

Paradox

1. Before looking at the possible answers, take a few seconds to think about what might be causing the unexpected result. What could explain the continuing incidence of head injuries? Perhaps children's bicycle helmets were not designed properly or perhaps children are not using the helmets properly.

Now look at the possible selections. (A) and (C) are not correct because they are possible explanations for why children do not wear helmets. The passage asks why injuries still occur in children who do wear helmets. (B) is irrelevant; it does not explain why head injuries occur in children who wear bicycle helmets. The passage implies that bicycle helmets reduce the total incidence of head injuries, not that they eliminate all head injuries. Selection (D) contradicts this implication because it states that the same injuries occur that bicycle helmets help prevent. Selection (E) remains, and it is the correct selection. It also fits an explanation we thought of before reviewing the LSAT selections.

2. This question wants to be an "all things being equal" question. But in finding the best answer to this question, we are asked to pick an explanation for why not all things are equal. For only if things are not equal can both seemingly contradictory statements in the passage be supported. If cases are randomly assigned in the district attorney's office, then Mr. Feather's low conviction rate discredits the district attorney's claim. However,

if Mr. Feather is assigned the cases that are the most difficult to prove, then it is reasonable that his conviction rate will be lower than the conviction rates of other prosecutors in the office. Perhaps a less skillful prosecutor would have an even lower conviction rate if given the weakest cases to take to trial. Selection (D) is the correct answer.

Selection (A) is the second best answer because it provides an explanation for the district attorney's claim. Obviously, the district attorney will want her staff and the public to think that she has chosen the best person for the job of first assistant district attorney. She might exaggerate Mr. Feather's capabilities to bolster her own image. But the answer doesn't explain why even if Mr. Feather is quite talented, he has such a low conviction record.

Selection (B) doesn't really explain either of the positions in the passage. Explaining that Mr. Feather was promoted from within the ranks doesn't support the district attorney's claim about Mr. Feather's prosecuting abilities or explain why Mr. Feather has such a low conviction record.

Neither does selection (C) explain why the district attorney touts Mr. Feather as the best. Selection (C) also does not explain Mr. Feather's poor conviction record.

Selection (E) just compares Mr. Feather's record with that of his predecessor. It doesn't support the claims contained in the passage.

3. If all of the men and women who

had played basketball for Thompson High School ten years earlier had responded to the survey, then the results would indeed contradict the facts. However, if a disproportionately higher number of starting players responded to the survey, then the apparent contradiction can be easily explained. If only four people responded to the survey and three of them were in fact starting players, then 75% of those responding were starters. This would explain the apparent contradiction. The answer is Selection (B).

Selection (A) does not explain the contradiction; in fact, it seems to support the contradiction because it states that people reported their starting positions correctly. If instead Selection (A) had indicated that people's faulty memories accounted for inaccurate responses, then it would help explain the contradiction.

Selection (C) is too vaguely worded to be of much help. Perhaps only two starting players failed to respond while all the other starting players responded to the survey. This might help explain the contradiction if a larger percentage of non-starters failed to respond.

If Selection (D) were true, then it would not help resolve the contradiction. Rather, it would make the contradiction more inexplicable, particularly if we assume that the people who responded were correct in their responses.

Finally, Selection (E) might help explain the contradiction if good players who played later in the game were confused about whether

they were classified as starters or not. But this answer is not the best answer. Selection (B) is by far the best answer.

4. All-things-being-equal, one would expect the amount of ultraviolet radiation reaching the Earth's surface to increase as the ozone layer decreased in the upper atmosphere. So we are looking for something that might offset the decrease in ozone in the upper atmosphere. Look at choice (D). It states that as ozone decreased in the upper atmosphere it increased dramatically in the lower atmosphere. Thus, overall there would be more ozone in the atmosphere and therefore more ultraviolet light would be absorbed before reaching the Earth's surface. The answer is (D).

The first part of choice (A) is irrelevant. The second part rather than reconciling the discrepant facts would add another discrepant fact: If the amount of cancer causing ultraviolet light reaching the Earth decreased, the incidence of cancer should also decrease, not increase.

Choice (B) is irrelevant since the passage is about what happened in North America, not Brazil. Even if it were relevant, it would strengthen, not reconcile, the apparently discrepant facts.

Choice (C) explains why the ozone is being depleted in the upper atmosphere, but this does not reconcile the discrepancy.

Choice (E) offers another explanation for why the ozone in the upper atmosphere is being depleted, but again this does not reconcile the discrepancy.

5. The answer is (C). All things being equal, one would expect the older the car, the more likely it would need major repairs. However, perhaps the older cars are considered classics and are therefore driven on only special occasions. Or perhaps when the older cars break down, their owners opt for new cars, which is what choice (C) says.
6. (A) No. The paradox involves the health of mule deer living in old-growth forests and the health of mule deer living in cleared forests, not between the mule deer and other species of deer.
(B) No. It is conceivable that both female deer and their young offspring are less well nourished than adult males; however, this is speculation.
(C) No. Their natural range is irrelevant. At issue is the difference in their health in cleared forest versus old-growth forests.
(D) Yes. We are looking for an agent that would cause the deer to become less well nourished even as their food supply increases. Choice (D) offers an agent—tannins, which inhibit digestion of food. So even though the deer have more food to eat, they receive less nutrition from the food.
(E) No. This should make the deer better nourished in cleared forest since there are few trees from which the parasites could drop onto the deer.
7. (A) Yes. Incineration may pose the least amount of risk for the greatest number of people, yet concentrate the risk for a few people—those living nearby.
(B) No. This would make the general population less likely to approve of incinerators and does not explain why people object when an incinerator is built nearby.
(C) No. This does not explain why the general population approves of incinerators and the people living near incinerators oppose them.
(D) No. This should help allay the fears of nearby residents, assuming that the solids are potentially less harmful. Hence, it would make them less likely to object to the incinerators.
(E) No. This does not explain why the general population approves of incinerators, and the people living near incinerators oppose them. Evidently, the people living near the incinerators worry that they will be exposed to greater amounts of toxins than people further away.