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QUESTION 1

The new agriculture bill will almost surely fail to pass, the leaders of all major parties have stated that they oppose it.

Which one of the following, if true, adds the most support for the prediction that the agriculture bill will fail to pass?

- A. Most bills that have not been supported by even one leader of a major party have not been passed into law.
- B. Most bills that have not been passed into law were not supported by even one member of a major party.
- C. If the leaders of all major parties endorse the new agriculture bill, it will pass into law.
- D. Most bills that have been passed into law were not unanimously supported by the leaders of all major parties.
- E. Most bills that have been passed into law were supported by at least one leader of a major party.

Correct Answer: A

Sometimes the simplest arguments prove to be the toughest questions. The conclusion is that the new bill will almost surely fail to pass. The evidence is that the leaders of all major parties have stated that they oppose it. In order to strengthen this argument, you need to find a statement that most accurately describes the situation in which this bill finds itself. In other words, you need to stay within the scope.

Option [Most bills that have not been supported by...] says that most bills that have not been supported by even one leader (that's the same as our bill, which is opposed by leaders of all major parties) have not been passed into law (which is what our conclusion predicts--that the bill will fail to pass).

QUESTION 2

A test that examines people on their memory capacity for spatial layouts has placed Jason in the top 1 percentile of all test-takers. We can conclude from this that his memory capacity for things that do not involve spatial layouts will be below average. The conclusion follows logically if which one of the following is assumed?

- A. Jason tried hard to remember spatial layouts.
- B. Jason has a greater proclivity to remember spatial layouts than most people.
- C. It is possible for Jason to improve, through practice and effort, his memory capacity for things that do not involve spatial layouts.
- D. The total memory capacity of the human brain is fixed and equal for all people.
- E. Some people have a greater memory capacity than others.

Correct Answer: D

Argument construction A test that examines people on their memory capacity for spatial layouts has placed Jason in the top 1 percentile of all test-takers. We can conclude from this that his memory capacity for things that do not involve spatial layouts will be below average.

The structure of the argument is:

Premise: Jason is in the top 1 percentile of all people in his memory capacity for spatial layouts. This means, his

Memory capacity for spatial layouts (called MS henceforth for easier reference) is better than 99% of all test-takers. In other words, it is outstanding!

Conclusion: We can conclude from this that his memory capacity for things that do not involve spatial layouts (called MO for other things - henceforth for easier reference) will be below average. Looking at this argument, we see a gap between the premise and conclusion: being outstanding in MS does not necessarily guarantee that one's MO will be below average. This is the loophole that the correct answer choice will have to plug. The correct answer choice will be one which, when added to the argument's premise, would produce a conclusive argument, that is, an argument with no gaps in its support for the conclusion.

Let us analyze the options one by one.

Answer choice explanation [Jason tried hard to remember spatial layouts.] This option is incorrect. When we take this option statement as a premise and combine it with the premise of the argument, does the conclusion logically follow? No. This option statement only provides a plausible reason for why Jason's MS is outstanding. It does not offer any support for the conclusion, which is about his MO.

[Jason has a greater proclivity to remember spatial layouts than most people.] This option is incorrect. The reasons are similar to the ones discussed in the Option above.

[It is possible for Jason to improve, through practice and effort, his memory capacity for things that do not involve spatial layouts.] This option is incorrect. The premise in the argument is that Jason's MS is outstanding. The premise offered by this option statement is that it is possible for Jason (through practice and effort) to improve his MO. When these two premises are combined, the conclusion that Jason's MO is below-average does not logically follow. In fact, one wonders how, when it is possible to improve one's MO, can such a definite declaration as the argument's conclusion be made.

[The total memory capacity of the human brain is fixed and equal for all people.] This option is correct. According to this option statement, the total memory capacity, M, is equal for all people. Also, M is a fixed number. It cannot be increased or decreased. Now, if Jason has higher MS than most people, then it does follow that his MO is lower than most people. Therefore, when this option statement is combined with the argument's premise, there is no gap left in the argument and the conclusion follows logically.

[Some people have a greater memory capacity than others.] This option is incorrect. If some people have a greater (total) memory capacity than others, then it could be possible that Jason has both an outstanding MS and an outstanding MO, therefore, ending up with an outstanding total memory capacity M as compared to most people. Therefore, when this option statement is combined with the premise, the conclusion does not logically follow.

QUESTION 3

To paraphrase Oliver Wendell Holmes, taxes keep us civilized. Just look around you, at well-paved superhighways, air-conditioned schools, and modernized prisons, and you cannot help but agree with Holmes. Which one of the following is the strongest criticism of the statement above?

- A. The author never actually met Holmes.
- B. The author does not acknowledge those of us who do live near highways, schools, and prisons.
- C. The author does not assure us that he has been in a modernized prison.
- D. The author does not offer a biographical sketch of Holmes.
- E. The author does not define "civilized."

Correct Answer: E

Without an implied or explicit definition of the "civilized," the relevance of the examples is vague, at best. Options [The author never actually met Holmes.] and [The author does not offer a biographical sketch of Holmes.] are irrelevant considerations, and options [The author does not acknowledge those of...] and [The author does not assure us that...], although possibly relevant, do not address the most apparent weakness of the passage.

QUESTION 4

By passing more and more regulations allegedly to protect the environment, the state is driving the manufacturing industry away. And when the employers leave, the workers will follow. The number of new no growth or environmental rules passed each year is increasing by leaps and bounds. Rich environmentalists who think they are sympathetic to workers have no real sympathy for the blue-collar employees are injured by their activities.

One major manufacturer has been fined for failing to establish a car-pool plan. Another is accused of polluting the air with industrial emissions, although everyone knows that two thirds of the pollutants come from cars and trucks. No wonder the large manufacturers are moving to states with fewer restrictive laws. And as the manufacturers go, unemployment and the number of workers leaving the state will rise more rapidly than ever before. Which one of the following is NOT an argument of this passage?

- A. Environmentalists are responsible for depriving workers of their jobs.
- B. When workers leave a state, it is a sign that manufacturers will follow.
- C. A car-pool law should not be enforced, as cars and trucks are responsible for most air pollution.
- D. Large manufacturers prefer states with fewer restrictions.
- E. A rise in unemployment will lead to an increase in workers leaving the state.

Correct Answer: B

The passage makes no comment on workers leaving before a manufacturer. It argues that the loss of manufacturers leads to a loss of workers [A rise in unemployment will lead to an increase...].

QUESTION 5

Always read the meter dials from the right to the left. This procedure is much easier, especially if any of the dial hands are near the zero mark. If the meter has two dials, and one is smaller than the other, it is not imperative to read the smaller dial since it only registers a small amount. Read the dial at the right first. As the dial turns clockwise, always record the figure the pointer has just passed. Read the next dial to the left and record the figure it has just passed. Continue recording the figures on the dials from right to left. When finished, mark off the number of units recorded. Dials on water and gas meters usually indicate the amount each dial records.

These instructions show you how to

- A. read a meter
- B. turn the dials of a meter
- C. install a gas meter
- D. repair a water meter
- E. be prepared for outside employment

Correct Answer: A

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