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QUESTION 1

Forty years ago, hardly anybody thought about going to court to sue somebody. A person could bump a pedestrian with his Chrysler Airflow and the victim would say something like, "No harm done," and walk away. Ipso facto. No filing of codicils, taking of depositions or polling the jury. Attorneys need not apply.

Which one of the following details, if true, would most strengthen the above statement?

- A. There were fewer courthouses then than now.
- B. The marked increase in pedestrian accidents is a relatively recent occurrence.
- C. Most citizens of 40 years ago were not familiar with their legal rights.
- D. The number of lawsuits filed during World War II was extremely low.
- E. Most young attorneys were in the armed forces 40 years ago.

Correct Answer: D

This fact would strengthen the merely impressionistic evidence that lawsuits were less prevalent 40 years ago. It is the only choice dealing directly with the implied subject of the passage - lawsuits.

QUESTION 2

Most of those who enjoy music play a musical instrument; therefore, if Maria enjoys music, she probably plays a musical instrument. Which one of the following most closely parallels the reasoning in the statement above?

- A. The majority of those who voted for Smith in the last election oppose abortion; therefore, if the residents of University City all voted for Smith, they probably oppose abortion.
- B. If you appreciate portrait painting you are probably a painter yourself; therefore, your own experience is probably the cause of your appreciation.
- C. Most of those who join the army are male; therefore, if Jones did not join the army, Jones is probably female.
- D. Over 50 percent of the high school students polled admitted hating homework; therefore, a majority of high school students do not like homework.
- E. If most workers drive to work, and Sam drives to work, then Sam must be a worker.

Correct Answer: A

This choice parallels both the reasoning and the structure of the original. The original reasoning may be summarized as follows: most X → Y; therefore X → Y (probably).

QUESTION 3

The organizer of a reading club will select at least five and at most six works from a group of nine works.

The group consists of three French novels, three Russian novels, two French plays, and one Russian play.

The organizer's selection of works must conform to the following requirements:

No more than four French works are selected.

At least three but no more than four novels are selected.

At least as many French novels as Russian novels are selected.

If both French plays are selected, then the Russian play is not selected.

The organizer must at least select

- A. one French novel and one French play
- B. one French novel and one Russian play
- C. one Russian novel and one French play
- D. two French novels
- E. two Russian novels

Correct Answer: D

The very appearance of this question might have suggested to you, at the outset, that there's at least one fact about the selection process that is inferable from the rules alone. But whether you worked it out up front or now, how come? Because to choose a single French novel would restrict us to a single Russian novel (Rule 3), and that plus Rule 4 would ensure that we could never meet our quota of five works mandated in the opening? At most we'd be restricted to four: the French novel, the Russian novel, and two plays. In order to meet the requirement of five works minimum, we must choose at least two French novels at all times. And if you look back over the first three questions, we've done just that all along.

QUESTION 4

The print circulation of The World Tribune has shown a 40 percent decline in the past two years. However, the traffic on the newspaper's website has increased by 30 percent during the same period. The website contains many news sections and blogs that are not featured in the print newspaper but are the most read pages of the website. Therefore, to maintain its profits, the newspaper has decided to discontinue its still-profitable print edition and to introduce more content on the website that is similar to the exclusive content on the most read pages of the website.

Which one of the following is an assumption on which the decision of The World Tribune depends?

- A. The print circulation of the newspaper would not have declined further in the near future.
- B. To access the content on the newspaper's website, the readers of the website will be willing to pay a monthly subscription fees that is equal to the revenue that the print edition of the newspaper earned per reader each month.
- C. The print circulation of the newspaper declined in the past two years because the newspaper's website offered more interesting content.
- D. The revenue earned from increased website traffic will not be less than the revenue lost by discontinuing the print edition.
- E. Introducing more content similar to the exclusive content on the most read pages of the website will increase the newspaper's website traffic further.

Correct Answer: E

Argument construction

This argument features two versions/modes in which The World Tribune newspaper is available: the Print Mode and the newspaper's website (called the Web Mode henceforth).

Over the past 2 years:

The Print Mode's circulation has decreased by 40% - Premise 1

The Web Mode's traffic has increased by 30% - Premise 2

The website contains many news sections and blogs that are not featured in the print newspaper but are the most read pages of the website. This is Premise 3.

