

Necessary Assumption

1. If the physicists trained by J. J. Thomson were creative researchers before studying under him, then clearly the argument would be specious. On the other hand, if none of the physicists were creative researchers before studying under Thomson, then the argument would be strong. However, the argument does not require this strong of a statement in order to be valid. All it needs is one person whose research skills profited from the tutelage of Thomson. The answer is (C).
Many students have problems with this type of question. They read through the answer-choices and find no significant statements. They may pause at (C) but reject it—thinking that the argument would be deceptive if only one person out of 122 profited from the tutelage of Thomson. However, the missing assumption doesn't have to make the argument good, just valid.
2. The sentence “To address this problem . . . cockpit” is the counter-premise because it shows that the airlines are doing something about the problem. However, the author goes on to imply that it is not enough, that no training program can be a substitute for actual flying time. Notice that choice (A) baits the reader because it refers to the counter-premise. If the counter-premise stood alone, (A) would not be a bad answer (though it would still overstate the case). However, in the sentence, “But it is . . . time,” the author states that training programs are not only insufficient but only marginally effective.
This argument is difficult because the second-best answer-choice is almost as

good as the best one. Choices (B) and (E) can be quickly dismissed. Choice (C), though probably true, slightly overstates the author's claim. The author implied only that actual flying time is essential; he made no claim that it would actually decrease the number of crashes. Furthermore, he did not imply that airlines should focus on actual flying time, only that it plays an essential part in reducing the number of pilot errors. Hence, by process of elimination, the answer is (D).

3. The implied premise of the first question is that Central voice students have better breath control than Northeast voice students because the Central students take more frequent voice lessons and are required to practice more often. Further, it is assumed that more lessons and practice are indispensable factors to this result. (D) is the correct answer.
Selection (A) is the second best answer. The conclusion in the first question states that Northeast students “*will improve their breath control only if they increase*” their lessons and practice. Put another way, more frequent voice lessons and practice are required for greater breath control. Selection (A) says that all students who take frequent lessons and practice often would have good breath control, but (A) does not imply that such a schedule of lessons and practice are necessary.

4. The link that allows the conclusion to be drawn in this problem is the assumption that only principals will try new methods and programs. Under this theory of governance by committee, new methods and programs cannot be implemented. Thus, the theory assumes that only individuals will try new ideas. Selection (B) is the correct answer. Selection (C) is a close second. It is supported by the argument, but it understates the breadth of the implied premise. The question states that in this theory of school governance, new methods and programs cannot be implemented, not that they are less likely to be implemented.

5. Don't ponder too long over this question. The answer is fairly simple. The question presumes that medical professionals who left their jobs in the public health sector for higher paying private jobs would return to the public health sector if salaries go up enough. (D) is the correct choice. Students often assume the LSAT will contain only difficult questions because it has the reputation of being a difficult test. But the LSAT contains questions with a wide range of difficulty levels, from easy to very difficult. Students are often bewildered when they read a fairly easy question and find an obvious answer in the selections available. They believe they might have missed something, and often try to make the question more difficult than it is. When one of the selections seems too self-evident, then perhaps it is. However, because the LSAT questions do vary tremendously by difficulty level, perhaps the obvious answer to a simple question is correct. If a question bothers you for this reason, don't become obsessed with

discovering what you have missed in the question. Perhaps you haven't missed anything and the obvious answer is the correct choice. If you carefully read back through the question and selections and don't find anything you missed the first time, select your answer and go on with the next LSAT question. You might want to mark that question somehow in the margin so that you can come back to it if you have time after you complete the exam.

6. In determining whether one of the assumptions provided in the answers is a suppressed premise for the passage, you should ask yourself whether the assumption makes the presented argument more likely. If it does, then the answer is most likely a suppressed premise. The lower reading level in American children could be caused by a number of things, not just the amount of television they watch. For instance, if the methods used by American teachers and parents to teach reading are inferior to the methods used in other western countries, then this could quite possibly account for the difference in reading levels. Thus, in order for the argument to be valid, the methods used in the United States must be about as effective as the methods used in other western countries. Selection (E) is the correct answer to this question. Don't be distracted by (C) or (D). While (C) might be true, it is not an assumption in the argument. And just because a child watches less television doesn't mean he or she is reading more.

