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Additional [LSAT Reading Comprehension Help](#)

Reading Comprehension Practice

Directions as given on the LSAT: Each question or set of questions in this section is based on a single passage. The questions are to be answered on the basis of what is stated or implied in the passage. 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.

Questions 1 - 5

(5) New Orleans is a city powered by swamp heat. No amount of airport HVAC could disguise the all-consuming humidity, the elevated temperature that, even at 10:30 on an early November night, was closer to summer than the onrushing winter my companions and I had left in Spokane that morning, along with icy roads, snow and a total of six sturdy Sorels. Four airports and half a continent later, we were not ready for the touch of bayou in our lungs.

(10) From the time we arrived at our 14th-floor room until the day we drove to the airport, we left the air conditioning on, not because the climate was unbearable, but because it was so alien. In the morning, we would get up and watch the clouds gather for the daily cleaning, while discussing the seminars on collegiate journalism we were scheduled to attend. At 11:00 AM, the clouds opened up for about five minutes, then the sun came out and the streets...well, they took no notice. If you left the hotel to catch some lunch, a bubble of canned, cooled air followed you from the lobby for just a moment, only to pop and scatter under the weight of the Mississippi and three million souls on its back.

(15) This is not to say the weather was something to be avoided or courted. It simply was, a necessary condition of the Big Easy. You didn't have to be a native to see it; New Orleans is a city of proximity. The buildings are close together, as are the people walking in and out of them. Streets are narrow, especially in the French Quarter, and agoraphobes be warned.

(20) New Orleans, more than perhaps any other American city, keeps a tight grip on its past, and so the centuries blur together in the streets. Skyscrapers loom over the remains of antebellum mansions turned Creole restaurants. A 200-year-old Catholic cathedral shares space with a mini-mall, where you can buy cameras to capture the glorious murals inside the ancient church, but you can't take them in; the light from the flashes causes the delicate colors to fade and vanish, so only candlelight is allowed. In a shop window, a large and ephemeral alligator skull grins at passerby, while next door, a Hard Rock café squats across the cobblestoned street

(25) from Hooters, each vying for the lunchtime crowd.

Our hotel was strategically located for maximum tourism. A couple of blocks west, Bourbon Street and the French Quarter. A handful of blocks east, the Mississippi itself. In

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between, streets that stretched for decades, and places that seemed tailor-made to fill in the gaps. A pipemaker's shop, where the proprietor had inherited a family trade, and told us that he would be the last of his line to practice it. No money in it, he told us, while beautiful meerschaum and polished wood burl handiwork sat in dusty display cases. The walls were lined with hand-crafted work and signs advertising tobacco and pipe accessories; wonderful work, but for all the traffic there wasn't, it might as well have been invisible.

(30)

- 1) The author's discussion of the heat and humidity of New Orleans in the first two paragraphs serves primarily to:
 - a) Provide a meteorological backdrop to the essay's events
 - b) Underline the essential strangeness of the city to the narrator
 - c) Express detail necessary to explain the physical setting
 - d) Draw parallels between the narrator's home and the essay's setting

Answer: The best answer is B. In this essay, the narrator is expressing first impressions of a visit to New Orleans as a tourist, and while the meteorological impressions arguably are used as background to later events, the overwhelming emphasis of the detail, and the lack of mention in later paragraphs, argues for primary usage, which thus eliminates Statement A. For similar reasons, Statement C can also be eliminated, as the meteorological information is used as the physical setting rather than support for it. As the narrator specifically contrasts the environment of home (Spokane) to New Orleans without finding common ground, even using the term "alien" in line 8 to describe the climate, Statement D is also unsuited to answer the question. Only Statement B, which is directly supported by the aforementioned contrast descriptions and the adjectives used in line 8, correctly addresses the question; thus, B is correct.

- 2) Which of the following attributes is New Orleans most strongly implied to possess in this passage?
 - a) Dignity
 - b) Authenticity
 - c) Vitality
 - d) Modernity

Answer: The best answer is C. Although certain aspects of dignity are arguably present, the overarching sense of gravity or formality that is an integral part of the definition is entirely absent, both through direct text support and connotation (such as the implication of distance, which is directly contradicted by lines 14-17); thus, Statement A is irrelevant. Authenticity is implied in the references to historical buildings in lines 18-23, but there is no corroboration elsewhere, so the connection is weak at best. As a result, Statement B can be discarded. For similar reasons, Statement D can be rejected; although it can be inferred from lines 18-23 as a companion to authenticity, the connection is textually weak, and can be discarded. Only vitality, with its strong inferences in the third and fifth paragraphs, is a logical answer to the question; thus, Statement C is correct.

- 3) What emotion is the author most likely trying to evoke with the description of the pipemaker's shop in lines 29-33?
 - a) Melancholy

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- b) Interest
- c) Mirth
- d) Indifference

Answer: The best answer is A. Although every description and point raised in the essay is designed to raise interest in the reader, the range of potential variations on the broad concept of interest is far too great to suffice as an answer in this circumstance. Thus, Statement B is invalid. While much of the essay is written to achieve a witty or comic effect, the particular description of a workman facing the end of his livelihood is portrayed with too much gravitas to serve a mirthful function, so Statement C is incorrect. Finally, for reasons much the same as those cited for Statement B, indifference as a desired reader reaction can be rejected, thus making Statement D invalid. Only melancholy, meaning a gloomy or sober thoughtfulness, realistically addresses the tone of the section describing a workman whose life's work is obsolete and soon ending; thus, Statement A is correct.

- 4) Which of the following terms could be substituted for "ephemeral" in line 23 without changing the author's meaning?
- a) Delicate
 - b) Spectral
 - c) Hulking
 - d) Transient

Answer: The best answer is D. Given the placement of the skull's description between the ironic mention of the church murals and the mention of a then-popular restaurant, it is reasonable to look toward a term that means something that is not fixed in time or position and soon to be gone. While delicate shares some connotations, the term generally refers more to physical construction than an object's nature, which is too weak a connection for the meaning implied in the passage, so Statement A can be discarded. Since spectral refers to a property of not being truly present, Statement B can be discarded as well, although it too shares some connotations. Conversely, hulking implies too strong a physical presence for the tone of the passage, so Statement C is invalid. Only transient, meaning lasting only a short time, is relevant to the passage; thus, Statement D is correct.

- 5) Although it is never stated specifically in the passage, how many people, including the narrator, does the passage imply went on the trip to New Orleans?
- a) 1
 - b) 2
 - c) 3
 - d) 4

Answer: The best answer is C. Although the narrator doesn't explicitly identify the number of people who went on the trip, the pronoun "we" is commonly used throughout the narrative, making it clear that the narrator had at least one companion on the journey to New Orleans. Thus, Statement A can be disregarded out of hand. In line 3, the narrator explicitly states that "my companions and I had left" Spokane, which means that the narrator had at least two companions, which eliminates Statement B. Finally, in line 4, the narrator states that along with Spokane itself, the traveling party left behind "icy roads, snow and a total of six sturdy Sorels." The statement that six Sorels, a popular brand of boot,

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were left behind implies three pairs total; thus, Statement D can be rejected, leaving Statement C as best addressing the question and C as the correct answer.

Questions 5 – 10

(5) For American voters in 1892, especially those cognizant of history, the Presidential election turned out to be remarkable. Aside from the numerous issues that faced the electorate—including tariff reform and voting protections for black men in the South—the election ticket marked the first and only time to date in U.S. history where both major-party candidates had held the office of President.

(10) The incumbent at the time, Benjamin Harrison, was a Republican who defeated then-President Grover Cleveland in 1888. Harrison, a noted public speaker who had served with distinction in the Civil War, was a strong believer in trade protectionism, seen as the road to keeping working wages high, and abandoning the gold standard. Also, in keeping with Republican thought, Harrison was also an advocate for extending voting protections, attempted through the massive Federal Elections Bill, and expanding pensions for Civil War veterans. However, despite the general respect accorded Harrison, he wasn't popular with everyone; much of the grass-roots GOP machinery didn't like Harrison, who was not considered generous with patronage and appointments to federal office, and toward the end of his term, several

(15) high-profile strikes rippled through America, particularly in Pennsylvania and Idaho.

(20) Running against Harrison as a Democrat was Grover Cleveland, who was elected President in 1884. Cleveland, an experienced politician who worked his way up through the system from county sheriff to New York governor, was well-known for his forthrightness, dislike of wasteful legislation—in his term as president, his veto numbers were more than double the sum of his predecessors' combined vetoes—and opposition to high tariffs. Cleveland supported free trade and was a fierce opponent of the free silver doctrine, which advocated abandoning the gold standard for the basis of U.S. currency and adopting silver at a 16-1 ratio to gold. Republican campaign machinery would use Cleveland's antagonism toward free silver and high tariffs against him repeatedly.

(25) During the campaign itself, many editorial cartoons, an extremely popular venue for expressing the day's hot-button issues, focused on trade issues, a logical expectation given politics of the time, but a large subset also focused on what might be considered wedge issues. A common theme was military service; both Cleveland and Adlai Stevenson, his vice-presidential candidate, had hired substitutes to take their place in the Union

(30) draft during the Civil War. This practice was legal, but viewed by many with disfavor. On the other hand, Harrison was a respected Union general, and his vice-presidential candidate, Whitelaw Reid, was an acclaimed war correspondent. Many cartoons of the time focused on the disparity between the two tickets, especially in light of Cleveland's repeated vetoes of pension bills.

