

**Critical Reasoning**



**GRE  
REFRESHER**

# Critical Reasoning

Recently NGOs have become far more effective at persuading industrial corporations to change. For example, as a result of the efforts of animal groups, many biotechnology companies have reduced their use of laboratory animals, substituting in their place alternative methods of product testing.

**Which of the following, if true, casts the most serious doubt on the connection between pressure group activity and corporate change claimed above?**

- A. Many companies in the research industry have increased their public relations spending in order to counter the activity of animal rights groups.
- B. Before the new methods of testing products are used, they have to be calibrated by comparison tests involving experiments on laboratory animals.
- C. When companies stop using laboratory animals, they generally go to some expense to publicize this change of policy.
- D. The biotechnology companies who still use laboratory animals are mostly the smaller firms that have been less subject to pressure group activity.
- E. The methods of product testing that do not involve laboratory animals are faster and cheaper than the methods that do.



# Critical Reasoning

A Critical Reasoning question is based on a short passage that contains a premise and a conclusion.

## Premise

A premise is a stated fact, evidence or claim that is used to support a conclusion

## Conclusion

A conclusion is a deduction, a judgment that is made based on the premises.

# Critical Reasoning

## Example:

Average hours of television viewing per child have rapidly increased for more than three decades. To fight the rise in obesity, the children must limit their hours of television viewing.

### Premise

Average hours of television viewing per child have rapidly increased for more than three decades.

### Conclusion

The children must limit their hours of television viewing to control obesity.



# Critical Reasoning

Inference

Assumption

Discrepancy

Strengthen

Weaken

# Critical Reasoning

## Inspirus “*RIPE*” Strategy for CR Questions:

- **R**ead the argument and simplify it in your own words.
- **I**dentify the key components of the argument; premise, counter-premise, and conclusion.
- **P**redict an answer based on the type of the question type.
- **E**liminate the options that are irrelevant or do not match with the predicted answer.

# Critical Reasoning

## Draw the Inference / Conclusion

Inferences are logical deductions that are based on premises. These questions want you to understand an author's intended meaning in parts of a passage where the meaning is only suggested.

### Example:

Scientists claim that the causes of all diseases can be traced back to unique genes. Once the gene corresponding to a particular disease is identified, it can be screened and eliminated before childbirth.

?  
Inference

It is possible to eliminate all diseases.



# Critical Reasoning

1. In a chocolate factory, chocolates are packed 100 to a box. For checking for purity, the sampling machine picks out one chocolate from the box at random and then checks it. The box is rejected if the chocolate picked out is impure or if the result of the check fails to conclude whether the chocolate is pure or not.

**Which of the following conclusion can be logically drawn from the passage above?**

- A. All chocolates, in a box which passes the check, are pure.
- B. In most cases, whenever the test is inconclusive, chocolates are impure.
- C. At times, due to some systemic error, a pure chocolate might be identified as impure.
- D. Boxes with 80-90 impure chocolates may not always get rejected.
- E. This process is causing huge losses to the company as it results in large number of rejected boxes.





# Critical Reasoning

2. Studies have shown that a large percentage of car accidents are caused by aggressive driving. To help reduce the number of accidents and to promote traffic safety in general, insurance companies have begun to issue discounts to drivers who take defensive driving courses. Research shows that people who practice defensive driving are considerably less likely to get into a car accident. Therefore, the insurance company's plan should help reduce the number of accidents.

**Assuming the statements above are true, which of the following can be inferred from them?**

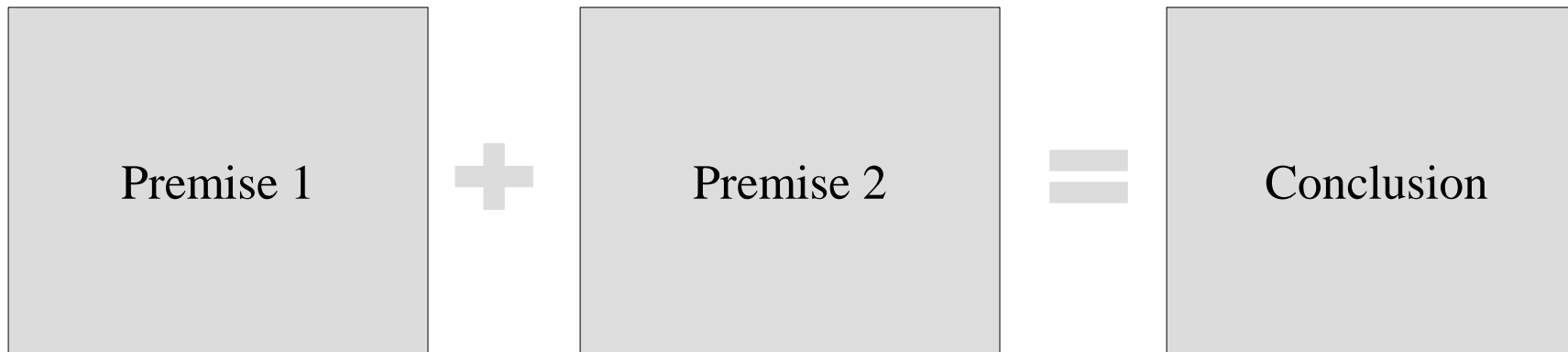
- A. The majority of accidents are caused by drivers who possess insurance.
- B. People who manage to consistently avoid car accidents are likely practicing defensive driving.
- C. Young males and other demographics known for disproportionately being involved in car accidents are less likely to practice defensive driving than other demographics.
- D. An individual who does not practice defensive driving is always more likely to get into a car accident than an individual who does practice defensive driving.
- E. Discounts are the most effective way for insurance companies to promote defensive driving.



