

PREPARING FOR THE LSAT

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

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

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

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

THE THREE LSAT MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION TYPES

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Both law school and the practice of law revolve around extensive reading of highly varied, dense, argumentative, and expository texts (for example, cases, codes, contracts, briefs, decisions, evidence). This reading must be exacting, distinguishing precisely what is said from what is not said. It involves comparison, analysis, synthesis, and application (for example, of principles and rules). It involves drawing appropriate inferences and applying ideas and arguments to new contexts. Law school reading also requires the ability to grasp unfamiliar subject matter and the ability to penetrate difficult and challenging material.

The purpose of LSAT Reading Comprehension questions is to measure the ability to read, with understanding and insight, examples of lengthy and complex materials similar to those commonly encountered in law school. The Reading Comprehension section of the LSAT contains four sets of reading questions, each set consisting of a selection of reading material followed by five to eight questions. The reading selection in three of the four sets consists of a single reading passage; the other set contains two related shorter passages. Sets with two passages are a variant of Reading Comprehension called Comparative Reading, which was introduced in June 2007.

Comparative Reading questions concern the relationships between the two passages, such as those of generalization/instance, principle/application, or point/counterpoint. Law school work often requires reading two or more texts in conjunction with each other and understanding their relationships. For example, a law student may read a trial court decision together with an appellate court decision that overrules it, or identify the fact pattern from a hypothetical suit together with the potentially controlling case law.

Reading selections for LSAT Reading Comprehension questions are drawn from a wide range of subjects in the humanities, the social sciences, the biological and physical sciences, and areas related to the law. Generally, the selections are densely written, use high-level vocabulary, and contain sophisticated argument or complex rhetorical structure (for example, multiple points of view). Reading Comprehension questions require you to read carefully and accurately, to determine the relationships among the various parts of the reading selection, and to draw reasonable inferences from the material in the selection. The questions may ask about the following characteristics of a passage or pair of passages:

- The main idea or primary purpose
- Information that is explicitly stated
- Information or ideas that can be inferred
- The meaning or purpose of words or phrases as used in context
- The organization or structure
- The application of information in the selection to a new context
- Principles that function in the selection
- Analogies to claims or arguments in the selection
- An author's attitude as revealed in the tone of a passage or the language used
- The impact of new information on claims or arguments in the selection

Suggested Approach

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

Strategies. One question that often arises in connection with Reading Comprehension has to do with the most effective and efficient order in which to read the selections and questions. Possible approaches include:

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

Test takers are different, and the best strategy for one might not be the best strategy for another. In preparing for the test, therefore, you might want to experiment with the different strategies and decide what works most effectively for you.

Remember that your strategy must be effective under timed conditions. For this reason, the first strategy—reading the selection very closely and then answering the questions—may be the most effective for you. Nonetheless, if you believe that one of the other strategies might be more effective for you, you should try it out and assess your performance using it.

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

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

Answering the Questions

- Always read all the answer choices before selecting the best answer. The best answer choice is the one that most accurately and completely answers the question being posed.
- Respond to the specific question being asked. Do not pick an answer choice simply because it is a true statement. For example, picking a true statement might yield an incorrect answer to a question in which you are asked to identify an author’s position on an issue, since you are not being asked to evaluate the truth of the author’s position but only to correctly identify what that position is.
- Answer the questions only on the basis of the information provided in the selection. Your own views, interpretations, or opinions, and those you have heard from others, may sometimes conflict with those expressed in a reading selection; however, you are expected to work within the context provided by the reading selection. You should not expect to agree with everything you encounter in reading comprehension passages.

Fourteen Sample Reading Comprehension Questions and Explanations

The sample questions on the following pages are typical of the Reading Comprehension questions you will find on the LSAT. Three single-passage Reading Comprehension passages are included, but they are followed by only two or three sample questions each, whereas each passage in the actual LSAT is followed by five to eight questions. However, the Comparative Reading set below includes seven questions and explanations for test preparation purposes.

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

Passage for Questions 1, 2, and 3

The painter Roy Lichtenstein helped to define pop art—the movement that incorporated commonplace objects and commercial-art techniques into paintings—by paraphrasing the style of comic books in his work.

- (5) His merger of a popular genre with the forms and intentions of fine art generated a complex result: while poking fun at the pretensions of the art world, Lichtenstein's work also managed to convey a seriousness of theme that enabled it to transcend mere parody.

That Lichtenstein's images were fine art was at first difficult to see, because, with their word balloons and highly stylized figures, they looked like nothing more than the comic book panels from which they were copied. Standard art history holds that pop art emerged as an impersonal alternative to the histrionics of abstract expressionism, a movement in which painters conveyed their private attitudes and emotions using nonrepresentational techniques. The truth is that by the time pop art first appeared in the early 1960s, abstract expressionism had already lost much of its force. Pop art painters weren't quarreling with the powerful early abstract expressionist work of the late 1940s but with a second generation of abstract expressionists whose work seemed airy, high-minded, and overly lyrical. Pop art paintings were full of simple black lines and large areas of primary color. Lichtenstein's work was part of a general rebellion against the fading emotional power of abstract expressionism, rather than an aloof attempt to ignore it.