7. (A) No. The gallery owner's argument attempts to directly refute this charge; it is not an assumption in his argument.
- (B) No. The gallery owner's argument is based on the quality and style of Grieg's paintings, not the number of pieces of artwork Grieg or any other artist submits.
- (C) Yes. The gallery owner states that the artists' names are covered so the review board could not know who the artists are. He or she assumes that the members of the review board will not be able to recognize Grieg's paintings if his name is not disclosed. But the review board could recognize Grieg's paintings based on his style, medium, subject matter, and other things.
- (D) No. We have no information as to the type of artwork displayed in the gallery.
- (E) No. Again, we have no information as to what type of art the review board has favored in the gallery in recent years.
8. (A) No. Nothing in the argument suggests that the incidence of accidents has gone up with the increased use of bicycle helmets.
- (B) No. In fact, the argument states just the opposite—that bicycle helmets are exempt from the safety standards the government requires for football helmets.
- (C) No. This argument concerns the incidence of head injuries in children who ride bicycles contrasted with children who play football. This selection encompasses all types of injuries, not merely head injuries. We have no information about the incidence of other types of injuries sustained in these activities, i.e., broken bones, sprained ankles, etc.
- (D) No. Again, the author provides no information as to how many children play football and ride bicycles. And the conclusion in the passage deals with the probability of head injuries in children who participate in both activities, not the number of children who participate in these activities.
- (E) Yes. The argument implies that because bicycle helmets are exempt from the government safety standards for football helmets, children will more likely be injured in bicycle accidents. However, bicycle helmets might be exempt from the standards because the government believes bicycle helmets already meet the safety standards applicable to football helmets. We don't know the reason bicycle helmets are not covered by the standards. The implication in this argument is that bicycle helmets are not as safe as football helmets, and therefore, they are less likely to meet the football helmet safety standards.

9. If the salespeople trained by Mr. Cooper were successful before studying under him, then clearly the argument would be specious. On the other hand, if none of the salespeople were successful before studying under him, then the argument would be strong. However, the argument does not require this strong of a statement in order to be valid. All it needs is one person who profited from the tutelage of Mr. Cooper. The answer is (C).

Many students have problems with this type of question. They read through the answer-choices and find no significant statements. They may pause at (C) but reject it—thinking that the argument would be deceptive if only one person out of 17 profited from the tutelage of Mr. Cooper. However, the missing premise doesn't have to make the argument good, just valid.

10. Based on the conclusion of the passage, the author believes that convenience stores continued to sell tobacco products to minors but that they just weren't caught as often during the years 1990-1995. He places the blame for this at the feet of local enforcement agencies. Thus, selection (B) is assumed in the author's conclusion and is the correct selection. The author assumes that the number of tobacco sales to minors did not decrease. However, if in fact the number of tobacco sales to minors decreased from 1990-1995, then the author's conclusion is flawed. But that isn't the question here. Rather, the question asks about the assumptions the author has made in reaching his conclusion, valid or not. This question points out the importance of reading the specific question asked about the test passage.

Selections (A), (C) and (D) would perhaps explain why fewer citations were issued during 1990- 1995. But they are not assumptions the author has necessarily made in reaching his conclusion. The basic underpinning of the author's conclusion is his belief or assumption that convenience stores continued to sell tobacco products to minors at the same levels sold during the preceding five-year period. Selection (E) is irrelevant to the conclusion because it has no bearing on why the number of citations decreased during 1990-1995.

11. (A) No. This does not address the conflicting proposals: demolition vs. rehabilitation.
- (B) Yes. Suppose the houses are destroyed first. Then it cannot be known whether rehabilitating the houses would have solved the problem. However, suppose the houses are rehabilitated first. Now, if rehabilitation fails to solve the problem, the houses can still be demolished. So rehabilitating the houses first *does not* preclude the possibility of destroying the houses later, whereas destroying the houses first *does* preclude the possibility of rehabilitating the houses later.
- (C) No. We do not know whether either proposal requires government funding. Besides, only one of the two proposals advocated renovating the buildings, the other advocated destroying the buildings.
- (D) No. This is the second-best choice. It is both too strong and too broad. The passage is about only two proposals: destruction and rehabilitation.
- (E) No. The question asks which of two possible decisions is right, not which method should be taken to arrive at a decision.

12. The statement “*It is clear that if his dismissal was justified, then Hastings was either incompetent or else disloyal*” can be symbolized as

$$\mathbf{J \rightarrow (I \text{ or } D)}$$

where J stands for “his dismissal was justified,” I stands for “incompetent,” and D stands for “disloyal.” Now, the statement “*it was shown that he had never been incompetent*”— $\sim\mathbf{I}$ —reduces the diagram to

$$\mathbf{J \rightarrow D}$$

This diagram tells us that if we assume that J is true, then, as the argument

concludes, D must be true. Hence, the argument assumes that Hastings’ dismissal was justified. The answer is (A).

13. This is a case of All-Things-Being-Equal. In order to attribute the reduction in accidents to the Highway Patrol’s Publicity campaign, we must remove the possibility of alternative explanations. Choice (D) removes one such explanation—that the decrease in accidents could have been due to a decrease in driving on the highway. The answer is (D).