"Reason is the life of the law." —Sir Edward Coke

LSAT Logical Reasoning

Your LSAT exam will contain two scored Logical Reasoning sections of approximately 25 questions per section. (If there are three Logical Reasoning sections on your LSAT, one of them will be the experimental section.) Because there are four scored LSAT sections, half of your score depends on your doing well on these questions.

Each logical reasoning question is based on an argument. There is usually one question per argument; however, there will also be two or three sets of double questions on each Logical Reasoning section, with two questions based on one argument. Double questions will be discussed later in this chapter. The basics of the structure of arguments are covered in Chapter 3, "Introduction to LSAT Logic."

EXAM✓PREP
StudyTIP

Maximize your LSAT score by managing your time. Don't be stubborn! If you cannot answer a question after one or two minutes, skip it and move on to the next question. Remember to always do the "easy stuff" first—that is, skip the questions that are most difficult for you and answer as many questions as you can in the time allowed.

You'll need to work quickly because you are allowed an average time of just under one and one half minutes per question, if you attempt all of the questions. Keep in mind that there are some "time traps" set by the test writers that you would do best to avoid unless you are a legitimate contender for a top LSAT score. For example, some questions can be dealt with in less than a minute, while others are designed to eat up two or three minutes of your precious time, and might take even longer if they are especially difficult or if you are stressed. Most LSAT takers should **not** attempt all the questions on any given Logical Reasoning section. Remember that you will be on pace for a score of 160, which will usually put you in the top 20% of scores, if you can get 75% of the questions correct.

As with all LSAT preparation, you should disregard the time limits and the order in which the questions are presented as you begin your practice. You should save some time within the last few weeks before your actual exam for timed practice on complete sections and for some "dress rehearsal" practice testing.

Anatomy of a Logical Reasoning Question

Each of the approximately 50 Logical Reasoning questions that you will face on test day is in basically the same format. There is a stimulus paragraph followed by a question stem and five answer choices.

Consider the following example:

Stimulus Argument

1. Industry representative: Thorough research of the results of all relevant clinical trials done to date reveal that there is no reason to believe that the artificial flavoring used in most brands of beef jerky contributes to hardening of the arteries when occasionally consumed in reasonable amounts. Therefore, those who enjoy beef jerky can consume it without any concern for their health.

Question Stem

Which one of the following points to a weakness in the reasoning in the industry representative's argument?

Answer Choices

(A) The research done was merely a review of experimental results and did not involve direct observation of the study participants.

(B) Having healthy arteries is not precisely the same as being generally healthy overall.

(C) Those who eat beef jerky might also consume other convenience foods that contribute to unhealthy arteries.

(D) Other meat snacks might contain substances that impact the health of human arteries.

(E) Consumption of mass quantities of beef jerky could be a symptom of a tendency to overeat generally, which can, itself, contribute to arterial health problems.

Plan of Attack for a Logical Reasoning Section

In order to use your time and energy most wisely, you should be familiar with the various question types that the LSAT employs on the Logical Reasoning sections. Through practice testing, you will find that some types are naturally easier for you and some will take practice to master. Ideally, you will have plenty of time to prepare, and you will become proficient with all the question types. However, the reality for most LSAT takers is that some question types simply consume more time than they are worth, or are simply too difficult to consistently tackle.

EXAM✓**PREP**
Study**TIP**

Practice sufficiently to identify the question types that give you the most trouble. Skip those questions on your first pass through the section.

So, the plan of attack for test day is to make a first pass through the section and try to deal with about half of the questions quickly, marking the ones that you skip so that you can come back to them later. Then, make a second pass and do the easiest half of the remaining questions. The truth is that many of our students report that most, but not all, of the easiest questions are in the first half of each Logical Reasoning section.

However, you are not a statistic. You are an individual with specific personal strengths and weaknesses. And, you'll be taking the test on a specific day of your life when some things might not "click" for you right away. So, be flexible in your approach and simply skip any question that gives you trouble. You can always come back to it later if you manage your time effectively.

> **NOTE**
>
> Remember that you can only work on one section at a time. You may not review sections on which time has already been called, nor can you move ahead to the next section.

If you are like most LSAT takers, you will decide that certain question types are simply not worth attacking at all. Hopefully, these will be types that do not appear very frequently on the test. Remember that if you skip a question completely—that is, you're making a random guess—you should still fill in an answer on your answer sheet.

As stated in Chapter 2, "LSAT Testing Strategies," you should mark your answers in the test booklet and only transfer them to the answer sheet in groups when you need a pause in the action to catch your breath and get refocused to attack more questions.

Plan of Attack for Logical Reasoning Questions

Now you know how to deal with the Logical Reasoning sections as a whole. Here are the steps to go through for each of the Logical Reasoning questions within each section that you decide to attack:

1. Read the question stem first to determine what type of question you are dealing with.

2. Then, make a decision to attack it now or skip it and come back to it later.

3. Once you determine that it makes sense to attack a given question, you need to make sure that you understand the question. Paraphrase it if necessary. When you paraphrase, picture a high school or middle school student who you might know, and think of breaking the question down for him or her to understand.

4. Once you are certain that you know what is being asked, read the stimulus argument, identifying the evidence presented and the conclusion, if one is stated.

5. Look for any missing evidence. Remember that assumptions are unstated evidence (also known as *suppressed premises*).

6. Next, if you can, predict an answer to the question posed, and scan the available choices to see if it is there. If you find an answer choice that matches your prediction, mark it, and move on to attack another question. The probability that you successfully predicted one of the incorrect choices (known as *distractors*) is fairly remote.

7. If you cannot predict an answer, or your prediction is not there, you must fall back on the tried-and-true method known as the *process of elimination*.

Yes, it will take tons of practice to be able to accomplish all these steps within a minute or two for each question. Remember that speed is the last piece of the LSAT puzzle to fall into place. You will naturally get faster with repeated exposure to the various question types.

A Note on the Process of Elimination

When you find that you must eliminate incorrect choices, remember that most of the incorrect answer choices on most of the questions on any LSAT are incorrect because they are irrelevant. If you eliminate all the irrelevant choices, there won't be many choices remaining. If you still have more than one choice remaining, remember that you are asked to choose the *best* answer and not waste time looking for the perfect choice that isn't there.

Logical Reasoning Question Types

A careful analysis of past, released LSAT exams reveal that there is a limited number of types of questions that appear on the Logical Reasoning sections. We've listed them below, along with specific strategies for each one. If you haven't done so yet, review Chapter 3 before going any further in this chapter. In our following discussion, we assume that you are familiar with the terminology and concepts found in Chapter 3.

EXAM/PREP
Study**TIP**

Refer to Appendix B, "Categorization of LSAT Question Types," for a list of each Logical Reasoning question and where each question occurs within our practice tests. Focus on those question types that you find most difficult and carefully read the explanations for those questions that you answered incorrectly.

The Logical Reasoning question types found on the LSAT are

Assumption

Weaken/Strengthen

Conclusion

Method of Argument

Principle

Point of Contention

Role of Fact

Flaw

Paradox

Parallel Structure

Question Type: Assumption

Assumption questions ask you to identify the missing link in the logic of the stimulus argument.

Some example question stems are

1. Which one of the following, **if assumed**, allows the argument's conclusion to be properly drawn?

2. Which one of the following is an **assumption** on which the argument depends?

3. The final conclusion above follows logically if which one of the following is **assumed**?

4. The claim made by the official in the argument above depends on the **presupposition** that

5. Which one of the following is an **assumption** on which the argument relies?

> **NOTE**
>
> "Presupposition" is simply another word that the LSAT uses for assumption.