# Critical Reasoning

## Assumption

An assumption is an unstated premise necessary to reach the conclusion.



# Critical Reasoning

Fills the gap/provide the missing piece of evidence

Average hours of television viewing per child have rapidly increased for more than three decades. To fight the rise in obesity, the children must limit their hours of television viewing.

Premise	Assumption	Conclusion
Average hours of television viewing per child have rapidly increased for more than three decades.	Television viewing causes obesity.	The children must limit their hours of television viewing to control obesity.

# Critical Reasoning

3. Recently, the research and development departments of major pharmaceutical organizations have been experimenting with new injections that provide the boost in iron that anemic children need to reverse their condition. These companies have expressed confidence that children who are suffering from anemia will be cured relatively simply through the use of such biochemical supplements.

**In concluding that the biochemical remedy being developed will have its desired effect, the pharmaceutical companies assume that:**

- A. major pharmaceutical companies have the responsibility to cure childhood anemia
- B. a low iron level in the body is the major factor influencing the incidence of anemia in children
- C. a diet rich in iron cannot improve the conditions of children suffering from anemia to the point that biochemical supplements would become necessary
- D. children afflicted with anemia will find out about and submit to injections that can reverse their conditions
- E. the use of biochemical supplements is the safest way to cure anemia in children



# Critical Reasoning

## Assumption

Protects the argument by eliminating ideas that could weaken the argument.

A recent study shows that many people who have left drama schools before graduating suffer from depression. Clearly, depression is likely to cause withdrawal from drama school.

### Weaken

The fear of withdrawal caused depression.

### Assumption

The fear of withdrawal did not cause depression.



# Critical Reasoning

4. Statistics released by the National Institute of Health show that cancer patients, on average, are living almost six months longer after the initial diagnosis of their condition than were patients just two years ago. Moreover, these findings conform to a trend that goes back well over a decade. Clearly, the medical community is making significant progress in extending the lives of cancer patients.

**The above argument depends on which of the following as an assumption?**

- A. Cancer is not being diagnosed in progressively earlier stages.
- B. The trend is more pronounced in some kinds of cancer than in others.
- C. Fewer people are diagnosed with cancer each year.
- D. The number of patients whose cancer goes into full remission is also rising.
- E. Cancer is no longer the leading cause of death among people over 60 years of age.



# Critical Reasoning

## Explain or Resolve

5. It is usually believed that smoking increases the risk of lung cancer. However a recent study at the Dintin University showed results quite contrary to expectations. Amongst the respondents, all of whom were from senior citizen clinics in the city, 80% of those suffering from lung cancer were found to be non-smokers.

**Which of the following, if true, best explains the apparent contradiction described above?**

- A. Dintin University receives many grants from cigarette companies.
- B. Most smokers who contract lung cancer at a young age die.
- C. The government recently reduced aid for lung cancer research.
- D. More smokers were observed to suffer from asthma than non-smokers.
- E. Many senior citizens do not go to senior citizen clinics.



# Critical Reasoning

6. According to critics, Country X's government has failed to take adequate steps to curb poverty. The government claims that poverty (people below poverty line) has reduced by ten percent over the last twenty years. However, a recent survey showed that the number of people below poverty line (as defined by the government) today is the same as it was twenty years ago.

**Which of the following best explains the discrepancy outlined above?**

- A. The same poor people are unable to access assistance through schemes for poverty alleviation over the last twenty years.
- B. Along with improvement in the economy, the standards of living of the poor people in Country X have also improved over the last twenty years.
- C. Country X's total population has grown over the last twenty years but the number of people below poverty line has remained unchanged.
- D. Country X's Gross Domestic Product has grown by 10% but the number of poor people has remained unchanged.
- E. A number of schemes introduced by Country X's government to eliminate poverty over the past few years have failed, but a few have worked well.





# Critical Reasoning

## Weaken the Conclusion

7. Employees of companies that offer corporate fitness programs consistently take fewer sick-days than do employees of companies that do not offer fitness programs. Thus, corporate fitness programs are shown to have a positive effect on the health of a company's workforce.

