

Assumption Questions

December 2007, Prep Test 53, Sec I

- #9 (Necessary)
- The evidence is about nesting female leatherback turtles.
- The conclusion is about the entire population of leatherback turtles.
- For the argument to be a good one, nesting female leatherback turtles must be representative of leatherback turtles generally. So the answer is A.
- #13 (Necessary)
- The evidence states the drug caused no significant change in a three month trial.
- The conclusion states that the drug has no effect.
- “No change → No effect” would complete the argument, and A is the contrapositive this statement.
- Note that in 9 & 13, the correct answer is both necessary and sufficient. We can stay that they are necessary because they contain no language than is stronger than that in the conclusion.

Assumption Questions

December 2007, Prep Test 53, Sec I,
#15

- Necessary
- B) If crushed limestone did NOT stay in the soil long enough to neutralize some of the top layer's acidity, then crushed limestone would not make the soil less acidic, and would therefore not make the soil more attractive to earthworms. The negation of B destroys the argument, and so it is correct.
- C) Limestone might be good for other reasons, but the conclusion is about earthworms. We always must consider the specific conclusion. The conclusion isn't just a general "Limestone is good", but "limestone would make the soil more attractive to earthworms."

Assumption Questions

December 2007, Prep Test 53, Sec I,
#15

- Necessary
- B) If crushed limestone did NOT stay in the soil long enough to neutralize some of the top layer's acidity, then crushed limestone would not make the soil less acidic, and would therefore not make the soil more attractive to earthworms. The negation of B destroys the argument, and so it is correct.
- C) Limestone might be good for other reasons, but the conclusion is about earthworms. We always must consider the specific conclusion. The conclusion isn't just a general "Limestone is good", but "limestone would make the soil more attractive to earthworms."

Assumption Questions

December 2007, Prep Test 53, Sec I,
#20

- Sufficient
- Argument by analogy: lions and tigers have same skeletons, but different hunting behavior. Therefore, we cannot infer that certain dinosaurs with same skeletons had same hunting behavior.
- We need an answer choice that connects what we know about lions and tigers to dinosaurs, or to animals in general. C does that, so C is correct.
- D is a common kind of wrong answer for Sufficient Assumption questions. It says, “If the conclusion is true, then the evidence is true.” But we already know the evidence is true, so D does nothing to help the argument.

Assumption Questions

December 2007, Prep Test 53, Sec I,
#23

- Necessary
- Evidence is about “robust crops” withstanding insect attacks.
- Conclusion is about “good soil” preventing insect attacks.
- Correct answer will connect “robust crops” to “good soil.”
- D is correct: “Crops grown in good soil tend to be robust crops.” leads to good crops. Note that the language strength of the assumption – “tend to,” - matches the strength of the conclusion: “a better way.”

Assumption Questions

December 2007, Prep Test 53, Sec III, #8

- 8: A) If there are NO bacteria in these landfills converted to public parks, then the evidence is completely irrelevant to human health, and therefore the argument is destroyed. A is correct.
- B) This choice can be diagrammed: Damage health → Toxic Vapors + Human Exposure. The negation is that “health could be damaged without toxic vapors and human exposure.” Sure, health could be damaged by a faulty sea-saw, so the negation of B does not destroy the argument and is not wrong.
- C) This choice is tempting, but its negation does not destroy the argument, because the choice is about “vapors”, not necessarily “toxic vapors.”
- D) Weakens the argument, and the negation ("measures cannot be taken") strengthens is, so this choice is clearly wrong.
- E) "Any landfill" is too broad.

Assumption Questions

December 2007, Prep Test 53, Sec III

- 15 (Necessary)
- The correct answer is E. The negation of E: “If retirement age ceases to be 65, NO one will work past 65.” The negation makes the injustices cited impossible and the conclusion completely useless.
- 20 (Necessary)
- Conclusion: ability of mammals to control their internal body temperature is a factor in the development of their brains and intelligence.
- Evidence: last clause
- The negation of C is “The brain COULD support intelligence...”. This looks like it might weaken the argument. But the argument is about the development of intelligence, not the support of the intelligence.
- The negation of D: “The development of intelligence in mammals IS INDEPENDENT...”. This negation destroys the argument, and so D is correct.