- (15) But if rebellion against previous art by means of the careful imitation of a popular genre were all that characterized Lichtenstein's work, it would possess only the reflective power that parodies have in relation to their subjects. Beneath its cartoonish methods, his work displayed an impulse toward realism, an urge to say that what was missing from contemporary painting was the depiction of contemporary life. The stilted romances and war stories portrayed in the comic books on which he based his canvases, the stylized automobiles, hot dogs, and table lamps that appeared in his pictures, were reflections of the culture Lichtenstein inhabited. But, in contrast to some pop art, Lichtenstein's work exuded not a jaded cynicism about

- (45) consumer culture, but a kind of deliberate naivete, intended as a response to the excess of sophistication he observed not only in the later abstract expressionists but in some other pop artists. With the comics—typically the domain of youth and innocence—as his reference point, a nostalgia fills his paintings that gives them, for all their surface bravado, an inner sweetness. His persistent use of comic-art conventions demonstrates a faith in reconciliation, not only between cartoons and fine art, but between parody and true feeling.

Question 1

Which one of the following best captures the author's attitude toward Lichtenstein's work?

- (A) enthusiasm for its more rebellious aspects
 (B) respect for its successful parody of youth and innocence
 (C) pleasure in its blatant rejection of abstract expressionism
 (D) admiration for its subtle critique of contemporary culture
 (E) appreciation for its ability to incorporate both realism and naivete

Explanation for Question 1

This question requires the test taker to understand the attitude the author of the passage displays toward Lichtenstein's work.

The correct response is (E). Response (E) most accurately and completely captures the author's attitude. First, the author's appreciation for Lichtenstein's art is indicated by way of contrast with the way in which the author describes what Lichtenstein's art is not. For example, the author asserts that Lichtenstein's work "transcended mere parody," and that unlike other pop art, it did not display a "jaded cynicism." Similarly, the author holds that there is more to Lichtenstein's work than "the reflective power that parodies possess in relation to their subjects." Moreover, the author's appreciation is reflected in several positive statements regarding Lichtenstein's work. The author's appreciation for Lichtenstein's realism is indicated by the author's statement that "Beneath its cartoonish methods, his work displayed an impulse toward realism, an urge to say that what was missing from contemporary painting was the de-

picture of contemporary life." That the author also appreciates Lichtenstein's naivete is demonstrated in this sentence:

"Lichtenstein's work exuded not a jaded cynicism about consumer culture, but a kind of deliberate naivete...." This idea is further expanded in the next sentence, which says that "for all their surface bravado," Lichtenstein's paintings possess "an inner sweetness." It is important to note that these evaluations appear in the last paragraph and form part of the author's conclusion about the importance of Lichtenstein's art.

Response (A) is incorrect because, although in the last sentence of paragraph two the author notes Lichtenstein's connection to a general rebellion against abstract expressionism, the author also states quite pointedly in the first sentence of paragraph three: "But if rebellion . . . were all that characterized Lichtenstein's work, it would possess only the reflective power that parodies have..."

Response (B) is incorrect because, as noted in the first paragraph of the passage, the author believes Lichtenstein's work transcended "mere parody." Moreover, the author states in the last paragraph that comics, "typically the domain of youth and innocence," were Lichtenstein's "reference point" and filled his painting with "nostalgia" and an "inner sweetness."

Response (C) is incorrect because, as mentioned above, the author believes Lichtenstein's rebellion against abstract expressionism was not the most important aspect of his work. Indeed, if it had been, Lichtenstein's work would have been reduced to having "only the reflective power that parodies have in relation to their subjects," where here the "subject" refers to abstract expressionism.

Response (D) is incorrect because the author very clearly says that Lichtenstein embraced contemporary culture. In the last paragraph, the author writes, "But, in contrast to some pop art, Lichtenstein's work exuded not a jaded cynicism about consumer culture, but a kind of deliberate naivete..."

Based on the number of test takers who answered this question correctly when it appeared on the LSAT, this was a middle difficulty question.

Question 2

The author most likely lists some of the themes and objects influencing and appearing in Lichtenstein's paintings (lines 38-43) primarily to

- (A) show that the paintings depict aspects of contemporary life
- (B) support the claim that Lichtenstein's work was parodic in intent
- (C) contrast Lichtenstein's approach to art with that of abstract expressionism
- (D) suggest the emotions that lie at the heart of Lichtenstein's work
- (E) endorse Lichtenstein's attitude toward consumer culture

Explanation for Question 2

This question requires the test taker to identify from the context what the author is trying to accomplish by listing some of the themes and objects that influenced and appeared in Lichtenstein's paintings.

The correct response is (A). First, as the author notes in the same sentence, the listed themes and objects "were reflections of the culture Lichtenstein inhabited." Moreover, as the author argues in the sentence that precedes the list, Lichtenstein's work displayed "an impulse toward realism, an urge to say that what was missing from contemporary painting was the depiction of contemporary life."

Response (B) is incorrect because the author does not claim that Lichtenstein's work was parodic in intent. On the contrary, the author states in the opening paragraph that Lichtenstein's work transcended "mere parody."

Response (C) is incorrect because the author's comparison between Lichtenstein's approach to art and that of the abstract expressionists—which is located in paragraph two—concentrates on the difference between Lichtenstein's and other pop artists' use of "simple black lines and large areas of primary color" and the expressionists' "airy" and "overly lyrical" work. This comparison does not involve the list of themes and objects mentioned in question 2. The list is offered instead as part of the author's argument in paragraph three that there is more to Lichtenstein's work than its rebellion against abstract expressionism.

Response (D) is incorrect because, although the listed themes and objects "were reflections of the culture Lichtenstein inhabited," the list by itself does not suggest anything about the emotions that lie at the heart of Lichtenstein's work. The emotions in Lichtenstein's work were revealed in Lichtenstein's treatment of those themes and objects, which "exuded not a jaded cynicism about consumer culture, but a kind of deliberate naivete . . ." The author goes on to assert that it is Lichtenstein's use of conventions of comic art that gives his art its "inner sweetness" and demonstrates his faith in the possibility of reconciliation between "parody and true feeling."