Strategies

The most time-efficient way to answer assumption questions is to recognize the missing link in the argument as you read the stimulus. Sometimes, the wording of the argument and the answer choices can be confusing. So, you might want to employ the technique of **negating** the answer choices that you want to test. Negation is fully explained in Chapter 3, "Introduction to LSAT Logic."

EXAM✓**PREP**
Study**TIP**

Use the process of negating answer choices to eliminate those that are irrelevant or unnecessary to the argument.

Because an assumption is an unstated piece of evidence, this technique "knocks out" each answer choice that you test, one by one. When you test the correct answer, you are knocking out a piece of evidence, and the argument should suffer accordingly.

In tutoring sessions, we often use the analogy of testing to see if a wall within a house or an office is important to the structure by knocking the wall down to see if the roof falls in. If the roof falls in, we have shown that the wall was important. If there is no effect on the structure, the wall was not a load-bearing wall. In other words, the wall was irrelevant to the strength of the structure.

Sample Assumption Question

Consider the following example:

1. The birth rate in Country X is down this year by 12% compared to last year. The death rate in Country X has remained stable for several years. Therefore, the population of Country X is decreasing measurably.

    Which of the following is assumed by the author of the argument above?

    (A) The causes of the declining birthrate in Country X can be discovered through physician surveys.

    (B) Statisticians are able to predict future changes in the size of the population of Country X.

    (C) Country Y, which has a nearly identical population to Country X, is experiencing the same population shift as Country X.

    (D) There was no significant migration into Country X during the time under discussion.

    (E) The causes of the declining birthrate in Country X are primarily economic in nature.

The best answer is D. You might be able to answer the question directly by simply recognizing the missing piece of evidence and selecting it. However, if you aren't able to do so, you can still determine the correct answer by negating whichever answer choices you view as potentially correct. It is not likely that you will have time to carefully negate each choice presented. So, you will need to "filter out" choices that you find clearly irrelevant.

Let's say that you could easily recognize that answer choice C is irrelevant since it discusses Country Y and, therefore, it can't possibly be the missing link between the stated evidence and the stated conclusion, which both involve Country X. Likewise, let's say that you could eliminate answer choice B, which is about predicting the future, whereas the stimulus argument is about the recent past.

That leaves answer choices A, D, and E still in contention. Try to negate answer choice A. You should come up with something like: "The causes of the declining birthrate in Country X *cannot* be discovered through physician surveys." Since physicians play no part in the stimulus argument, you should recognize that neither the original phrasing of answer choice A, nor its negation, has any bearing on the relationship between the evidence and the conclusion stated in the argument. Similarly, negating E with "The causes of the declining birthrate in Country X are *not* primarily economic in nature," has no impact on the likelihood that the conclusion is valid. However, if you negate answer choice D, you get "There *was* significant migration into Country X during the time under discussion." This would dramatically call into question the stated conclusion that the population of Country X is declining measurably. Therefore, answer choice D must be correct.

Question Type: Weaken/Strengthen

You will have to attack a significant number of weaken and strengthen questions in order to end up with a respectable LSAT score. This question type also sometimes appears in the Reading Comprehension section of the exam. Since the LSAT is set up to test your understanding of the structure of arguments, the correct answer choices for weakening and strengthening questions will more often undermine or support their respective conclusions structurally rather than by directly attacking stated evidence, or by providing new evidence. You can undermine conclusions by finding a key assumption in the argument and then finding the answer choice that will make that assumption more likely to be true or less likely to be true, as the case may be.

> **NOTE**
>
> Remember that weakening an argument does not mean disproving it completely and strengthening an argument does not mean proving it beyond all doubt. To strengthen an argument is to make the conclusion more likely to be true, and to weaken an argument is to make the conclusion at least somewhat less likely to be true.

Some example question stems are

Weaken:

1. Which one of the following, if true, would most **weaken** the above argument?

2. The prediction that ends the paragraph would be most seriously **called into question** if it were true that

3. Which one of the following, if true, most **weakens** the researcher's argument?

4. Which one of the following, if true, most **calls into question** the argument that…?

5. Which one of the following, if true, most **undermines** the conclusion?

6. Which one of the following, if true, would be the **strongest challenge** to the author's conclusion?

Strengthen:

1. Which one of the following, if established, does most to **justify** the position advanced by the passage?

2. Which one of the following, if true, provides the **best reason in favor** of the proposal?

3. Which one of the following, if true, most **strengthens** the argument?

4. Which of the following principles, if valid, most helps to **justify** the scientist's reasoning?

5. Which one of the following, if true, most helps to **support** the claim that…?

6. Which one of the following, if true, most **supports** the proposal?

Strategies

To answer either a weaken or strengthen question, you must first identify the key assumptions in the argument. This should become second nature to you as you practice for test day. Once you become proficient at identifying assumptions, you can more easily choose answers that either support or undermine them. In some cases of weaken questions, the correct answer actually contradicts a statement made in the stimulus argument.

Sample Weaken/Strengthen Questions

Consider the following example:

1. More and more computer software that is capable of correcting not just spelling, but also grammar and punctuation is being developed. Therefore, it is increasingly unnecessary for working reporters and writers to have a complete knowledge of the principles of English grammar and punctuation. Consequently, in training journalists, less emphasis should be placed on the principles of grammar so that students and professors can concentrate on other important subjects.

   Which one of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument given for the recommendation above?

   (A) The effective use of software that corrects grammar and punctuation requires an understanding of grammatical principles.

   (B) Much of the software that corrects grammar and punctuation is already in use.

   (C) Development of more complex ethical guidelines for reporters and writers has meant that professors and students in journalism schools must allow time for teaching such issues.

   (D) Most of the software that is capable of correcting grammar and punctuation can be run on the types of computers available to most media outlets.

   (E) The journalism curriculum already requires that journalism students be familiar with, and able to use, a variety of software packages.

The best answer is A. If journalists must be able to understand the principles of grammar in order to effectively use the software described, the conclusion of the argument—that less emphasis should be placed on such principles in journalism school—is less likely to be true. Answer choices B, D, and E are irrelevant to the argument. Answer choice C actually strengthens the argument by making the conclusion just slightly more likely to be true.

Question Type: Conclusion

These questions ask you to draw a conclusion from evidence presented within the stimulus. In some cases, the conclusion that you are asked to draw is based on only part of the stimulus and will not necessarily be the main idea of the stimulus paragraph. Some conclusion questions use the terms "infer" and "imply."

> **NOTE**
>
> Remember that "imply" and "infer" are just two sides of the same coin; the speaker, or author, implies and the listener, or reader, infers.

Some example question stems are

1. If the statements above are true, which one of the following **must also be true** on the basis of them?

2. If the environmentalist's statements are true, they **provide the most support for** which one of the following?

3. Which one of the following statements is **most strongly supported by** the information above?

4. Amy's reply is structured to lead to which one of the following **conclusions**?

5. Which one of the following inferences **is most strongly supported by** the information above?

6. Which one of the following can be **properly inferred** from the argument above?

Strategies

To correctly answer these questions you must consider the validity of the argument. Look for the logical end of the chain of reasoning started in the stimulus argument.

Sample Conclusion Question

Consider the following example:

1. Physician: The continued use of this drug to treat patients with a certain disease cannot be adequately supported by the proposition that any drug that treats the disease is more effective than no treatment at all. What must also be taken into account is that this drug is very expensive and has notable side effects.

