

Preparing for the LSAT

Most law school applicants familiarize themselves with test directions and question types, practice on sample tests, and study the information available on test-taking techniques and strategies. Although it is difficult to say when you are sufficiently prepared for the LSAT, very few people achieve their full potential without some preparation. You should be so familiar with the instructions and question types that nothing you see on the test can delay or distract you from thinking about how to answer a question. At a minimum, you should review the descriptions of the question types (below) and simulate the day of the test by taking, under actual time constraints, a practice test that includes a writing sample. Taking a practice test under timed conditions helps you to estimate the amount of time you can afford to spend on each question in a section and to determine the question types for which you may need additional practice.

The Three LSAT Multiple-choice Question Types

■ Reading Comprehension Questions

The purpose of reading comprehension questions is to measure your ability to read, with understanding and insight, examples of lengthy and complex materials similar to those commonly encountered in law school work. The reading comprehension section of the LSAT contains four sets of reading questions, each consisting of a selection of reading material followed by five to eight questions. The reading selection in three of the four sets consists of a single reading passage of approximately 450 words in length. The other set contains two related shorter passages. Sets with two passages are a new variant of reading comprehension, called comparative reading, which was introduced into the reading comprehension section in June 2007. See the box on page 34 for more information.

Reading selections for reading comprehension questions are drawn from subjects such as the humanities, the social sciences, the biological and physical sciences, and issues related to the law. Reading comprehension questions require you to read carefully and accurately, to determine the relationships among the various parts of the reading selection, and to draw reasonable inferences from the material in the selection. The questions may ask about the following characteristics of a passage or pair of passages:

- the main idea or primary purpose;
- the meaning or purpose of words or phrases used;
- information explicitly stated;
- information or ideas that can be inferred;
- the organization or structure;

The five multiple-choice sections of the test contain three different question types. The following pages present a general discussion of the nature of each question type and some strategies that can be used in answering them. Directions for each question type, sample questions, and a discussion of the answers are also included. When possible, explanations of the sample questions indicate their comparative level of difficulty.

Next, the writing sample is described, including directions and example prompts.

The following descriptive materials reflect the general nature of the test. It is not possible or practical to cover the full range of variation that may be found in questions on the LSAT. Be aware that material may appear in the test that is not described in the discussion of question types found here. For additional practice, you can purchase any of the many LSAT preparation books listed in the ad in this book.

- the application of information in a passage to a new context; and
- the author's attitude as it is revealed in the tone of a passage or the language used.

Suggested Approach

Since reading selections are drawn from many different disciplines and sources, you should not be discouraged if you encounter material with which you are not familiar. It is important to remember that questions are to be answered exclusively on the basis of the information provided in the selection. There is no particular knowledge that you are expected to bring to the test, and you should not make inferences based on any prior knowledge of a subject that you may have. You may, however, wish to defer working on a set of questions that seems particularly difficult or unfamiliar until after you have dealt with sets you find easier.

Strategies. In preparing for the test, you should experiment with different strategies and decide which work most effectively for you. These include:

- reading the selection very closely and then answering the questions;
- reading the questions first, reading the selection closely, and then returning to the questions; or
- skimming the selection and questions very quickly, then rereading the selection closely and answering the questions.

Remember that your strategy must be effective for you under timed conditions.

Comparative Reading

As of the June 2007 administration, LSAC introduced a new variant of reading comprehension, called comparative reading, as one of the four sets in the LSAT reading comprehension section. In general, comparative reading questions are similar to traditional reading comprehension questions, except that comparative reading questions are based on two shorter passages instead of one longer passage. The two passages together are of roughly the same length as one reading comprehension passage, so the total amount of reading in the reading comprehension section remains essentially the same. A few of the questions that follow a comparative reading passage pair might concern only one of the two passages, but most will be about both passages and how they relate to each other.

Comparative reading questions reflect the nature of some important tasks in law school work, such as understanding arguments from multiple texts by applying skills of comparison, contrast, generalization, and synthesis to the texts. The purpose of comparative reading is to assess this important set of skills directly.

What comparative reading looks like

The two passages in a comparative reading set—labeled “**Passage A**” and “**Passage B**”—discuss the same topic or related topics. The topics fall into the same academic categories traditionally used in reading comprehension: humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, and issues related to the law. Like traditional reading comprehension passages, comparative reading passages are complex and generally involve argument. The two passages in a comparative reading pair are typically adapted from two different published sources written by two different authors. They are usually independent of each other, with neither author responding directly to the other.

As you read the pair of passages, it is helpful to try to determine what the central idea or main point of each passage is, and to determine how the passages relate

to each other. The passages will relate to each other in various ways. In some cases, the authors of the passages will be in general agreement with each other, while in others their views will be directly opposed. Passage pairs may also exhibit more complex types of relationships: for example, one passage might articulate a set of principles while the other passage applies those or similar principles to a particular situation.

Questions that are concerned with only one of the passages are essentially identical to traditional reading comprehension questions. Questions that address both passages test the same fundamental reading skills as traditional reading comprehension questions, but the skills are applied to two texts instead of one. You may be asked to identify a main purpose shared by both passages, a statement with which both authors would agree, or a similarity or dissimilarity in the structure of the arguments in the two passages. The following are additional examples of comparative reading questions:

- Which one of the following is the central topic of each passage?
- Both passages explicitly mention which one of the following?
- Which one of the following statements is most strongly supported by both passages?
- Which one of the following most accurately describes the attitude expressed by the author of passage B toward the overall argument in passage A?
- The relationship between passage A and passage B is most analogous to the relationship in which one of the following?

This is not a complete list of the sorts of questions you may be asked in a comparative reading set, but it illustrates the range of questions you may be asked.

Reading the selection. Whatever strategy you choose, you should give the passage or pair of passages at least one careful reading before answering the questions. Try to distinguish main ideas from supporting ideas, and opinions or attitudes from factual, objective information. Note transitions from one idea to the next and examine the relationships among the different ideas or parts of a passage, or between the two passages in comparative reading sets. Consider how and why an author makes points and draws conclusions. Be sensitive to implications of what the passages say.

You may find it helpful to mark key parts of passages. For example, you might underline main ideas or important arguments, and you might circle transitional words—“although,” “nevertheless,” “correspondingly,” and the like—that will help you map the structure of a passage. Moreover, you might note descriptive words that will help you identify an author’s attitude toward a particular idea or person.

Answering the Questions

- Always read all the answer choices before selecting the best answer. The best answer choice is the one that most accurately and completely answers the question being posed.
- Respond to the specific question being asked. Do not pick an answer choice simply because it is a true statement. For example, picking a true statement might yield an incorrect answer to a question in which you are asked to identify an author's position on an issue, since here you are not being asked to evaluate the truth of the author's position but only to correctly identify what that position is.

- Answer the questions only on the basis of the information provided in the selection. Your own views, interpretations, or opinions, and those you have heard from others, may sometimes conflict with those expressed in a reading selection; however, you are expected to work within the context provided by the reading selection. You should not expect to agree with everything you encounter in reading comprehension passages.

Fourteen Sample Reading Comprehension Questions and Explanations

The sample questions on the following pages are typical of the reading comprehension questions you will find on the LSAT. Three traditional reading comprehension passages are included, but they are followed by only two or three sample questions each, whereas each passage in the actual LSAT is followed by five to eight questions. In contrast, since comparative reading is a new variant of reading comprehension, the comparative reading set below includes seven questions and explanations for familiarization purposes. (Note: There is also a comparative reading set in the sample LSAT included in this book.)

Directions: Each set of questions in this section is based on a single passage or a pair of passages. The questions are to be answered on the basis of what is stated or implied in the passage or pair of passages. For some of the questions, more than one of the choices could conceivably answer the question. However, you are to choose the best answer; that is, the response that most accurately and completely answers the question, and blacken the corresponding space on your answer sheet.

Passage for Questions 1 and 2

For many African American writers, history and personal experience have reflected not diversity of opportunity, but limitation of opportunity. Their writings consequently demonstrate their (5) sense that literature should provide a unified, cultural identity in forceful opposition to that limitation. For Ralph Ellison and some younger contemporary novelists such as Charles Johnson, Leon Forrest, and John Wideman, (10) however, the problem seems the reverse. With African American life offering multiple perspectives and possibilities to these writers, how can one pattern of unification explain all? And if one pattern cannot, what identities are (15) available to their characters?

In *Invisible Man*, Ellison's protagonist, like Ellison in his early life, experiments with a variety of roles. As he assumes new roles, each a result of racial pressure, he realizes (20) paradoxically that while his options should be decreasing, they are actually increasing. Most frightening to him is the prospect that there might be innumerable roles for him to play, that the perception of "infinite possibilities" would (25) become the terrifying perception of chaos; he might, in other words, be without any permanent "form." Ellison's protagonist's

problem is the same epistemological problem as that of Herman Melville's character Ishmael in

(30) *Moby-Dick* (1851): how to make definitions, especially of one's self. The only "plan" that Ellison's protagonist finds capable of shielding him from the chaos of living is a personal aesthetic plan for an individual rather than for a (35) people. As the novel progresses, the Invisible Man perceives that actively creating a personal style makes survival possible; as a style for himself he adopts the attitudes of traditional blues.

(40) Johnson, Forrest, and Wideman, however, cannot rest easy with even such a hard-won solution as the blues, if that solution is used to serve only an isolated individual. For them, the blues are chiefly a triumphant and lasting part of (45) African American culture, rather than a solution to the problem of defining identity. In their novels, the individual, that archetypal figure of Western myth and fiction, often journeys forth from a rural Southern community to the urban (50) North, seeking to know himself and give form to his life. Eventually the reader realizes that this journey is, as Ellison explicitly states about the journey of his protagonist, cyclical. Yet it should be noted that, whereas Ellison's (55) protagonist concludes his quest as a lone individual once again, the protagonists of these other

novels reconfirm their identity as members of the African American community. No character like Ras the Exhorter, who attempts in *Invisible Man* to unify the African American community, triumphs in these novels, as many of Ellison's critics think should have happened in *Invisible Man*; but their protagonists do not end underground, companioned alone with their thoughts.

(60)

Question 1

It can be inferred from the passage that some of the protagonist's actions in *Invisible Man* are most likely to have been modeled on the

- (A) actions of Ishmael in Melville's *Moby-Dick*
- (B) most recurrent situations in Western myth and fiction
- (C) author's personal experiences before he wrote the novel
- (D) actions of those African American literary characters who question traditional blues attitudes
- (E) actions of those African American literary characters who work to establish a single African American identity

Explanation for Question 1

This question requires the examinee to draw from the information presented in the passage an inference about what most likely is the case.

The credited response is (C). The author implies that Ellison's personal experiences provided the model for his protagonist: "In *Invisible Man*, Ellison's protagonist, like Ellison in his early life, experiments with a variety of roles" (lines 16–18). It is also indicated (in the first paragraph) that Ellison's personal experience provided the diversity of opportunity needed for such experimentation, and that these "multiple perspectives and possibilities" (lines 11–12) are reflected in his writing.

Response (A) is incorrect, because, although the author compares *Invisible Man* to *Moby-Dick* in lines 27–31, response (A) mistakes the author's purpose in referring to Melville's novel. The author of the passage is making a very limited comparison between the respective protagonists of both novels. The author of the passage merely points out that both novels have protagonists who face the same epistemological question and who attempt "to make definitions, especially of one's self." This is nothing more than an observation that the author of the passage makes. There is no suggestion that Ellison used Melville's work as a model.

Response (B) is incorrect because it confuses the context in which the author refers to recurrent situations in Western myth and fiction. The second paragraph examines the work of Ellison. The third contrasts that author with Johnson, Forrest, and Wideman, whose novels are said to deal with the individual as "that archetypal figure of Western myth and fiction" (lines 47–48). There is no basis in the passage for assuming that this archetype is the model for

Ellison's protagonist. If anything, there is a slight suggestion in lines 53–58, where the author of the passage contrasts Ellison's protagonist with those of Johnson, Forrest, and Wideman, that Ellison's protagonist is unlike this archetype.

Response (D) is incorrect because it distorts information in the passage. Ellison's character "adopts the attitudes of traditional blues" (lines 38–39). The writers Johnson, Forrest, and Wideman are said to see the blues as an aspect of African American culture, "rather than a solution to the problem of defining identity" (lines 45–46). The passage never refers to literary characters who question traditional blues attitudes.

Response (E) is incorrect. It refers to the work of those African American writers mentioned in the first sentences of the passage whose work deals with the problem of creating "a unified, cultural identity" (lines 5–6). This is the point of departure for the author's discussion of Ellison and the other younger writers for whom "the problem seems the reverse" (line 10). Therefore, since the author establishes a clear distinction between these writers and Ellison, it would be very odd to say that Ellison modeled his protagonist on the actions of characters typical of the other group. Moreover, although the character Ras the Exhorter in *Invisible Man* is said to attempt to unify the African American community, there is every indication that Ras the Exhorter is not *Invisible Man*'s protagonist (for example, see lines 31–35).

This question was answered correctly by 47 percent of test takers, making it a "middle difficulty" question.

Question 2

Which one of the following terms could best be substituted for the word "chaos" (line 25) without changing the author's meaning?

- (A) racial pressure
- (B) literary incoherence
- (C) contradictory roles
- (D) limited identity
- (E) unstable identity

Explanation for Question 2

This question requires the examinee to understand from context the meaning of the word "chaos," which is used by the author in an interesting way.

The credited response is (E). Ellison's protagonist, faced with the prospect of a life of innumerable roles, of "infinite possibilities" (line 24), becomes terrified at the thought of the chaos that would leave him no "permanent 'form'" (line 27). Any word that replaces the word "chaos" without changing the author's meaning, must denote something that leads to a lack of permanent form. "Unstable identity" does this best in that it suggests that one's identity never remains the same, that it is always changing, and thus leaves one with no permanent form.

Response (A) is incorrect. Although each of the roles played by Ellison's protagonist is the result of racial

pressure, it is not the pressures themselves that the protagonist equates with chaos.

Response (B) is incorrect. Nothing in the passage suggests that the problem of “chaos” faced by Ellison’s protagonist is a literary problem for the character or Ellison.

Response (C) is incorrect. The protagonist fears innumerable roles—that is, the perception of “infinite possibilities” (line 24). So, the passage suggests that it is a consequence of the number of roles, rather than the contradictions among them, that would positively terrify Ellison’s protagonist.