Response (E) is incorrect because the list of themes and objects does not in itself explain Lichtenstein's attitude toward consumer culture. Instead, it is how he dealt with these objects and themes that shows, according to the author, that Lichtenstein did not exude the "jaded cynicism" of other pop artists.

Based on the number of test takers who answered this question correctly when it appeared on the LSAT, this was an easy question.

Question 3

The primary purpose of the passage is most likely to

- A) express curiosity about an artist's work
- B) clarify the motivation behind an artist's work
- C) contrast two opposing theories about an artist's work
- D) describe the evolution of an artist's work
- E) refute a previous overestimation of an artist's work

Explanation for Question 3

This question requires the test taker to look at the passage as a whole and determine the author's primary purpose in writing it.

Response (B) is the correct response because it most accurately and completely reflects the purpose of the passage as a whole. In the first two paragraphs of the passage, the author uses phrases that are suggestive of Lichtenstein's motivations, such as "poking fun at the pretensions of the art world," and "rebel[ling] against the fading emotional power of abstract expressionism." Then, in the third paragraph, the author makes clear that Lichtenstein also had a more serious aim that transcended these two—namely, that of depicting contemporary life with a "kind of deliberate naivete." As the author puts it in the final sentence, Lichtenstein's paintings demonstrated his "faith in reconciliation . . . between parody and true feeling."

Response (A) is incorrect because the passage does not simply express curiosity about Lichtenstein's work. Instead, the passage advances a thesis about the importance of Lichtenstein's work as art.

Response (C) is incorrect because nowhere in the passage are two opposing theories discussed.

Response (D) is incorrect because the passage does not cover the evolution of Lichtenstein's work. The author makes no mention of when any of the particular paintings were created in the course of Lichtenstein's career, but instead treats the work as a unified whole.

Response (E) is incorrect because a previous overestimation of Lichtenstein's work is neither mentioned nor alluded to. If the passage had an aim of this kind, it would seem to be the reverse, as the author clearly thinks that Lichtenstein's work is valuable and has perhaps been underestimated by those who see pop art as primarily parodic in intent.

Based on the number of test takers who answered this question correctly when it appeared on the LSAT, this was an easy question.

Passage for Questions 4 and 5

The following passage was written in the late 1980s.

The struggle to obtain legal recognition of aboriginal rights is a difficult one, and even if a right is written into the law there is no guarantee that the future will not bring changes to the law that

- (5) undermine the right. For this reason, the federal government of Canada in 1982 extended constitutional protection to those aboriginal rights

- (10) already recognized under the law. This protection was extended to the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples, the three groups generally thought to comprise the aboriginal population in Canada. But this decision has placed on provincial courts the enormous burden of interpreting and translating the necessarily general constitutional language into specific rulings. The result has been inconsistent recognition and establishment of aboriginal rights, despite the continued efforts of aboriginal peoples to raise issues concerning their rights.

- (20) Aboriginal rights in Canada are defined by the constitution as aboriginal peoples' rights to ownership of land and its resources, the inherent right of aboriginal societies to self-government, and the right to legal recognition of indigenous customs. But difficulties arise in applying these broadly conceived rights. For example, while it might appear straightforward to affirm legal recognition of indigenous customs, the exact legal meaning of "indigenous" is extremely difficult to interpret. The intent of the constitutional protection is to recognize only long-standing traditional customs, not those of recent origin; provincial courts therefore require aboriginal peoples to provide legal documentation that any customs they seek to protect were practiced sufficiently long ago—a criterion defined in practice to mean prior to the establishment of British sovereignty over the specific territory. However, this requirement makes it difficult for aboriginal societies, which often relied on oral tradition rather than written records, to support their claims.

- (40) Furthermore, even if aboriginal peoples are successful in convincing the courts that specific rights should be recognized, it is frequently difficult to determine exactly what these rights amount to. Consider aboriginal land claims. Even when aboriginal ownership of specific lands is fully established, there remains the problem of interpreting the meaning of that "ownership." In a 1984 case in Ontario, an aboriginal group claimed that its property rights should be interpreted as full ownership in the contemporary sense of private property, which allows for the sale of the land or its resources. But the provincial court instead ruled that the law had previously recognized only the aboriginal right to use the land and therefore granted property rights so minimal as to allow only the bare survival of the community. Here, the provincial court's ruling was excessively conservative in its assessment of the current law. Regrettably, it appears that this group will not be successful unless it is able to move its case from the provincial courts into the Supreme Court of Canada, which will be, one hopes, more insistent upon a satisfactory application of the constitutional reforms.

Question 4

Which one of the following most accurately states the main point of the passage?

- (A) The overly conservative rulings of Canada's provincial courts have been a barrier to constitutional reforms intended to protect aboriginal rights.
- (B) The overwhelming burden placed on provincial courts of interpreting constitutional language in Canada has halted efforts by aboriginal peoples to gain full ownership of land.
- (C) Constitutional language aimed at protecting aboriginal rights in Canada has so far left the protection of these rights uncertain due to the difficult task of interpreting this language.
- (D) Constitutional reforms meant to protect aboriginal rights in Canada have in fact been used by some provincial courts to limit these rights.
- (E) Efforts by aboriginal rights advocates to uphold constitutional reforms in Canada may be more successful if heard by the Supreme Court rather than by the provincial courts.

Explanation for Question 4

This question requires the examinee to identify the main point of the passage. For an answer choice to be the main point of the passage, it must do more than simply express a claim with which the author would agree. The correct answer choice is the one that most accurately expresses the point of the passage as a whole.