   Which one of the following most accurately expresses the main point of the physician's argument?

   (A) The drug is more effective than no treatment at all.

   (B) The drug is more effective than other forms of treatment for the disease.

   (C) The drug is more expensive than other forms of treatment for the disease.

   (D) The drug should not be used to treat the disease unless it is either effective or inexpensive.

   (E) The drug's possible effectiveness in treating the disease is not sufficient justification for using it.

EXAM✓PREP
Study**TIP**

Answer choices that go beyond the scope of the argument are incorrect, even if they include factual statements.

The best answer is E. According to the physician, the fact that the drug might be somewhat effective is not enough reason to continue to use it. The physician suggests that other factors beyond mere effectiveness, such as cost and side effects, be considered when deciding whether to use the drug. Answer choice A is incorrect because, although it might be inferred from evidence presented in the stimulus, the question stem calls for the main point of the argument. Answer choices B and C are incorrect because no comparison is made between the drug and any other form of treatment for the disease. Answer choice D is incorrect because the physician also contends that the side effects of the drug should be considered when deciding whether to use the drug.

Question Type: Method of Argument

Method of argument questions ask you to recognize the way that the argument is put together. You must choose the answer that properly describes the structure of the stimulus argument. Some, but certainly not all, method of argument questions are based on dialogues.

Some examples of question stems are

1. The scientist's argument **proceeds by**

2. Trillian's response to Douglas **proceeds by**

3. Karen uses which one of the following **argumentative techniques** in countering Rob's argument?

4. The argument criticizing the essay employs which one of the following **strategies**?

5. The **relationship** of Svetlana's statement to Katalya's argument is that Svetlana's statement

Strategies

To answer these questions correctly, you must pay attention to the structure of the argument rather than to the content or subject matter. Describe the argument in your own words (paraphrase) and try to match up the analogous parts of your paraphrased argument to the answer choices.

> **NOTE**
>
> The LSAT purposely uses difficult language to disguise relatively simple arguments. Practice sufficiently so that you can recognize the argument amidst the tricky language.

Sample Method of Argument Question

Consider the following example:

1. It is widely accepted that eating sugar can cause weight gain. Indeed, many people who are susceptible to weight gain report that, in their own experience, eating large amounts of sugar is invariably followed by a measurable weight gain within a few days. However, it is likely that common wisdom has confused cause and effect.

Recent studies suggest that hormonal changes associated with stress can cause weight gain, and there is ample evidence that people who are fond of sugar tend to eat more of it when they are under stress.

The argument employs which one of the following argumentative strategies?

(A) It cites evidence that questions the accuracy of the evidence advanced in support of the position that is being called into question.

(B) It gives additional evidence that suggests an alternative interpretation of the evidence offered in support of the position being challenged.

(C) It relies upon the superiority of science versus common opinion as a means of dismissing the relevance of evidence based upon common experience.

(D) It shows that the position being challenged is not consistent with cited, proven factual evidence.

(E) It calls into question the intelligence of those who subscribe to a certain popularly held belief.

The best answer is B. The additional evidence provided is regarding hormonal changes causing weight gain; the alternative interpretation of the correlation between sugar consumption and weight gain is the possibility that both the weight gain and sugar consumption are, in fact, caused by stress.

Question Type: Principle

These questions ask you to identify a rule, or principle, that supports the stimulus argument presented. In some cases, you are required to choose an argument that conforms to the stimulus principle.

Some example question stems are

1. The reasoning above most closely conforms to which one of the following **principles**?

2. Which one of the following conforms most closely to the **principle** illustrated above?

3. Which one of the following employee behaviors most clearly violates the company **policy** outlined above?

4. Which one of the following illustrates a **principle** most similar to that illustrated by the passage?

Strategies

The first step in answering these questions is to identify the rule or principle in the stimulus argument. Then, select the answer choice that relies on the same rule or principle. You should generally avoid any answer choices that include the same subject matter as that of the stimulus argument; focus on the rule or principle, not on the content.

Sample Principle Question

Consider the following example:

1. The best way to create a successful party is to visualize the guests discussing it with friends the next day. The hostess should first decide what aspects of the party will lead to favorable comments from guests during those conversations and then come up with refreshments and activities that will actually cause such post-party talk to occur.

    Which one of the following illustrates a principle most similar to that illustrated by the passage?

    (A) When planning a vacation, some travelers decide first where they want to go, and then plan their route. But, for most people, financial issues must also be taken into account.

    (B) When landscaping the grounds of a new home, you should start with the topsoil and then choose your shrubbery and other foliage.

    (C) Good moviemakers do not extemporaneously film their movies in one or two days with no script; a movie cannot be separated from the story upon which it is based.

    (D) In negotiating an employment contract, the best method is to make as many outlandish demands as possible and then agree to forgo the most outrageous of them.

    (E) To make a great golf shot, you should picture the ball landing where you want it to land, and then you will be able to line up your body and your club accordingly.

The best answer is E. The underlying principle in the stimulus argument is that it is best to work backward from a desired result in order to achieve that result. In the stimulus, the desired result is a successful party. In the correct answer, the desired result is a great golf shot. Answer choices B, C, and D are incorrect because they work forward rather than backward.

> **NOTE**
>
> This particular format, choosing an argument that illustrates the same principle as the stimulus argument, is similar to parallel reasoning questions.

Question Type: Point of Contention

These questions always involve a dialogue between two people who disagree about something. You are expected to choose the answer that best describes the crux of the disagreement.

Some sample question stems are

1. Todd's and Andy's positions indicate that they **disagree about the truth** of which one of the following?

2. A point on which Randy and Salvatore's **views differ** is whether

3. William and Max **disagree over whether**

4. The dialogue most supports the claim that Heather and Mike **disagree about whether**

Strategies

Your first step is to understand, then succinctly summarize the first party's argument. Next, determine where the first and second parties differ in their statements. Paraphrasing will help you get to the root of the argument and quickly locate the correct answer.

Sample Point of Contention Question

Consider the following example:

1. Jason: The Internet is making more information available to more people than ever before in history. So, people can simply learn all they need to know without seeking the advice of experts.

   Mark: In the past, the need for experts actually increased as the volume of knowledge increased. Therefore, the Internet will surely increase our dependence on experts.

   The dialogue most strongly supports the claim that Jason and Mark disagree with each other about whether

   (A) the Internet will contribute significantly to the increase in the spread of information throughout society

   (B) the Internet will increase the likelihood that people will seek the advice of experts when searching for knowledge

   (C) the Internet makes more information available to more people

   (D) experts will increase their reliance on the Internet in the future

   (E) explaining knowledge to specialists can only be accomplished by Internet experts

The best answer is B. Jason thinks that experts will become irrelevant because of direct public access to information. Mark thinks that the opposite will occur.

Question Type: Role of Fact

Some of the questions ask about the role, or function, of a specific fact that is included in the stimulus argument.

Some sample question stems are

1. The claim that taxes should increase in proportion to a person's income **plays which one of the following roles in the argument**?

2. The claim in the first sentence of the passage **plays which one of the following roles in the argument**?

3. Joshua's statement that "this claim simply cannot be proved" **plays which one of the following roles in his argument**?

4. Which one of the following **most accurately describes the role played in the passage** by the claim that fish have gills?

Strategies

To answer these questions correctly, you must determine the reason why the author included this particular fact or detail. Most of the incorrect answer choices will either be too narrow or too broad, or beyond the scope of the stimulus argument.