Response (D) is incorrect. Substituting “limited identity” for “chaos” would make the perception incongruent with the perception of “infinite possibilities” mentioned in line 24. These contradictory concepts would make the resulting sentence incoherent. Furthermore, in the second paragraph, the author is examining the phenomenon of “increasing” options, not limiting ones.

This is considered an “easy” question. Sixty-eight percent of test takers answered this question correctly.

Passage for Questions 3 and 4

The auction is a market mechanism. It consists of unique transactions between willing sellers and eager buyers who have been brought together by the auctioneer to determine a price at which the (5) items for sale will be sold. As a method for determining price, auctions are easy, accurate, and fair. However, auctions are occasionally marred by certain bidding practices that conflict with fairness and openness in business deals. Some of these (10) practices involve negotiations behind the scenes.

Two of the more common types of illegal bidding practices in auction circuits are “puffing” and “stifling competition.” The objective of “puffing” is to buoy the price of the item for sale. Two puffing (15) practices are common: having the seller, or the seller’s agent, bid on an item the seller himself has put up for sale; or having the seller in some way exempt the person bidding from being held responsible for the full amount of the bid. Sellers bid (20) on their own property because they want to get the highest price possible; they do not want the property to be sacrificed.

When puffing is suspected, it is important to establish whether the person suspected of puffing is (25) indeed the seller of the item. Ownership interests may be divided among several persons, each of whom must agree to the sale. Those persons, as a group, then constitute the seller. An individual with ownership interests can bid as an individual without being a (30) puffer so long as the seller—that is, the group as a whole—can hold that person responsible for the full amount of the bid. If the person bidding is even partially immunized by the seller from being held responsible for the full amount of the bid, puffing (35) has occurred.

Buyers engage in “stifling competition,” the other common illegal bidding practice, to dampen

competition so that they can purchase an item for less than the amount it would have brought in an

(40) auction uninfluenced by such conduct. Stifling competition can take several forms: agreements among prospective buyers not to bid, words or actions that are meant to discourage others from bidding, or bidding techniques that diminish the (45) price ultimately paid for the item being auctioned.

Puffing and stifling competition are opposite sides of the same coin. When they occur, buyers and sellers, respectively, complain that the other’s conduct has prevented the auction from being fair (50) and open. In those instances when the complaints have been found to be justified, the courts have held puffing to be a fraud on the buyers and stifling competition to be a fraud on the sellers. Both practices are fraudulent because they undermine (55) the fair, open, and competitive determination of price that is meant to be the distinguishing characteristic of auctions as market mechanisms.

Question 3

According to the information in the passage, each of the following is an accurate statement about auctions EXCEPT:

- (A) Puffing is considered an illegal practice at auctions.
- (B) Ideally, auctions are a fair method for determining the price of an item.
- (C) Sellers are generally able to get higher prices through auctions than through other market mechanisms.
- (D) The prices paid at a fair auction are the result of competition among buyers.
- (E) The price that is determined at a fair auction is not always acceptable to the seller.

Explanation for Question 3

This question requires the examinee to identify what information about auctions the passage does and does not contain. Note that the question says, “According to the information in the passage, each of the following is an accurate statement about auctions EXCEPT.” The correct response, in this case, is one that the passage *does not* support as accurate.

(C) is the credited response because the passage does not discuss “other market mechanisms,” and nowhere does it suggest that sellers could do better through auctions than such mechanisms. Therefore, (C) correctly answers the question asked because the information given in the passage does not support it as an accurate statement about auctions.

Response (A) is incorrect because the passage clearly states that “puffing” is considered an illegal bidding practice at auctions. Paragraph two begins by saying, “*Two of the more common types of illegal bidding practices in auction circuits are ‘puffing’ and ‘stifling competition.’*” Therefore, based on the information in the passage, response (A) is an accurate statement about auctions.

Response (B) is incorrect because the first paragraph of the passage establishes that “ideally, auctions are a fair method for determining the price of an item.” It says, “*As a method for determining price, auctions are easy, accurate, and fair.*” The final paragraph also provides information supporting response (B). It says, “*the fair, open, and competitive determination of price...is meant to be the distinguishing characteristic of auctions as market mechanisms.*” Therefore, response (B) is an accurate statement about auctions, given the information in the passage.

Response (D) is incorrect because the fourth paragraph of the passage, which discusses the illegal bidding practice of “*stifling competition*,” makes it clear that when competition is stifled, an auction is no longer fair. Thus, the passage does provide information to support the statement, “The prices paid at a fair auction are the result of competition among buyers.”

Response (E) is incorrect because the passage contains information to support the statement that the price “determined at a fair auction is not always acceptable to the seller.” The practice of “*puffing*,” described in paragraph two, is an attempt on the seller’s part to get the best possible price for whatever is being auctioned. If the price determined at a fair auction were always acceptable to the seller, there would be no need for a practice such as “*puffing*.” Therefore, information in the passage provides support for response (E) as an accurate statement about auctions.

This is considered an “easy” question, answered correctly by 86 percent of test takers. Although small numbers of test takers chose each of the other responses, the overwhelming majority answered this question correctly.

Question 4

Which one of the following statements about competition in auctions is best supported by the information in the passage?

- (A) Competition among buyers sometimes becomes excessive.
- (B) Competition among buyers that results from puffing is artificial.
- (C) Competition among sellers can be undermined by the practice of puffing.
- (D) Competition among sellers is more likely in auctions than in other market mechanisms.
- (E) Competition among sellers is the critical element in the determination of a fair price.

Explanation for Question 4

This question requires the examinee to see the logical implications following from the passage in order to identify which response is best supported by the information in the passage.

The credited response is (B). “*Puffing*” is an artificial way of determining price in an auction because it is an attempt on the seller’s part to “*b自己 the price of an item for sale*” illegally. The seller or the seller’s agent interferes with the fair auction market mechanism by

stimulating more competition than would naturally occur. Therefore, “*Competition among buyers that results from puffing is artificial.*” Response (B) is clearly supported by information in the passage.

Response (A) is incorrect because the passage does not discuss the intensity of competition among buyers.

Response (C) is incorrect because, according to the passage, the practice of “*puffing*” artificially increases competition among buyers. The passage does not discuss “*competition among sellers*,” nor how such competition might be undermined.

Response (D) is incorrect because the passage does not discuss “*competition among sellers*,” nor does it compare auctions to other market mechanisms.

Response (E) is incorrect because the passage suggests that competition among buyers, not among sellers, is important to a determination of fair price. The passage never discusses competition among sellers, let alone suggests that such competition, as opposed to other factors, is critical to determining fair price.

This is considered a “middle-difficulty” question, answered correctly by approximately 56 percent of test takers. About 23 percent of test takers chose response (C), and about 10 percent chose response (E).

Passage for Questions 5, 6, and 7

During the past 25 years, there has been much discussion of “*black capitalism*.” Many people have debated fruitlessly about the meaning of this term and the values of the philosophy it supposedly (5) describes. However, there is no such thing as black capitalism. In the United States capitalism, like socialism, is an economic and political philosophy that describes the experience of Europeans and their descendants—white Americans. Blacks must (10) therefore create a new economic ideology that may include elements of capitalism, elements of socialism, or elements of neither. What matters is that the new economic ideology be created to suit our economic goals, the chief of which is the (15) creation and acquisition of capital-producing instruments. What sort of economic entity might result were the new economic ideology put into practice? Although I am not interested in defining styles of ownership in absolute terms, I imagine (20) that the HCC (Harlem Commonwealth Council) very much resembles such an entity.

The HCC, which was the first group in the United States to formalize the advance of black-owned business beyond the risky “*Mom and Pop*” (25) businesses financed and managed by a single individual or family, is a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation that invests in profit-making businesses and uses the accumulated capital to reinvest in black-owned or black-managed businesses. The (30) HCC’s first brochure, issued in the 1960s, noted that Harlem’s half million people spend over half a billion dollars for consumer goods each year—a

sum larger than the gross national product of many newly industrialized nations. Yet the brochure also

(35) noted that most of this money is siphoned off from the community by outsiders who control 80 percent of Harlem's business volume. Thus the HCC concluded that the major economic problem of Harlem is that the community is prevented from

(40) accumulating the capital required to make investments (and thus earn revenue on those investments) and to finance the industry necessary for the creation of jobs for members of the community. Accordingly, the goal of the HCC has been to develop Harlem's

(45) capital resources, thereby restoring to Harlem the internal economic vitality that is inseparable from the acquisition of political power.

To accomplish its goal, the HCC set up, during the 1960s, a community-based board of directors to

(50) evaluate opportunities for investment. The directors first invested in those businesses that would meet a community need (e.g., a 24-hour pharmacy selling prescription medicines by their generic names, thus permitting prices considerably lower than those for

(55) brand-name medicines) and those businesses that could take advantage of Harlem's location in Manhattan.

The HCC, then, is not confined by the restrictions either of capitalism (financial

(60) risk-taking by the entrepreneur) or of socialism (financial risk-taking by the state); rather, it combines elements of both in its pursuit of tomorrow's opportunities.

Question 5

The author most probably refers to "the gross national product of many newly industrialized nations" (lines 33–34) in order to

(A) compare economic conditions in other countries to the economic conditions in the United States

(B) provide an example of the type of economic entity sought by the advocates of the new economic ideology

(C) clarify the meaning of the phrase "capital-producing instruments"

(D) emphasize the enormous economic benefits that Harlem would derive from the acquisition of greater political power

(E) suggest the magnitude of Harlem's potential for accumulating capital

Explanation for Question 5

This question requires the examinee to identify from the context what the author intends to accomplish or convey by using the phrase "the gross national product of many newly industrialized nations."

The credited response is (E). The phrase is used parenthetically immediately following reference in the

passage to *the over half a billion dollars residents of Harlem spend each year on consumer goods*. The passage then goes on to say that most of this money is "*siphoned off from the community by outsiders*," and that this is why Harlem has trouble accumulating capital for making investments within the community. These statements imply that, if over half a billion dollars can be spent in Harlem on consumer goods—a sum as great as the gross national product of many newly industrialized nations—there is potential for generating capital for investment within the Harlem community of a magnitude comparable to that generated in entire newly industrialized nations, if only that money could be directed to investment within the Harlem community instead of being siphoned off by outsiders who control most of Harlem's business volume.

Response (A) is incorrect. Nowhere in the passage does the author compare economic conditions in other countries to those in the United States. The reference to *the gross national product of other countries* is intended to make a point about economic conditions in Harlem.

Response (B) is incorrect because the author uses the HCC, not newly industrialized nations, as an example of the type of economic entity sought by advocates of "the new economic ideology."

Response (C) is incorrect. The phrase "*capital producing instruments*" occurs earlier, in the first paragraph of the passage, and there is no language in the passage linking it with "*the gross national product of many newly industrialized nations*." So, there is nothing in the passage to suggest that the latter is intended to clarify the meaning of the former.

Response (D) is also incorrect. While the passage does relate economic vitality and political power, response (D) misstates the relationship described in the passage. The passage states that *internal economic vitality is necessary for the acquisition of political power*, while response (D) states that enormous economic benefits could be realized from the acquisition of greater political power. So, response (D) describes a relationship which is the reverse of the one being stressed in the passage. Moreover, the reference to the *gross national product of other countries* is not related in the passage to the relationship between economic vitality and political power.

Question 6

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) contend that black capitalism has failed and urge that the techniques of capitalism and socialism be combined by black entrepreneurs

(B) summarize the old economic ideology espoused by many theorists of black economics and then explain the new economic ideology

(C) argue for the creation of a new economic ideology and explain how it can be put into practice

(D) outline the economic goals of Harlem and provide examples of the ways in which some of those goals can be achieved

(E) point out that the HCC has been an effective organization and suggest that the HCC expand the scope of its activities

Explanation for Question 6

This question requires the examinee to look at the passage as a whole and determine its primary purpose.

(C) is the credited response because it most accurately and completely reflects the purpose of the passage as a whole. The first paragraph of the passage argues for the creation of “*a new economic ideology*,” one which, the author says, “*may include elements of capitalism, elements of socialism, or elements of neither*,” so long as it suits certain economic goals, “*the chief of which is the creation and acquisition of capital-producing instruments*.” The remainder of the passage then explains, by using the HCC as an example, how this ideology “can be put into practice.” At the end of paragraph one, the author says, “*Although I am not interested in defining styles of ownership in absolute terms, I imagine that the HCC (Harlem Commonwealth Council) very much resembles such an entity*.”

Response (A) is incorrect because the passage does not contend that “black capitalism has failed,” nor does it “urge that the techniques of capitalism and socialism be combined by black entrepreneurs.” In fact, the passage says that “*there is no such thing as black capitalism*,” and it suggests that black entrepreneurs create a “*new economic ideology*” that may or may not use elements of capitalism and socialism.

Response (B) is incorrect because, although the passage does explain a “*new economic ideology*,” it does not contain a summary of “the old economic ideology espoused by many theorists of black economics.” It makes brief mention of “*black capitalism*,” but it does not summarize this ideology.

Response (D) is incorrect because, although the passage discusses “the economic goals of Harlem” and “ways in which some of those goals can be achieved,” it does so in order to illustrate the operation of the HCC, which is an example of the “*new economic ideology*” in practice. This “*new economic ideology*,” not “the economic goals of Harlem,” is the passage’s primary focus.

Response (E) is incorrect. Although the passage points out that the HCC has been an effective organization, it says nothing about expanding “the scope of its activities.” Moreover, while pointing out the effectiveness of the HCC is one purpose of the passage, it is not the primary purpose, which is established in the first paragraph.

Question 7

The author suggests which one of the following about the debate over black capitalism?

(A) The usefulness of the debate has been negligible because black-controlled businesses should not be guided solely by the values of capitalism.

(B) The debate has been worthless because capitalism is both a self-contradictory and an evolving philosophy.

(C) The questions raised by the debate remain unanswered because the people taking part have accepted incompatible definitions of economic growth.

(D) The debate will soon become more helpful than it has been in the past because of the activities of the HCC.

(E) The people taking part in the debate have not adequately distinguished the values of capitalism from the values of socialism.

Explanation for Question 7

This question requires the examinee to identify an idea suggested in the passage.

The credited response is (A), because it summarizes an argument that the author makes in the passage. “The usefulness of the debate has been negligible” is implied by the author’s assertion in the first paragraph that people have debated “*fruitlessly*” about the meaning of “*black capitalism*.” Moreover, the statement that “black-controlled businesses should not be guided solely by the values of capitalism” is implied by the author’s argument that both capitalism and socialism reflect European and white American, not black, economic reality, and that blacks must create their own synthesis of these and other models.