The correct answer choice is (C). The passage discusses the Canadian federal government's 1982 decision to extend constitutional protection to aboriginal rights. In the first paragraph the author claims that this decision has "placed on provincial courts the enormous burden of interpreting and translating the necessarily general constitutional language into specific rulings" (lines 12-14). The rest of the passage details the difficulties that have been encountered as provincial courts have attempted to carry out this task. The second paragraph is concerned mainly with the difficulties involved in interpreting the legal meaning of "indigenous," especially as it relates to the recognition of indigenous customs. The third paragraph focuses primarily on an example of the difficulties encountered in an attempt to interpret the meaning of "ownership." Answer choice (C) best captures the main point of the passage as a whole. It is clear that the author thinks the protection of aboriginal rights is uncertain, and it is clear that the author feels this is due to the difficulties involved in interpreting the general language of the constitutional reforms.

Answer choice (A) is incorrect. The passage does mention one provincial court ruling that the author feels is "excessively conservative" (line 57). However, the author clearly intends this to merely be one example of a problem caused by the difficult task of interpreting the constitutional language, rather than the main point of the passage. Moreover, even the "excessively conservative" decision described in the last para-

graph has not been a barrier to constitutional reform. The constitution was already reformed in 1982 to extend protection to aboriginal rights. The difficulties detailed in the passage have arisen in legal efforts to apply the 1982 constitutional changes.

Answer choice (B) is incorrect. While this answer choice does identify the crucial issue involving the "overwhelming burden placed on provincial courts of interpreting constitutional language," it is incorrect inasmuch as it focuses only on "efforts by aboriginal peoples to gain full ownership of land." It's clear that the author thinks land ownership is only one of the important issues concerning aboriginal rights. The author also discusses the right of self-government (line 22) and the right to legal recognition of indigenous customs (line 23). Moreover, while the passage indicates that the "excessively conservative" decision described in the last paragraph has been a setback to one aboriginal group's efforts to gain full ownership of its land, it does not say that such efforts have been "halted" by the decision. In fact, the author suggests that the group in question may seek to pursue its efforts further before the Supreme Court of Canada (lines 58-63).

Answer choice (D) is incorrect. The author points to one example of a provincial court ruling that, in the author's opinion, seems to limit aboriginal rights rather than protect them. However, it is incorrect to regard this as the main point of the passage. The author's point throughout the passage as a whole concerns the difficulty of interpreting the general constitutional language aimed at protecting aboriginal rights, not simply that some courts have limited these rights.

Answer choice (E) is incorrect. The author does introduce the possibility that the Supreme Court of Canada may be better able to uphold constitutional reforms. The author even expresses hope that this is so. But it is inaccurate to regard this hope as the main point of the passage, because the Supreme Court is mentioned only in connection with one specific court case. It is not central to the author's discussion.

Based on the number of test takers who answered this question correctly when it appeared on the LSAT, this was an easy question.

Question 5

The passage provides evidence to suggest that the author would be most likely to assent to which one of the following proposals?

- (A) Aboriginal peoples in Canada should not be answerable to the federal laws of Canada.
- (B) Oral tradition should sometimes be considered legal documentation of certain indigenous customs.
- (C) Aboriginal communities should be granted full protection of all of their customs.
- (D) Provincial courts should be given no authority to decide cases involving questions of aboriginal rights.
- (E) The language of the Canadian constitution should more carefully delineate the instances to which reforms apply.

Explanation for Question 5

This question requires the examinee to use evidence from the passage to infer what the author would be most likely to believe. The question is not simply to identify something that the author states explicitly. Rather, the test taker must identify what can reasonably be inferred from what the author says.

The correct answer choice is (B). In the second paragraph the author discusses the aboriginal right to the legal recognition of indigenous customs. It is clear from the tenor of the discussion in the passage that the author believes that this right should be protected, but the author notes that there have been difficulties in securing this protection. According to the author, provincial courts have required legal documentation as evidence that a custom is long-standing. As the author points out, however, this requirement is difficult to meet for aboriginal societies, “which often relied on oral tradition rather than written records” (lines 38-39). Given that the author believes that aboriginal customs should receive legal recognition, and given that the author regards the requirement of written documentation as an impediment to such recognition in many cases, it can be inferred that the author would be likely to assent to the statement that oral tradition should sometimes be considered legal documentation for certain indigenous customs.

Answer choice (A) is incorrect. While the author clearly feels that aboriginal rights should be protected, that is a far cry from thinking that aboriginal peoples should not be answerable to federal laws. More importantly, the author’s argument in favor of the legal recognition of aboriginal rights, and also the presumption that problems should be resolved in the Canadian courts, suggest that the author probably believes that aboriginal peoples should be answerable to Canadian laws.

Answer choice (C) is incorrect. The main point of the passage as a whole is that there are difficulties involved in interpreting the language of the constitutional protection of aboriginal rights. Importantly, the author clearly agrees with the intentions of the constitutional protection. In discussing the legal recognition of aboriginal customs, the author claims that the “intent of the constitutional protection is to recognize only long-standing traditional customs, not those of recent origin” (lines 29-31). Since the author never questions this intent, there is no reason to think that the author would agree that aboriginal peoples should be granted full protection of all of their customs.

Answer choice (D) is incorrect. The author asserts that provincial courts have been placed in the difficult position of interpreting general constitutional language. This assertion takes it for granted that the provincial courts are the correct venue for the interpretation and application of the constitutional reforms. (If the author believed otherwise, it would be incumbent on him or her to say as much, rather than simply observing that the provincial courts are in a difficult position.) Furthermore, the passage does not provide any other evidence that the author thinks that provincial courts should be eliminated from the process, or be stripped of their authority concerning issues of aboriginal rights.