Sample Role of Fact Question

Consider the following example:

1. Some environmentalists have argued that there are two independently sufficient justifications for recycling waste materials: one based on economics and the other based on the aversion to the continued consumption of pristine global resources. But suppose that recycling were not economically efficient. Then it would be less clear that an aversion to consuming pristine global resources is enough of a reason to recycle.

    Which one of the following most accurately describes the role played in the argument by the supposition that recycling is not economically efficient?

    (A) It is used to disprove the environmentalist position that we should recycle.

    (B) It is used to show that the two reasons given by environmentalists are each individually sufficient.

    (C) It is used to disprove the claim that recycling is beneficial.

    (D) It is used to weaken the claim that consumption of pristine resources is sufficient reason to recycle.

    (E) It is used to show that there is no sufficient reason for recycling.

The best answer is D. The author of the argument asks the reader to go along with the supposition that recycling is not economically efficient in order to show that a mere aversion to consuming pristine resources might not be a sufficient, independent justification for recycling after all. Answer choices A, C, and E are incorrect because the argument does not actually show that there is no support for recycling. Answer choice B is incorrect because the argument is meant to question the reasons given for recycling, not to shore up the reasons given by environmentalists.

Question Type: Flaw

These questions ask you to identify an error of reasoning in the stimulus argument.

Some sample question stems are

1. Which one of the following, if true, **identifies a flaw** in the plan for the program?

2. The **argument is vulnerable to criticism** on the grounds that the argument

3. The **reasoning above is questionable** because it fails to exclude the possibility that

4. The reasoning in the politician's **argument is flawed because** this argument

5. Ralph's reasoning in his response to Jessica is **most vulnerable to criticism** on the grounds that it

6. Which one of the following is a **questionable argumentative strategy** employed in the above argument?

Strategies

The question stem tells you that a problem exists with the logic of the argument. You just have to choose the answer that describes the flaw. Most flawed arguments include an unwarranted assumption; in other words, the argument is weakened by a missing link between the stated evidence and the stated conclusion. The author of the argument is taking something for granted that is not necessarily true.

Sample Flaw Question

Consider the following example:

1. Giant Motors is attempting to dominate the automobile market by promoting its products with an expensive television advertising campaign. But, the results of recent surveys reveal that, in the opinion of 85 percent of all consumers, Giant Motors already dominates the market. Since any product with more than half of all sales in any given market is already dominant, Giant Motors dominates the market now and must only preserve its market share in order to continue to dominate its market.

    The argument commits which one of the following errors in reasoning?

    (A) Failing to eliminate the possibility that what seems to be the outcome of a specific market condition might actually be the cause of the condition

    (B) Confusing a condition necessary for certain outcome to obtain for a condition that, alone, is sufficient to assure that result

    (C) Treating the failure to establish the falsity of a specific claim as tantamount to showing that such a claim is certainly accurate

    (D) Accepting evidence that a claim is believed to be true as evidence that the claim, itself, is actually true

    (E) Describing the results of a survey that was done in the past as acceptably predicting future conditions

The best answer is D. The survey results only show the *opinions* of consumers. The stimulus argument relies upon those beliefs as fact in concluding that Giant Motors dominates the automobile market. There is no reason to accept the opinion of consumers as an accurate measure of Giant Motors's actual share of the automobile market. Each of the other answer choices describes an error in reasoning that is irrelevant to the stimulus argument.

Question Type: Paradox

A paradox arises when you are presented with two statements that are both true, yet they appear to be mutually contradictory. The key words to help you spot paradox question stems are "explain" and "reconcile."

Some sample questions stems are

1. Which one of the following, if true, most helps to **explain** why the people mentioned continued to grow beans?

2. Which one of the following, if true, most helps to **explain** the finding of the caffeine study?

3. Which one of the following, if true, helps to **reconcile** the statements above?

4. Which one of the following, if true, does the most to **reconcile the apparent conflict** in the system described above?

Strategies

The stimulus argument in paradox questions usually includes a term that either must be redefined in order to resolve the paradox, or contains a misinterpretation of a term upon which the author relies. You must recognize the contradiction that exists and look for an answer choice that more clearly defines a critical term.

We often refer to the "bumblebee paradox" with our tutoring students. Current research suggests that a bumblebee's wings are aerodynamically unsound; as a result, a bumblebee should not be able to fly. However, bumblebees *do* fly, so clearly the term "aerodynamically unsound" is poorly defined.

Sample Paradox Question

Consider the following example:

1. Researchers concur with one another on the issue of the harm that can result when children are exposed to microscopic asbestos fibers. The resulting disease, *asbestosis*, is almost always debilitating and even sometimes fatal. Many older school buildings contain asbestos insulation around hot water pipes and heating ducts because, until recently, the dangers of asbestos were unknown. Yet, these same researchers also agree that laws requiring the removal of asbestos from schools could actually lead to an increased likelihood of exposure to asbestos fibers to the students who attend those schools.

Which one of the following, if true, most helps to resolve the apparent discrepancy in the researchers' positions?

   (A) New insulation materials used instead of asbestos are as potentially harmful to children as asbestos is.

   (B) The money that would be spent on the removal of asbestos from schools could be spent in other ways that would be more likely to increase the overall health of school children.

   (C) Other sources of asbestos, such as automobile and household uses, are responsible for more cases of *asbestosis* than school-based sources are.

   (D) Removing the asbestos from older schools disperses a large quantity of asbestos fibers into the air, where they are more easily inhaled than when they are left in place around the pipes and ducts.

   (E) Lead-based paint poses more of a health hazard to children than asbestos does.

The best answer is D. Answer choice D provides an explanation for the suggestion not to remove the asbestos. Essentially, this answer boils down to pointing out that the act of removal itself is more dangerous than simply leaving the hazard in place. Answer choices A, C, and E are all incorrect because they focus on other potential sources of harm rather than the apparent conflict between the two positions that the researchers hold simultaneously: 1) that asbestos can cause serious harm, and 2) that it should not be removed from schools. Answer choice B is incorrect because it focuses on financial issues rather than the seemingly logical inconsistency inherent in the researchers' positions.

Question Type: Parallel Structure

These questions ask you to match up two arguments that share structural characteristics. There are usually two parallel structure questions in each Logical Reasoning section. They are usually in the second half of the section, and they can usually be recognized by their length since each answer choice is a complete argument. Sometimes the stimulus argument is flawed. In such a case, you must identify the answer choice argument that shares the same flaw.

> **NOTE**
>
> These questions can use up a disproportionate amount of time. We recommend that you only attempt this question type on test day if you have successfully tackled all or almost all the other questions within the section.

Some sample question stems are

1. Which one of the following arguments is **most similar in its reasoning** to the argument above?

2. The flawed reasoning in which one of the following arguments **most closely resembles** the flawed reasoning in the professor's argument?

3. The reasoning in the argument above **most closely parallels** that in which one of the following?

4. The flawed pattern of reasoning in the argument above is **most similar to** that in which one of the following?

5. Which one of the following contains questionable reasoning **most similar to** that in the argument above?

6. The pattern of reasoning in which of the following is **most similar to** that in the mayor's argument?

Strategies

One way to approach the parallel structure questions is to reason by analogy. In other words, if you match up the analogous parts, the structure becomes clearer. The structure of the argument is more important than the content or subject matter of the argument.

Do not be fooled by answer choices that refer to the same subject matter as that presented in the stimulus argument. You are expected to see past the facts presented and look at the relationship between the evidence and conclusion in the argument.