Response (B) is incorrect because the author never suggests in the passage that capitalism is “a self-contradictory and an evolving philosophy.” Nor is this given as a reason for believing that the debate over black capitalism has been “*fruitless*.”

Similarly, response (C) is incorrect because “incompatible definitions of economic growth” held by participants in the debate over black capitalism is not a reason given by the author for feeling that the debate has been “*fruitless*.”

Response (D) is incorrect because, while the author describes the HCC approvingly as a model of the “*new economic ideology*” that blacks need to develop, the passage does not imply that the debate will “soon become more helpful than it has been in the past,” or indeed, that the HCC will affect the debate over black capitalism one way or another. The debate is briefly mentioned in the first paragraph only to provide a context for the author’s discussion of the HCC, then is dismissed as “*fruitless*” and not mentioned again.

Response (E) is incorrect because the problem with the debate is not that “the people taking part have not adequately distinguished the values of capitalism from the values of socialism.” The author makes a different argument: that the debate has focused (“*fruitlessly*”) on capitalism, when in fact capitalism is irrelevant to blacks. What is needed, according to the author, is “*a new economic ideology that may include elements of capitalism, elements of socialism, or elements of neither*.”

This question is classified as “very difficult,” answered correctly by only 38 percent of test takers on the LSAT. Most people were drawn to responses (B) and (C), which attribute to the author particular arguments that were not

made in the passage. Many “difficult” reading comprehension questions, like this one, require close attention to modifying words, such as “self-contradictory” and “evolving,” and a careful search of the text to determine if the author actually is suggesting the relationships implied by these words.

Passage Pair for Questions 8–14

For the following comparative reading set, difficulty information is not available.

The following passages were adapted from articles published in the mid-1990s.

Passage A

In January 1995 a vast section of ice broke off the Larsen ice shelf in Antarctica. While this occurrence, the direct result of a regional warming trend that began in the 1940s, may be the most spectacular (5) manifestation yet of serious climate changes occurring on the planet as a consequence of atmospheric heating, other symptoms—more intense storms, prolonged droughts, extended heat waves, and record flooding—have been emerging around the (10) world for several years.

According to scientific estimates, furthermore, sea-level rise resulting from global warming will reach 3 feet (1 meter) within the next century. Such a rise could submerge vast coastal areas, with (15) potentially irreversible consequences.

Late in 1995 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that it had detected the “fingerprint” of human activity as a contributor to the warming of the earth’s atmosphere. Furthermore, (20) panel scientists attributed such warming directly to the increasing quantities of carbon dioxide released by our burning of fossil fuels. The IPCC report thus clearly identifies a pattern of climatic response to human activities in the climatological record, thereby (25) establishing without doubt that global warming can no longer be attributed solely to natural climate variability.

Passage B

Over the past two decades, an extreme view of global warming has developed. While it contains (30) some facts, this view also contains exaggerations and misstatements, and has sometimes resulted in unreasonable environmental policies.

According to this view, global warming will cause the polar ice to melt, raising global sea levels, (35) flooding entire regions, destroying crops, and displacing millions of people. However, there is still a great deal of uncertainty regarding a potential rise in sea levels. Certainly, if the earth warms, sea levels will rise as the water heats up and expands. If the (40) polar ice caps melt, more water will be added to the oceans, raising sea levels even further. There is some evidence that melting has occurred; however, there is

also evidence that the Antarctic ice sheets are growing. In fact, it is possible that a warmer sea-

(45) surface temperature will cause more water to evaporate, and when wind carries the moisture-laden air over the land, it will precipitate out as snow, causing the ice sheets to grow. Certainly, we need to have better knowledge about the hydrological cycle (50) before predicting dire consequences as a result of recent increases in global temperatures.

This view also exaggerates the impact that human activity has on the planet. While human activity may be a factor in global warming, natural events appear

(55) to be far more important. The 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, for example, caused a decrease in the average global temperature, while El Niño, a periodic perturbation in the ocean’s temperature and circulation, causes extreme global (60) climatic events, including droughts and major flooding. Of even greater importance to the earth’s climate are variations in the sun’s radiation and in the earth’s orbit. Climate variability has always existed and will continue to do so, regardless of human (65) intervention.

Question 8

Which one of the following questions is central to both passages?

(A) How has an increase in the burning of fossil fuels raised the earth’s temperature?
 (B) To what extent can global warming be attributed to human activity?
 (C) What steps should be taken to reduce the rate of global warming?
 (D) What kinds of human activities increase the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere?
 (E) To what extent is global warming caused by variations in the sun’s radiation and the earth’s orbit?

Explanation for Question 8

Most traditional reading comprehension sets start with a question that asks about the passage’s main point or central topic, or the author’s main purpose in writing. The same is true of most comparative reading sets, but in comparative reading the questions might ask about the main point, primary purpose, or central issue of both passages, as is the case here.

The correct response is (B), “To what extent can global warming be attributed to human activity?” Both passages are concerned with the current warming trend in the earth’s climate, which is generally referred to as “global warming.” Both passages agree that the earth’s climate is indeed getting warmer, but it is clear that the two authors differ in their views on the issue. In the third paragraph of each passage, the author raises the question of the causes of global warming. Passage A cites a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change (IPCC) that attributes warming "directly to the increasing quantities of carbon dioxide released by our burning of fossil fuels" (lines 20–22). The author concludes, "The IPCC report thus clearly identifies a pattern of climatic response to human activities in the climatological record, thereby establishing without doubt that global warming can no longer be attributed solely to natural climate variability" (lines 22–27). In contrast, the author of passage B argues, "While human activity may be a factor in global warming, natural events appear to be far more important" (lines 53–55). In other words, a central concern in each passage is the cause of global warming, and more specifically, the extent to which the phenomenon can be attributed to human activity or to natural climate variability. Thus, response (B) expresses a question that is central to both passages.

Response (A) is incorrect because passage B does not address the issue of fossil fuels. While passage A states that the IPCC scientists attributed global warming "directly to the increasing quantities of carbon dioxide released by our burning of fossil fuels" (lines 20–22), passage B makes no mention of fossil fuels or carbon dioxide.

Response (C) is incorrect because neither passage discusses steps that should be taken to reduce global warming. The author of passage A believes that global warming is a serious problem for which human activity bears significant responsibility, so he or she presumably believes that some steps should indeed be taken. But he or she does not actually discuss any such steps. Meanwhile, the author of passage B is not even convinced that human activity bears much responsibility for global warming; accordingly, passage B is not concerned at all with the question of what steps should be taken to address the problem.

Response (D) is incorrect because, as mentioned in the explanation of response (A) above, passage B makes no mention of carbon dioxide or any human activities that increase carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Response (E) is incorrect because passage A does not mention variations in the sun's radiation and the earth's orbit as possible causes of global warming. The author of passage B mentions variations in the sun's radiation and the earth's orbit as natural contributors to climate variation, but does so in order to illustrate a more general point, namely, that natural climate variability may very well explain global warming. The sun's radiation and the earth's orbit are not the central concern of passage B.

Question 9

Which one of the following is mentioned in passage B but not in passage A as a possible consequence of global warming?

- (A) an increase in the size of the Antarctic ice sheet
- (B) a decrease in the amount of snowfall
- (C) a falling of ocean sea levels
- (D) an increase in the severity of heat waves
- (E) an increase in the frequency of major flooding

Explanation for Question 9

This question is designed to test the ability to recognize a significant difference in the content of the two passages.

The correct response is (A), "an increase in the size of the Antarctic ice sheet." In lines 42–48, passage B explicitly cites the possibility that the Antarctic ice sheet will grow as a result of warmer sea temperatures brought about by global warming. On the other hand, passage A does not mention any possibility that the Antarctic ice sheet might grow. In fact, on the topic of the Antarctic ice sheet, passage A alludes only to the breaking off of part of the Larsen ice shelf (lines 1–2), which suggests that, if anything, the author of passage A believes that the Antarctic ice sheet is shrinking because of global warming. Thus response (A) describes something that is mentioned in passage B, but not passage A, as a possible consequence of global warming.

Response (B) is incorrect because passage B mentions only *increased* snowfall as a possible consequence of global warming. The correct response must be something mentioned in passage B but not in passage A.

Response (C) is incorrect because passage B mentions only *rising* sea levels as a possible consequence of global warming. The author's reference to the possibility that the Antarctic ice sheet might grow suggests that, in the author's eyes, the rise in sea level might be slowed. But nowhere does the author say that sea levels might drop as a consequence of global warming.

Response (D) is incorrect because, while passage A mentions extended heat waves as a consequence of global warming, passage B does not mention heat waves in any connection.

Response (E) is incorrect because passage A discusses major flooding as a consequence of global warming in the first two paragraphs.

Question 10

The authors of the two passages would be most likely to disagree over

- (A) whether or not any melting of the polar ice caps has occurred
- (B) whether natural events can cause changes in global climate conditions
- (C) whether warmer air temperatures will be likely to raise oceanic water temperatures
- (D) the extent to which natural climate variability is responsible for global warming
- (E) the extent to which global temperatures have risen in recent decades

Explanation for Question 10

A significant number of questions for comparative reading passages require an ability to infer what the authors' views are and how they compare. Some questions ask about points of agreement between the authors. Others, such as this one, ask about points on which the authors disagree.

As you read the response choices for a question of this sort, it is a good idea to recall what you may have already concluded about points of agreement and disagreement between the authors. For example, it was noted above that the authors of these two passages disagree on at least one key issue (see the explanation of question 8)—the causes of global warming. The correct response to this question is related to this point of contention: the correct response is (D), “the extent to which natural climate variability is responsible for global warming.” Passage A states, “The IPCC report thus clearly identifies a pattern of climatic response to human activities in the climatological record, thereby establishing without doubt that global warming can no longer be attributed solely to natural climate variability” (lines 22–27). In contrast, passage B states, “While human activity may be a factor in global warming, natural events appear to be far more important” (lines 53–55). In short, while the author of passage A holds that human activity is substantially responsible for global warming, the author of passage B holds that natural events may exert far more influence on the earth’s climate.

Response (A) is incorrect because it is not clear that the authors would disagree over this issue. The author of passage A describes the breaking off of part of the Larsen ice shelf in Antarctica as “the direct result of a regional warming trend that began in the 1940s” (lines 3–4). The author does not use the precise words “the melting of the polar ice caps,” but the implication of what the author does say is that such melting is obviously taking place. On the other hand, it is not clear that the author of passage B would disagree with this claim, since the author concedes that there is evidence supporting the position: “There is some evidence that melting has occurred...” (lines 41–42).

Response (B) is incorrect because both authors would agree that natural events can cause changes in global climate conditions. Since the author of passage B argues that natural events appear to be a more important factor in global warming than human activity, he or she must agree that natural events can affect global climate. And indeed, the author cites the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, El Niño, and variations in the sun’s radiation and the earth’s orbit as examples of natural events that are known to have done so (lines 55–63). On the other hand, the concluding sentence of passage A—which ends with the claim that the IPCC report has established “that global warming can no longer be attributed *solely* to natural climate variability” (lines 25–27, emphasis added)—indirectly acknowledges that natural events do play a role in changes in the earth’s climate. Thus the authors would agree with respect to response (B).

Response (C) is incorrect because the passages provide no evidence for concluding that the authors would disagree over the effect of warmer air temperatures on oceanic water temperatures. The author of passage B holds that warmer air temperatures would heat up the oceans. Passage B states, “Certainly, if the earth warms, sea levels will rise as the water heats up and expands” (lines 38–39). However, the author of passage A says

nothing at all about a causal relationship between air temperature and oceanic water temperatures, and this lack of evidence does not allow us to conclude that the author would disagree with the view expressed by the author of passage B.

Response (E) is incorrect because the passages do not provide any specific indications regarding either author’s views on *the extent* to which global temperatures have risen in recent decades. Both authors presume that global temperatures have risen, but they say nothing that would allow us to draw any clear inferences regarding their views on how much.

Question 11

Which one of the phenomena cited in passage A is an instance of the kind of “evidence” referred to in the second paragraph of passage B (line 42)?

- (A) the breaking off of part of the Larsen ice shelf in 1995
- (B) higher regional temperatures since the 1940s
- (C) increases in storm intensities over the past several years
- (D) the increased duration of droughts in recent years
- (E) the increased duration of heat waves over the past decade

Explanation for Question 11

This question concerns the use of the word “evidence” in line 42 in passage B. The author acknowledges that there is “some evidence” that melting of the polar ice caps has occurred. This question asks the examinee to identify which of the phenomena cited in passage A could be seen as an example of that kind of evidence.

The correct response is (A), “the breaking off of part of the Larsen ice shelf in 1995.” The author of passage A cites this event (lines 1–2), and it is evidence of melting of the polar ice caps.

Response (B) is incorrect because, while the higher temperatures in the Antarctic region since the 1940s might well be the cause of any melting of the polar ice that has taken place, it cannot be used as evidence of that melting.

Responses (C), (D), and (E) are incorrect because the phenomena they refer to—increased storm intensities, longer droughts, and longer heat waves—are all different possible consequences of global warming, like the melting of the polar ice caps. None of these phenomena can be taken as evidence of the melting of the polar ice caps.

Question 12

The author of passage B would be most likely to make which one of the following criticisms about the predictions cited in passage A concerning a rise in sea level?

- (A) These predictions incorrectly posit a causal relationship between the warming of the earth and rising sea levels.
- (B) These predictions are supported only by inconclusive evidence that some melting of the polar ice caps has occurred.
- (C) These predictions exaggerate the degree to which global temperatures have increased in recent decades.
- (D) These predictions rely on an inadequate understanding of the hydrological cycle.
- (E) These predictions assume a continuing increase in global temperatures that may not occur.

Explanation for Question 12

This question requires the examinee to infer what the opinion of one of the authors would be regarding a view expressed in the other passage. Specifically, the question asks which criticism the author of passage B would be most likely to offer in response to the predictions made in passage A concerning rising sea levels. The predictions in question are found in the second paragraph of passage A. There the author cites scientific estimates that global warming will result in a sea-level rise of 3 feet (1 meter) within the next century. The author adds, "Such a rise could submerge vast coastal areas, with potentially irreversible consequences" (lines 13–15).