Answer choice (E) is incorrect. The author’s main point is that there are difficulties inherent in interpreting the language involved in the constitutional protection of aboriginal rights in Canada. Tellingly, however, the author describes the relevant constitutional language as “necessarily general” (line 13), and there is no evidence to suggest that the author believes that the language of the Canadian constitution should be revised or rewritten.

Based on the number of test takers who answered this question correctly when it appeared on the LSAT, this was a difficult question.

Passage for Questions 6 and 7

In economics, the term “speculative bubble” refers to a large upward move in an asset’s price driven not by the asset’s fundamentals—that is, by the earnings derivable from the asset—but rather by mere speculation that someone else will be willing to pay a higher price for it. The price increase is then followed by a dramatic decline in price, due to a loss in confidence that the price will continue to rise, and the “bubble” is said to have burst. According to

(5) Charles Mackay’s classic nineteenth-century account, the seventeenth-century Dutch tulip market provides an example of a speculative bubble. But the economist Peter Garber challenges Mackay’s view, arguing that there is no evidence that the Dutch tulip market really involved a speculative bubble.

(10) By the seventeenth century, the Netherlands had become a center of cultivation and development of new tulip varieties, and a market had developed in which rare varieties of bulbs sold at high prices. For example, a Semper Augustus bulb sold in 1625 for an amount of gold worth about U.S. \$11,000 in 1999. Common bulb varieties, on the other hand, sold for very low prices. According to Mackay, by 1636 rapid price rises attracted speculators, and prices of many varieties surged upward from November 1636 through January 1637. Mackay further states that in February 1637 prices suddenly collapsed; bulbs could not be sold at 10 percent of their peak values. By 1739, the prices of all the most prized kinds of bulbs had fallen to no more than one two-hundredth of 1 percent of Semper Augustus’s peak price.

(15) Garber acknowledges that bulb prices increased dramatically from 1636 to 1637 and eventually reached very low levels. But he argues that this episode should not be described as a speculative bubble, for the increase and eventual decline in bulb prices can be explained in terms of the fundamentals. Garber argues that a standard pricing pattern occurs for new varieties of flowers. When a particularly prized variety is developed, its original bulb sells for a high price. Thus, the dramatic rise in the price of some original tulip bulbs could have resulted as tulips in general, and certain varieties in particular, became fashionable. However, as the prized bulbs become

- (45) more readily available through reproduction from the original bulb, their price falls rapidly; after less than 30 years, bulbs sell at reproduction cost. But this does not mean that the high prices of original bulbs are irrational, for earnings derivable from the millions of bulbs descendant from the original bulbs can be very high, even if each individual descendant bulb commands a very low price. Given that an original bulb can generate a reasonable return on investment even if the price of descendant bulbs decreases dramatically, a rapid rise and eventual fall of tulip bulb prices need not indicate a speculative bubble.

Question 6

The phrase "standard pricing pattern" as used in line 38 most nearly means a pricing pattern

- A) against which other pricing patterns are to be measured
- B) that conforms to a commonly agreed-upon criterion
- C) that is merely acceptable
- D) that regularly recurs in certain types of cases
- E) that serves as an exemplar

Explanation for Question 6

This question requires the test taker to understand from context the meaning of the phrase "standard pricing pattern," which is used by the author in a particular way.

The correct answer choice is (D). The phrase occurs in the third paragraph of the passage. The purpose of this paragraph is to detail Garber's reasons for thinking that, contrary to Mackay's view, the seventeenth-century Dutch tulip market did not involve a speculative bubble. It is in this context that the author uses the phrase in question. The complete sentence reads, "Garber argues that a standard pricing pattern occurs for new varieties of flowers." The author then explains this standard pricing pattern: original bulbs for prized new varieties initially command a high price, but descendants produced from the original bulbs cost dramatically less over time. It is clear that the author takes Garber to be describing a regularly recurring pattern about the pricing of new varieties of flowers, and then asserting that the particular details about the pricing of tulip bulbs in the seventeenth century fit this recurring pattern. Thus, answer choice (D) is correct, since it paraphrases the use of the term "standard pricing pattern" as a pricing pattern "that regularly recurs in certain types of cases."

Answer choice (A) is incorrect. Nowhere does the author suggest that pricing patterns can or should be "measured" against one another, much less against a pricing pattern that is for some reason taken to be the benchmark.

Answer choice (B) is incorrect. The passage as a whole does concern the interpretation of the pricing of tulip bulbs in the seventeenth-century, and it might be said that the debate between Mackay and Garber concerns whether this case fits commonly agreed-upon criteria regarding speculative bubbles. However, at line 38 Garber's point is simply about prices fitting a pattern observed in a number of other cases. In this

way, it is a point about conformance to a historical pattern, not to agreed-upon standards.

Answer choice (C) is incorrect. There is no reason to think that the author views pricing patterns as "acceptable" or unacceptable, or that the author believes there is a standard for acceptability.

Answer choice (E) is incorrect. An "exemplar" would be a particular case that serves as some kind of model or ideal. No particular case is being offered up as a model in the third paragraph. Instead the "standard pricing pattern" is only described generally, not by reference to some paradigm example of the pattern Garber has in mind.

Based on the number of test takers who answered this question correctly when it appeared on the LSAT, this was a difficult question.

Question 7

Given Garber's account of the seventeenth-century Dutch tulip market, which one of the following is most analogous to someone who bought a tulip bulb of a certain variety in that market at a very high price, only to sell a bulb of that variety at a much lower price?