Sample Parallel Structure Question

Consider the following example:

1. Murcheson's drawing of the Lincoln Monument contains several inaccuracies. Therefore, your attempt to reproduce the drawing of the monument will not be a very accurate reproduction of the drawing.

   Which one of the following is most similar in its flawed reasoning to the flawed reasoning in the argument above?

   (A) Katrina's presentation was made up primarily of fabrications and distortions. So the video recording made of it cannot be of good quality.

   (B) An architect who creates a model of an ugly building must necessarily create an ugly model, unless the sculpture is a distorted representation of the building.

   (C) If a puppy's coloring resembles its mother's, then if the mother's fur is curly, the puppy's fur must also be curly.

   (D) Kelly imitated Rory. But, Kelly is different from Rory, so Kelly could not have imitated Rory very well.

   (E) Quentin's second movie is similar to his first. Therefore, his second movie must be entertaining since his first movie won many awards.

The best answer is A. The flaw in the stimulus argument is that it concludes that a reproduction of a flawed reproduction cannot, itself, be an accurate reproduction. Answer choice A makes the same mistake. In this instance, Murcheson's drawing and Katrina's presentation fill the same role as one another in their respective arguments. And, video recording of Katrina's presentation is analogous to the attempted reproduction in the stimulus argument. Some of the other answer choices are also flawed arguments; however, they do not share the same structure.

Practice Logical Reasoning Questions

Following is a group of simulated Logical Reasoning questions, along with a complete explanation for each question. Do not time yourself at this stage. Work through the questions carefully and select the best answer from among the choices. Use the explanations at the end of the chapter to help you to understand any errors that you make so that you'll be stronger on test day.

Directions: The questions in this section are based on the logical reasoning contained in brief statements or passages. For some questions, there could be more than one possible answer. However, you are to select the best answer; that is, the response that most accurately and completely answers the question. You should not make assumptions that cannot be supported by the statements or passages. After you have selected the best answer, fill in the corresponding circle on your answer sheet.

1. Business Analyst: In a recent survey, employees of Company X were asked to state which one of the following two scenarios they would prefer: (1) Company X is the industry leader with gross revenues of $100 million, and Company Y is second with gross revenues of $90 million; or (2) Company Y is the industry leader with gross revenues of $120 million and Company X is second with gross revenues of $110 million. Despite the fact that, under the scenario 2, Company X would have higher gross revenue than under scenario 1, the majority of respondents stated that they preferred scenario 1.

   Which of the following, if true, would most help to explain the surprising survey results described by the business analyst?

   (A) Most employees of Company X believe that their company has a higher growth rate than Company Y.

   (B) Most employees of Company X want their company to have gross revenue of more than $120 million.

   (C) Most employees of Company X believe that their personal welfare is not connected to the company's gross revenue.

   (D) Most employees of Company X want their company to be more powerful than Company Y.

   (E) Most employees of Company X want their company to make products of the highest quality.

2. Attorneys who represent violent criminals cannot both respect their clients' right to confidentiality and be sincerely concerned for the welfare of victims of future violent crimes. Reporting a client's unreported crimes violates the client's trust, but remaining silent leaves the dangerous client out of prison, free to commit more crimes.

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

(A) Most attorneys who represent violent criminals are assigned this task by a court.

(B) Violent criminals are no more likely to be represented by an attorney than are nonviolent criminals.

(C) Victims of future violent crimes also have a right to confidentiality should they need legal representation.

(D) The right of victims of violent crimes to compensation is as important as the right of criminals to confidentiality.

(E) An attorney who has gained a violent criminal's trust can persuade that criminal not to commit repeat offenses.

3. Civil libertarian: As electronic surveillance of public places becomes more common and pervasive, we hear more and more attempted justifications of this practice by government officials. Surveillance, they explain, keeps the public honest and polite to one another. Such explanations are obviously self-serving, and so should not be taken to justify these unwarranted invasions of privacy.

A questionable technique used in the civil libertarians argument is to

(A) attack an argument different from that actually offered by government officials

(B) presume that members of the public are never dishonest or rude to one another

(C) insist that modern government practices meet moral standards far higher than those accepted in the past

(D) attack government officials' motives instead of addressing their arguments

(E) make a generalization based on a sample that there is reason to believe is biased

4. Physician: Research has shown that substance X causes cancer in rabbits. Even though similar research has never been done on humans, and probably never will be, the use of substance X should be banned.

   That substance X causes cancer in rabbits figures in the argument in which one of the following ways?

   (A) It is presented as the hazard that the physician is concerned with preventing.

   (B) It is presented as a benefit of not acting on the recommendation of that conclusion.

   (C) It is presented as evidence for the claim that similar research will never be done on humans.

   (D) It is presented as a finding that motivates the course of action advocated in the conclusion.

   (E) It is presented as evidence for the claim that similar research has never been done on humans.

5. Sulema: The real estate market is the best place to invest your money these days; although it is often volatile, it provides the opportunity to make a large profit quickly.

   Antonietta: I agree that the real estate market provides the opportunity to make large profits quickly, but one is just as likely to take a large loss. I think that it is better to invest in precious metals, which tend to provide a constant, reliable appreciation over a long period of time.

   Sulema's and Antonietta's statements provide the most support for holding that they disagree about whether

   (A) the real estate market is often volatile but provides the opportunity to make a large profit quickly

   (B) precious metals can provide a large return on one's investment

   (C) the real estate market provides the opportunity for an investor to make a constant, reliable income over a long period of time

   (D) it is safer to invest in precious metals than to invest in the real estate market

   (E) it is preferable to choose an investment offering a reliable income over a more risky opportunity to make a large profit quickly

6. Prison inmates are far more likely to be mentally ill than members of the general population. This fact shows that the peculiar environment of prison, with its inherent stresses and deprivations, tends to cause or exacerbate symptoms of mental illness.

   The reasoning in the argument is most vulnerable to criticism on the basis that the argument

   (A) fails to define the term "mentally ill"

   (B) presupposes that the prison environment is unique

   (C) simply restates the claim that there are "inherent stresses and deprivations" in prison without providing any evidence in support

   (D) takes a correlation between mental illness and prison as proof that prison causes mental illness

   (E) focuses on stress and deprivation only, while ignoring other characteristics of the prison environment

7. In the movie *The Big Date*, released in 2004, there is scene that is virtually identical to a scene in *Robber Barron*, which was made in 1986. The scene is so unique that it is highly unlikely that the similarity is mere coincidence. Therefore, it is probable that the makers of *The Big Date* saw *Robber Barron*.

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

   (A) A third movie that was probably seen by both the makers of *The Big Date* and *Robber Barron* was made in 1960 and contained essentially the same scene.

   (B) *The Big Date* is a comedy, whereas *Robber Barron* is a drama.

   (C) Both movies were released only in the United States.

   (D) The scene in *Robber Barron* was also included in the play and novel from which the movie was adapted.

   (E) According to critics, *The Big Date* was a far better movie than *Robber Barron* and contained many innovative scenes.

8. Oncologists report that cancer patients with brain tumors who receive a combination of chemotherapy and radiation treatment do only as well, on average, as those patients who receive radiation treatment alone. Yet the oncologists state that chemotherapy is a necessary part of the treatment of all patients who receive them for tumors.

   Which of the following, if true, most helps to reconcile the oncologists' two claims?

   (A) Oncologists treat all cancer patients who have tumors with either radiation treatment alone or a combination of radiation and chemotherapy.