The correct response is (D). The author of passage B addresses the effects of global warming on sea levels in the second paragraph. The author concedes that warming water would expand, causing sea levels to rise, and that the problem would be compounded if the polar ice caps melt (lines 38–41). But the author of passage B goes on to argue that warmer water temperatures might also result in more evaporation, which in turn could produce more snowfall on the polar ice caps, causing the ice caps to grow (lines 44–48). The author concludes the discussion of sea levels by stating, "Certainly, we need to have better knowledge about the hydrological cycle before predicting dire consequences as a result of recent increases in global temperatures" (lines 48–51). Since the author of passage A does in fact cite predictions of dire consequences, which are evidently made without taking into account the possible mitigating factors discussed in passage B, the author of passage B would be likely to regard those predictions as relying on an inadequate understanding of the hydrological cycle.

Response (A) is incorrect because the author of passage B agrees that there is a causal relationship between the warming of the earth and rising sea levels (lines 38–39). The author of passage B holds, however, that the relationship between global temperatures and sea levels is

more complex than acknowledged by those who make dire predictions. But the author does not object to merely positing that there is such a causal relationship.

Response (B) is incorrect because the author of passage B is aware that at least one factor other than the melting of the ice caps—namely the expansion of water as it warms—can cause sea levels to rise (lines 38–39). There is no indication that the author of passage B believes that those who make the predictions cited in passage A are unaware of this additional factor, or that that the melting of the polar ice caps is the only causal mechanism they rely on in making their predictions.

Response (C) is incorrect. The author of passage B does dispute the conclusions drawn by some people, such as the author of passage A, regarding the causes and consequences of the warming trend. But, as noted in the explanation for question 10, there is no evidence that the author of passage B disputes any claims made about the extent of the warming that has taken place so far.

Response (E) is incorrect because the author of passage B says nothing about any assumptions concerning future temperature increases underlying the dire predictions cited in passage A. There is therefore no evidence that the author of passage B is likely to view such assumptions as grounds for criticism.

Question 13

The relationship between passage A and passage B is most analogous to the relationship between the documents described in which one of the following?

- (A) a research report that raises estimates of damage done by above-ground nuclear testing; an article that describes practical applications for nuclear power in the energy production and medical fields
- (B) an article arguing that corporate patronage biases scientific studies about the impact of pollution on the ozone layer; a study suggesting that aerosols in the atmosphere may counteract damaging effects of atmospheric carbon dioxide on the ozone layer
- (C) an article citing evidence that the spread of human development into pristine natural areas is causing catastrophic increases in species extinction; an article arguing that naturally occurring cycles of extinction are the most important factor in species loss
- (D) an article describing the effect of prolonged drought on crop production in the developing world; an article detailing the impact of innovative irrigation techniques in water-scarce agricultural areas
- (E) a research report on crime and the decline of various neighborhoods from 1960 to 1985; an article describing psychological research on the most important predictors of criminal behavior

Explanation for Question 13

The response choices in this question describe pairs of hypothetical documents. Based on the descriptions of those documents, you are asked to identify the pair of documents that stand in a relationship to each other that is most analogous to the relationship between passage A and passage B. In order to answer this question, you need to determine, at least in a general way, what the relationship between passage A and passage B is.

As already discussed, the authors of passage A and passage B agree that global warming is occurring, but they disagree as to its cause. Passage A holds that human activity is substantially responsible, and the author quotes the IPCC claim that warming is due “directly to the increasing quantities of carbon dioxide released by our burning of fossil fuels” (lines 20–22). Passage B, on the other hand, states, “While human activity may be a factor in global warming, natural events appear to be far more important” (lines 53–55).

The closest analogy to this relationship is found in response (C):

an article citing evidence that the spread of human development into pristine natural areas is causing catastrophic increases in species extinction; an article arguing that naturally occurring cycles of extinction are the most important factor in species loss

Like passage A and passage B, these two documents both agree that a trend—loss of species—is occurring. And also like passage A and passage B, these two documents differ in their assignment of responsibility for the trend. The first document identifies human activity as the salient cause, while the second document identifies natural cycles as the salient cause. Most importantly, both articles discuss the same phenomenon, and they propose conflicting explanations of the phenomenon, as is the case with passage A and B.

Response (A) is incorrect because the two documents discuss related topics—damage done by above-ground nuclear testing and practical applications of nuclear power—rather than the same topic, as in passage A and passage B. They are not attempting to explain the same phenomenon.

Response (B) is incorrect because while, at a general level, both documents engage the same topic—the effect of pollution on the ozone layer—they do not appear to agree that there is a phenomenon that needs to be explained, much less offer competing or conflicting explanations. The first document argues that at least some studies of the problem are beset with bias, without apparently making any claims about how pollution affects the ozone layer. Meanwhile, the second document seems to argue that the effects of different types of pollution may cancel each other out.

Response (D) is incorrect because the second document describes what appears to be a potential way to address the problem identified in the first document. Neither passage A nor passage B discusses a method for addressing the problem of global warming.

Response (E) is incorrect because the two documents discuss related problems, rather than the same problem. The first document discusses the relationship between crime and the decline of various neighborhoods over 25 years, while the second document addresses a different question: factors that might predict criminal behavior in individuals.

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Question 14

Which one of the following most accurately describes the relationship between the argument made in passage A and the argument made in passage B?

- (A) Passage A draws conclusions that are not based on hard evidence, while passage B confines itself to proven fact.
- (B) Passage A relies on evidence that dates back to the 1940s, while passage B relies on much more recent evidence.
- (C) Passage A warns about the effects of certain recent phenomena, while passage B argues that some inferences based on those phenomena are unfounded.
- (D) Passage A makes a number of assertions that passage B demonstrates to be false.
- (E) Passage A and passage B use the same evidence to draw diametrically opposed conclusions.

Explanation for Question 14

This question tests for the ability to understand how the arguments in the two passages unfold and how they are related.

The correct response is (C). The author of passage A begins by describing some of the recent phenomena attributed to atmospheric heating. Some of the author’s particular choices of words—such as “the most spectacular manifestation *yet*” (lines 4–5, *italics added*) and “have been emerging around the world for several years” (lines 9–10)—clearly imply that such “spectacular” phenomena are likely to continue to emerge in the coming years. And in the second paragraph, the author describes the effects of a predicted sea-level rise due to global warming as “potentially irreversible.” In contrast, the author of passage B argues that an “extreme view” of global warming has developed, containing “exaggerations and misstatements” (lines 28–31). For example, the author of passage B argues, “Certainly, we need to have better knowledge about the hydrological cycle before predicting dire consequences as a result of recent increases in global temperatures” (lines 48–51). Thus, unlike the author of passage A, the author of passage B argues that some of the conclusions based on the phenomena surrounding global warming lack foundation.

Response (A) is incorrect because the author of passage A does in fact rely on hard evidence in drawing his or her conclusions. Though the author of Passage B obviously questions *inferences* like those drawn in passage A, the evidence used in passage A (the breaking

off of the Larsen ice shelf, more intense storms, etc.) is not in dispute. Nor does the argument in passage B confine itself exclusively to proven fact: in lines 44–48, the author speculates about possible implications of the “hydrological cycle” for the Antarctic ice sheet.

Response (B) is incorrect because both passages rely on recent evidence—for example, see the beginning and end of the first paragraph of passage A and the reference to Mount Pinatubo in passage B (lines 55–57).

Response (D) is incorrect because passage B does not *demonstrate* that any of the assertions made in passage A are false. For example, the author of passage B concludes the discussion of sea level in the second paragraph by stating, “Certainly, we need to have better knowledge about the hydrological cycle before predicting dire consequences as a result of recent increases in global temperatures” (lines 48–51). This does not amount to a demonstration of the falsity of the predictions.

Response (E) is incorrect because, while both passages refer to some of the same phenomena—such as melting of polar ice—each also cites evidence that the other passage does not mention. In reaching its conclusion, passage A cites intense storms and extended heat waves in the first paragraph, and the release of carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels in the third paragraph; passage B mentions none of these things. In reaching its quite different conclusion, passage B cites the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, El Niño, and variations in the sun’s radiation and in the earth’s orbit, as well as evidence that the Antarctic ice sheets might be growing. None of this evidence is mentioned in passage A.

■ Analytical Reasoning Questions

Analytical reasoning items are designed to measure your ability to understand a structure of relationships and to draw logical conclusions about the structure. You are asked to make deductions from a set of statements, rules, or conditions that describe relationships among entities such as persons, places, things, or events. They simulate the kinds of detailed analyses of relationships that a law student must perform in solving legal problems. For example, a passage might describe four diplomats sitting around a table, following certain rules of protocol as to who can sit where. You must answer questions about the implications of the given information, for example, who is sitting between diplomats X and Y.

The passage used for each group of questions describes a common relationship such as the following:

- Assignment: Two parents, P and O, and their children, R and S, must go to the dentist on four consecutive days, designated 1, 2, 3, and 4;
- Ordering: X arrived before Y but after Z;
- Grouping: A manager is trying to form a project team from seven staff members—R,S,T,U,V,W, and X. Each staff member has a particular strength—writing, planning, or facilitating;

- Spatial: A certain country contains six cities and each city is connected to at least one other city by a system of roads, some of which are one-way.

Careful reading and analysis are necessary to determine the exact nature of the relationships involved.

Some relationships are fixed (e.g., P and R always sit at the same table). Other relationships are variable (e.g., Q must be assigned to either table 1 or table 3). Some relationships that are not stated in the conditions are implied by and can be deduced from those that are stated. (e.g., If one condition about books on a shelf specifies that Book L is to the left of Book Y, and another specifies that Book P is to the left of Book L, then it can be deduced that Book P is to the left of Book Y.)

No formal training in logic is required to answer these questions correctly. Analytical reasoning questions are intended to be answered using knowledge, skills, and reasoning ability generally expected of college students and graduates.

Suggested Approach

Some people may prefer to answer first those questions about a passage that seem less difficult and then those that seem more difficult. In general, it is best not to start another passage before finishing one begun earlier, because much time can be lost in returning to a passage and reestablishing familiarity with its relationships. Do not assume that because the conditions for a set of questions look long or complicated, the questions based on those conditions will necessarily be especially difficult.

Reading the passage. In reading the conditions, do not introduce unwarranted assumptions. For instance, in a set establishing relationships of height and weight among the members of a team, do not assume that a person who is taller than another person must weigh more than that person. All the information needed to answer each question is provided in the passage and the question itself.

The conditions are designed to be as clear as possible; do not interpret them as if they were intended to trick you. For example, if a question asks how many people could be eligible to serve on a committee, consider only those people named in the passage unless directed otherwise. When in doubt, read the conditions in their most obvious sense. Remember, however, that the language in the conditions is intended to be read for precise meaning. It is essential to pay particular attention to words that describe or limit relationships, such as “only,” “exactly,” “never,” “always,” “must be,” “cannot be,” and the like.

The result of this careful reading will be a clear picture of the structure of the relationships involved, including the kinds of relationships permitted, the participants in the relationships, and the range of actions or attributes allowed by the relationships for these participants.

Questions are independent. Each question should be considered separately from the other questions in its set; no information, except what is given in the original conditions, should be carried over from one question to another.

In some cases a question will simply ask for conclusions to be drawn from the conditions as originally given. Some questions may, however, add information to the original conditions or temporarily suspend one of the original conditions for the purpose of that question only. For example, if Question 1 adds the information “if P is sitting at table 2 ...,” this information should NOT be carried over to any other question in the group.

Highlighting the text; using diagrams. Many people find it useful to underline key points in the passage and in each question. In addition, it may prove very helpful to draw a diagram to assist you in finding the solution to the problem.

In preparing for the test, you may wish to experiment with different types of diagrams. For a scheduling problem, a calendar-like diagram may be helpful. For a spatial relationship problem, a simple map can be a useful device.

Even though some people find diagrams to be very helpful, other people seldom use them. And among those who do regularly use diagrams in solving these problems, there is by no means universal agreement on which kind of diagram is best for which problem or in which cases a diagram is most useful. Do not be concerned if a particular problem in the test seems to be best approached without the use of a diagram.

Eight Sample Analytical Reasoning Questions and Explanations

The sample questions that follow are typical of the analytical reasoning problems you will find on the LSAT. A brief passage presents a set of conditions, followed by questions about the relationships defined by the conditions. While each passage here is followed by only one or two sample questions, each passage in the Analytical Reasoning section of the actual LSAT is followed by five to seven questions.

Directions: Each group of questions in this section is based on a set of conditions. In answering some of the questions, it may be useful to draw a rough diagram. Choose the response that most accurately and completely answers the question and blacken the corresponding space on your answer sheet.

Passage for Question 1

A medical clinic has a staff of five doctors—Drs. Albert, Burns, Calogero, Defeo, and Evans. The national medical society sponsors exactly five conferences, which the clinic’s doctors attend, subject to the following constraints:

- If Dr. Albert attends a conference, then Dr. Defeo does not attend it.
- If Dr. Burns attends a conference, then either Dr. Calogero or Dr. Defeo, but not both, attends it.
- If Dr. Calogero attends a conference, then Dr. Evans does not attend it.
- If Dr. Evans attends a conference, then either Dr. Albert or Dr. Burns, but not both, attends it.

Question 1

If Dr. Burns attends one of the conferences, then which one of the following could be a complete and accurate list of the other members of the clinic who also attend that conference?

- (A) Drs. Albert and Defeo
- (B) Drs. Albert and Evans
- (C) Drs. Calogero and Defeo
- (D) Dr. Defeo
- (E) Dr. Evans

Explanation for Question 1

This question requires you to determine, from the conditions given, which doctors can attend the same conferences. The question tells us that “Doctor Burns attends one of the conferences,” and we are asked to

choose the response that could be a list of all and only those doctors who attend the conference with Dr. Burns. Since we are asked what *could* be a “*complete and accurate list*” [emphasis added] of those doctors who attend the conference with Dr. Burns, we can eliminate as incorrect those responses which either are inaccurate (that is, cannot be true), or incomplete (that is, do not include everyone who must accompany one or more of the doctors going to the conference). This can be determined easily without the use of a diagram.

Response (A) states that, along with Dr. Burns, Drs. Albert and Defeo also attend the conference. But the first condition tells us that “*if Dr. Albert attends a conference, then Dr. Defeo does not attend it.*” So, Drs. Burns, Albert, and Defeo cannot all attend the same conference. Response (A), then, is incorrect.