- (A) someone who, after learning that many others had withdrawn their applications for a particular job, applied for the job in the belief that there would be less competition for it
- (B) an art dealer who, after paying a very high price for a new painting, sells it at a very low price because it is now considered to be an inferior work
- (C) someone who, after buying a box of rare motorcycle parts at a very high price, is forced to sell them at a much lower price because of the sudden availability of cheap substitute parts
- (D) a publisher who pays an extremely high price for a new novel only to sell copies at a price affordable to nearly everyone
- (E) an airline that, after selling most of the tickets for seats on a plane at a very high price, must sell the remaining tickets at a very low price

Explanation for Question 7

This question requires the test taker to identify the scenario that is most analogous to the way in which Garber would view the purchase of a tulip bulb at a very high price, and the later sale of tulip bulbs of that same variety at a much lower price. Before looking at the answer choices, it is worth getting clear on the specifics of Garber's account. In Garber's view, the value of the original bulb reflects the earnings that can be made from the descendant bulbs. Since an original bulb will produce multiple descendants, the value of the original will be much greater than the value of any individual descendant. The value of the original reflects the cumulative value of the descendants. Thus, someone could buy an original bulb at a very high price and still turn a profit by selling descendant bulbs at a much lower price.

The correct answer choice is (D). The relation between the manuscript of a new novel and the copies that can be made of that novel is analogous to the relation between an original bulb and its descendants. From the original novel, the publisher can produce many copies. The copies can then be sold for a much lower price than the original. The value of the new novel reflects the cumulative value of the sales of the copies.

Answer choice (A) is incorrect. The scenario described does not include anything akin to the relationship between an original bulb and later descendants. Instead, it presents an example of someone who applies for a job based on a perception about the degree of competition for that job.

Answer choice (B) is incorrect. In this scenario, the value of the painting has dropped due to critical or public opinion. This represents a case in which the art dealer has taken a loss, not one where the art dealer recoups the original value of the painting through an accumulation of smaller sales.

Answer choice (C) is incorrect. On the surface, the drop in price of the motorcycle parts due to a flooded market of replacement parts seems similar to the drop in price of the bulbs of a variety of flowers. However, the situation is disanalogous in crucial respects. The cheap substitute parts cannot be described as anything like "descendants" of the original rare parts, and the owner of the box of rare parts does not get the value back through the cumulative sales of the cheap replacements. Indeed, the owner of the box of rare motorcycle parts was simply forced to sell the parts at a loss.

Answer choice (E) is incorrect. The airline had a certain number of seats for which they could sell tickets. The drop in price over time is not a product of increased availability, as in the case of the flower bulbs. In this case, the number of available seats has actually decreased. While it is surely rational for the airline to reduce the price of the seats, the situation is not analogous to the drop in price of descendant flower bulbs.

Based on the number of test takers who answered this question correctly when it appeared on the LSAT, this was a difficult question.

Passage Pair for Questions 8–14

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

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

Passage A

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

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

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

Passage B

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

- According to this view, global warming will cause the polar ice to melt, raising global sea levels,
- (35) flooding entire regions, destroying crops, and displacing millions of people. However, there is still a great deal of uncertainty regarding a potential rise in sea levels. Certainly, if the earth warms, sea levels will rise as the water heats up and expands. If the
- (40) polar ice caps melt, more water will be added to the oceans, raising sea levels even further. There is some evidence that melting has occurred; however, there is also evidence that the Antarctic ice sheets are growing. In fact, it is possible that a warmer sea-
- (45) surface temperature will cause more water to evaporate, and when wind carries the moisture-laden air over the land, it will precipitate out as snow, causing the ice sheets to grow. Certainly, we need to have better knowledge about the hydrological cycle
- (50) before predicting dire consequences as a result of recent increases in global temperatures.

- This view also exaggerates the impact that human activity has on the planet. While human activity may be a factor in global warming, natural events appear to be far more important. The 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, for example, caused a decrease in the average global temperature, while El Niño, a periodic perturbation in the ocean's temperature and circulation, causes extreme global climatic events, including droughts and major flooding. Of even greater importance to the earth's climate are variations in the sun's radiation and in the earth's orbit. Climate variability has always existed and will continue to do so, regardless of human
- (60) intervention.
- (65)

Question 8

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

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

Explanation for Question 8

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

The correct response is (B), "To what extent can global warming be attributed to human activity?" Both passages are concerned with the current warming trend in the earth's climate, which is generally referred to as "global warming." Both passages agree that the earth's climate is indeed getting warmer, but it is clear that the two authors differ in their views on the issue. In the third paragraph of each passage, the author raises the question of the causes of global warming. Passage A cites a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that attributes warming "directly to the increasing quantities of carbon dioxide released by our burning of fossil fuels" (lines 20-22). The author concludes, "The IPCC report thus clearly identifies a pattern of climatic response to human activities in the climatological record, thereby establishing without doubt that global warming can no longer be attributed solely to natural climate variability" (lines 22-27). In contrast, the author of passage B argues, "While human activity may be a factor in global warming, natural events appear to be far more important" (lines 53-55). In other words, a central concern in each passage is the cause of global warming, and more specifically, the extent to which the phenomenon can be attributed to human activity or to natural climate variability. Thus, response (B) expresses a question that is central to both passages.

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

Response (C) is incorrect because neither passage discusses steps that should be taken to reduce global warming. The author of passage A believes that global warming is a serious problem for which human activity bears significant responsibility, so he or she presumably believes that some steps

should indeed be taken. But he or she does not actually discuss any such steps. Meanwhile, the author of passage B is not even convinced that human activity bears much responsibility for global warming; accordingly, passage B is not concerned at all with the question of what steps should be taken to address the problem.

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

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

Question 9

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

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

Explanation for Question 9

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

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

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

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

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

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

Question 10

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

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

Explanation for Question 10

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

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

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

the author concedes that there is evidence supporting the position: "There is some evidence that melting has occurred..." (lines 41-42).