(35) However, despite the focus on trade and tariffs—which spread into other issues; a noted cartoon on hysteria over “Negro supremacy” if the Federal Elections Bill was passed showed a caricature of John Bull in the background, expressing fear of foreign dominance of American markets if tariffs were lowered—the election of 1892 proved to be a victory for Cleveland. The 1890 elections placed both houses of Congress in the hands of Democrats, and

(40) Cleveland solidified Democrat power by winning a decisive 277 electoral votes.

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- 6) According to the passage, each of the following statements about the 1892 U.S. presidential election are accurate EXCEPT:
- a) The Democratic candidate was strongly opposed to protectionist tactics on trade issues.
 - b) The Republican candidate did not often practice patronage, or the practice of awarding political positions based on previous favors or support.
 - c) Both candidates argued strongly for currency reforms based on precious metals.
 - d) Neither candidate served in the military during the Civil War.

Answer: The correct answer is D. Because the question is requesting the inaccurate statement be identified, the correct statements must be eliminated. Lines 20-21 directly state that Grover Cleveland, the Democrat candidate, supported free trade, which confirms the assertion in Statement A, so it can be eliminated. Similarly, Benjamin Harrison, the Republican candidate, is specifically noted as being stingy with patronage and federal appointments in lines 13-14, thus confirming Statement B and eliminating it from further consideration. Line 9 asserts Harrison's support for abandoning the gold standard, and line 21 cites Cleveland's opposition to that policy, then known as the free silver doctrine, which confirms the assertion of Statement C, making it invalid to address the question. Only Statement D, with the text asserting in line 31 that Harrison had served as a respected Union general, is demonstrably inaccurate; thus, D is correct.

- 7) Based on the phrasing and incidence of cited issues in the passage, what issue of the 1892 Presidential election would the author likely think was of greatest importance to the electorate?
- a) Expansion of military pensions
 - b) Civil rights legislation for former slaves
 - c) Trade issues, specifically tariffs and free markets
 - d) Military background of candidates

Answer: The best answer is C. While each issue mentioned was debated during the 1892 election, the number of references in the passage suggests a hierarchy of importance. The expansion of military pensions is only mentioned twice, and one of those times is used in support of a larger theme within the penultimate paragraph, which downplays its significance and eliminates Statement A. Civil rights legislation, specifically voting protections, gets three mentions, but these mentions are incidental to the main theme, which also eliminates Statement B. While the discussion of military background of the candidates takes up an entire paragraph, that section specifically defines it as a wedge issue, making it of little overall importance and thus eliminating Statement D. Only Statement C, which is referred to repeatedly throughout the passage—at least five separate times—seems to match the author's overall emphasis; thus, C is correct.

- 8) Which of the following terms could be substituted for "cognizant" (line 1) in the first paragraph without changing the author's meaning?
- a) Influenced
 - b) Understanding
 - c) Ignorant
 - d) Related

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Answer: The best answer is B. Since the author states in the opening paragraph that the 1892 election was of historical importance, reading the first line in context with the rest of the paragraph indicates that the term “cognizant” implies knowledge of history, and the correct answer must reflect that. While “influenced” certainly implies having knowledge of something, the inference is too weak to serve as a relevant definition or synonym, so Statement A must be disregarded. Thanks to the contextual reading, Statement C can be rejected out of hand, and Statement D can be rejected for similar reasons for rejecting Statement A. Only Statement B expresses the central idea of comprehension behind the term; thus, B is the correct answer.

- 9) Which of the following sets of issues did the “Negro supremacy” cartoon cited in the last paragraph connect, based on the author’s description?
- a) Foreign market dominance, free trade and voting protections
 - b) Voting protections, free trade and union agitation
 - c) Foreign market dominance, free trade and military service
 - d) Military service, voting protections and free trade

Answer: The best answer is A. As mentioned in the last paragraph, the cartoon tied together fears of the Federal Elections Bill, legislation designed to provide unfettered voting rights to the recently freed black male population, with fears that the newly empowered voters would drop protectionist tariffs, a cornerstone of free trade, and allow John Bull (a symbol of England) to dominate international markets. Thus, the correct answer must address all of these aspects. Statement B can be eliminated, because the cartoon does not touch on the union issues then facing American industry. Similarly, Statement C can be eliminated because military service was not an issue in the cartoon, and Statement D can be rejected because it mentions military service and does not mention foreign market dominance. Only Statement A addresses all three major issues, making A correct.

- 10) According to the passage, which issue made Cleveland the most vulnerable to criticism with regards to his avoidance of military service?
- a) His opposition to the free silver doctrine
 - b) His frequent use of the presidential veto
 - c) His opposition to pension bills
 - d) His rejection of high tariffs for trade protection

Answer: The best answer is C. Although an argument can be made that the avoidance of military service was primarily a character flaw, the fact that Cleveland had already served a term as President argues against this being used against him, implying that it played directly into another issue. Of the issues listed, Statements A and D can be rejected out of hand, as both refer to Cleveland’s stance on trade issues, which had no relation to his military background, or lack thereof. Statement B is arguably tangentially related, but the passage makes clear his dislike of wasteful legislation was well-known and considered a positive aspect. However, Cleveland repeatedly used his veto power to prevent pension bills from passing, which would have expanded benefits for veterans; this issue fits naturally into his military service, and as such, best addresses the question, making C correct.

Questions 11 – 15

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(5) In the last twenty years or so, cinema has undergone an explosion of change in how films are made and distributed. From the emergence of CGI to the long-lasting effects the Sundance Film Festival has had on Hollywood's view of "profitable," the entire industry has undergone a series of remarkable changes. Few examples of film subculture exemplify this better than Mormon cinema, a subset of the moviemaking universe that has met with notable success for a number of intersecting reasons.

(10) The first, and perhaps most obvious of these, would be the concomitant growth in Mormon audiences. According to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints' Statistical Report for 2005, membership in the church stands at more than 12.5 million people, making it the fourth-largest religious group in the United States. Such a numerous population would be a natural built-in audience for films exploring Mormon beliefs and culture, and one that is not limited to Utah and Idaho; more than half of the church's population lives outside of the United States. The fact that an ever-growing segment of the population is LDS makes for an obvious correlation to the rise in popularity of LDS cinema, but it is not the only one.

(15) Another factor in the rise of LDS cinema, and one that dovetails with the increase in Mormon adherents, is the cultural tone of America over the last few years. Driven in part by the geopolitical events of the past few years—9/11, the war in Iraq—as well as by an administration commonly seen to be focused on traditional religious mores, American culture has experienced a significant populist turn toward family-friendly films and entertainment.

(20) Examples of this turn abound, from the popularity of Big Idea Studios' Christian-themed, computer animated show *Veggie Tales* (recently introduced into NBC's Saturday morning rotation, albeit in a slightly less theologically-weighted form) to billionaire Philip Anschutz's formation of Walden Media to create films families can watch; recent properties include the remake of *Around the World in Eighty Days* and the successful big-screen adaptations of C.S. Lewis' Narnia novels. Studios, mindful of this as well as the phenomenal success of kid-friendly movies like *WALL-E* and *Shrek*, are willing to get behind projects that project a wholesomeness that might not have been greenlit in years past. Mormon filmmakers have only been too willing to fill the gap, making films that are free of offensive language, sexual situations and violence, such as the adaptation of *The Work and the Glory*.

(30) More importantly, however, is that Mormon filmmakers have displayed a willingness to play up certain touchstone values in their films to lend a certain universality (or at least, values common to Western democratic cultures) rather than trumpet Mormon theology and culture. A prime example of this would be the aforementioned *The Work and the Glory*, which portrays the enemies of the church in the film as against free thought and the principles of America, rather than against the Mormon Church itself or its adherents.

11) Based on the phrasing of the passage, which set of influences would the author most likely argue have converged to lead to the perceived rise in popularity of Mormon cinema?

- a) Theological and cultural influences
- b) Cultural and political influences
- c) Economic and political influences
- d) Cultural and economic influences

Answer: The best answer is D. Although each of the potential influences listed are arguably correct, it is clear that the author sees a specific set of circumstances as being responsible. Although religion is

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discussed throughout the passage, the third paragraph clearly states that the theological aspects are considered part of a larger cultural context, so Statement A can be rejected out of hand. Similarly, while political matters are also discussed in the passage, the author uses them primarily as support for a larger examination of cultural matters, so Statement B can be rejected. While the penultimate paragraph strongly implies that economic factors are a major contributor (pointing out that greater availability of material is based on the perception of profits), the political reference disqualifies Statement C from consideration. Only Statement D combines the cultural concerns with the economic underpinning the author discusses; thus, D is correct.