Response (B) is incorrect for a similar reason. The fourth condition tells us what must be true if Dr. Evans attends a conference, namely, that “*either Dr. Albert or Dr. Burns, but not both, attends it.*” Since we know that Dr. Burns attends the conference, we know that it cannot be true that *both* Drs. Albert and Evans also attend that conference.

Response (C) is also incorrect. The second condition tells us what must be true if Dr. Burns attends a conference. Since we know that Dr. Burns *does* attend the conference, we also know that “*either Dr. Calogero or Dr. Defeo, but not both, attends it.*”

Responses (D) and (E) must be evaluated slightly differently. No condition rules out Dr. Burns’s and Dr. Defeo’s going to the same conference—response (D)—and no condition forbids Dr. Evans’s going with Dr. Burns to a conference—response (E). But recall that the question asks for what could be a “*complete and accurate list*” of the doctors who attend the conference

with Dr. Burns. We know from the second condition that at least one other person must accompany Dr. Burns, and that among those who accompany Dr. Burns are either Dr. Calogero or else Dr. Defeo. Since the conditions do not require anyone to accompany Dr. Defeo, it is possible that Dr. Defeo is the only person to accompany Dr. Burns. Thus, response (D) is an accurate response, in that it is possible that Drs. Burns and Defeo attend the same conference, and it is a complete response, in that Drs. Burns and Defeo could be the only doctors of the five to attend the conference. So response (D) is correct.

Response (E) is incorrect because we know that if Dr. Burns goes, someone other than Dr. Evans must also go. Response (E) then is incomplete. It fails to list at least one doctor whom we know must also accompany Dr. Burns.

This is a question of “moderate difficulty”; 60 percent of those who took the LSAT on which it appeared answered it correctly. The most common error was selecting response (B) (chosen by 17 percent).

Passage for Questions 2 and 3

Seven piano students—T, U, V, W, X, Y, and Z—are to give a recital, and their instructor is deciding the order in which they will perform. Each student will play exactly one piece, a piano solo. In deciding the order of performance, the instructor must observe the following restrictions:

X cannot play first or second.

W cannot play until X has played.

Neither T nor Y can play seventh.

Either Y or Z must play immediately after W plays.

V must play either immediately after or immediately before U plays.

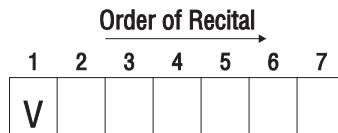
Question 2

If V plays first, which one of the following must be true?

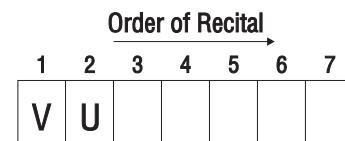
- (A) T plays sixth.
- (B) X plays third.
- (C) Z plays seventh.
- (D) T plays immediately after Y.
- (E) W plays immediately after X.

Explanation for Question 2

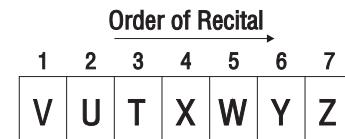
This question deals with an ordering relationship defined by a set of conditions as to when the seven piano students will perform. As an aid in visualizing this problem we can draw a simple diagram that shows the seven recital slots arranged in order from left to right. Student V is shown in the first slot, as specified by the condition that “V plays first”:



We can immediately fill in one of the empty slots in the diagram. The condition that “V must play either immediately after or immediately before U plays” tells us that U must occupy the second slot in the recital schedule. This is shown below:



Since the question asks us what *must be true*, we can eliminate incorrect responses by showing that they could be *false* without violating the conditions. Response (A) is incorrect because the statement that “T plays sixth” is not necessarily true—we can place T in one of the slots other than sixth and still meet all the conditions of the problem. One such recital schedule, with T playing third, is shown in the diagram below:



We can develop this schedule as follows. With V, U, and T in the first three positions, there are four positions left for W, X, Y, and Z.

- W must come after X—because of the condition that “W cannot play until X has played”—so if we put X fourth and W fifth, this condition will be met.
- This leaves two possible slots for Y and Z. Y cannot play seventh because of the condition that “Neither T nor Y can play seventh,” so we will place Y sixth and Z seventh.

A check will verify that this schedule meets the given conditions of the problem, including the one that “Either Y or Z must play immediately after W plays.”

The schedule shown in the diagram also demonstrates that response (B) is incorrect. In it, X plays fourth, so it is not correct that the statement, “X plays third,” *must* be true.

Response (C), “Z plays seventh,” is the credited response. We can show this by demonstrating that:

- all the conditions can be met with Z in the *seventh* slot, and
- some of the conditions would be violated with Z in any slot *other* than seventh.

To demonstrate that Z *can* play seventh, we can refer to the schedule that was developed for the discussion of response (A), above. In it, Z plays seventh, and all the conditions in the problem are met.

To demonstrate that *Z* *cannot* play in a slot *other* than seventh, we can attempt to find another student to play seventh. We already know that neither *U* nor *V* can play seventh. Hence, there are four remaining players: *T*, *W*, *X*, and *Y*. However, a review of the given conditions shows that none of those players can play seventh:

- The third condition states that “*Neither T nor Y can play seventh.*”
- *W* can’t play seventh, because there must be a slot following *W*’s in order to meet the condition, “*Either Y or Z must play immediately after W plays.*” If *W* plays seventh, then there is no such slot left for *Y* or *Z*.
- For a similar reason *X* can’t play seventh, because there must be a slot following *X*’s in order to meet the condition, “*W cannot play until X has played.*”

Since *Z* can play seventh and no other player can, then the statement that *Z must play seventh* is correct and (C) is the credited response.

Response (D) is incorrect because it is not necessarily true that “*T* plays immediately after *Y*.” In our discussion of response (A), we developed a schedule in which *T* plays third and *Y* plays sixth, yet all conditions are satisfied.

Response (E) is incorrect because, as shown in the diagram below, it is not necessarily true that “*W* plays immediately after *X*.” This schedule is obtained by simply reversing the order of players *W* and *Y* in the schedule we developed in the analysis of response (A). A review will show that all of the given conditions are met by this schedule.

Order of Recital						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>V</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Z</i>

This is a “difficult” problem; only 39 percent of the persons who took the LSAT on which it appeared answered it correctly. Twenty-six percent chose response (B), and another 19 percent chose response (E). This problem is difficult because it requires the test taker to go beyond simply matching each response with the given conditions. In solving this problem, one must use the given conditions to infer relationships such as the one that *W* cannot perform seventh.

Question 3

If *U* plays third, what is the latest position in which *Y* can play?

- (A) first
- (B) second
- (C) fifth
- (D) sixth
- (E) seventh

Explanation for Question 3

This question involves the same original conditions as the previous problem, but it begins with a different assumption: “*U* plays third.” The test taker must determine what effect this assumption would have on the possible positions in which *Y* can appear in the recital schedule.

The correct response is (D), because student *Y* can play as late as *sixth* under the given constraint that “*U* plays third.” The diagram below shows a recital order that meets all the given conditions and has *Y* performing in the sixth position.

Order of Recital						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>T</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Z</i>

One strategy for arriving at this solution is to work backward to see which position is the latest in which we can place *Y* and at the same time produce a recital schedule that meets all the given conditions.

Using that approach, we immediately see that *Y* cannot play as late as seventh, because of the condition that “*Neither T nor Y can play seventh.*” Backing up and placing *Y* sixth, we can begin to fill in the schedule, as follows:

Order of Recital						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		<i>U</i>				<i>Y</i>

This schedule has five empty slots, into which we must fit players *T*, *V*, *W*, *X*, and *Z*. The following is a series of reasoning steps that can be used:

- From our analysis of the previous question, we know that players *T*, *W*, and *X* cannot play seventh, but that *Z* can, so we can tentatively place *Z* in the *seventh* slot.
- We also know that “*Either Y or Z must play immediately after W plays.*” If we place *W* in the *fifth* slot, this condition will be met.
- By placing *V* in the *second* slot, we can meet the condition that “*V must play either immediately after or immediately before U plays.*”
- We must place the remaining two players, *T* and *X*, in the two remaining slots, the first and the fourth. Because the first condition states that “*X cannot play first . . .*,” we will place *X* in the *fourth* slot and *T* in the *first*. These positions will meet the conditions that apply to *T* and *X*: *T* will avoid playing seventh and *X* will play before *W*.

Since *Y* can play as late as *sixth*, response (D) is the correct solution.

This problem is classified as a “middle difficulty” problem. Sixty-three percent of those who took the LSAT on which it appeared answered it correctly. Sixteen percent chose response (C).

Passage for Question 4

Seven computers—A, B, C, D, E, F, and G—are connected in a network. Each computer belongs to only one of three classes—Class I, Class II, and Class III. Class I computers can receive data only from other Class I computers. Class II computers can receive data only from other Class II computers and from Class III computers. Class III computers can receive data only from other Class III computers and from Class I computers. The computers are distributed as follows:

- A and B are the same class computer.
- E and G are the same class computer.
- There are exactly twice as many Class II computers as Class III computers.
- F is a Class III computer.
- There is at least one computer of each class.

Question 4

If C is a Class II computer, then all of the following must be true EXCEPT:

- (A) A can receive data from G.
- (B) C can receive data from E.
- (C) D can receive data from F.
- (D) E can receive data from B.
- (E) F can receive data from A.

Explanation for Question 4

This item involves two tasks: grouping the computers into classes and determining which computers can receive data from other computers. To begin, we first need to determine what are the possible groupings of computers into classes. We know that there are seven computers, that there is at least one computer in each class, and that there are twice as many Class II computers as there are Class III computers. From this information alone we can determine that there can be *at most two* Class III computers. If there were more than two Class III computers, then there would be at least six Class II computers, and at least one Class I computer, giving us a total of at least ten computers. Since there are only seven computers, this cannot be. Thus, the number of computers in each class is limited to the following two possibilities:

<u>Class I</u>	<u>Class II</u>	<u>Class III</u>	<u>Total Computers</u>
4	2	1	7
1	4	2	7

Now, we are told that F is a Class III computer, and we know from the above that there can be at most two Class III computers. We are also told that A and B are both the same class of computer, and that E and G are both the same class of computer (that is, A and B can be both Class I or both Class II, and E and G can be both

Class I or both Class II). So only C or D could be a Class III computer together with F.

If F is the *only* Class III computer, then from the above there must be two Class II computers and four Class I computers. There are, then, three possibilities:

- Scenario 1: If C and D are in Class II, then the four others (A, B, E, and G) must be in Class I.
- Scenario 2: If E and G are in Class II, then the four others (A, B, C, and D) must be in Class I.
- Scenario 3: If A and B are in Class II, then the four others (C, D, E, and G) must be in Class I.

If there are *two* Class III computers, then as we said above, along with F, either C or D must also be in Class III:

- Scenario 4: If F and C are in Class III, then D must be in Class I and the remaining four (A, B, E, and G) must be in Class II.
- Scenario 5: If F and D are in Class III, then C must be in Class I and the remaining four (A, B, E, and G) must be in Class II.

All five possible scenarios are shown below.

<u>Scenarios</u>	<u>Class I</u>	<u>Class II</u>	<u>Class III</u>
1	A,B,E,G	C,D	F
2	A,B,C,D	E,G	F
3	C,D,E,G	A,B	F
4	D	A,B,E,G	F,C
5	C	A,B,E,G	F,D

We now have all the possible scenarios. In the question we are given the information that C is a Class II computer. Only one of the five scenarios places C into Class II, namely, Scenario 1. The remaining information in the passage can now be used to find the answer.

Class I computers can receive data only from other Class I computers.

Class II computers can receive data only from Class III computers and other Class II computers.

Class III computers can receive data only from Class I computers and other Class III computers.

According to Scenario 1, computers A and G are in the same class. Since we know from the above that any computers in the same class can receive information from each other, we know that responses (A) and (D) must be true, and so incorrect. Since Class II computers can receive data from Class III computers, response (C) must also be incorrect. Further, given that Class III computers can receive data from Class I computers,

response (E) is also incorrect. So we are left only with response (B) as an option. Response (B) claims that computer C, a member of Class II, can receive data from computer E, a member of Class I. By the rules above, this is false. So response (B) is the correct answer.

This is classified as a "difficult" question; 40 percent of test takers answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT. The most common error was selecting response (C) (chosen by 20 percent).

Passage for Questions 5 and 6

From a group of seven people—J, K, L, M, N, P, and Q—exactly four will be selected to attend a diplomat's retirement dinner. Selection conforms to the following conditions:

Either J or K must be selected, but J and K cannot both be selected.

Either N or P must be selected, but N and P cannot both be selected.

N cannot be selected unless L is selected.

Q cannot be selected unless K is selected.

Question 5

If P is not selected to attend the retirement dinner, then exactly how many different groups of four are there each of which would be an acceptable selection?

- (A) one
- (B) two
- (C) three
- (D) four
- (E) five

Explanation for Question 5

This question essentially adds a new assumption to the original set of conditions—"P is not selected to attend the retirement dinner." The test taker is supposed to determine all of the different possible selections that are compatible with this new assumption. A compatible solution is one that violates neither the new assumption nor the original conditions.

Since the second condition states "[e]ither N or P must be selected . . .," we can infer from the new assumption and the second condition that N is selected. And since N is selected, we know from the third condition that L is selected. In other words every acceptable selection must include both L and N. We are now in a good position to enumerate the groups of four which would be acceptable selections. Notice that K may or may not be selected. We need to examine what happens in either case. First, assume that K is not selected. In this case, J is selected (since the first condition indicates that one of J or K must be selected) and Q is not selected (since the fourth condition implies that if K is not selected, then Q cannot be selected either). Since exactly four people must be selected, and since P, K, and Q are not selected, M, the only remaining person, must be selected. Since M's selection does not violate

any of the conditions or the new assumption, N, L, J, and M is an acceptable selection; in fact, it is the only acceptable selection when K is not selected. So far we have one acceptable selection, but we must now examine what holds in the case where K is selected.

Suppose that K is selected. In this case J is not selected (as one can see by the first condition), but Q may or may not be selected. Again we look at both possibilities. If Q is selected, it is part of an acceptable selection—N, L, K, and Q. If Q is not selected, remembering that J and P are also not selected, M must be selected. This gives us our final acceptable selection—N, L, K, and M.

Thus there are exactly three different groups of four which make up acceptable selections, and (C) is the correct response.

This is considered a "difficult" question; only 37 percent of test takers answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 6

There is only one acceptable group of four that can be selected to attend the retirement dinner if which one of the following pairs of people is selected?