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

Response (C) is incorrect because the passages provide no evidence for concluding that the authors would disagree over the effect of warmer air temperatures on oceanic water temperatures. The author of passage B holds that warmer air temperatures would heat up the oceans. Passage B states, "Certainly, if the earth warms, sea levels will rise as the water heats up and expands" (lines 38-39). However, the author of passage A says nothing at all about a causal relationship between air temperature and oceanic water temperatures, and this lack of evidence does not allow us to conclude that the author would disagree with the view expressed by the author of passage B.

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

Question 11

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

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

Explanation for Question 11

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

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

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

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

Question 12

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

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

Explanation for Question 12

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

The correct response is (D). The author of passage B addresses the effects of global warming on sea levels in the second paragraph. The author concedes that warming water would ex-

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

Response (A) is incorrect because the author of passage B agrees that there is a causal relationship between the warming of the earth and rising sea levels (lines 38-39). The author of passage B holds, however, that the relationship between global temperatures and sea levels is more complex than acknowledged by those who make dire predictions. But the author does not object to merely positing that there is such a causal relationship.

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

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

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

Question 13

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

- (A) a research report that raises estimates of damage done by above-ground nuclear testing; an article that describes practical applications for nuclear power in the energy production and medical fields
- (B) an article arguing that corporate patronage biases scientific studies about the impact of pollution on the ozone layer; a study suggesting that aerosols in the atmosphere may counteract damaging

- effects of atmospheric carbon dioxide on the ozone layer
- (C) an article citing evidence that the spread of human development into pristine natural areas is causing catastrophic increases in species extinction; an article arguing that naturally occurring cycles of extinction are the most important factor in species loss
- (D) an article describing the effect of prolonged drought on crop production in the developing world; an article detailing the impact of innovative irrigation techniques in water-scarce agricultural areas
- (E) a research report on crime and the decline of various neighborhoods from 1960 to 1985; an article describing psychological research on the most important predictors of criminal behavior

Explanation for Question 13

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

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

The closest analogy to this relationship is found in response (C): an article citing evidence that the spread of human development into pristine natural areas is causing catastrophic increases in species extinction; an article arguing that naturally occurring cycles of extinction are the most important factor in species loss.

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

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

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

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

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

Question 14

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

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

Explanation for Question 14

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

The correct response is (C). The author of passage A begins by describing some of the recent phenomena attributed to atmospheric heating. Some of the author’s particular choices of words—such as “the most spectacular manifestation yet” (lines 4-5, italics added) and “have been emerging around the world for several years” (lines 9-10)—clearly imply that such “spectacular” phenomena are likely to continue to emerge in the coming years. And in the second paragraph, the author describes the effects of a predicted sea-level rise due to global warming as “potentially irreversible.” In contrast, the author of passage B argues that an “extreme view” of global

warming has developed, containing “exaggerations and mis-statements” (lines 28-31). For example, the author of passage B argues, “Certainly, we need to have better knowledge about the hydrological cycle before predicting dire consequences as a result of recent increases in global temperatures” (lines 48-51). Thus, unlike the author of passage A, the author of passage B argues that some of the conclusions based on the phenomena surrounding global warming lack foundation.

Response (A) is incorrect because the author of passage A does in fact rely on hard evidence in drawing his or her conclusions. Though the author of passage B obviously questions inferences like those drawn in passage A, the evidence used in passage A (the breaking off of the Larsen ice shelf, more intense storms, etc.) is not in dispute. Nor does the argument in passage B confine itself exclusively to proven fact: in lines 44-48, the author speculates about possible implications of the “hydrological cycle” for the Antarctic ice sheet.

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

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

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

ANALYTICAL REASONING QUESTIONS

Analytical Reasoning questions are designed to assess the ability to consider a group of facts and rules, and, given those facts and rules, determine what could or must be true. The specific scenarios associated with these questions are usually unrelated to law, since they are intended to be accessible to a wide range of test takers. However, the skills tested parallel those involved in determining what could or must be the case given a set of regulations, the terms of a contract, or the facts of a legal case in relation to the law. In Analytical Reasoning questions, you are asked to reason deductively from a set of statements and rules or principles that describe relationships among persons, things, or events.

Analytical Reasoning questions appear in sets, with each set based on a single passage. The passage used for each set of questions describes common ordering relationships or grouping relationships, or a combination of both types of relationships. Examples include scheduling employees for work shifts, assigning instructors to class sections, ordering tasks according to priority, and distributing grants for projects.

Analytical Reasoning questions test a range of deductive reasoning skills. These include:

- Comprehending the basic structure of a set of relationships by determining a complete solution to the problem posed (for example, an acceptable seating arrangement of all six diplomats around a table)
- Reasoning with conditional (“if-then”) statements and recognizing logically equivalent formulations of such statements
- Inferring what could be true or must be true from given facts and rules
- Inferring what could be true or must be true from given facts and rules together with new information in the form of an additional or substitute fact or rule
- Recognizing when two statements are logically equivalent in context by identifying a condition or rule that could replace one of the original conditions while still resulting in the same possible outcomes

Analytical Reasoning questions reflect the kinds of detailed analyses of relationships and sets of constraints that a law student must perform in legal problem solving. For example, an Analytical Reasoning passage might describe six diplomats being seated around a table, following certain rules of protocol as to who can sit where. You, the test taker, must answer questions about the logical implications of given and new information. For example, you may be asked who can sit between diplomats X and Y, or who cannot sit next to X if W sits next to Y. Similarly, if you were a student in law school, you might be asked to analyze a scenario involving a set of particular circumstances and a set of governing rules in the form of constitutional provisions, statutes, administrative codes, or prior rulings that have been upheld. You might then be asked to determine the legal options in the scenario: what is required given the scenario, what is permissible given the scenario, and what is prohibited given the scenario. Or you might be asked to develop a “theory” for the case: when faced with an incomplete set of facts about the case, you must fill in the picture based on what is implied by the facts that are known. The problem could be elaborated by the addition of new information or hypotheticals.