- 12) Which of the following qualities does the author state as the most vital factor in the increased acceptance of Mormon cinema among mainstream audiences?
- a) Geopolitical turbulence such as the war in Iraq
 - b) Growth in LDS membership, in the U.S. and abroad
 - c) Use of general fundamental values over specific religious messages
 - d) General cultural shift toward more traditional expressions

Answer: The best answer is C. In the passage, the author argues for the inclusion of global turmoil as a contributing factor to a larger cultural shift, but does not include an argument for this factor on its own, so Statement A can be discounted. The first factor cited in the passage is the growth in LDS membership, but due to the phrasing of the passage and its position in the essay, it is clear that the author views this as the least important factor; thus, Statement B is clearly not valid. While the larger cultural shift of American audiences is addressed in the bulk of the text, the last paragraph makes clear that this factor is superseded by an even larger one, so Statement D can also be rejected. Only Statement C, specifically cited in the final paragraph, meets the question's criterion, making C the correct answer.

- 13) Although relevant in a strictly cultural context, the author's inclusion of *Veggie Tales* in this passage could be considered irrelevant to the main argument for what reason?
- a) *Veggie Tales* is a retelling of Bible stories and is not indicative of a new trend
 - b) *Veggie Tales* is a television show, thus not relevant to cinema arguments
 - c) *Veggie Tales* is computer-animated and thus appeals to a different audience segment
 - d) *Veggie Tales* has a relatively limited audience and is thus not "mainstream" enough

Answer: The best answer is B. Statement A can be discounted, because the fact that *Veggie Tales* retells Biblical stories is why it fits within the cultural shift described in the passage, returning to a traditional cultural theme. The argument that computer-animated fare appeals to a different segment of the audience is counter-indicated by the fact that of the five titles specifically mentioned in the passage, three of them are computer-animated; thus, Statement C is invalid. For similar reasons to Statement A, Statement C can also be discounted; the adoption of *Veggie Tales* by NBC firmly discounts the "mainstream" argument. However, it also highlights the primary difference: *Veggie Tales* is a TV show, for a different audience and produced under different rules and standards, which reduces its relevance to the main thrust of the argument, which regards cinema. Thus, Statement C, which highlights this, is correct.

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- 14) What factor mentioned in the passage is most at odds with the U.S.-centric tone and viewpoint of the author?
- a) The literary adaptations mentioned are based on works from European authors
 - b) More than half of the LDS global population lives outside the United States
 - c) The major geopolitical event of the last few years is wholly outside U.S. borders
 - d) Most films in Mormon cinema project values and traits specific to church members

Answer: The best answer is B. While the original literary works mentioned were European works, the films that resulted were financed and created within the Hollywood studio system, which makes their literary origins of little relevance in this context; thus, Statement A is invalid. While it is also true that the major geopolitical influence—the war in Iraq—is outside U.S. borders, no other single nation is as militarily or culturally involved, thus making Statement C invalid. As discussed in the final paragraph, the use of certain basic touchstone values in recent films discounts the assertion of Statement D, making it irrelevant. However, the fact that more than half of LDS membership is outside of U.S. borders has, and will increasingly have, a major shift on the culture of the church, which has the most counterbalancing effect on the U.S.-centric nature of the passage and makes Statement B correct.

- 15) Which of the following terms could be substituted for “mores” (line 18) in the third paragraph without changing the author’s meaning?
- a) Values
 - b) Thoughts
 - c) Intentions
 - d) Laws

Answer: The best answer is A. Given the phrasing of the line and the implication of religious traditions, a substitute that most closely fits the concept of traditions must be used. While “thoughts” are arguably implied in that statement, the inference is too weak and does not have the connotation of translation into action or even belief, so Statement B can be discounted. For similar reasons, Statement C can be discarded, as the concept expressed in the passage is stronger than “intentions” can provide. However, the idea of “laws” is too strong a concept, as “traditions” has the connotation of practices that are handed down but not enforced on pain of punishment, as “laws” would be. Only “values” fits comfortably into the overall concept of traditions here, meeting the definition of mores as fundamental moral values of a group; thus, A is the correct answer.

Questions 16 – 20

- In a sense, one could argue that with Claude McKay’s sonnet “The Lynching,” written in the early 1920s, what you see is what you get. Certainly there is enough meaning readily apparent in the piece, a chilling rendition of the immediate aftermath of a lynching, to satisfy the casual reader. Considering the racial tenor of the times, which saw among other things a resurgence in membership in the Ku Klux Klan, that may even have been the primary reason behind the poem’s genesis.
- (5)

- However, regardless of how deep the racial aspects were intended to function as art in this case, there exists entwined within the poem a deeper examination of evil within humanity, explored (and in some terms, expressed) within the context of man’s relationship with the
- (10) Divine.

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- The very beginning of the sonnet sets the tone for this evaluation: “His Spirit in smoke ascended to high heaven./His father, by the cruelest way of pain,/Had bidden him to his bosom once again.” McKay makes an interesting and subtle choice in his usage of capitalization here; note that while “Spirit” (referring to the lynching’s victim, one would assume) is capitalized in concordance with the commonly accepted method of denoting divinity, the words “father” and “him” in the third line are not. The assignation of holiness to the lynched is not unusual, especially considering that in Catholicism (a faith that McKay turned to strongly later in life and was, due to his Jamaican upbringing, more than likely familiar with in his youth), fire is a common method of dispatching martyrs and saints to their Heavenly reward (hanging is not, but in light of the poem’s construction and the adjectives used, fire appears to have more conceptual weight within the sonnet, and this paper will focus on McKay’s use of fire in the lynching and its repercussions). However, the lack of capitalization when regarding Divinity is unusual. The weighting of the quality of holiness is thus subtly moved to the side of the victim, and away from God.
- (15) Thus, the victim’s spirit ascends “to high heaven,” as we would expect from the title; the reader would naturally assume that the person who was lynched, as the term “lynch” is defined by Merriam-Webster’s 11th Collegiate Dictionary as “to put to death (as by hanging) by mob action **without legal sanction**” (emphasis mine), was an innocent and thus likely to be Heaven-bound.
- (20) In fact, the fact that the lynched’s spirit is explicitly headed to Heaven and thus removed from this sphere of influence has the paradoxical effect of highlighting the dramatic impact of what was done to him and rendering him (with apologies to Alfred Hitchcock) what could be called a McGuffin: a device necessary to set the narrative machine in motion, but not intrinsically of value. This condition is used to excellent effect by McKay in the sonnet’s conclusion.
- (25) Neither the second nor third line contains anything to dissuade us from this spiritual viewpoint, which is reinforced by the fourth line: “The awful sin remained still unforgiven.” This may seem like redundancy, as the sin can be argued to be too fresh to consider for forgiveness, but it further cements the idea of innocence and sin that the first few lines have constructed for us. Furthermore, in that the soul of the victim has already ascended to Heaven and clearly received divine forgiveness, it removes any and all potential for the “awful sin” belonging to the lynched and leaves it squarely on the shoulders of the earthbound.
- (30)
- (35)
- (40)

- 16) Based on the passage, what object discussed in McKay’s poem would the author consider most holy in the sonnet’s overall context?
- a) The pain
 - b) The victim’s body
 - c) The smoke
 - d) The victim’s spirit

Answer: The best answer is D. While much of the objects described in the passage are metaphorical, the author appears willing to consider them in concrete terms, so the reader must be willing to do so as well. Although pain in literature is often used to denote or describe purification, it’s used here solely to underline the inhumanity of the central event, and no quality of holiness attaches to it. Thus, Statement A can be rejected. Statement B can be rejected because the passage does not address the physicality of

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the victim in any meaningful way. Smoke plays a vital part in the poem, but it is clear from lines 11-13 that the smoke is primarily metaphorical, so Statement C is irrelevant. Only Statement D, with the metaphorical implications of the spirit being discussed throughout the bulk of the passage, addresses the question; thus, D is correct.

- 17) What relevance does the use of fire have in the poem, according to the author?
- a) Fire was frequently used to kill people being lynched
 - b) Fire was commonly seen as the only way to destroy evil
 - c) Fire was commonly used to send saints and martyrs to the afterlife
 - d) Fire was frequently used as a poetic device in the 1920s

Answer: The best answer is C. Although the discussion of the poem makes clear that fire was not a rare device in lynchings, it is also secondary in purpose within the context of the poem, as the actual death was discussed as a device more than a thematic purpose. As a result, Statement A is invalid. The historical and spiritual uses of fire are not discussed in any detail within the passage, so any inference in that direction is weak at best, so Statement B can be discarded. For similar reasons, Statement D can be rejected, as there is no comparative discussion of contemporary poetry within the passage. Only Statement C, with specific textual support coming from lines 16-19, can be seen as addressing the question; thus, C is correct.

- 18) According to the passage, what is the primary thematic purpose of the poem?
- a) Dissect racial relations of the then-contemporary era
 - b) Explore the intertwined relationship of man, evil and divinity
 - c) Provide an eyewitness account of a horrific crime
 - d) Examine the martyr complex common in African-American literature at the time

Answer: The best answer is B. The primary thematic purpose of the poem can be seen through careful examination, and although the event described was an all-too-common event, the language used in the lines cited to describe it does not focus on the race of the victim, so a racial analysis is not directly applicable (although it is strongly implied). Thus, Statement A is invalid. Although the poem certainly describes the crime, it does not do so on a realistic basis. By invoking spiritual imagery, it takes on a different tone and approach than an eyewitness account can, so Statement C is also invalid. Since there is no mention of a martyr complex or other African-American literature or writers, Statement D is discarded. Only Statement B, with direct textual support provided by the passage's second paragraph and further support interspersed throughout, addresses the question, making B correct.