The Conclusion drawn (= the decision made) by the newspaper from these three premises is that:

to maintain profits, the newspaper should:

discontinue the still-profitable Print Mode.

introduce more exclusive content on the website that is similar to the most read pages of the website.

When we analyze the premises of this argument, we realize that from Premises 2 and 3, the decision-makers at the newspaper have assumed that the increase in the Web Mode's traffic is due to the exclusive content that makes for the website's most read pages. It is due to this assumption that they have decided to introduce more such content on the Web Mode. It can also be said that these decision-makers believe (assume) that because such content led to an increase in the website traffic in the past two years, introducing more such content will inevitably increase the website traffic in the future too. That is, they are assuming that a past relationship between two metrics (amount of exclusive content that forms the most-read pages of the Web Mode, website traffic) that held in the past will hold in the future too.

Further, the explicit goal of the newspaper is "to maintain its profits." However, the decision that it has taken concerns its reach because the reach (circulation) of the Print Mode was decreasing while the reach (traffic) of the Web Mode was increasing, the newspaper decided to kill the still-profitable Print Mode and focus solely on the Web Mode and take measures to increase the traffic of the Web Mode further. So, one necessary assumption that the decision-makers have made is that the increase in profits from increasing the traffic of the Web Mode will at least offset (if not exceed) the loss of profits due to closing down the Print Mode.

	At the time of Decision	After the Decision
Profits from Print Mode	x	0
Profits from Web Mode	y	z
Total Profits	$x + y$	z

The decision-makers assume that this decision will enable them to "maintain profits," that is:

$$z \geq x + y \Rightarrow z - y \geq x \Rightarrow (\text{Post-decision Increase in profit from Web-Mode}) \geq (\text{Post-decision Loss of profit from Print-Mode})$$

Therefore, to sum up, the assumptions that have gone into the newspaper's decision are:

over the past two years, the increase in the Web Mode's traffic was due to the exclusive content that makes for the website's most read pages in the future too, introducing more such content will continue to drive an increase in the Web Mode's traffic (Post-decision Increase in profit from Web-Mode) (Post-decision Loss of profit from Print-Mode)

In analyzing the options in an assumption question, the Negation Test often comes in handy. Since a necessary assumption is, by definition, vital for the conclusion to be logically valid, we can test an answer choice by deeming it to be false. If, upon doing so, the conclusion no longer holds, this means that the answer choice in question is indeed a necessary assumption.

Let's analyze each option one by one.

Answer choices explanation [The print circulation of the newspaper would not have declined further in the near future.] This option is incorrect. Suppose the print circulation of the newspaper would have declined further in the near future. Then, the perception that the Print Mode is a sinking business would be further strengthened and the newspaper's decision to kill the Print Mode would be validated. So, if we Negate this answer choice, the conclusion (= decision made by the newspaper) stands strengthened, instead of being demolished. Therefore, this answer choice fails the Negation Test.

[To access the content on the newspaper's website, the readers of the website will be willing ...] This option is incorrect. Let the revenue that the print edition of the newspaper earned per reader each month (at the time of the decision) be dollars. Suppose the readers of the newspaper's website are not willing to pay a subscription fees of dollars per month for access to the website content. Does this necessarily mean that the newspaper will not be able to maintain its profits? No. For example, suppose the readers of the website are only willing to pay a monthly subscription fees of dollars. If the number of website readers is more than ten times the number of print-edition readers (which it very well might be, because, from the argument, we only know the percentage changes in readership of the print-edition and the website traffic, and not the actual numbers), then the revenue from the website subscription fees will be greater than the revenue from the print-edition. If the costs of the website are not greater than the costs of the print-edition, then the profits from the website will be greater than the profits that the print-edition earned at the time of the decision. Therefore, negating this answer choice does not necessarily impact the conclusion.

[The print circulation of the newspaper declined in the past two years...] This option is incorrect. Suppose the print circulation did not decline in the past two years because of the content offered in the Web Mode but due to some other reason. The facts of the case still remain the same ?the print circulation was declining, the Web Mode traffic was increasing, and the newspaper wanted to maintain its profits. So, negating this answer choice has no impact whatsoever on the conclusion drawn.