- (A) J and L
- (B) K and M
- (C) L and N
- (D) L and Q
- (E) M and Q

Explanation for Question 6

The way in which this question is phrased is rather complex, and so it is important to get very clear what exactly is being asked. Unlike other questions which give the test taker a new assumption to consider in conjunction with the original conditions, this question asks the test taker to determine what assumption is needed, in addition to the original conditions, to guarantee that only one group of four is acceptable.

There is probably no better way to approach this question than to consider each option individually, and determine for each option whether only one acceptable group of four can be selected when the pair indicated in the option is selected. The test taker may wish to vary the order in which the options are considered according to personal preferences. We will consider the options in order from (A) through to (E).

Option (A): When both J and L are selected, K cannot be selected (first condition). Consequently Q cannot be selected (fourth condition). More than one group of four is acceptable under these circumstances however. J, L, M, and N may be selected, and J, L, M, and P may be selected.

Option (B): When K and M are both selected, J cannot be selected (first condition). Other than that, anyone else could be selected. This leaves more than one acceptable group of four. K, L, M, and N may be selected; K, L, M, and P may be selected; and K, M, P, and Q may be selected.

Option (C): When L and N are both selected, P cannot be selected (second condition), but, as in the case of option (B), anyone else can be selected. This leaves more than one acceptable group of four. J, L, M, and N may be selected; K, L, M, and N may be selected; and K, L, N, and Q may be selected.

Option (D): When L and Q are both selected, K must be selected (fourth condition). Consequently J cannot be selected (first condition). More than one group of four is acceptable under these circumstances however. K, L, N, and Q may be selected, and K, L, P, and Q may be selected.

Option (E): When M and Q are both selected, K must be selected (fourth condition), and hence J cannot be selected (first condition). Furthermore, N cannot be selected: if N were selected, then L would also have to be selected (third condition), and this would violate the restriction that exactly four people are to be selected. And since N cannot be selected, P must be selected (second condition). Thus when M and Q are both selected, both K and P must be selected as well, and only one group of four—K, M, P, and Q—is acceptable. (E) is therefore the correct response.

This is considered a “very difficult” question; only 18 percent of test takers answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Passage for Question 7

A law firm has exactly nine partners: Fox, Glassen, Hae, Inman, Jacoby, Kohn, Lopez, Malloy, and Nassar. Their salary structure must meet the following conditions:

Kohn’s salary is greater than both Inman’s and Lopez’s.

Lopez’s salary is greater than Nassar’s.

Inman’s salary is greater than Fox’s.

Fox’s salary is greater than Malloy’s.

Malloy’s salary is greater than Glassen’s.

Glassen’s salary is greater than Jacoby’s.

Jacoby’s salary is greater than Hae’s.

Question 7

If Malloy and Nassar earn the same salary, what is the minimum number of partners that must have lower salaries than Lopez?

- (A) 3
- (B) 4
- (C) 5
- (D) 6
- (E) 7

Explanation for Question 7

As with many problems involving relative rank or order, the test taker should attempt to diagram the various relationships given in the stimulus.

In what follows, each partner’s name is abbreviated by the first letter of that partner’s name, and the symbol “>” indicates that the person whose initial appears to

the left of the sign has a greater salary than that of the person whose initial is to the right of the sign. So, for instance, “K > L” means “Kohn’s salary is greater than Lopez’s.”

The conditions indicate the following eight relative orderings of salary:

- (1) K > I
- (2) K > L
- (3) L > N
- (4) I > F
- (5) F > M
- (6) M > G
- (7) G > J
- (8) J > H

It should be obvious that if person A’s salary is greater than person B’s and if person B’s salary is greater than person C’s, then person A’s salary is also greater than person C’s. Using this principle, we may combine and condense several of the above orderings into two separate “chains” of relative order:

- (9) K > I > F > M > G > J > H
(This combines [1], and [4] through [8].)
- (10) K > L > N
(This combines [2] and [3].)

We are now in a position to determine the correct response for question 8. The test taker is asked to determine the minimum number of partners whose salaries must be lower than that of Lopez, if Malloy and Nassar earn the same salary. Assuming that Malloy’s and Nassar’s salary are equal allows us to infer from chains (9) and (10) the following chain of relative ordering:

- (11) K > L > (N,M) > G > J > H

(11) shows that since M and N have the same salary, anyone whose salary is less than M’s is also less than N’s, and therefore also less than L’s. So, at least Malloy, Nassar, Glassen, Jacoby, and Hae must have lower salaries than Lopez. This shows that response options (A) and (B) are both incorrect. If we can now show that no partner other than these five must have lower salaries than Lopez, then we will have shown that (C) is the correct response.

To see that there could be fewer than six partners with lower salaries than Lopez, one need merely look at (9) and (10) above to see that as long as Inman and Fox have lower salaries than Kohn, they could have salaries equal to or higher than Lopez’s. This allows us to construct the following possible complete chain of relative order:

- (12) K > I > F > L > (N,M) > G > J > H

In this possible case no more than five partners have lower salaries than Lopez, and since there must be at least five such partners, five is the minimum number of

such partners. (C) is therefore the correct response. This is considered an item of “middle difficulty.”

Passage for Question 8

The organisms W, X, Y, and Z respond to the antibiotics ferromycin, ganocyclene, and heptocillin in a manner consistent with the following:

Each of the organisms responds to at least one of the antibiotics.

No organism responds to all three antibiotics. At least two but not all four of the organisms respond to ferromycin.

If W responds to any antibiotic, then X responds to that antibiotic.

If an organism responds to ferromycin, then it responds to ganocyclene.

Y responds to ferromycin.

Question 8

If none of the organisms responds to heptocillin, then which one of the following must be true?

- (A) W responds to ferromycin.
- (B) X responds to ferromycin.
- (C) Z responds to ferromycin.
- (D) Exactly three of the organisms respond to ganocyclene.
- (E) Exactly four of the organisms respond to ganocyclene.

Explanation for Question 8

This question requires the test taker to determine which of the response options must be true if in addition to the given conditions it is also assumed that none of the organisms responds to heptocillin.

As with many questions that ask the test taker to determine what must be true, a good way to approach answering this question is by trying to falsify each of the response options. If one can show that it is possible for an option to be false given the conditions and the additional assumption, then one knows that it need not be true, and so is not the correct answer.

Let us consider options (A) through (C) first, since they are more similar to each other than they are to options (D) and (E). We need to see if it is possible for W not to respond to ferromycin, if it is possible for X not to respond to ferromycin, and if it is possible for Y not to respond to ferromycin. Using a table that lists each antibiotic, and, underneath each, the organisms that respond to the antibiotic, we can show the different possibilities allowed by the original conditions and the added assumption.

Y, we are told, responds to ferromycin and so, by the fifth condition, must also respond to ganocyclene. We represent this as follows:

<u>ferromycin</u>	<u>ganocyclene</u>	<u>heptocillin</u>
Y	Y	

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Since we are trying to show that W does not have to respond to ferromycin, we place it under ganocyclene (remember, nothing is to be placed under heptocillin). Nothing in the conditions prevents this. But we are told that whatever W responds to X responds to, so we must also place X under ganocyclene. The chart should be updated as follows:

<u>ferromycin</u>	<u>ganocyclene</u>	<u>heptocillin</u>
Y	W, X, Y	

Knowing that all the organisms must respond to at least one of the antibiotics, and that we are assuming that none of them respond to heptocillin, we must find a place on our chart for Z under either ferromycin (and therefore also ganocyclene) or ganocyclene alone. The third condition requires us to place one other organism under ferromycin, so we should place Z underneath both ferromycin and ganocyclene, completing our chart as follows:

<u>ferromycin</u>	<u>ganocyclene</u>	<u>heptocillin</u>
Y, Z	W, X, Y, Z	

The above shows that neither W nor X must respond to ferromycin. Therefore, we can eliminate response options (A) and (B). Indeed, since there are four organisms that respond to ganocyclene in this possible state of affairs—showing that it need not be true that exactly three organisms respond to ferromycin—we can also eliminate option (D).

Response option (C) is also incorrect, as the following table shows:

<u>ferromycin</u>	<u>ganocyclene</u>	<u>heptocillin</u>
Y, X	W, X, Y, Z	

This leaves option (E), and, under timed conditions, it would be reasonable at this point to select this option as your answer.

To prove, however, that (E) is indeed the correct response, we need to show that it is impossible to have fewer than four of the organisms responding to ganocyclene. Given that none of the organisms responds to heptocillin, each must respond to either ganocyclene, or to ferromycin. Of course, if any organism responds to ferromycin, it must also respond to ganocyclene. This latter fact makes it impossible to have fewer than four organisms respond to ganocyclene. Any organism that did not respond to ganocyclene would have to respond to only ferromycin. And since no organism can respond to only ferromycin, all four must respond to ganocyclene. (E) is therefore the credited response.

Only 34 percent of test takers answered this item correctly, making it a “very difficult” problem.

■ Logical Reasoning Questions

Logical reasoning questions evaluate your ability to understand, analyze, criticize, and complete a variety of arguments. The arguments are contained in short passages taken from a variety of sources, including letters to the editor, speeches, advertisements, newspaper articles and editorials, informal discussions and conversations, as well as articles in the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences.

Each logical reasoning question requires you to read and comprehend a short passage, then answer one or two questions about it. The questions test a variety of abilities involved in reasoning logically and thinking critically. These include:

- recognizing the point or issue of an argument or dispute;
- detecting the assumptions involved in an argumentation or chain of reasoning;
- drawing reasonable conclusions from given evidence or premises;
- identifying and applying principles;
- identifying the method or structure of an argument or chain of reasoning;

Nine Sample Logical Reasoning Questions and Explanations

The sample questions on the following pages are typical of the logical reasoning questions you will find on the LSAT.

Directions: The questions in this section are based on the reasoning contained in brief statements or passages. For some questions, more than one of the choices could conceivably answer the question. However, you are to choose the best answer; that is, the response that most accurately and completely answers the question. You should not make assumptions that are by commonsense standards implausible, superfluous, or incompatible with the passage. After you have chosen the best answer, blacken the corresponding space on your answer sheet.

Question 1

A study has shown that there are still millions of people who are unaware that they endanger their health by smoking cigarettes. This is so despite government campaigns to warn people of the dangers of smoking. Reluctantly, one has to draw the conclusion that the mandatory warnings that tobacco companies are required to print have had no effect.

Which one of the following, if true, would refute the argument in the passage?

- (A) Many people who continue to smoke are aware of the dangers of smoking.
- (B) Some people smoke cigarettes for legitimate reasons.

- determining how additional evidence or argumentation affects an argument or conclusion; and
- identifying explanations and recognizing resolutions of conflicting facts or arguments.

The questions do not presuppose knowledge of the terminology of formal logic. For example, you will not be expected to know the meaning of specialized terms such as “ad hominem” or “syllogism.” On the other hand, you will be expected to understand and critique the reasoning contained in arguments. This requires that you possess, at a minimum, a college-level understanding of widely used concepts such as argument, premise, assumption, and conclusion.

Suggested Approach

Read each question carefully. Make sure that you understand the meaning of each part of the question. Make sure that you understand the meaning of each answer choice and the ways in which it may or may not relate to the question posed.

Do not pick a response simply because it is a true statement. Although true, it may not answer the question posed.

Answer each question on the basis of the information that is given, even if you do not agree with it. Work within the context provided by the passage. LSAT questions do not involve any tricks or hidden meanings.

- (C) Government has had to force companies to warn potential customers of the dangers of their products.
- (D) Some people who are aware of the dangers of smoking were made aware of them by the mandatory warnings.
- (E) Smoking is clearly responsible for a substantial proportion of preventable illness in the country.

Explanation for Question 1

This question requires the test taker to read the argument presented in the passage, and then to evaluate the effect of additional evidence on the argument.

The argument concludes that “*the mandatory warnings that tobacco companies are required to print have had no effect*” [emphasis added]. It holds that the warnings have had no effect because “*there are still millions of people who are unaware*” that their smoking endangers their health. In

order to refute the argument it is sufficient to present evidence of two things: (1) that there are some people who are aware of the dangers of smoking and (2) that these people are aware because of the mandatory warnings. Since response (D) presents this evidence, it is the credited response.

Response (A) is incorrect because it includes only the first part of the refutation described above. An attempt to refute the author's argument by showing that some smokers are indeed "aware of the dangers of smoking" must also show that the smokers' awareness was produced by the warnings. Had it been produced through some other means, the author's argument about the ineffectiveness of the warnings would not be undermined.

Response (B) is incorrect because the author's argument does not deal with the reasons people smoke. It maintains that warnings have had no effect because many smokers are still unaware of the dangers; why those smokers smoke is irrelevant to the awareness issue.

Response (C) is incorrect because the fact that "government has had to force companies to warn ... of the dangers" is irrelevant to the issue of warnings and awareness. Moreover, the author already describes the warnings as *mandatory warnings*; therefore, this response adds little or nothing new to the discussion.

Response (E) is incorrect because it merely elaborates a minor detail in the passage (that smokers "*endanger their health by smoking cigarettes*"), and it supports rather than refutes the author's argument.

This question is classified as "difficult"; only 44 percent of test takers answered it correctly. Almost as many—40 percent—chose response (A), overlooking its failure to address the issue of how the smokers who are aware of the dangers became aware.

Question 2

Electrons orbit around the nucleus of an atom in the same way that the Earth orbits around the Sun. It is well known that gravity is the major force that determines the orbit of the Earth. We may, therefore, expect that gravity is the main force that determines the orbit of an electron.

The argument above attempts to prove its case by

- (A) applying well-known general laws to a specific case
- (B) appealing to well-known specific cases to prove a general law about them
- (C) testing its conclusion by a definite experiment
- (D) appealing to an apparently similar case
- (E) stating its conclusion without giving any kind of reason to think it might be true

Explanation for Question 2

This question requires the examinee to identify the method exhibited in an argument. The passage draws a parallel between two cases that share a similar trait: (1) the orbit of electrons around an atom's nucleus and (2) the orbit of the Earth around the Sun in our solar sys-

tem. It uses knowledge about the second case (the fact that "*gravity is the major force that determines the orbit of the Earth*") to draw an inference about the first (that "*gravity is the main force that determines the orbit of an electron*"). The passage is "appealing to an apparently similar case" (the role of gravity in determining the Earth's orbit) to establish a conclusion about the role of gravity in determining an electron's orbit. Therefore, (D) is the credited response.