- 19) Based on the passage and the lines cited, what entity or actor in the poem is de-emphasized in an unusual fashion?
- a) The victim's soul
 - b) Spectators at the lynching
 - c) The lynchers
 - d) God

Answer: The best answer is D. Although no specific people or entities are discussed in the lines cited from the poem, there is enough anecdotal evidence and inferences available to discuss various actors in

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the poem. Statement A can be rejected out of hand, as there is ample textual evidence from the poem and the passage to suggest that the victim's soul is actually held in highest regard, specifically the fourth and fifth paragraphs, which makes A incorrect. Statement B can also be rejected, as they are not specifically mentioned in the lines cited, nor in this passage, so for all intents and purposes, they can be ignored for now; thus, B is incorrect. Statement C can be rejected for similar reasons. Only Statement D, with lines 23-24 specifically discussing how the victim's soul gains status over even God, fits the bill in this context, so D is correct.

20) Which of the following terms could be substituted for "concordance" (line 15) in the third paragraph without changing the author's meaning?

- a) Agreement
- b) Substitution
- c) Defiance
- d) Assignment

Answer: The best answer is A. Within the context of the sentence, the term "concordance" is being used to signify alignment with the methodology being discussed, so the correct term must reflect this idea. In this context, Statement B would be incorrect, because it would imply that the method being described was insufficient, a different concept than what the author intends. For similar reasons, Statement C can be discarded, because "defiance" means in opposition to, again not the intention of the author here. Statement D would also be incorrect, because the term "assignment" is completely unrelated in this sense, referring to specifying a term or condition, rather than aligning or not aligning, which would be more in keeping with the contextual clues. Only Statement A, with the term being used to indicate that the conditions described are similar and aligned in purpose, meets the concept under consideration; thus, A is correct.

Additional [LSAT Logical Reasoning Help](#)

Logical Reasoning Practice

Directions as given on the LSAT: 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.

Questions 1-2

A recent Newsweek poll found that for the first time, a majority of Americans now believe that gay and lesbian couples deserve legal recognition. Fifty-five percent of the poll's respondents stated they support legally sanctioned unions. The poll also indicated that there was increased backing for inheritance and other property rights, and that 39 percent support legalizing gay marriage.

- 1) Which one of the following, if true, most weakens the assertion of increased support for gay unions among the American people?

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- a) The poll firm used by Newsweek to conduct the survey is owned and operated by a company not aligned with any political organizations.
- b) All polling was conducted through random telephone calls to people across the nation.
- c) Respondents queried by Newsweek chose which poll questions to answer.
- d) Other news magazines were conducting a similar poll during the same period that Newsweek was.

Answer: The best answer is C. In order to assure a statistically valid result, the sample size must be statistically valid and free of bias. Having a politically neutral organization in charge of polling is standard practice and avoids influencing the questions or the pollers, so such a condition would not weaken the central assertion, which eliminates Statement A. Random phone calling avoids selecting respondents from specific demographics and geographic areas, which also minimizes bias, so Statement B is also unsuitable. The fact of other polls being conducted in the same period has no effect on the poll in question, as they are independent events; thus, Statement D is invalid as well. Only Statement C, where the respondents' bias affects the questions answered, could provide a valid argument against the poll's objectivity; thus, C is correct.

- 2) The statements above most strongly support which of the following assertions?
- a) The gay population of the United States is higher than it was.
 - b) Acceptance of gays and lesbians is higher in the United States than it was.
 - c) Marriage proponents have persuaded a larger set of the population to partake.
 - d) The gay population of the United States is lower than it was.

Answer: The best answer is B. Based on the statements in the paragraph above, the poll was specifically focused on the question of legal unions and/or marriages for the gay and lesbian population. Since the statements reflect no information or speculation about the percentage of gays and lesbians among the general population, both Statements A and D can be rejected out of hand, as there is no information or inference to draw on. Also, since the statements specifically reflect respondents' opinions on a specific population with regards to marriage, there is no general information from which to draw an overall opinion of marriage itself, which eliminates Statement C from consideration. Only the assertion in Statement B can reasonably be drawn from the statements in the question; thus, B is correct.

Questions 3-4

Radio listener: Van Morrison and Nick Lowe started their music careers only a few years apart, but while both men have released numerous albums, their levels of fame and renown are wildly different. Morrison has had a long career in the popular eye, and has made many millions of dollars, as well as having had critical acclaim. Lowe has also made money, but substantially less than Morrison. Lowe is a respected songwriter, but hasn't had more than a couple of popular hits. Because of their differing levels of fame, Morrison is clearly the better musician.

- 3) The reasoning in this argument is most vulnerable to criticism on what grounds?
- a) The argument calls for a ruling based on variable and ill-defined qualities.
 - b) The argument compares musicians from different genres of music.
 - c) The argument ignores other, more relevant examples for comparison.

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- d) The argument does not offer factual evidence to support the otherwise valid assertions.

Answer: The best answer is A. In order for the argument to function logically and validly, the premises must be valid and the argument must logically connect the premises to form a rational, logically consistent conclusion. Since there is no basis for arguing for or against different genres or types of music, Statement B is irrelevant to the argument, and can be ignored. Similarly, since it calls for a judgment comparison solely between the two mentioned musicians and does not require additional citations, Statement C is also irrelevant. Although having factual bases is helpful in constructing an argument, there are no definitions of terms or qualities offered that having facts would help support, so Statement D is also unsuitable. Only Statement A, which specifically highlights the weakness of the argument calling for a conclusion without defining the terms needed to phrase the conclusion, addresses the question, making A correct.

- 4) This argument assumes which of the following?
 - a) There are only two relevant performers that can be compared.
 - b) Popular music covers country and classical arrangements.
 - c) Readers are familiar with a wide range of popular performers.
 - d) Quality of musicianship and popular appeal are directly related.

Answer: The best answer is D. The assumptions of the argument are implicit in the statements used, so those statements must be examined in order to extract its assumptions. Although there are only two performers cited, the comparison being made is explicitly made only between the two listed; since there is no basis to assume the argument was constructed to apply to any other performers, Statement A can be rejected. There is no discussion of musical types in the argument, so no assumptions can be made about what genres are considered popular, which disqualifies Statement B. As the argument is constructed, it applies only to the two cited directly in the statements, and requires no prior knowledge of music or these musicians; thus, Statement C is irrelevant. Only Statement D, which is indirectly stated in the conclusion and implied throughout, is relevant here; thus, D is correct.

Question 5

No one in the trauma unit that Dr. James belongs to can work more than one shift in the emergency room per any given work week. For the next week, all the shifts available to work are non-emergency room shifts. Thus, it is untrue that Dr. James can work any emergency room shift in the next week.

- 5) Which one of the following conditions, if true, most directly weakens the argument concerning Dr. James working in the emergency room?
 - a) The shifts are scheduled and set only a few days in advance.
 - b) The shifts still available were overtime shifts, and have no relation to regularly scheduled shifts.
 - c) Dr. James has privileges at a different nearby hospital.
 - d) The trauma unit is affiliated with a mobile medical clinic.

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Answer: The best answer is B. In order for the argument to be weakened or refuted, there must be a condition or qualification that contradicts the conclusion without altering the statements given. With this in mind, Statement A is irrelevant, because the scheduling of the shifts does not affect who is assigned to which ones or the rules governing them. Since one specific emergency room is being discussed in the argument, the shifts Dr. James could work at a different emergency room have no bearing on the shifts being discussed, so Statement C is invalid. For identical reasons, Statement D is also invalid, as the mobile clinic is outside the scope of the argument. Only Statement B, which opens the possibility that the shifts discussed are separate from regularly scheduled shifts and thus Dr. James could already be scheduled for an emergency room shift, addresses the question, making B correct.

Questions 6-7

Infidelity can have a number of psychological effects on the partner committing the infidelity. Aside from the various factors that led to the act, one of the more common side effects has to do with the perception of trust. Often, the effort of keeping an illicit relationship from the other partner is extremely stressful, with the straying party having to resort to more and more elaborate tactics to keep the infidelity secret. As the pressure mounts, and the unfaithful party reflects on their own behavior, the cheating party will often reinterpret the other partner's behavior through the prism of the cheater's own duplicity, leading to _____.

- 6) Which of the following phrases most logically completes the argument?
- a) increasing distrust and, ironically, suspicion that the other party is cheating.
 - b) a desire to lay down strict rules regarding communication.
 - c) isolating the other party through silence and rejection of affection.
 - d) erratic behavior and occasional fits of excessive attention or affection.