   (B) Oncologists who prescribe these treatments make accurate determinations about which patients need both radiation and chemotherapy and which need radiation alone.

   (C) Some tumors have been completely healed by a combination of radiation and chemotherapy.

   (D) Some tumors that have been exacerbated by improper attempts at chemotherapy have been successfully treated with radiation.

   (E) Patients with tumors in other areas of the body show more improvement when treated with both radiation and chemotherapy than when treated with radiation alone.

9. Walters: Our neighboring country had a much higher percentage increase in GNP (Gross National Product) over the last ten years than our country did. So, their economic prosperity increased relative to ours.

   Kostamo: I disagree. The GNP of our neighbor might have increased by a greater percentage, but the absolute amount of the increase in GNP was certainly greater for our country.

   Walters and Kostamo disagree about whether

   (A) change in the economic prosperity of the neighboring country relative to their country is accurately measured by comparing their percentage changes in GNP

   (B) change in the economic prosperity of the neighboring country is more accurately measured in terms relative to their country than in terms relative only to the neighboring country

   (C) changes in the GNP of the neighboring country should ever be compared to changes in the GNP of their country

   (D) there were any improvements at all in the economic situation of the neighboring country during the ten years being considered

   (E) the GNP of the neighboring country increased by a greater percentage over the last decade than did the GNP of their country

10. Adversity and imperfection are often useful. When individuals and teams study the ways in which adversity arises and their own responses to it, they can acquire insight into areas that might be ripe for improvement.

Which one of the following most closely conforms to the principle above?

(A) An actor should not simply react negatively to a mistake made during an important performance. By discovering the root causes of the mistake, the actor can better prepare for future performances.

(B) A politician should understand that the votes received on Election Day are not only an endorsement of the politician's policies. Politicians should also take satisfaction from the fact that voters also respond to the politician's personality and appearance.

(C) Altruism is valuable not only for the positive emotions that it brings, but also for the opportunities to contribute to society's overall well being.

(D) Even though business can and should be profitable, the primary reward of a career in business is the career itself.

(E) Golfers whose game suffers when playing with strangers should take every opportunity to golf with new people. Others will respect their courage, and they will gain the increased self-respect that comes from giving a full effort to something that is difficult for them.

11. Carrie: The title of the seminar we just attended, *Being a Good Husband*, is misleading. A title should describe all of the contents of a seminar, but nearly half of this seminar was involved with discussing wives.

Alan: I don't think the title is misleading. It seems to me that husbands and wives are two sides of one relationship: marriage. One cannot be a husband without a wife.

Which one of the following is most strongly supported by the discussion above?

(A) Carrie believes that the seminar should have been titled, *Being a Good Wife*.

(B) Alan believes that there is no real distinction between the roles of husband and wife.

(C) Carrie and Alan disagree about the relevance of traditional marriage.

(D) Carrie and Alan disagree about the overall value of the seminar.

(E) Carrie believes that the seminar title should not mention husbands without mentioning wives.

12. Internet Advertising Executive: Those pundits who claim that TV viewership is down only 5 percent are clearly incorrect. They clearly haven't looked at the numbers that I have. Network A is down 12 percent, Network B is down 10 percent, Network C is down 14 percent, and Network D is down nearly 40 percent.

The reasoning in the executive's argument is most vulnerable to criticism on the grounds that the argument

(A) attacks the character of the pundits rather than addressing their arguments

(B) fails to demonstrate that the pundits mentioned are not experts in the area of television viewership

(C) incorrectly concludes that something is not true based on the claim that it has not been demonstrated to be true

(D) draws evidence from only a small pool of available sources, which may be nonrepresentative

(E) relies upon an emotional appeal in an effort to persuade the listener

13. In 1977, a young wolf was observed entering a cave in pursuit of prey. Soon, other wolves started entering the cave, and over the next few seasons, this behavior became the norm for the entire wolf pack. Before 1977, no wolf had been seen entering or leaving the cave and no signs of wolves were found in the cave. By 2004, the entire pack was spending most of its winters in or near the cave. Therefore, these wolves are capable of adopting and passing on new behaviors, and are not merely bound by their genetics.

Which of the following is an assumption required by the argument above?

(A) Genetic mutations in wolves can occur in a fairly short time span, such as a few decades.

(B) New behaviors that emerge in wolf populations over the course of a couple of decades are not necessarily genetically predetermined.

(C) Only after certain patterns of behavior become the norm for a given animal population can it be inferred that a genetic mutation has occurred in that group.

(D) The social actions of wolves are fully independent of their genetics.

(E) The wolves' new pattern of behavior will continue for several generations yet to come.

14. Literature Expert: Great pieces of literature have often caused outrage among the public when first published; for example *Ulysses* by James Joyce was banned for years due to its alleged obscenity, and Walt Whitman's poem collection, *Leaves of Grass*, was banned for its use of explicit language. So, since literature often causes outrage and shock, we should not limit the use of public funds to support books that many people find obscene.

Which of the following is an assumption that the literature expert's argument requires in order to properly come to his or her conclusion?

   (A) Most literature is obscene.

   (B) James Joyce and Walt Whitman received public funding for their writing.

   (C) Literature was more shocking in the past.

   (D) Public funds should be used to support literature.

   (E) Literature should not be shocking or obscene.

15. A city poll of the community showed that 88 percent of respondents believe that an appropriate amount of the city budget is being spent on parks and recreation. It seems, then, that any significant increase in the city budget should be spent on something other than parks and recreation.

Which one of the following describes a flaw in reasoning in the above argument?

   (A) The argument confuses a coincidence with a correlation.

   (B) The argument confuses the percentage of the budget spent on parks and recreation with the amount of money spent on parks and recreation.

   (C) The argument does not justify its presumption that what is true of a portion of the budget also applies to the total budget.

   (D) The argument fails to consider that less money could be spent and a significant percentage of the community would still find that amount to be appropriate.

   (E) The argument fails to consider that if more money from the budget were spent on parks and recreation, then an even larger percentage of the community might approve of that use of the budget.

16. Having endured a tumultuous childhood, Theresa has no conception of the moral difference between right and wrong, only between what is legally permitted and what is not. When Theresa committed her offense, she did not recognize the fact that it was a morally wrong act, despite knowing that it was illegal.

    From the statements above, which one of the following can be properly inferred?

    (A) Theresa committed no offense that was not legally permissible.

    (B) Theresa did something that was morally wrong.

    (C) Moral ignorance is never excusable in the eyes of the law.

    (D) Theresa's childhood could have provided more sufficient moral training even in the circumstances.

    (E) Theresa could now be taught the moral difference between right and wrong.

17. Jill: Hale-Bopp Comet, now in a part of its orbit relatively far from the Sun, recently flared brightly enough to be seen by telescopes. No comet has ever been observed to flare so far from the Sun before, so such a flare must be highly unusual.

    Sara: Hogwash. Usually no one bothers to try to observe comets when they are so far from the Sun. This flare was observed only because an observatory was tracking Hale-Bopp Comet very closely.

    Sara challenges Jill's reasoning by

    (A) pointing out that Jill's use of the term "observed" is excessively vague

    (B) drawing attention to an inconsistency between two of Jill's claims

    (C) presenting evidence that directly contradicts Jill's evidence

    (D) offering an alternative interpretation of the evidence Jill cites

    (E) undermining some of Jill's evidence while agreeing with her conclusion

18. Psychologist: There are theories that posit completely different causal mechanisms from those posited by the Smith psychological theory and that are more successful at predicting human behavior. Therefore, the Smith theory of behavior, no matter how elegant or complex it is, ought to be abandoned in favor of these other theories.