Response (A) is incorrect because it mistakes the argument made in the passage, based on an analogy, for an argument that applies "well-known general laws to a specific case." For the facts in this passage, such an argument from general laws to a specific case would go as follows:

1. General law: For all bodies in orbit, gravity is the main force that determines the body's orbit.
2. Specific case: An electron is a body in orbit.
3. Conclusion: Gravity is the main force that determines an electron's orbit.

Comparing this with the passage makes it clear that the argument in the passage builds its case on an apparently analogous situation, not on a general law. That the law of gravity, a well-known general law, applies to the specific case of the orbit of electrons is the *conclusion* the argument is drawing, not the *method* by which the argument attempts to prove its case.

Response (B) is incorrect because the argument is not trying to prove a general law about both electrons and planets. Its conclusion is only about electrons and their nuclei based on information about a comparable case.

Response (C) is incorrect because there is no evidence in the passage that the argument is using data from an *experiment* to make its point.

Response (E) is incorrect because the argument clearly does provide a reason for its conclusion, which can be stated as follows: since an electron orbits around its nucleus in the same way as the Earth orbits around the Sun, it is logical to conclude that there are other similarities between the two phenomena.

This test question is a "middle difficulty" item—approximately 60 percent of test takers answered it correctly. Approximately 25 percent incorrectly chose response (A).

Question 3

During the construction of the Quebec Bridge in 1907, the bridge's designer, Theodore Cooper, received word that the suspended span being built out from the Bridge's cantilever was deflecting downward by a fraction of an inch [2.56 centimeters]. Before he could telegraph to freeze the project, the whole cantilever arm broke off and plunged, along with seven dozen workers, into the St. Lawrence River. It was the worst bridge construction disaster in history. As a direct result of the inquiry that followed, the engineering "rules of thumb" by which thousands of bridges had been built around the world went down with the Quebec Bridge. Twentieth-century bridge engineers would thereafter depend on far more rigorous applications of mathematical analysis.

Which one of the following statements can be properly inferred from the passage?

- Bridges built before about 1907 were built without thorough mathematical analysis and, therefore, were unsafe for the public to use.
- Cooper's absence from the Quebec Bridge construction site resulted in the breaking off of the cantilever.
- Nineteenth-century bridge engineers relied on their rules of thumb because analytical methods were inadequate to solve their design problems.
- Only a more rigorous application of mathematical analysis to the design of the Quebec Bridge could have prevented its collapse.
- Prior to 1907 the mathematical analysis incorporated in engineering rules of thumb was insufficient to completely assure the safety of bridges under construction.

Explanation for Question 3

The question requires the examinee to identify the response that can be properly inferred from the passage. The passage indicates that the Quebec Bridge disaster in 1907 and the inquiry that followed caused the engineering "rules of thumb" used in construction of thousands of bridges to be abandoned. Since the Quebec Bridge disaster in 1907 prompted this abandonment, it can be inferred that these were the rules of thumb under which the Quebec Bridge was being built when it collapsed and that these were the rules of thumb used in bridge building before 1907. Further, since the Quebec Bridge collapsed while under construction and the rules of thumb being used were abandoned as a result, it can be inferred that the rules of thumb used in building the Quebec Bridge and bridges prior to 1907 were insufficient to completely assure the safety of bridges under construction. Finally, since the alternative to the old engineering rules of thumb that was adopted was to "depend on far more rigorous applications of mathematical analysis," it can be inferred that it was the mathematical analysis incorporated in the engineering rules of thumb used prior to 1907 that made them insufficient to completely assure the safety of bridges under construction. Thus, (E) is the credited response.

Response (A) is incorrect. (A) asserts that the lack of thorough mathematical analysis in construction of bridges before about 1907 was sufficient to establish that those bridges were *unsafe* for the public to use. But, the rules of thumb used in bridge construction before 1907 were abandoned because they were not sufficient to establish that the bridges being constructed using them were *safe* when under construction. It does not follow that the lack of more rigorous or thorough mathematical analysis in the rules of thumb was sufficient to establish that the bridges built before about 1907 using them were *unsafe* even while under construction, let alone for the public. In fact, some, or even all, may have been quite safe.

In addition, the passage gives evidence only about the safety of bridges built before 1907 while they were *under construction*. It is silent on whether bridges built before about 1907 were safe when open for use by the public.

Response (B) is incorrect in claiming that Cooper's absence from the construction site *caused* the breaking off of the cantilever.

The passage does not establish that, had Cooper been at the site, he could have successfully intervened to prevent the cantilever from breaking off. By freezing the project, he might have spared lives by stopping work, but there is nothing in the passage to indicate that he necessarily would have prevented the collapse.

Response (C) is incorrect; there is no evidence in the passage about why nineteenth-century engineers relied on their rules of thumb.

Response (D) is also incorrect. While the passage suggests that a more rigorous application of mathematical analysis would have prevented the collapse of the bridge, it offers no evidence that it is the only way the collapse could have been prevented. For example, it might have been prevented had corrective measures been taken in time.

The question is "moderately difficult"; 48 percent of the test takers answered it correctly; 22 percent incorrectly chose (D).

Question 4

No one who has a sore throat need consult a doctor, because sore throats will recover without medical intervention. In recent years several cases of epiglottitis have occurred. Epiglottitis is a condition that begins with a sore throat and deteriorates rapidly in such a way that the throat becomes quite swollen, thus restricting breathing. Sometimes the only way to save a patient's life in these circumstances is to insert a plastic tube into the throat below the blockage so that the patient can breathe. It is highly advisable in such cases that sufferers seek medical attention when the first symptoms occur, that is, before the condition deteriorates.

Which one of the following is the best statement of the flaw in the argument?

- The author draws a general conclusion on the basis of evidence of a particular instance.
- The author assumes that similar effects must have similar causes.
- The author uses a medical term, "epiglottitis," and does not clarify its meaning.
- The author makes two claims that contradict each other.
- The author bases her conclusion at the end of the passage on inadequate evidence.

Explanation for Question 4

This question requires the test taker to identify the reasoning error in the argument.

The argument states initially that “*no one who has a sore throat need consult a doctor.*” However, it is then pointed out that “*several cases of epiglottitis have occurred*” and argued that for this condition, which begins with a sore throat and then deteriorates, it is “*highly advisable*” for sufferers to seek medical attention *before* the condition deteriorates, that is, *when* the symptom is a sore throat. So the author claims both that no one with a sore throat need seek medical attention and that some people with a sore throat do need to seek medical attention, and these claims contradict each other. Therefore, (D) is the credited response.

Response (A) is incorrect because the author does not clearly draw “a general conclusion on the basis of evidence of a particular instance” of anything. Even though a specific disease (epiglottitis) is discussed, no conclusion about diseases in general is drawn. And having this disease is discussed in terms of “*several cases*” and “*sometimes*,” not in terms of a “particular instance.”

Response (B) is incorrect because the author is not concerned with the causes of sore throats and epiglottitis.

Response (C) is incorrect because the meaning of the medical term “epiglottitis” is specified in the third and fourth sentences of the passage in sufficient detail for purposes of the argument.

Response (E) is incorrect because the evidence given in the third and fourth sentences of the passage is adequate for the conclusion that “*it is highly advisable*” in cases of epiglottitis “*that sufferers seek medical attention when the first symptoms first occur.*”

This test question is a “very easy” item; 91 percent of examinees answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 5

Photovoltaic power plants produce electricity from sunlight. As a result of astonishing recent technological advances, the cost of producing electric power at photovoltaic power plants, allowing for both construction and operating costs, is one-tenth of what it was 20 years ago, whereas the corresponding cost for traditional plants, which burn fossil fuels, has increased. Thus, photovoltaic power plants offer a less expensive approach to meeting demand for electricity than do traditional power plants.

The conclusion of the argument is properly drawn if which one of the following is assumed?

- (A) The cost of producing electric power at traditional plants has increased over the past 20 years.
- (B) Twenty years ago, traditional power plants were producing 10 times more electric power than were photovoltaic plants.

- (C) None of the recent technological advances in producing electric power at photovoltaic plants can be applied to producing power at traditional plants.
- (D) Twenty years ago, the cost of producing electric power at photovoltaic plants was less than 10 times the cost of producing power at traditional plants.
- (E) The cost of producing electric power at photovoltaic plants is expected to decrease further, while the cost of producing power at traditional plants is not expected to decrease.

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Explanation for Question 5

This question requires the test taker to identify an assumption that would allow the argument’s conclusion to be properly drawn. As the argument is stated, there is a logical gap between the information given in the premises and the claim made in the conclusion:

Premise 1: The cost of producing electric power at photovoltaic power plants is one-tenth of what it was 20 years ago.

Premise 2: The corresponding cost for traditional plants has increased.

Conclusion: Photovoltaic power plants offer a less expensive approach to meeting demand for electricity than do traditional power plants.

From the fact that one cost has gone down while another has risen, it does not necessarily follow that the first is now lower than the second. In particular, if the cost of producing electric power at photovoltaic power plants twenty years ago was *more* than ten times the corresponding cost for traditional plants, then the fact that it is now one-tenth what it was is not sufficient to show that it is now lower than the corresponding cost for traditional plants, even though we are told in Premise 2 that the cost for traditional plants has increased. To conclude from the premises given in the argument that photovoltaic power plants now offer a *less expensive* approach than do traditional power plants, we need to know how the costs of the two methods of production were related 20 years ago—specifically that the cost of producing power at photovoltaic plants was less than 10 times the cost of producing it at traditional plants. (D) gives this information and is, thus, the credited response.

Response (A) is incorrect because it tells us about only one of the two costs, not about how the two were related 20 years ago. It in effect restates premise 2, and premises 1 and 2 together are not sufficient for drawing the conclusion.

Response (B) is incorrect. The amount of electricity produced by the different kinds of plants is not at issue.

Response (C) is incorrect. While it is relevant to the discussion, (C) does not provide the information about the *comparative* costs of the two kinds of plants 20 years ago that allows the conclusion to be properly drawn.

Response (E) is incorrect because the conclusion in the argument is about the present only. Whether or not the change described in (E) is expected to take place has no bearing on the claim in the conclusion that the one kind of plant offers a less expensive approach at present.

This question is classified as “difficult.” Approximately 35 percent of test takers answered it correctly. Most of those who answered incorrectly chose response (E).

Question 6

Some legislators refuse to commit public funds for new scientific research if they cannot be assured that the research will contribute to the public welfare. Such a position ignores the lessons of experience. Many important contributions to the public welfare that resulted from scientific research were never predicted as potential outcomes of that research. Suppose that a scientist in the early twentieth century had applied for public funds to study molds: who would have predicted that such research would lead to the discovery of antibiotics—one of the greatest contributions ever made to the public welfare?

Which one of the following most accurately expresses the main point of the argument?

- (A) The committal of public funds for new scientific research will ensure that the public welfare will be enhanced.
- (B) If it were possible to predict the general outcome of a new scientific research effort, then legislators would not refuse to commit public funds for that effort.
- (C) Scientific discoveries that have contributed to the public welfare would have occurred sooner if public funds had been committed to the research that generated those discoveries.
- (D) In order to ensure that scientific research is directed toward contributing to the public welfare, legislators must commit public funds to new scientific research.
- (E) Lack of guarantees that new scientific research will contribute to the public welfare is not sufficient reason for legislators to refuse to commit public funds to new scientific research.

Explanation for Question 6

This question requires the test taker to determine the most accurate expression of the main point of the argument in the passage. The main point of an argument is not only a salient point, but one which draws on the rest of the argument for support. The primary purpose of an argument such as that in the passage on which this question is based is to convince the reader to accept the main point.

The passage begins by stating the position that some legislators hold. These legislators “refuse to commit public funds for new scientific research if they cannot be assured that the research will contribute to the public welfare.” Then a reason is given for rejecting this position. Many important contributions to the public welfare come from scientific research for which no assurance could be given of a contribution to public welfare. These contributions “that resulted from scientific research were never predicted as potential outcomes of that research.” Finally, this reason is emphasized by giving an example.

Clearly the purpose of this argument is to refute the position of the legislators mentioned. The main point is the denial of that position. Since response (E) most accurately expresses the denial of the legislators’ position, it is the correct answer.

Response (A) is incorrect because it expresses a point that the argument does not make. Nothing is expressed or implied about whether committing public funds for new scientific research ensures that public welfare will be enhanced. All that is said is that legislators ought not insist on assurances of enhanced public welfare before committing public funds for new scientific research.

Response (B) is incorrect because it is a prediction of what legislators *would* do in cases where it is possible to predict the outcome of scientific research. The argument states what the legislators would *not* do if they *cannot* be assured that the research will contribute to the public welfare. Moreover, nothing is stated or implied about what legislators would do, the issue is rather what legislators *should* do. (B) implies that if it is possible to predict a *negative* outcome of a new scientific research effort, then legislators would not refuse to commit public funds for that effort. Nothing in the argument suggests anything close to this.

Response (C) is incorrect because it speculates that scientific discoveries that have contributed to the public welfare would have occurred sooner if public funds had been committed to the underlying research. Response (C) takes the argument much further than it has committed itself—the issue of whether any discoveries may have occurred sooner is never addressed within the argument.

Response (D) is incorrect because it addresses an issue that is not discussed in the argument. The argument does not say that the existence of research contributing to the public’s welfare is conditional upon legislators committing public funds to that research.

This test question is an “easy” item. Eighty-two percent of examinees answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 7

Situation: In the island nation of Bezun, the government taxes gasoline heavily in order to induce people not to drive. It uses the revenue from the gasoline tax to subsidize electricity in order to reduce prices charged for electricity.

Analysis: The greater the success achieved in meeting the first of these objectives, the less will be the success achieved in meeting the second.

The analysis provided for the situation above would be most appropriate in which one of the following situations?

- (A) A library charges a late fee in order to induce borrowers to return books promptly. The library uses revenue from the late fee to send reminders to tardy borrowers in order to reduce the incidence of overdue books.
- (B) A mail-order store imposes a stiff surcharge for overnight delivery in order to limit use of this option. The store uses revenue from the surcharge to pay the extra expenses it incurs for providing the overnight delivery service.
- (C) The park management charges an admission fee so that a park's users will contribute to the park's upkeep. In order to keep admission fees low, the management does not finance any new projects from them.
- (D) A restaurant adds a service charge in order to spare customers the trouble of individual tips. The service charge is then shared among the restaurant's workers in order to augment their low hourly wages.
- (E) The highway administration charges a toll for crossing a bridge in order to get motorists to use other routes. It uses the revenue from that toll to generate a reserve fund in order to be able one day to build a new bridge.

