

Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT)

Section 1: Thinking Skills Understanding Argument Questions

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Understanding Argument Questions

(Mark Scheme and explanations at the end)

- 1 People who suffer from a range of chronic illnesses, including migraine, find that sometimes their symptoms fade away if they eliminate certain foods, for example, wheat or dairy products, from their diet. This method could save a great sum of money which is currently spent on treating these illnesses with drugs. 70% of the patients who said they benefited from changing their diets, said their symptoms still had not returned a year later, provided they continued to avoid certain foods. If they reverted to their former diet, the symptoms returned immediately.

Which one of the following can be drawn as a conclusion from the above information?

- A Sufferers of chronic illnesses should first be tested for reactions to food.
 - B Most chronic illnesses can be treated effectively with modern drugs.
 - C It is important to watch what you eat every day.
 - D People with chronic illnesses who are unable to control their diet should use modern drugs as treatment
 - E Migraines are often related to situations which induce stress.
- 2 Child sex traffickers are turning to the internet for business. Using the internet as the preferred medium allows these traffickers to operate with a greater level of impunity as the internet grants some anonymity to them. Modern technology actually/ enables the manifestation of greed and exploitation in a different form. Therefore, all selling and buying over the internet should be banned.

Which one of the following best expresses the flaw in the above passage?

- A It assumes that the internet allows for more efficient sex trafficking.
- B It ignores the fact that it is child sex trafficking that is wrong rather than merchants' use of the internet.
- C It assumes that there is great demand on the internet for child sex trafficking to take place.
- D It ignores the fact that there may be less child sex trafficking happening with the use of the internet as the medium.
- E It assumes that people who use the internet support child sex trafficking.



- 3** The price paid to coffee producers has fallen steadily over the last few years and in some cases does not even cover the cost of growing the coffee. However, the price that consumers of coffee pay in restaurants and cafes has not decreased and in most cases has actually increased. This shows that consumers are being exploited by not having the fall in the price paid to producers reflected in the price they pay when they drink coffee.

Which one of the following is an assumption of the above argument?

- A** Profits have increased because coffee has become more popular.
 - B** Customers in cafes are concerned about the exploitation of coffee producers.
 - C** The price paid to coffee producers has fallen due to overproduction.
 - D** There has been no increase in the cost of running cafes and restaurants.
 - E** Buying coffee is a major expense for the average consumer.
- 4** Human carnivores often give the reason that they do not have the teeth or stomachs of natural herbivores and therefore must only eat meat. While humans may not have the digestive equipment to eat raw grass, they do not have the teeth and digestion of natural predators either: Humans are as far removed from the wolf as they are from the cow. Seeds, nuts, berries, leaves and roots are the natural diet of humans' closest relatives in the animal kingdom.

Which one of the following best expresses the main conclusion of the above argument?

- A** There is no evidence to support that humans must be carnivores.
- B** Seeds, nuts, berries, leaves and roots are humans' natural diet.
- C** Humans are no more like wolves than they are like cows.
- D** Humans do not have the teeth or stomach to eat meat.
- E** Eating meat is not natural for humans.



- 5** There is a need to increase the efficiency of energy use to reduce demand and thus pollution. One way to do this is to increase Value Added Tax on fuel. But people on high incomes would just regard this cost as a luxury they can afford and so would not reduce their consumption. Low income families, would find it hard even to afford the minimum amount of energy they need and currently use.

Which one of the following could be drawn as a conclusion from the above passage?

- A** A fair tax on energy should be introduced to reduce demand and thus pollution.
- B** Tax on energy would not be popular with the public.
- C** A new method should be devised to create a taxation system for fuel which is fair to all.
- D** The government should sponsor research into more efficient ways of reducing energy consumption.
- E** Value Added Tax on fuel is neither a fair nor effective way of reducing energy consumption.



Answers and Explanations

1 **A is the answer.**

Without looking at the options, try and summarise the argument in one statement. For example:

Chronic illness sufferers may find that their symptoms fade away if they eliminate certain types of food from their diet, which could save much money as compared to using drugs for treatment.