Which one of the following is an assumption on which the psychologist's argument depends?

(A) The Smith theory has led to intriguing predictions, which have been shown to be false, about the causes of human behavior.

(B) A psychological theory with greater predictive success than another is scientifically preferable.

(C) The Smith theory has had remarkable success in predicting how people will behave in certain situations.

(D) Measuring the predictive success of a psychological theory always involves considering other theories that attempt to explain the same phenomena.

(E) Scientific theories become impractical if they posit causal mechanisms beyond a certain level of complexity.

Questions 19–20

Roland: It is important for us to cut down on our usage of fossil fuels. Therefore, we must invest in new hybrid technology for vehicles. Hybrid technology will help us decrease our dependency on fossil fuels. Hybrid vehicles use half the fossil fuels per mile than other vehicles.

Tomassi: Not true. There are many ways that we can reduce our usage of fossil fuels without spending money on developing hybrid vehicles.

19. Roland assumes which one of the following?

(A) That drivers who switch from regular vehicles to hybrid vehicles will drive less than twice as much as they did prior to the switch

(B) That more consumers will be able to afford hybrid vehicles than other types of vehicles

(C) That all vehicles can be converted to hybrid technology

(D) That hybrid vehicles have the same horsepower as fossil fueled vehicles

(E) That the consumer demand for hybrid vehicles is elastic

20. Tomassi assumes which one of the following?

    (A) That other technology is more effective at cutting fossil fuel usage

    (B) That consumers will not buy hybrid cars

    (C) That hybrid cars are not as durable as non-hybrid cars

    (D) That alternate means of reducing fossil fuel consumption will be sufficient to avert any looming crisis

    (E) That hybrid vehicles will not cut down on the usage of fossil fuels if they are driven for longer distances

21. Several legislators claim that the public finds many current movies so sexually explicit as to be morally offensive. However, these legislators have misrepresented public opinion. In a survey conducted by a movie industry guild, only 15 percent of respondents think that movies are too sexually explicit, and only 4 percent found any recent movie to be morally offensive. These low percentages are telling because the respondents see far more current movies than does the average movie-goer.

    The reasoning in the argument is flawed in that the argument

    (A) attempts to undermine the legislators' credibility instead of addressing their argument

    (B) bases its conclusion on subjective judgments rather than on an objective criterion of moral offensiveness

    (C) fails to consider the possibility that sexually explicit movies increase the prevalence of antisocial behavior

    (D) generalizes from a sample that is unlikely to be representative of public sentiment

    (E) presumes, without providing justification, that the people surveyed based their responses on a random sampling of movies

22. Children who are educated at Evans High School tend to do better than children who are educated at Gilbert T. Sloan High School. Since Samuel achieved higher grades than any of his classmates in his first year at the university, he was probably educated at Evans.

    Which one of the following most closely parallels the flawed reasoning in the argument above?

    (A) Quarter Horses are usually taller than Appaloosas. Since Dandy Jim Zip is taller than the other horses in the competition, he must be a Quarter Horse.

    (B) When people make more money, they generally are able to accumulate more wealth.

    (C) When children practice piano scales for half an hour each day, they usually do extremely well at recitals. Since Hannah practices scales for less than a half an hour a day, she will have difficulty doing well at her recital.

    (D) When children have parents who participate in their education, the children generally do better in school. Therefore, if parents want to help their children do better in school, they should participate in their children's education.

    (E) When children study math from an early age, they tend to do better in math in adulthood. Therefore, if you want to do better in math as an adult, you should study more as a child.

23. Frustration in response to insults is unreasonable, for insults are merely assertions that someone has undesirable characteristics. If such an assertion is false, the insulted party ought to pity the ignorance prompting the insult. If it is true, the insulted party should be thankful for such useful information.

    Which one of the following, if assumed, enables the argument's conclusion to be properly drawn?

    (A) Actions prompted by ignorance do not warrant negative reactions.

    (B) Frustration is an unreasonable response to useful information.

    (C) Frustration is an unreasonable response to any action that should prompt pity or gratitude.

    (D) Gratitude and pity are reasonable responses to some forms of hostile or insensitive behavior.

    (E) Pity is the only reasonable reaction to people with undesirable characteristics.

Answers and Explanations

1. **The best answer is D.** This is a *paradox* question. The fact that most employees of Company X want their company to be more powerful than Company Y would explain why they prefer a situation in which their company is ahead of Company Y in terms of gross revenue. Each of the other answer choices is irrelevant. Answer choice A is outside the scope of the stimulus because there is no information presented on the growth rate of either company. Answer choice B is outside the scope of the stimulus because even if employees of Company X do want their gross revenue to be higher than $120 million, they would prefer the scenario in which the revenue is already at $120 million rather than the scenario in which the revenue is only $100 million. Answer choice C is irrelevant because it would not explain why employees would choose one scenario over the other. Answer choice E is irrelevant because the scenarios are based on gross revenue, not quality.

2. **The best answer is E.** This is a *weaken* question. Each of the other answer choices is irrelevant to the relationship between the stated evidence concerning a client's right to confidentiality, and the conclusion that the attorney's duty of confidentiality and any genuine concern for victims is mutually exclusive.

3. **The best answer is D.** This is a *method of argument* question. The only statement offered in support of the civil libertarians' position is that the public officials' explanation is self-serving. This is an attack on the motives of the officials. The civil libertarians have not offered any refutation to the assertion that electronic surveillance of public places has some beneficial effects. Each of the other choices describes a questionable argumentation technique other than the one used by the civil libertarians.

4. **The best answer is D.** This is a *role of fact* question. The finding that X causes cancer in rabbits is the motivation for the proposed course of action: banning the use of X. Answer choice A is incorrect because the conclusion of the physician's argument is that X should be banned not to save rabbits, but to save humans from a similar fate. Answer choice B is incorrect because the physician does not assert or imply that cancer in lab rabbits is a *benefit* to anyone. Answer choices C and E are not correct because the claim that similar research will never be done on humans is not actually supported at all. In fact, the physician uses the word "probably" in the statement as a way to avoid having to offer conclusive support.

5. **The best answer is E.** This is a *point of contention* question. Both Sulema and Antonietta agree on the fact that real estate can yield a significant profit or a significant loss. Sulema uses the term "volatile" to indicate that she recognizes this fact. However, the two speakers do not agree on which investment option is best. Antonietta clearly prefers investment options that are more steady and predictable, whereas Sulema prefers the opportunity for large profit offered by the more volatile real estate market.

6. **The best answer is D.** This is a *flaw* question. As discussed in Chapter 3, "Introduction to LSAT Logic," correlation does not prove causation. Simply finding two things together—in this case, being in prison and a higher likelihood of mental illness—does not mean that one caused the other. In fact, based on the correlation given, it is just as likely that having a mental illness increases the likelihood that one will be incarcerated as that incarceration causes mental illness. Although the other answer choices contain true statements, they fail to identify any flaw in the relationship between the evidence and the conclusion presented in the argument.

7. **The best answer is A.** This is a *weaken* question. Answer choice A weakens the conclusion of the argument by providing an alternate explanation for the similarity between the scenes in the two movies. In this instance, the alternate explanation offered is entirely plausible and would explain why the two scenes are so similar without blaming only the maker of the movie that came later in time for the similarity. Each of the other answer choices is irrelevant to the connection between the evidence presented and the stated conclusion.