Explanation for Question 7

This question requires the test taker to select from among the options the situation that most appropriately illustrates the principle expressed by the analysis of the situation in the passage. The analysis states that the two objectives described in the situation are related in such a way that more success in the first objective, the reduction of driving, will result in less success in the second, a reduction in the price of electricity. To see this, suppose that the gasoline taxes mentioned in the passage prove successful in inducing people not to drive. This would mean that people would have a diminished need to purchase gasoline, since they do not drive as much. Since less gasoline is being purchased, there is less revenue from taxes on gasoline purchases. There is therefore less revenue from the gasoline tax with which to subsidize electricity. With less of a subsidy, it will be more difficult

to reduce prices charged for electricity. Among the options, (E) most closely presents exactly such a situation. The more motorists there are who begin to use other routes, thus reducing bridge traffic, the less toll money there will be for the new bridge fund. (E) is the credited response.

Response (A) is incorrect. Two devices are named, late fees and reminders, but they share the one objective stated, which is described in two ways: to get "borrowers to return books promptly" and to "reduce the incidence of overdue books." Success in one *is* success in the "other."

Response (B) is incorrect. This situation has two objectives, to limit the use of overnight delivery service, and to offset the extra expense of the overnight delivery still requested. However, these objectives are related in such a way that success in the first, a reduction in overnight delivery, would contribute to success in the second by lowering the extra expenses incurred by the service.

Response (C) is also incorrect. We cannot infer that more success in achieving the first objective, getting park users to help keep up the park, will cause less success in the second objective, keeping the fees low. It is conceivable that success in the former would enable the fees to be lowered; after all, if there were enough park users paying the fees (i.e., contributing to the park's upkeep), then the park management would not have to charge a high fee—fifteen park users paying \$1.00 generates more revenue than one park user paying \$10.00. Furthermore, there is nothing in the passage that functions like the last clause of (C). This makes the situation expressed in (C) even less similar to the passage than that expressed in (E), the credited response.

Response (D) is incorrect. The two objectives in this situation, sparing customers an inconvenience and augmenting restaurant workers' wages, are not necessarily related so more success in the former would cause less success in the latter. The quantitative relation between the restaurant's service charge and the average amount of individual tips is information needed to determine what effect satisfying the first objective would have on the second. A successful service charge could very well gather enough money that the employees' wages would be augmented even more by sharing this service charge than their salaries would be augmented by individual tips.

This was classified as a "difficult" item, with 33 percent of examinees correctly answering it when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 8

The ancient Romans understood the principles of water power very well, and in some outlying parts of their empire they made extensive and excellent use of water as an energy source. This makes it all the more striking that the Romans made do without water power in regions dominated by large cities.

Which one of the following, if true, contributes most to an explanation of the difference described above in the Romans' use of water power?

- (A) The ancient Romans were adept at constructing and maintaining aqueducts that could carry quantities of water sufficient to supply large cities over considerable distances.
- (B) In the areas in which water power was not used, water flow in rivers and streams was substantial throughout the year but nevertheless exhibited some seasonal variation.
- (C) Water power was relatively vulnerable to sabotage, but any damage could be quickly and inexpensively repaired.
- (D) In most areas to which the use of water power was not extended, other, more traditional sources of energy continued to be used.
- (E) In heavily populated areas the introduction of water power would have been certain to cause social unrest by depriving large numbers of people of their livelihood.

Explanation for Question 8

This question requires the test taker to identify the response that does most to explain an apparent discrepancy presented in the passage. The first step, then, is to determine clearly what this discrepancy is. The passage notes the Romans' extensive use of water power in some outlying parts of their empire, but in regions dominated by large cities, it says, they did without water power. Given the efficiency of water power, an adequate response must help answer the question why ancient Romans did not use water power in regions near their cities when they had a demonstrated ability to do so.

Response (A) is incorrect. Rather than explaining the puzzle, it merely describes their ability to supply water over distances. Response (B) is also incorrect. While it speaks of the region near cities, it indicates the natural water supply there was substantial although seasonally variable. Both (A) and (B) give reasons to expect water power to be used, not reasons the Romans did without it near cities. (C) is incorrect for a similar reason. It notes that even sabotage of water power could be overcome easily—a reason to use it, not to do without it near cities.

Response (D) reports what was used in place of water power in areas near cities, viz., "more traditional" energy sources. This may help explain how cities got along without water power: the use of traditional sources prevented them from being entirely without energy. This response appealed to many test takers, in fact it was the most popular option. However, merely saying that one can do without something, does not entail that one should do without something. Response (D) does help explain how cities and their immediately surrounding areas did without the demonstrated facility with water power that was extensively and excellently applied elsewhere, but it does not explicitly say why this facility was not applied in and

around cities. While (D) may appear to explain the discrepancy more than either (A), (B), or (C), which give no explanation at all, it really does not give a reason against using water power in cities. Recall that the search is for the statement that contributes *most* to an explanation. Response (E) must therefore be examined.

(E) presents an undesirable consequence that would have followed from the use of water power in regions near cities: social unrest due to significant loss of livelihood. So while the other candidate for an explanation, response (D), notes a diminished need for water power in these regions, response (E) identifies a negative aspect of water power use in heavily populated areas, and that gives a reason not to use it near cities. Thus, (E) is the credited response.

This was a "very difficult" item. Approximately one third of test takers answered it correctly when it appeared on the test.

Question 9

All intelligent people are nearsighted. I am very nearsighted. So I must be a genius.

Which one of the following exhibits both of the logical flaws exhibited in the argument above?

- (A) I must be stupid because all intelligent people are nearsighted and I have perfect eyesight.
- (B) All chickens have beaks. This bird has a beak. So this bird must be a chicken.
- (C) All pigs have four legs, but this spider has eight legs. So this spider must be twice as big as any pig.
- (D) John is extremely happy, so he must be extremely tall because all tall people are happy.
- (E) All geniuses are very nearsighted. I must be very nearsighted since I am a genius.

Explanation for Question 9

Note carefully that this question refers to two logical flaws that are in the argument. It requires the test taker to select the option that exhibits both of those flaws. It is worth a bit of time to make clear what the two flaws are. The first sentence identifies a group, intelligent people, and says all its members have a particular characteristic, nearsightedness. In the second sentence, the speaker admits to being nearsighted then concludes, in the third sentence, that he or she must be a member of the group of intelligent people (a genius). The justification for this inference, presumably, is that since the speaker has one characteristic that belongs to all members of a certain group, then the speaker also belongs to that group. This is one flaw. The error can be seen by noting that the first sentence speaks of all intelligent people but not of all nearsighted people. So we cannot legitimately infer from this statement that any particular nearsighted person, here the speaker, is (or is not) intelligent.

The second flaw also arises from attributing something to the first sentence that is not legitimate. The

speaker acknowledges being *very* nearsighted, and concludes that he or she is *very* intelligent, i.e., a genius. The presumed justification here is that the *degree* of one characteristic is associated with the *degree* of the other characteristic. Again the error can be seen by noticing that the first sentence speaks of groups and characteristics but says nothing about quantities or degrees. The intensification of one characteristic does not justify inferring that the other is intensified as well. This error could have been committed without committing the first error. For example, after the first sentence, the speaker might have said “I am *very* intelligent, therefore I must be *very* nearsighted.”

With the two flaws identified, the options may be examined in search of one that exhibits both flaws.

Response (A) shares the following premise with the passage: all intelligent people are nearsighted. Here, the speaker denies having the characteristic of nearsightedness, and instead claims perfect eyesight, then concludes that he or she must not belong to the group of intelligent people. This inference is legitimate because the effect of the shared premise is to rule out any intelligent person’s being without nearsightedness. This response does, however, commit the intensification flaw seen above. It makes the illegitimate inference from being intensely “not nearsighted,” i.e., having perfect vision, to being intensely “not intelligent,” i.e., stupid. So (A) is an incorrect response.

Response (B)’s first premise is similar to the premise shared by the passage and (A); all members of the class “chickens” are said to have a beak. A particular bird is said to have a beak; then it is concluded that this particular bird is a chicken. This is the first mentioned flaw in the original argument: taking a characteristic that belongs to all members of a group as sufficient indication that an individual having that characteristic is also a

member of that group. (B), however, does not commit the intensification flaw seen in the original. So, responses (A) and (B) each exhibit *one* of the flaws in the original argument, but neither of them exhibits both.

Response (C) illicitly presumes that size is directly proportional to the number of legs a creature has, and so concludes that the spider with eight legs is twice as big as a pig which has four legs. This is an interesting mistake, but not the two errors committed by the original argument.

(D) is the correct response. Even though the order of presentation is different than the original argument, the structure of the reasoning is the same, and exhibits both of the flaws. (D) makes an inference from “all tall people are happy” and “John is extremely happy” to “he must be extremely tall.” This is to take a characteristic belonging to all members of a class as sufficient indication that an individual having that characteristic is also a member of that class. It also infers from the intensification of that characteristic to the possession of an intense degree of the defining characteristic of the class. (D) thus exhibits both flaws seen in the original argument; it is the credited response.

Response (E) exhibits neither of the flaws. Indeed, it is a valid argument. Note that the intensification appears in the main premise: all geniuses, i.e., very intelligent people, are said to be *very* nearsighted. And the conclusion states of one particular genius, the speaker, that he or she is *very* nearsighted. This of course must be true if the first premise is true. So (E) is incorrect.

This was classified as a “very difficult” question. Twenty-seven percent of examinees answered this question correctly. Most of those who answered incorrectly chose response (B), indicating, perhaps, that test takers were less apt to recognize the intensification flaw than they were to identify the other flaw.

The Writing Sample

On the day of the test, you will be asked to write one sample essay. LSAC does not score the writing sample, but copies are sent to all law schools to which you apply. According to a 2006 LSAC survey of 157 United States and Canadian law schools, almost all utilize the writing sample in evaluating some applications for admission. Frivolous responses or no responses to writing sample prompts have been used by law schools as grounds for rejection of applications for admission.

In developing and implementing the writing sample portion of the LSAT, LSAC has operated on the following premises: First, law schools and the legal profession value highly the ability to communicate effectively in writing. Second, it is important to encourage potential law students to develop effective writing skills. Third, a sample of an applicant’s writing, produced under controlled conditions, is a potentially useful indication of that person’s writing ability. Fourth, the writing sample can serve as an independent check on other writing submitted by applicants as part of the admission process. Finally, writing samples may be useful for diagnostic purposes.

You will have 35 minutes in which to plan and write an essay on the topic you receive. Read the topic and the accompanying directions carefully. You will probably find it best to spend a few minutes considering the topic and organizing your thoughts before you begin writing. In your essay, be sure to develop your ideas fully, leaving time, if possible, to review what you have written. Do not write on a topic other than the one specified. Writing on a topic of your own choice is not acceptable.

No special knowledge is required or expected for this writing exercise. Law schools are interested in the reasoning, clarity, organization, language usage, and writing mechanics displayed in your essay. How well you write is more important than how much you write. Confine your essay to the blocked, lined area on the front and back of the separate Writing Sample Response Sheet. Only that area will be reproduced for law schools. Be sure that your writing is legible.

The writing prompt presents a decision problem. You are asked to make a choice between two positions or

courses of action. Both of the choices are defensible, and you are given criteria and facts on which to base your decision. There is no “right” or “wrong” position to take on the topic, so the quality of each test taker’s response is a function not of which choice is made, but of how well or poorly the choice is supported and how well or poorly the other choice is criticized. The two example topics below are typical of decision prompts that have been administered with the LSAT in the past.

Directions:

The scenario presented below describes two choices, either one of which can be supported on the basis of the information given. Your essay should consider both choices and argue for one over the other, based on the two specified criteria and the facts provided. There is no “right” or “wrong” choice: a reasonable argument can be made for either.

Example 1

Denyse Barnes, a young country music singer who has just released her debut CD, is planning a concert tour to promote it. Her agent has presented her with two options: she can tour as the opening act for Downhome, a famous country band that is mounting a national tour this year, or she can be the solo act in a tour in her home region. Using the facts below, write an essay in which you argue for one option over the other based on the following two criteria:

- Barnes wants to build a large and loyal fan base.
- Barnes wants to begin writing new songs for her next CD.

Downhome is scheduled to perform in over 100 far-flung cities in 8 months, playing in large arenas, including sports stadiums. This ambitious schedule would take Barnes far away from her home recording studio, where she prefers to compose. Downhome’s last concert tour was sold out, and the band’s latest release is a top seller. Many concertgoers at large arenas skip the opening act. But it is possible that Barnes would be invited by Downhome to play a song or two with them.

The solo tour in her home region would book Barnes in 30 cities over a 4-month period, including community theaters and country-and-blues music clubs, a few of which have reputations for launching new talent. These venues have loyal patrons; most shows are inexpensive and are well-attended, even for new talent. Barnes would have a promotion budget for her solo tour, but it would be far smaller than that for Downhome’s tour.

Example 2

The City of Ridleyville must decide whether a decommissioned military base now owned by Ridleyville and located on its downtown riverfront should be developed as a business complex or converted to park and open space. Using the facts below, write an essay in which you argue for one option over the other based on the following two criteria:

- Ridleyville wants to address a growing budget deficit.
- Ridleyville wants to increase the amount of parkland and open space in the city, especially in the downtown riverfront area.

Ridleyville is considering selling the property for development as a business complex. Through tax incentives, the city could potentially preserve a small portion of the property as open space. The business complex would generate substantial tax revenue from the new businesses that would locate there. Before it realizes any of these revenues, Ridleyville would need to pay for a variety of costly infrastructure improvements, and these revenues would be partly offset by ongoing costs for increased municipal services. The city would likely incur greater environmental cleanup costs converting the base to a business complex than converting it to a park.

Ridleyville has no parks on its extensive river frontage, which is otherwise developed, and no parks in its downtown area. Several corporate sponsors are willing to underwrite the cost of converting the property into parkland. These corporations are also willing to contribute towards ongoing operating costs. The park could host revenue-generating events like concerts and the popular “Taste of Ridleyville,” an annual food festival. Fees could be charged for boat launching. These combined revenues could enable the park to pay for itself.

Note: For additional practice, you can purchase any of the many LSAT preparation books listed in the ad in this book.