (C) The distributors most likely to qualify for the manufacturer's special discount are those whose orders were unusually low a year earlier.
- (D) The distributors who qualified for the manufacturer's special discount were free to decide how much of that discount to pass on to their own customers.
- (E) The distributors ordering more goods in the summer quarter left them overstocked for the fall quarter.

**The manufacturer wants to repeat its success with sales by repeating the discount.
Weaken: Distributors will not necessarily buy more again because of a fresh discount.**

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Weaken

Q18. A proposed ordinance requires the installation in new homes of sprinklers automatically triggered by the presence of a fire. However, a home builder argued that because more than 90 percent of residential fires are extinguished by a household member, residential sprinklers would only marginally decrease property damage caused by residential fires.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the home builder's argument?

- (A) Most individuals have no formal training in how to extinguish fires.
- (B) Since new homes are only a tiny percentage of available housing in the city, the new ordinance would be extremely narrow in scope.
- (C) The installation of smoke detectors in new residences costs significantly less than the installation of sprinklers.
- (D) In the city where the ordinance was proposed, the average time required by the fire department to respond to a fire was less than the national average.
- (E) The largest proportion of property damage that results from residential fires is caused by fires that start when no household member is Present.

90% of the residential fires are extinguished by a household member. Hence, there is no need to have automatic sprinkler.

WEAKEN: The loss happens more when a household member cannot extinguish the fire.

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FLAWED REASONING

The question stem almost always contains a form of the word “flaw” or “fallacy”.

The correct answer will be related to an assumption, but the correction should indicate why it is flawed.

Unlike “Weaken the Conclusion” questions, which present a new piece of information, “Flawed Reasoning” questions attack the logic applied in the Argument.

Weaken the Conclusion questions may contain the word “flaw”.

However, weaken questions contain the expression “if true”. Flaw questions will *not* contain this language.

The most common Trap Options involves:

- ☐ Discussing alternatives when we were asked to comment on the given plan
- ☐ Brings up a detail or distinction that does not affect the conclusion i.e. IRRELEVANT

Flawed Reasoning

Q19. Consumer health advocate: Your candy company adds caffeine to your chocolate candy bars so that each one delivers a specified amount of caffeine. Since caffeine is highly addictive, this indicates that you intend to keep your customers addicted.

Candy manufacturer: Our manufacturing process results in there being less caffeine in each chocolate candy bar than in the unprocessed cacao beans from which the chocolate is made.

The candy manufacturer's response is flawed as a refutation of the consumer health advocate's argument because it

- (A) fails to address the issue of whether the level of caffeine in the candy bars sold by the manufacturer is enough to keep people addicted
- (B) assumes without warrant that all unprocessed cacao beans contain a uniform amount of caffeine
- (C) does not specify exactly how caffeine is lost in the manufacturing process
- (D) treats the consumer health advocate's argument as though it were about each candy bar rather than about the manufacturer's candy in general
- (E) merely contradicts the consumer health advocate's conclusion without giving any reason to believe that the advocate's reasoning is unsound

READ: Identify the logical error in the response to the blame.

IDENTIFY: *Adding Caffeine to keep people addicted; Response – Final candy bar has less caffeine than unprocessed cacao.*

PREDICT: It is possible that without the added content, the candy would have even lower caffeine content, which wouldn't have been addictive. However, the manufacturer doesn't answer that. He substitutes an entirely different subject, the amount of caffeine in cacao beans. The manufacturer's response is a diversion, not an answer.

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The candy manufacturer's response is flawed as a refutation of the consumer health advocate's argument as it:

✓ (A) fails to address the issue of whether the level of caffeine in the candy bars sold by the manufacturer is enough to keep people addicted **Seems like our formulated answer. Put it on hold.**

✗ (B) assumes without warrant that all unprocessed cacao beans contain a uniform amount of caffeine **Uniformity is not a topic here. Irrelevant.**

✗ (C) does not specify exactly how caffeine is lost in the manufacturing process

How caffeine is lost is not relevant.

✗ (D) treats the consumer health advocate's argument as though it were about each candy bar rather than about the manufacturer's candy in general. **He refers to candy bars in general.**

✗ (E) merely contradicts the consumer health advocate's conclusion without giving any reason to believe that the advocate's reasoning is unsound **He doesn't contradict it. He avoids the advocate's argument.**

Flawed Reasoning

Q20. From the perspective of long-term survival, it was best for peasants in Czarist Russia to be weak. If they were strong, they would have been enlisted into the Czar's army against their will. Soldiers' lives were not highly valued by their commanders, and the bitter conditions and violent wars they endured led to a much shorter life span.

What is the logical flaw presented in the argument?

(A) It assumes, without justification, that the only factor helping weak peasants survive longer was the fact that they were not enlisted into the army.

(B) It overlooks the possibility that there were peasants of intermediate strength who enjoyed survival benefits greater than those of either the strong or the weak.

(C) It assumes, without justification, that all strong peasants and all weak peasants of the time faced the same prospects in life.

(D) It overlooks the possibility that strong peasants were often targeted and killed by the local aristocracy for fear that they might lead a peasant uprising.


(E) The argument takes for granted that smart peasants knew how to make themselves appear weak when the army recruiters came through town.

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Thank you