8. **The best answer is B.** This is a *paradox* question. The paradox, or apparent contradiction, arises from the fact that the physicians in charge of treatment say that all patients who receive both treatments need both treatments. And yet, the patients who receive both treatments usually don't do any better than the patients who receive only one treatment. This apparent contradiction is resolved by the statement in answer choice B that the physicians are correctly identifying which patients need both treatments and not giving both to patients who only need radiation. In other words, patients are not randomly assigned to the two groups but rather carefully selected by experts. Each of the other statements is irrelevant to the resolution of the paradox.

9. **The best answer is A.** This is a *point of contention* question. Kostamo states that she disagrees and then gives the reason for her disagreement, which is that there is a difference between a percent increase and an increase in absolute amount. In other words, if the speaker's country had a significantly larger GNP than its neighboring country at the beginning of the time in question, it is plausible that the neighboring country's GNP could grow by a much larger percentage but still be much smaller than the speakers' country.

10. **The best answer is A.** This is a *principle* question. The situation described in answer choice A is the most closely analogous to the stimulus. The actor is an individual, and the poor performance is certainly a case of adversity. The idea that the actor can better prepare for the future corresponds to the idea that individuals should look for ways to improve. Answer choices B, C, and D are incorrect because there is no adversity described. Answer choice E is incorrect because it does not describe the golfer discovering how to improve his golf game. It only describes the other potentially good things that will probably happen if he puts himself in a certain situation.

11. **The best answer is E.** This is an *inference* question. The only answer choice that includes something that the reader may safely infer is that Carrie feels that wives should have been mentioned in the seminar title since a good portion of the discussion was devoted to wives. Answer choice A is incorrect because it is an exaggeration of Carrie's position. Answer choice B is incorrect because it is not supported by any information in the stimulus. Just because Alan believes that the two roles, husband and wife, are parts of the same relationship, does not mean that he sees *no* distinction or difference between the roles. Answer choices C and D are both irrelevant to the stimulus because they go far beyond the scope of the evidence presented.

12. **The best answer is D.** This is a *flaw* question. Answer choice D points to a flaw because the executive making the argument is only looking at a sample of four segments of all of television viewership. Just because the four networks that he points to are down more than 5 percent, we cannot safely conclude that at least some of those viewers have not simply moved to other networks or channels not included in the Internet executives' sample. Answer choice A is incorrect because there is no attack on the pundits' characters. Answer choice B is incorrect because the success or failure of the executive's argument does not rest with showing that the pundits are not experts. Answer choices C and E both describe flaws that can be fatal to arguments but are simply not present in the stimulus argument.

13. **The best answer is B.** This is an *assumption* question. Remember that an assumption is a piece of unstated evidence. If we negate answer choice B and say, "New behaviors that emerge in wolf populations over the course of a couple of decades are necessarily genetically predetermined," we can see that this statement would directly contradict the conclusion of the stimulus argument, which is that the wolves' behavior is evidence *against* genetically predetermined behavior. Because the negation of answer choice B conflicts with the conclusion of the stimulus argument, answer choice B, as originally stated, must be an important part of the argument. Negating any of the other answer choices results in a statement that is irrelevant to the argument, showing that each of the other choices is irrelevant to the argument and therefore *not* a suppressed premise.

14. **The best answer is D.** This is an *assumption* question. The author of the argument must be assuming that public funds should be used to support literature, or nothing else in the argument would make any sense at all. If public funds should *not* be used to support literature, any discussion of what type of literature ought to be supported would be meaningless. The statements made in the other answer choices might or might not be true, but they are not assumptions necessary to connect the stated evidence of the stimulus argument to its conclusion.

15. **The best answer is E.** This is a *flaw* question. Answer choice E correctly points out that the author of the argument is assuming that the proportion of city residents who approve of the level of funding for parks and recreation cannot be raised above 88 percent. While such an outcome is not guaranteed simply by spending more public money on parks and recreation, it is at least a plausible, possible outcome that prevents reaching the argument's conclusion, that any new money

should be spent on some other purpose, without more evidence. The other answer choices describe common argument flaws that are simply not relevant to the stimulus argument.

16. **The best answer is B.** This is an *inference* question. The only selection supported by the stimulus is answer choice B because it states that Theresa did something that was morally wrong. This is supported by the statement in the stimulus, "…she did not recognize the fact that it was a morally wrong act,…" Answer choice A is incorrect because the stimulus also states that Theresa did know that her actions were illegal. Answer choice C is incorrect because the stimulus simply does not provide enough evidence to draw any conclusion about what is or is not *never* excused by the law. Likewise, answer choices D and E go far beyond the scope of the stimulus in discussing what could have happened or what might happen in the future.

17. **The best answer is D.** This is a *method* question. Sara challenges Jill's conclusion mainly by pointing out that there might be another reason that such a flare has not been observed before: No one was looking for one. Sara does not do anything that is described in any of the other answer choices.

18. **The best answer is B.** This is an *assumption* question. Answer choice B is the only selection that provides the missing link between the stated evidence that other theories predict behavior better than the Smith theory, and the stated conclusion that therefore, the Smith theory should be abandoned in favor of those theories. Answer choice A is incorrect because there is no evidence that the Smith theory led to predictions that proved to be false. The conclusion is supported even if the Smith theory did lead to some predictions that proved to be true, so long as the other theories' predictions are *more* predictive. Answer choices C, D, and E are all irrelevant to the conclusion of the stimulus argument.

19. **The best answer is A.** This is an *assumption* question. In order to state that hybrid vehicles will decrease our dependency on fossil fuels, it must be assumed that people will drive less than twice as much as they would with non-hybrid vehicles. Because hybrids use half as much fossil fuel as non-hybrids per mile, if drivers traveled more than twice as much in hybrids, there would be no net savings. Each of the other answer choices is irrelevant to the argument.

20. **The best answer is D.** This is an *assumption* question. Tomassi concludes that simply because there are other ways to reduce fossil fuel consumption, it is not necessary to invest in hybrid vehicles. So, Tomassi must be assuming that the savings that will be realized from these other means will be enough to make a switch to hybrid vehicles unnecessary. Each of the other answer choices is irrelevant to the conclusion.

21. **The best answer is D.** This is a *flaw* question. Answer choice D points out that the statistical evidence the movie industry guild relies on is questionable because the sample is unlikely to be representative of the population at large. Answer choice A is incorrect because the guild is not engaging in *ad hominem* argument. Answer choice B is incorrect because, since neither side of the argument offers any

objective measure of moral offensiveness, it cannot be a flaw for one side to fail to do so. (Of course, it is unlikely that any objective measure of moral offensiveness could be formulated.) Answer choices C and E are irrelevant to the argument's conclusion.

22. **The best answer is A.** This is a *parallel structure* question. The stimulus argument makes the error of ascribing group differences to individual members of the group. Answer choice A commits the same error. Just because members of one group usually exhibit certain characteristics, it does not mean that each member of the group exhibits those characteristics. A secondary error in the stimulus argument is also repeated in answer choice A: We don't know the comparison group for our individual member. In other words, in the stimulus argument, we don't know the makeup of the students at the university. They might all, including Samuel, come from Gilbert T. Sloan High School. Similarly, all the horses in the competition, including Dandy Jim Zip, might be Appaloosas.

23. **The best answer is C.** This is an *assumption* question. If frustration is mutually exclusive of either pity or gratitude, the conclusion, that frustration in response to insults is unreasonable, is properly drawn. Each of the other answer choices is irrelevant to the conclusion.