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

- A. Other benefits offered by companies that do not offer corporate fitness programs surpass the benefits offered by companies that do offer such programs.
- B. Companies that offer corporate fitness programs attract employees who are more health conscious than the employees of companies that do not offer such programs.
- C. The health benefits of a corporate fitness program depend upon the particular makeup of the program.
- D. Employees who participate in corporate fitness programs are not measurably less healthy than people who exercise on their own.
- E. People who participate in fitness programs not offered by their employees are generally healthier than people who participate in corporate fitness programs.



# Critical Reasoning

8. Research shows that, contrary to popular opinion, most people who have pets are less happy than most people who do not. Therefore, any person who wants to be as happy as possible would do well to consider not having a pet.

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

- A. Some people who have pets are happier than most people who do not.
- B. Most people who have no pets occasionally wish that they had pets.
- C. Most people who have pets are reasonably happy.
- D. Most people who have pets feel that they are happier than they would have been without them.
- E. All people who have no pets admit to feeling unhappy sometimes.



# Critical Reasoning

9. A survey has shown that people with high credit card debt suffer from ill health. The report claims that having a higher credit card debt might be causing stress leading to illness.

**Which of the following most weakens the argument made above?**

- A. Debit card holders have been shown to have as many health problems as credit card holders.
- B. People with ill health are unlikely to use their credit cards since they are usually recovering at home or in a hospital.
- C. Credit cards have been known to spur people to spend on things they otherwise would have deemed unnecessary.
- D. People who are ill tend to run up high credit card bills to pay for their treatment.
- E. Credit card companies usually charge a very high rate of interest on outstanding payments.



# Critical Reasoning

## Strengthen the Conclusion

10. Some animals, such as dolphins, dogs, and African grey parrots, seem to exhibit cognitive functions typically associated with higher-order primates such as chimpanzees, gorillas, and humans. Some parrots, for example, have vocabularies of hundreds of words that they can string together in a comprehensible syntax. This clearly shows that humans and primates are not the only animals capable of using language to communicate. One parrot, named Alex, has been known to ask to be petted or kissed and will exhibit aggression if the gesture offered is not the specific one requested.

**Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the conclusion above?**

- A. Dolphins can be trained to assist divers in ocean rescues.
- B. Gorillas in captivity often learn hand signals for food and water.
- C. Dogs are capable of sensing their owners' moods and often exhibit concern if they sense sadness.
- D. Chimpanzees can memorize long sequences of key punches on machines that dispense food.
- E. Alex does not exhibit aggression when offered a gesture that he specifically requested.



# Critical Reasoning

## Boldface Questions

11. Marketing Manager: Traditionally, **introducing a new consumer product contributes to the diversity of a company's product mix and results in an overall increase in sales and profits.** However, our launch of a new brand of ice –cream, Eat Right Away, planned for the end of this fiscal year, will almost certainly reduce rather than increase the company's profits. Since we already offer a line of ice-creams that are very similar to Eat Right Away, the launch of the new ice-cream is likely to cannibalize our current sales rather than attract new customers. Additionally, **since the costs of producing Eat Right Away are higher than those of the other ice – creams, a large part of our current sales will be replaced with lower-margin revenues.**

**In the Marketing Manager's argument, which of the following statements best describes the role played by each highlighted portion?**

- A. The first is a pattern of cause and effect that the marketing analyst predicts will be repeated in the case at issue; the second acknowledges a circumstance in which that pattern would not hold.
- B. The first is a generalization that the marketing analyst accepts as true; the second is a consequence that follows from that generalization.
- C. The first acknowledges a consideration against the main conclusion of the marketing analyst; the second is that conclusion.
- D. The first is a pattern of cause and effect that the marketing analyst predicts will not hold in the case at issue; the second offers a consideration in support of that prediction.
- E. The first is evidence that the marketing analyst provides in support of a certain prediction; the second is that prediction.



# Critical Reasoning

12. Goldwind recently invested in a series of large windmills which are able to produce renewable energy with minimal negative effect to the environment. The company has not drilled oil wells in the same area, even though **greater revenues and profits could be generated from oil wells**. Because any drilling would disrupt the native habitat of certain marine species in the area, some environmentalists assert that, by foregoing this drilling, **Goldwind has established that it places environmental impact over financial returns**. However, Goldwind may be acting in a manner consistent with its financial goals. Recent patterns of increasing annual hurricane activity have some experts questioning the long-term viability and profitability of oil wells in the area. **The two highlighted portions play which of the following roles?**
- A. The first supports the conclusion of the argument; the second calls that conclusion into question.
  - B. The first states the conclusion of the argument; the second supports that conclusion.
  - C. The first supports the environmentalists' conclusion; the second states that conclusion.
  - D. The first states the environmentalists' conclusion; the second provides a consideration in support of that conclusion.
  - E. The first supports the conclusion of the argument; the second also supports the conclusion of the argument.





*Thank you*