Answer: The best answer is A. Since the argument is based on the perception of trust within a relationship, the completing phrase should reference the linchpin of the argument directly. Although issues of communication are implied to be a factor, there is no direct citing of this, nor is there any inferred reference, so Statement B is not suitable here. Both Statements C and D do not address the issue of trust perception, only potential side effects of this, which fails to logically complete the argument or support the main assertion; thus, both statements can be rejected. Only Statement A refers back to the central pillar of the argument and follows logically with the conclusion's first half; thus, A is the correct answer.

- 7) Each of the following is an assumption required by the argument EXCEPT:
- a) An adulterous partner in a relationship will generally attempt to keep the infidelity secret.
 - b) The other partner will generally disapprove of the adulterous partner's behavior.
 - c) Adulterous behavior is driven by a perception of mistrust.
 - d) Infidelity carries a range of psychological side effects generally caused by guilt and secrecy.

Answer: The best answer is C. For an assumption to be a valid part of an argument, it must either be directly stated or supported in the argument, or it must be a necessary condition for the argument's

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thesis to exist; thus, in this instance, the correct answer must be for a condition that does not meet this test. Statement A is thus rejected, as the third line clearly states that in general, an unfaithful partner will strive to keep the adultery secret. Since disapproval and/or reprisal is clearly implied to be the driving force behind the secrecy, Statement B is also disqualified. Statement D restates the introduction of the argument, so it is also not suitable for further consideration. Only Statement C, which addresses an issue irrelevant to the argument and has no inferred or direct place in the argument, is not a necessary statement, which makes C correct.

Questions 8-9

The ability of an organism to adapt to environmental change is strictly controlled by how well it fits into the environment prior to the change, which is directly related to time spent in that ecology. If an environment is stable over long periods of time, as was seen during the lengthy period between the Triassic and Cretaceous eras, the lifeforms that appear and flourish in that environment are so specialized to the climate and ecological system that any sudden change, even if relatively insignificant, can result in species extinction. The rise of mammals after the Cretaceous-Tertiary extinction event and the subsequent fall of dinosaurs is simply the best-known example.

- 8) What assumption is made in the argument as stated that, if incorrect, could weaken the argument's logic?
- a) The extinction event was a geological phenomenon.
 - b) Mammals developed some time after dinosaurs appeared.
 - c) The earth's climate stabilized into a subtropical system.
 - d) Dinosaurs first appeared in the pre-Triassic era.

Answer: The best answer is B. Since the thesis of the argument is that a direct relationship can be drawn between adaptability and time spent in an ecosystem, any assumption that would address time and/or adaptability could greatly affect the argument if wrong. Statement A can be discarded immediately, because it addresses the possible cause of the extinction event; all that matters here is that there was an extinction event, not its cause. Similarly, Statement C can be rejected, as it only concerns climate, not adaptability or time. While a weak connection is made with the idea of time in Statement D, it is irrelevant because the extinction event, not time itself, was the agent of change; thus, Statement D can be rejected. Only Statement B addresses the unspoken assumption that mammals came along later and thus were less finely tuned to the environment, making them more adaptable; thus, B is correct.

- 9) The reasoning behind this argument is flawed for what reason?
- a) It fails to recognize the superior flexibility of mammals in a variable environment.
 - b) It relies on a sudden change for proof of its thesis.
 - c) It correlates unrelated branches of science in an attempt to make an argument.
 - d) It fails to account for other potential factors that could generate the result.

Answer: The best answer is D. In order for the reasoning to be flawed, there must be a structural defect in the logic, or a factor that was not considered when stating the original argument, such as poorly defined assumptions. For this argument, Statement A can be discarded right away, because the argument does not make any such claim, implied or direct, as outlined in the statement. Statement B

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can be discarded because it contradicts the thesis directly; adaptability is defined in part by sudden change, so sudden change would constitute valid proof. Since the sciences referred to in the argument—climatology, ecology and (by inference) geology—are not unrelated, Statement C is patently false, and is thus not valid in this context. Only Statement D, which accurately outlines that the argument fails to take into consideration other potential factors such as mutation, correctly addresses the question, making D correct.

Question 10

An engineering manager reports that the latest revision of the company's product, a rotational ring used as part of the spindle assembly for high-revolution hard drives, is ready for production, barely within the stated deadline for ramping up production. Test results show that the ring performs above the 99% operational function standard within the narrow range of temperature and revolution laid out in the official product specifications. However, further analysis shows the failure rate rose dramatically when tested outside that well-defined range in temperatures and revolution rates that are common for those devices, falling to a 92% operational function standard. The manager states that because the product functions within stated tolerances inside the specified ranges, the product is ready to manufacture, and that modifications can wait for future revisions.

- 10) The reasoning in the manager's argument is flawed because the argument:
- a) Bases a liability analysis on time factors only.
 - b) Follows a narrowly defined interpretation of the warranty.
 - c) Assumes customers will primarily use the product in optimal conditions.
 - d) Is predicated on a timeframe that may not occur.

Answer: The best answer is C. Although there are several real-world factors that must be considered in a business environment, the manager's argument is based on a small subset of these factors, which must be considered in the context of the larger issues. Statement A, while initially weakly implied, is invalid because the manager has not explicitly weighed liability factors, choosing to focus solely on deadline issues. Since warranty issues are generated by customer usage, and the product has not been manufactured yet, Statement B is invalid. Time is the primary issue to the manager, which creates a connection to Statement D, but since the manager is deciding based on a defined deadline, the inference is too weak to use in this context. Only Statement C, which presupposes a practical limitation in product usage that the original conditions contradict, adequately answers the question, making C correct.

Questions 11-13

In virtually all species of cockroach, the nervous and respiratory systems are heavily decentralized. Laboratory experiments have repeatedly demonstrated that cockroaches can be decapitated completely, yet continue to survive for up to several weeks before dying of lack of food or water. This demonstrates the relative superiority of cockroaches over virtually all other insect species, since hardly any other species has demonstrated such ability to survive after being introduced to extreme damage or environmental conditions.

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- 11) The argument about cockroaches seeks to do which of the following?
- a) Establish a conclusion about a group using facts known about a set of representative members of that group
 - b) Support the hypothesis that certain phenomena can occur by describing a suitable mechanism
 - c) Conclude that members of disparate groups share a certain ability because of other characteristics they share
 - d) Demonstrate that a general rule about a group or situation applies in a particular case

Answer: The best answer is A. The argument as structured follows a traditional format of providing support statements and then drawing a conclusion based on those statements; as a result, Statement B can be discarded, as it describes an inversely structured argument which begins with a thesis and follows up with support. Since there is no discussion of disparate groups or species in the argument (cockroaches are members of the insect group), Statement C can similarly be discarded. Statement D is also invalid, because it argues for a particular rule or situation and compares it to a general situation, which is the inverse of the actual argument. Only Statement A accurately describes the structure and intent of the cockroach argument; thus, A is correct.

- 12) Which of the following statements, if true, most seriously weakens the cockroach argument?
- a) Cockroaches are found in the widest environmental ranges of any insect species.
 - b) The estimated cockroach population has increased dramatically since modern cities appeared.
 - c) More bird species prey on cockroaches than any other insect species.
 - d) The lethal dose for common household chemicals is far lower for cockroaches than most other insect species.

Answer: The best answer is D. Since the point of the cockroach argument is to demonstrate their superiority through hardiness, the statement that best weakens that argument would downplay or disprove that quality. Statement A, since it argues for the adaptability of cockroaches, would support the cockroach argument, so it is invalid in this context. Similarly, Statement B would imply biological success, which supports the original argument. As a result, Statement B is also invalid in this context. Statement C is invalid because it refers to the larger role of cockroaches in the ecosystem, specifically the predator/prey relationship, and has no bearing on the relationship to other insects and the relative hardiness therein. Only Statement D, which would indicate a greater weakness in human habitation than other insect species, would contradict the cockroach argument's main conclusion if true, making D correct.

- 13) Which one of the following is an assumption on which the cockroach argument depends?
- a) Decentralization of the nervous and respiratory systems is common among insects.
 - b) Cockroach swarming behavior is a sign of complex emergent behavior.
 - c) Superiority is demonstrated by the ability to survive extreme conditions and damage.
 - d) Few insects exhibit the ecological adaptability of cockroaches.

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Answer: The best answer is C. While the decentralization of certain systems is listed as a factor in cockroaches' hardiness, it is not stated or implied that property is specific to roaches or not. As a result, Statement A has no bearing on the argument, and is thus invalid. Emergent behavior and its role in roaches superiority is also not mentioned, so for similar reasons, Statement B is invalid. The argument does not cite ecological adaptability as a reason for the central assertion, so Statement D is also not relevant to the argument, and is thus invalid. Only Statement C, which defines the implied quality of superiority in a way to allow the supporting statements to bear the argument's logical burden, plays into the argument's primary assumptions; thus, C is the correct answer.

Questions 14-15

A poll of employees at Widgets, Inc. concluded that employee satisfaction levels were among the five highest-ranked companies in the United States. Poll data was gathered by representatives from human resources quizzing employees in private meetings about their satisfaction levels with their jobs, and the company as a whole, and then computing the results based on a predetermined index. A recruiter with a national staffing firm has argued with the results, claiming that the percentages listed do not match with surveys of former and present employees placed with the company.