[The revenue earned from increased website traffic will not be less than...] This option is incorrect. Suppose the revenue earned from increased website traffic is indeed less than the revenue lost by discontinuing the print edition. However, if the costs incurred by the newspaper for the Web Mode are far lesser than those for the Print Mode, then profits earned by the newspaper for the Web Mode can still be greater than or equal to the profits earned for the Print Mode.

Therefore, the conclusion ("to maintain profits," kill the Print Mode and put more of XYZ type of traffic-increasing content on the Web Mode) can still stand. Therefore, this answer choice fails the Negation Test.

[Introducing more content similar to the exclusive content on the most ...] This option is correct. Suppose that introducing more content similar to the exclusive content on the most read pages of the website will not increase the newspaper's website traffic further. The newspaper had assumed: (More such content --> More Web Traffic --> More Profit from Web-Mode that would at least offset the loss of profit from Print-mode). The negation of this answer choice breaks this chain of assumptions and therefore suggests that the newspaper's decision may not result in greater profit from Web-Mode that would at least offset the loss of profit from Print-Mode. Therefore, the profits of the newspaper may not be maintained. The negation of this answer choice substantially weakens the decision made by the newspaper. Therefore, this answer choice represents a necessary assumption on which this decision depends.

QUESTION 5

Experimental psychology requires the application of statistics to interpret empirical data and assess their significance. A person will not be able to understand such applications without training in statistics. Therefore, the more training one has in statistics, the better one will be at research in experimental psychology.

Which one of the following arguments exhibits a flawed pattern of reasoning most similar to that exhibited by the argument above?

A. Most people need the love and support of others; without it, they become depressed and unhappy. Therefore, in most instances, the more love and support a person receives, the happier that person will be.

B. Since in most jobs there are annual wage or salary increases, the longer one has worked, the more raises one will have received. Therefore, in a typical job, the longer one has worked, the greater one's income will be.

C. The main cause of heart attacks is arteriosclerosis, the buildup of plaque on the interior wall of the coronary arteries. It develops over an extended period of time. Therefore, if one is at risk for arteriosclerosis, one becomes more likely to suffer a heart attack as one gets older.

D. Since many disease processes are biochemical in nature, unless one understands chemistry one will not be able to understand the explanations for many diseases. Therefore, if one has no training in chemistry, one will not be able to master medicine.

E. Since most disease processes are biochemical in nature, an understanding of chemistry will enable one to understand most diseases. Therefore, one needs little more than training in chemistry to be able to master medicine.

Correct Answer: A

Here's the first, and only pure Parallel Reasoning question of the section -- although, as mentioned above, has a definite Parallel Reasoning feel to it. Mimic the flaw is our task, and let's see, as always, if isolating the conclusion can be of any help. And it's not hard to find, signaled by the trusty Keyword "Therefore..." Paraphrased in general terms (which is how we always want to treat the conclusion in Parallel Reasoning questions), the last sentence says that the more of a certain thing you have, the better you'll be at something else. Options [Most people need the love and support of...] and [Since in most jobs there are annual wage or...] are passable on this front, including as they do a "more X, more Y" style of reasoning, but the rest don't conform at all: option [The main cause of heart attacks is arteriosclerosis...] is element of likelihood has no counterpart in the original. Option [Since many disease processes are biochemical in...] is "no training" doesn't match "more training" in the stimulus, and this option is conclusion about what will not happen is also out of place. Option [Since most disease processes are biochemical in nature, an understanding...] is conclusion, meanwhile, deals with what's required to do something, which also doesn't conform to the passage conclusion's "more/better" structure. But there is a "requirement" element in the evidence, and that helps us to differentiate between the right answer and the fourth loser. The most glaring element of the first sentence is that

one thing requires another, and comparing options [Most people need the love and support of...] and [Since in most jobs there are annual wage or...], only the first contains this element -- people need love and support. The second describes a typical consequence of an activity(working), but that's not the same thing. Options [Most people need the love and support of...] is the only choice that mimics the two main elements of the passage: the "more/better" structure of the conclusion, and the notion of necessity in the evidence.

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