A is the answer that addresses the argument most completely, addressing the sufferers of chronic illnesses, certain types of food and comparison with drugs for treatment. The phrase 'should first be tested for reactions to food' alludes that figuring out if there are any adverse reactions to certain types of food should be the first line method before moving on to other types of treatment (such as drugs).

B is incorrect because while it may be a valid inference from the passage, it does not address the whole idea of the passage which addresses sufferers of chronic illnesses, certain types of food and comparison with drugs for treatment.

C is incorrect because it is too general and does not mention people who suffer from chronic illnesses specifically.

D is incorrect because it is offering a new insight that is not alluded to in the passage even though technically it addresses all 3 points of the passage: sufferers of chronic illnesses, certain types of food and comparison with drugs for treatment.

E is incorrect because while 'situations which induce stress' could possibly mean eating certain types of food, it is too general as the passage specifically focuses on diet.

2 **B is the answer.**

After reading the passage, you may notice that there is something in the argument not making sense. You may then think just because child sex traffickers turn to the internet for business (one negative example of the use of internet for transactions), does not mean all selling and buying over the internet should be banned (all use of internet for transactions should be stopped as a result). If the flaw is obvious to you, look through the options and choose the one most similar to what you think.

B is the only one which addresses why the blanket ban on the use of internet for transactions should not happen even in the light of child sex traffickers turning to the internet for business.



If the flaw is not obvious:

- Look for the conclusion of the argument which is all selling and buying over the internet should be banned.
- Then look for the reason which is child sex traffickers are turning to the internet for business because it provides some anonymity.
- This seems to imply that everyone who uses the internet to buy or sell should be penalised because of one group of people who use the internet in a wrong way.

Looking through the options, B is the only one which addresses what the argument implies.

- A** is incorrect because it does not address why the blanket ban on the use of the internet to buy and sell is wrong.
- C** is incorrect because it does not address why the blanket ban on the use of the internet to buy and sell is wrong.
- D** is incorrect because it does not address why the blanket ban on the use of the internet to buy and sell is wrong.
- E** is incorrect because it is less accurate than B.

3 **D is the answer.**

Identify the conclusion:

Consumers are being exploited because the fall in price paid to producers is not reflected in the price they pay for coffee in cafes or restaurants.

Identify the reason:

It is implied that the consumers are being wronged by the restaurants for paying a higher price for coffee when the restaurants themselves pay a lower price to coffee producers, so the restaurants/cafes are taking advantage of the consumers.

D addresses that the restaurants/cafes are not justified in raising prices for coffee.

- A** is incorrect because it does not address that restaurants/cafes are not justified in raising prices for coffee.
- B** is incorrect because it does not address that restaurants/cafes are not justified in raising prices for coffee.
- C** is incorrect because it is only justifying why the price paid to coffee producers has fallen.
- E** is incorrect because it is introducing a new reason why consumers should not be taken advantage of rather than addressing that the restaurants/cafes are not justified in raising prices for coffee.



4 **C is the answer.**

Find the conclusion from the passage - *Humans are as far removed from the wolf as they are from the cow.*

C is very similar to the conclusion in the passage.

- A** is incorrect because it is addressing 'Human carnivores often give the reason that they do not have the teeth or stomachs of natural herbivores and therefore must only eat meat' as the main idea of the argument but the main idea of the argument is that humans are as far removed from the wolf as they are from the cow.
- B** is incorrect because it is only a piece of supporting evidence rather than the actual main idea of the argument.
- D** is incorrect because it is only stating one of the points mentioned in the argument and not the whole idea.
- E** is incorrect because it brings in the idea of 'natural' which is not mentioned in the argument.

5 **E is the answer.**

Without looking at the options, try and summarise the argument in one statement.

There is a need to increase the efficiency of energy use to reduce demand and pollution but value added tax on fuel is not very effective because the rich will continue to use it; the poor will then not be able to afford energy.

E is the most similar to the above statement.

- A** is incorrect because it is a new suggestion instead of concluding the argument.
- B** is incorrect because it introduces public opinion which is not mentioned in the argument.
- C** is incorrect because it is a new suggestion instead of concluding the argument.
- D** is incorrect because it is a new suggestion instead of concluding the argument.