- 14) The recruiter can most properly criticize the reasoning by which the poll reached its result on what basis?
- a) The index used to measure satisfaction was not compiled to the same objectives and specifications as other companies.
 - b) The poll was not conducted by an objective party, and may have skewed the results.
 - c) Former employees were not included in the polling sample.
 - d) Polling was not conducted electronically, making tampering more likely.

Answer: The best answer is B. Since an analysis of the poll's veracity can only be based on the information given, any issues must be identifiable from that information. Since it is only known that a predetermined index was used, and not what that index measured or how, there is no way to properly analyze that index's utility in this context, so Statement A is invalid here. The company poll was intended to measure employee satisfaction, so former employees would not be a valid sample population in any case, making Statement C also inapplicable. Finally, there is no mention of how the poll answers were recorded, so any speculation on that aspect is irrelevant to the argument, thereby eliminating Statement D. Only Statement B, which rightfully questions the objectivity of a company-administered poll, is relevant grounds for criticism, making B correct.

- 15) Which of the following statements could Widgets, Inc., most likely use to dispute the recruiter's own figures?
- a) The staffing firm has a vested interest in creating the appearance of dissatisfaction.
 - b) Only a small percentage of companies took part in the national poll results.
 - c) The staffing firm's polls included former employees, which were not counted in Widgets' poll.
 - d) Different poll indexes were used by Widgets and the staffing firm.

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Answer: The best answer is C. Any refutation of the staffing firm's poll must be based on the information about the poll made available in the argument, and since there is no information or reason to infer the staffing firm has any business interest in how Widgets is perceived with regards to employee satisfaction, Statement A can thus be discarded. Similarly, both Statements B and D can both be rejected; there is no information available about the percentages of companies polled or the indexes used, so no useful argument can be drawn on those bases. Only Statement C, which is directly supported by the last line of the argument, makes the point that the poll populations were different and thus cannot be considered in the same light, which is a valid basis for refutation; thus, C is correct.

Question 16

Teenage couch potato: My folks are always telling me to sit back from the TV set; they say my eyes will go bad if I sit too close to the screen. Our TV is a an older set with one of those tubes, and I read that the refresh rate on older TVs is the part that eyes have trouble focusing on, which is why computer screens on TV are always so hard to see. Flat-panel plasma TVs don't have that problem, since they have much higher resolution and refresh much faster, so instead of always sitting back so far, buying a flat-panel plasma TV will take care of any focus issues my eyes might have.

- 16) Which of the following best states the flaw in this argument's reasoning?
- a) Refresh rates do not have an effect on the ability to read an image.
 - b) Simply moving back from the TV is a simpler and less expensive solution.
 - c) Flat-panel plasma TVs have a similar effect on the eyes, despite their higher performance standards.
 - d) The teenager does not have any vision issues.

Answer: The best answer is B. Statement A can be discarded out of hand, since the rate of refresh has a definite and noticeable effect on how an image is perceived (as cited in the argument); thus, A is patently false and is irrelevant to the argument. Statement C can also be rejected for similar reasons; due to differing mechanisms and higher technology, the capabilities of flat-panel plasma TVs are much different than older technology, and as cited in the argument, the statement in C is contradicted by the supporting statements. While Statement D is arguably true, since the argument is designed to help stave off such issues, it has no bearing on the argument's reasoning, and so can be rejected. Statement B, however, directly contradicts the conclusion by pointing out a reasonable and simpler alternative, so in this context, B is the correct answer.

Questions 17-18

All college students who play video games develop increased hand-eye coordination. All college students who major in the biological sciences make excellent doctors and surgeons. Everyone in Riley's study group, including Riley, is majoring in the biological sciences, and all of them except Riley play video games. Therefore, everyone in Riley's study group will make excellent surgeons.

- 17) Which of the following statements could reasonably be inferred from this argument, if true?
- a) Riley has less hand-eye coordination than her study group peers.
 - b) Riley has the same hand-eye coordination as her study group peers.

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- c) Riley has greater hand-eye coordination than her study group peers.
- d) There is no inference that can reasonably be drawn on the study group's members' hand-eye coordination.

Answer: The best answer is D. In this case, although hand-eye coordination is used as a supporting factor in the argument, there is no basis for comparison between Riley and her study group peers. If the argument is true, as the question states, it can be reasoned that Riley's study group has experienced increased hand-eye coordination, and similarly, Riley has not as she does not play video games. However, there is no basis of comparison between Riley and her peers, as there is no information as to levels of coordination before beginning their video game playing habits. Riley could have started at the same level as her peers, been far behind or be so advanced that they can't reach her level no matter how many games they play. As a result, the only valid statement that can be made is Statement D; thus, D is the correct answer.

- 18) What assumption is made in the above argument that is not explicitly supported in the argument's text?
- a) Riley and her study group peers intend to be surgeons.
 - b) Riley and her study group peers started as biological science majors.
 - c) Riley and her study group peers are college students.
 - d) Riley and her study group peers are good at video games.

Answer: The best answer is C. The argument as written is intended to argue that the students mentioned will make excellent surgeons, but not that they must, or even intend to pursue that path. Additionally, the argument states that such students make excellent doctors and surgeons, which thus opens the possibility of not being a surgeon; thus, Statement A can be rejected. Statement B is invalid, because the argument states only that they are biological science majors, which has no bearing on their initial majors. Since the argument explicitly states that Riley does not play video games, the question of whether or not she is good is unanswerable, which makes Statement D inapplicable. However, while the first supporting statements reference college students, the argument does not explicitly state that Riley and her peers themselves are college students; thus, C is correct.

Questions 19-20

Librarian: Every year, there are a handful of challenges from parents angry that Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* is available for children to check out. For the last several years, the challenges have always been over the racially charged material and the "liberal" nature of Atticus Finch; although the library board has consistently ruled in favor of the book, the challenges keep coming every year. However, the movie version, which is also available for children to check out, has never been challenged once, despite the fidelity of the adaptation to the novel.

- 19) The reasoning in the librarian's argument is flawed because:
- a) It assumes that parents are aware that the movie is also available for children to check out.
 - b) It fails to note whether other novels with similar thematic elements are also being challenged.

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- c) It ignores the possibility that challenges are being issued for non-textual issues.
- d) It assumes that the text and movie versions are being checked out at similar rates.

Answer: The best answer is A. As the argument states, the challenges are over the fact that the novel is available to check out by children, so the other statements in the argument must be evaluated in that light. Since the challenges are specifically against one novel, the similarity to other novels that are available, if such novels exist, are irrelevant in this case, so Statement B can be rejected. The argument gives specific reasons for the general challenges to the novel, so any other possibility for the challenges is also irrelevant, which invalidates Statement C. Finally, since the challenges are directed toward the novel's availability with no reference to its actual circulation among children, Statement D has no bearing on the argument. Only Statement A, which refers a possible and reasonable reason behind the lack of challenges to the film version, is relevant in this context, making A correct.

20) Which of the following statements best describes the librarian's implied conclusion?

- a) The film version must leave out some objectionable material that is in the novel.
- b) Parents are more concerned about what their children read than what they watch.
- c) The book is more interesting to children than the movie.
- d) Parents have nothing better to do than to challenge important novels.

Answer: The best answer is B. In reading the argument, it is apparent that the librarian is commenting about the mindset of the parents responsible for the challenges. Since the librarian specifically states that the film and the novel are similar, enough so that the comparison of objectionable material is of little consequence, Statement A is of no consequence to the argument and can be rejected. Similarly, as the argument addresses parental response solely, any statement concerning children's responses to either form is irrelevant, which makes Statement C invalid. While the librarian might feel that Statement D is accurate, there is nothing in the argument to point toward that as a thesis, nor is there specific citation to call the book important, so Statement D can be rejected. Only Statement B, which is implicit in the last line of the argument, is relevant to the question, making B correct.

Additional [LSAT Analytical Reasoning Help](#)

Analytical Reasoning Practice

Instructions as given on the LSAT: 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 each question.

Questions 1-5

Art, Dash, Aggie and Phil are taking part in a mystery role-playing game. Each has been assigned a method of committing a murder—poison, a knife, a tire iron or piano wire—and a set of rules regarding their use. The following rules and conditions are in effect:

- The tire iron cannot be used by a woman.
- Art has a broken arm, so he cannot use piano wire or the tire iron.

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- Aggie and her husband are the same size and the smallest people in the game.
- For appearances, only the largest person is allowed to use the tire iron.
- Phil is the second largest person in the game.
- Neither Dash nor Aggie can use the poison.
- Neither Phil nor Aggie can use the knife.

- 1) Based on the information in the argument, which of the male contestants is married to Aggie?
- a) Art
 - b) Dash
 - c) Phil
 - d) None of them

Answer: The best answer is A. One of the initial conditions given in the passage that sets up the analytical exercise is that Aggie is the same size as her husband, and they are tied for the smallest person in the game. Since they are the smallest people in the game, and there are four players, the condition that identifies Phil as the second-largest person in the game eliminates him from consideration, which eliminates Statement C. Since Aggie's husband is explicitly identified as playing the game, Statement D can be rejected out of hand. Additionally, since the initial conditions state that only the largest person can use the tire iron, and Art, Phil and Aggie have been eliminated from its use, that leaves Dash, which thus eliminates him as a possibility for Aggie's husband, thus removing Statement B. Only Art can be Aggie's husband, making A correct.

- 2) Which of the contestants has the least potential freedom in possible murder weapons based on the initial conditions and rules?
- a) Phil
 - b) Dash
 - c) Art
 - d) Aggie

Answer: The best answer is D. Of all the contestants, Aggie had the largest amount of information directly provided about her; in addition, the specificity of the information was greatest when applied to her. The rules and conditions were explicit in defining that Aggie could not use poison or the knife, but another condition stated that a woman could not use the tire iron, and as Aggie was explicitly identified as a woman by another condition, the choice of weapon was restricted to one by the primary information provided. All the other contestants were restricted by deduction and application of the other conditions, leaving Aggie with the greatest confinement; thus, D is the correct answer.

- 3) Which contestant has the least direct information provided about him or her?
- a) Phil
 - b) Dash
 - c) Art
 - d) Aggie

Answer: The best answer is B. Phil and Aggie are each mentioned directly in at least two of the initial conditions, which allows for more deductions to be made concerning them in the role-playing game;

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Aggie, in fact, is directly mentioned in three conditions, and another condition is about women in the game, of which Aggie is the only one, so yet more information is available. Art and Dash are directly mentioned only once apiece, but in the condition where Art is mentioned, the reader is given a good deal of information, including the statement that Art can't use two of the possible four weapons. The condition which mentions Dash only states that he can't use one of the four possible weapons, and that condition is shared with Aggie. Thus, of the game contestants, Dash has the least amount of direct information made available about him, which makes B correct.

- 4) Which weapon does Aggie use in the game?
- a) Poison
 - b) Knife
 - c) Piano wire
 - d) Tire iron

Answer: The best answer is C. As described in the initial conditions, Aggie can't use either the poison or the knife for weapons in the game. Furthermore, the first of the initial conditions specifically states that the tire iron cannot be used by a woman in the game. Although Aggie is generally considered a feminine name, she is not explicitly identified as female until a later condition, where it states that Aggie and her husband are tied for the smallest people in the game. Once that identification is made, then the previous condition is applied to Aggie in the game, and the tire iron is eliminated from her use. That leaves only the piano wire for a possible weapon, which makes D the correct answer.

- 5) Which contestant is assigned poison as a murder weapon during the game?
- a) Art
 - b) Aggie
 - c) Dash
 - d) Phil

Answer: The best answer is D. By examining the information given, the reader can deduce the usage of the murder weapons by the relevant contestant. Looking at the initial conditions, Phil is explicitly identified as the second-largest of the contestants, and since another condition states only the largest contestant gets to use the tire iron, that weapon is thus ineligible for Phil to use. The last of the initial conditions explicitly states that Phil cannot use the knife, eliminating that weapon. As seen in a previous question, the reader has already deduced that Aggie was assigned the piano wire. That leaves only one weapon for Phil to use: the poison. Thus, D is the correct answer.

Questions 6-9

Jake is trying to arrange the radio station's CD library on the new shelves according to the station manager's instructions. However, the instructions were incomplete, and the manager is not available for clarification. The arrangement has to be done before the start of business the next day. Jake has to shelve five sets of CDs—rock, jazz, blues, Americana and metal, and has to deal with the following rules and conditions:

- The top two shelves each hold 100 CDs, and the bottom three hold 75 CDs apiece.
- Neither rock nor blues can be on the top shelf.

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- There are 100 Americana, 100 blues, 75 metal CDs, 75 rock and 50 jazz CDs to shelve.
- No one genre can completely fill one shelf alone.
- Metal must come immediately after rock.
- Blues cannot be the last shelved genre.

- 6) Based on the rules and conditions set forth, what genre has to be the first one shelved?
- Americana
 - Jazz
 - Rock
 - Blues

Answer: The best answer is B. The initial conditions state explicitly that neither rock nor blues can be shelved first on the top shelf, which simultaneously eliminates both Statements C and D. Of the remaining genres, one of the initial conditions specifically says that no one genre can fill a shelf all by itself; since the top shelf holds 100 CDs, which is how many Americana CDs the library has, that disqualifies Americana from further consideration, which removes Statement A. Among the listed options (although even if metal were listed, it could not be shelved first, as the initial conditions say it must follow rock in the shelving), only jazz is allowable under the initial conditions to be shelved first, making B the correct answer.

- 7) What genre has to be the last one shelved?
- Jazz
 - Rock
 - Metal
 - Blues

Answer: The best answer is C. Since the initial conditions specifically state that blues cannot be the last genre shelved, Statement D is immediately eliminated out of hand. Similarly, the initial conditions state that metal must come after rock, which means that rock cannot be the last genre shelved; as a result, Statement B is eliminated. While there is no explicit reason that jazz cannot be last, the deduction as demonstrated in the previous question shows that jazz has to be the first genre shelved, which obviously eliminates it from consideration as the last one shelved, thus removing Statement A from consideration. Thus, only metal can be shelved last, which makes C the correct answer.

- 8) In what order must the genres be shelved based on the rules and conditions?
- Jazz, Americana, rock, blues, metal
 - Jazz, rock, blues, metal, Americana
 - Jazz, metal, rock, blues, Americana
 - Jazz, Americana, blues, rock, metal

Answer: The best answer is D. Again, examining the initial conditions will help eliminate options right away; the second condition listed states that neither rock nor blues can be on the top shelf, and since there are only 50 jazz CDs, Statement B can be eliminated because it would put rock CDs on the top shelf with the jazz CDs, which contradicts the aforementioned condition. Similarly, because one of the initial conditions states that metal must come after rock in the shelving, Statement C can be rejected as

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it reverses this order. Finally, since it is stated in the conditions that metal must immediately follow rock in the shelving, Statement A can be eliminated, as it places blues between the two. Only Statement D meets all the conditions and completes the task as required, which makes D the correct answer.

- 9) Of the genres that must be shelved, which genre has the greatest degree of potential freedom in where it can be shelved?
- a) Jazz
 - b) Americana
 - c) Blues
 - d) Metal

Answer: The best answer is A. Of all the genres, jazz is the least hemmed in by both the initial conditions and the size of the library. As an example, the initial conditions state that blues cannot be placed on the top shelf; similarly, another condition says that one genre cannot take up a whole shelf by itself, which also eliminates Americana from the top shelf, as it would completely fill it. Furthermore, since metal can only be shelved after rock, it too is barred from the top shelf. Not only is jazz the only genre that can be shelved on the top shelf, it is also the only genre that can go on any shelf, as it is the only genre that cannot fill up any of the new shelves on its own. Thus, only jazz has the freedom to be shelved anywhere, which makes A the correct answer.

Questions 10-12

Six friends—Steve, Mary, Paul, Sarah, James and Kathryn—go to the movies and are seated in a block of seats in one row, starting with the aisle seat. Where they sit is decided by the following conditions:

- Kathryn and Steve must sit next to each other.
- James and Mary must sit at least two seats between them.
- Either Kathryn or Paul must have the aisle seat.
- Sarah must sit in the seat one directly next to the aisle seat.
- James must sit next to Sarah.

- 10) Based on the initial conditions, which of the females in the group must be sitting on the end of the row, in the seat farthest from the aisle?
- a) Kathryn
 - b) Sarah
 - c) Mary
 - d) None of them

Answer: The best answer is C. As presented, the initial conditions state the position of the group's females relatively clearly. Sarah is stated to be in the seat next to the aisle seat, which eliminates her from sitting in the end position farthest from the aisle. Kathryn can take the aisle seat; however, if she doesn't, then Paul is in the aisle seat and the soonest Kathryn could be seated would be third from the aisle. Since Kathryn must be sitting by Steve, and James and Mary must be separated by two seats, however, Kathryn can't be sitting third from the aisle, as if she was, James and Mary would occupy the last two seats in the block, violating the conditions. Kathryn and Steve must be sitting so that James is separated from Mary and sitting next to Sarah, which forces Mary to take the end. Thus, C is correct.

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- 11) Which of the following seating arrangements would be acceptable, starting from the aisle seat and moving inward?
- a) Kathryn, Paul, Sarah, James, Steve, Mary
 - b) Paul, Kathryn, James, Sarah, Mary, Steve
 - c) Sarah, Paul, James, Kathryn, Mary, Steve
 - d) Paul, Sarah, James, Kathryn, Steve, Mary

Answer: The best answer is D. Going by the initial conditions as laid out in the question, it is clear that the aisle seat must be taken by either Kathryn or Paul, which automatically eliminates Statement C from consideration, since it places Sarah in the aisle seat. While the other options meet the aisle seat requirement, the very first initial condition listed states that Kathryn and Steve must be seated next to each other. This condition is not met in both Statements A and B, which automatically removes them from further consideration. Thus, only Statement D is left as an acceptable seating arrangement, and since it meets the other conditions listed, D is the correct answer.

- 12) Which of the male members of the group has the greatest amount of potential freedom in this scenario?
- a) Steve
 - b) Paul
 - c) James
 - d) None of them

Answer: The best answer is B. Of the three males listed in the question and the initial conditions, each of them has a specific assignment. James has the greatest level of confinement, as he is not only required to stay at least two seats from Mary, but he must also sit next to Sarah, which limits his potential freedom more than any other male. Steve has only one limitation: he must sit next to Kathryn, which is an invariable condition. Paul, however, has even less of a limitation, in that he is one of two people who can sit in the aisle seat. Since this is the only condition that applies to him, and it is less a requirement than a conditional, Paul therefore has the greatest level of freedom of the males, which makes B correct.

Questions 13-14

Kate is trying to schedule a short series of films for a zombie film festival at the local theater. The festival will play on Friday night, and will feature five films: *Shaun of the Dead*, *My Boyfriend's Back*, *Night of the Living Dead*, *Fido* and *Dawn of the Dead*. Each film will play only once. Kate has to follow these additional rules for scheduling:

- The last film played must be one of the funny films: *Fido*, *My Boyfriend's Back* or *Shaun of the Dead*.
- The first film played has to be *Night of the Living Dead*.
- When *Night of the Living Dead* or *Dawn of the Dead* is played, it must be immediately followed by one of the funny films.
- *Shaun of the Dead* and *My Boyfriend's Back* must be separated by at least one film.
- *Fido* must be the first funny film played.

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- *Dawn of the Dead* must be played before *Shaun of the Dead*.

13) Which of the following films can play as the middle film of the festival?

- Night of the Living Dead
- My Boyfriend's Back
- Shaun of the Dead
- Fido

Answer: The best answer is B. As explicitly stated in the conditions, the first film of the festival must be *Night of the Living Dead*, and since the films can only play once, this eliminates the film from playing as the middle film, or any other position, within the festival; as a result, Statement A is invalid. Since *Fido* is stated to be the first funny film to be played, and *Night of the Living Dead* must be followed by a funny film, Statement D is eliminated. Additionally, since *Dawn of the Dead* must play before *Shaun of the Dead*, and the earliest *Dawn of the Dead* could possibly play is the middle position, Statement C is also disqualified. Thus, only *My Boyfriend's Back*, which can be played directly after *Fido*, can fill the middle position, thus making B the correct answer.

14) Which of the following orders shows the exact order in which the films must be played?

- Night of the Living Dead, My Boyfriend's Back, Dawn of the Dead, Fido, Shaun of the Dead
- Night of the Living Dead, Fido, Shaun of the Dead, Dawn of the Dead, My Boyfriend's Back
- Night of the Living Dead, Dawn of the Dead, Shaun of the Dead, Fido, My Boyfriend's Back
- Night of the Living Dead, Fido, My Boyfriend's back, Dawn of the Dead, Shaun of the Dead

Answer: The best answer is D. As given in the initial conditions, *Night of the Living Dead* is the first movie of the festival, as each option shows; however, the conditions go on to state that the film immediately following must be a funny film, specifically *Fido*. This automatically eliminates both Statements A and C, which contradict this condition. Furthermore, Statement B can be rejected, as it lists *Shaun of the Dead* directly following *Fido*, whereas the conditions explicitly state that *Dawn of the Dead* must play before *Shaun of the Dead*; since Statement B contradicts this, it can be rejected out of hand. Only Statement D provides an accurate ordering to the films based on the conditions laid out in the question, thus making D the correct answer.

Questions 15-20

At the poetry slam, three friends—Al, Betty and Chaz—sign up to perform six well-known poems, designated here as Hop, Bop, Cop, Top, Sop and Mop. Each poem will be performed individually by one poet, and each poem can only be performed once. To decide the order of the poems, the owner of the coffee shop that organizes the poetry slam lays down the following rules:

- Hop must be performed before Top and before Mop.
- Cop must be performed after Bop and before Sop.
- Al can perform Hop, Bop and Sop.

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- Betty can perform Cop, Top and Bop.
- Chaz can perform Hop, Mop and Top.
- Different poets must begin and end the slam, i.e. whatever poet performs the first poem cannot perform the last one.

15) Which of the following orders of the poems, first to last, is a legitimate ordering of how they can be performed by the poetry slam rules?

- Hop, Top, Mop, Bop, Cop, Sop
- Top, Hop, Mop, Bop, Cop, Sop
- Bop, Sop, Cop, Hop, Top, Mop
- Sop, Cop, Bop, Hop, Top, Mop

Answer: The best answer is A. Based on the rules, Statement B cannot be considered, because Hop must be performed before Top, which is reversed in Statement B and thus contradicts the rules, rejecting it as a possible answer. Similarly, Statement C also cannot be considered, because Bop must follow after Cop according to the rules, which is contradicted here, thus eliminating Statement C from further consideration. Finally, Statement D must be rejected because Sop, the first entry in this option, cannot precede Cop according to the initial conditions; since it contradicts that rule, it is an invalid statement and must be rejected. Only Statement A follows the rules as outlined in the question, which makes A the correct answer.

16) If the slam opens with Bop, which of the following poems could be performed second, third and fourth, respectively?

- Sop, Cop, Hop
- Top, Mop, Hop
- Cop, Sop, Hop
- Mop, Hop, Top

Answer: The best answer is C. Starting with the rules, it is clear that Statement A can be rejected out of hand, as it has Sop being performed before Cop, which is a direct violation of the second condition listed in the question. Similarly, Statement B can also be rejected out of hand, because it has Hop following Top and Mop, whereas the first condition listed specifically states that Hop must be performed before Top and Mop; therefore, it is an invalid statement. In Statement D, Hop is listed after Mop, so for the same reasons, Statement D is an invalid statement and must be discarded. Only Statement C properly orders the poem in accordance with the initial rules laid out in the question; thus, C is the correct answer.

17) If Chaz opens the slam by performing Hop, which combination of poet and poem can be performed second?

- Al, with Sop
- Betty, with Cop
- Chaz, with Cop
- Betty, with Top

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Answer: The best answer is D. Based on the rules, Statement A is an invalid option for the second slot, because although Al can perform Sop, that poem must follow Cop, and since Hop is the first poem performed, that condition is not met; thus, A is rejected. Similarly, Statement B is also not a valid option, because Cop must follow Bop in the slam ordering, which it has not. Statement C must be discarded because Chaz cannot perform Cop in the slam; it's not one of the options he has available, so C cannot be considered as an answer. Only Statement D, which correctly matches poet to available poem and in the correct order, can legitimately follow Hop as a performance option; thus, D is the correct answer.

18) If the order of poets performing is Al, Betty, Chaz, Al, Betty, Chaz, which of the following orders of poems could have been performed?

- a) Hop, Top, Mop, Bop, Cop, Sop
- b) Bop, Cop, Sop, Hop, Top, Mop
- c) Hop, Bop, Cop, Sop, Top, Mop
- d) Bop, Cop, Hop, Sop, Top, Mop

Answer: The best answer is D. Given the rules as presented, Statement A is invalid because the last poem listed is Sop, which only Al can perform, thus disqualifying A as an answer. Similarly, Statement B is invalid as an answer for the same reason; only Al can perform it, and its position as the third poem throws off the order as outlined in the question, so B cannot be the answer either. Statement C does not work because Chaz cannot perform Cop, which again violates the order of the poems mandated by the question. Only Statement D correctly matches the projected order of the poets to the possible order of the poems, thus fulfilling the question and making D the correct answer.

19) If Bop is the fourth poem performed, which of the following must be true?

- a) Al performed the first poem
- b) Betty performs the fifth poem
- c) Chaz performed the first poem
- d) Chaz performs the last poem

Answer: The best answer is B. Based on the rules listed, if Bop is the fourth poem, then Cop and Sop are still to come, which means that Hop, Top and Mop were the first three poems. Accordingly, if Hop is the first poem, then either Al or Chaz could have been the first poet, so Statements A and C are automatically rejected, since either one would fit. However, given the order laid out by Bop being fourth, then Sop is the last poem, which only Al can perform. Therefore, Al has to be the last poet, which therefore causes Statement D to be invalid. Only Statement B, with Betty performing Cop, which is one of her options, can be true; thus, B is the correct answer.

20) All of the following orders of poems to be performed are valid orders based on the rules EXCEPT:

- a) Hop, Top, Mop, Bop, Cop, Sop
- b) Bop, Cop, Sop, Hop, Top, Mop
- c) Hop, Bop, Sop, Cop, Top, Mop
- d) Bop, Cop, Hop, Sop, Top, Mop

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Answer: The best answer is C. As the rules are presented, there are two basic orders that must be met in order to be a valid ordering of the poems: Hop-Top-Mop and Bop-Cop-Sop. As long as the orderings obey these two rules in the broad strokes, they will be valid orderings. Statement A follows this ordering precisely as laid out, so it is a valid ordering, and thus is invalid in this context. Statement B mixes the individual ordering, but still follows the basic rules, so it is also a valid ordering and, similarly, invalid in this context, as is Statement D for the same reasons. Statement C, however, does not present a valid ordering; Sop is presented before Cop, which violates the second condition of the question and is thus not a valid ordering. Since that is what the question seeks in this context, C is the correct answer.

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