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

Suggested Approach

Some people may prefer to answer first those questions about a passage that seem less difficult and then those that seem more difficult. In general, it is best to finish one passage before starting on another, because much time can be lost in returning to a passage and reestablishing familiarity with its relationships. However, if you are having great difficulty on one particular set of questions and are spending too much time on them, it may be to your advantage to skip that set of questions and go on to the next passage, returning to the problematic set of questions after you have finished the other questions in the section.

Do not assume that because the conditions for a set of questions look long or complicated, the questions based on those conditions will be especially difficult.

Read the passage carefully. Careful reading and analysis are necessary to determine the exact nature of the relationships involved in an Analytical Reasoning passage. Some relationships are fixed (for example, P and R must always work on the same project). Other relationships are variable (for example, Q must be assigned to either team 1 or team 3). Some relationships that are not stated explicitly in the conditions are implied by and can be deduced from those that are stated (for example, if one condition about paintings in a display specifies that Painting K must be to the left of Painting Y, and another specifies that Painting W must be to the left of Painting K, then it can be deduced that Painting W must be to the left of Painting Y).

In reading the conditions, do not introduce unwarranted assumptions. For instance, in a set of questions establishing relationships of height and weight among the members of a team, do not assume that a person who is taller than another person must weigh more than that person. As another example, suppose a set involves ordering and a question in the set asks what must be true if both X and Y must be earlier than Z; in this case, do not assume that X must be earlier than Y merely because X is mentioned before Y. All the information needed to answer each question is provided in the passage and the question itself.

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

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

Keep in mind question independence. Each question should be considered separately from the other questions in its set. No information, except what is given in the original conditions, should be carried over from one question to another.

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

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

In preparing for the test, you may wish to experiment with different types of diagrams. For a scheduling problem, a simple calendar-like diagram may be helpful. For a grouping problem, an array of labeled columns or rows may be useful.

Even though most people find diagrams to be very helpful, some people seldom use them, and for some individual questions no one will need a diagram. There is by no means a universal agreement on which kind of diagram is best for which problem or in which cases a diagram is most useful. Do not be concerned if a particular problem in the test seems to be best approached without the use of a diagram.

Eight Sample Analytical Reasoning Questions and Explanations

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

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

Passage for Question 1

A university library budget committee must reduce exactly five of eight areas of expenditure—G, L, M, N, P, R, S, and W—in accordance with the following conditions:

- If both G and S are reduced, W is also reduced.
- If N is reduced, neither R nor S is reduced.
- If P is reduced, L is not reduced.
- Of the three areas L, M, and R, exactly two are reduced.

Question 1

If both M and R are reduced, which one of the following is a pair of areas neither of which could be reduced?

- (A) G, L
- (B) G, N
- (C) L, N
- (D) L, P
- (E) P, S

Explanation for Question 1

This question concerns a committee's decision about which five of eight areas of expenditure to reduce. The question requires you to suppose that M and R are among the areas that are to be reduced, and then to determine which pair of areas could *not* also be among the five areas that are reduced.

The fourth condition given in the passage on which this question is based requires that exactly two of M, R, and L are reduced. Since the question asks us to suppose that both M and R are reduced, we know that L must not be reduced:

Reduced: M, R

Not reduced: L

The second condition requires that if N is reduced, neither R nor S is reduced. So N and R cannot both be reduced. Here, since R is reduced, we know that N cannot be. Thus, adding this to what we've determined so far, we know that L and N are a pair of areas that cannot both be reduced if both M and R are reduced:

Reduced: M, R

Not reduced: L, N

Answer choice (C) is therefore the correct answer, and you are done.

When you are taking the test, if you have determined the correct answer, there is no need to rule out the other answer choices. However, for our purposes in this section, it might be instructive to go over the incorrect answer choices. For this question, each of the incorrect answer choices can be ruled out by finding a possible outcome in which at least one of the two areas listed in that answer choice are reduced. Consider answer choice (A), which lists the pair G and L. We already know that for this question L must be one of the areas that is not reduced, so all we need to consider is whether G can be one of the areas that is reduced. Here's one such possible outcome:

Reduced: M, R, G, S, W

If areas M, R, G, S, W are reduced, then the supposition for the question holds and all of the conditions in the passage are met:

- M and R are both reduced, as supposed for this question.
- Both G and S are reduced, and W is also reduced, so the first condition is satisfied.
- N is not reduced, so the second condition is not relevant.
- P is not reduced, so the third condition is not relevant.
- Exactly two of L, M, and R are reduced, so the fourth condition is satisfied.

Thus, since G could be reduced without violating the conditions, answer choice (A) can be ruled out. Furthermore, since G appears in the pair listed in answer choice (B), we can also see that (B) is incorrect.

Now let's consider answer choice (D), which lists the pair L and P. We already know that for this question L must be one of the areas that is not reduced, so all we need to consider is whether P can be one of the areas that is reduced. Here's one such possible outcome:

Reduced: M, R, P, S, W

If areas M, R, P, S, and W are reduced, then the supposition for the question holds and all of the conditions in the passage are met:

- M and R are both reduced, as supposed for this question.
- G is not reduced, so the first condition is not relevant.
- N is not reduced, so the second condition is not relevant.
- P is reduced and L is not reduced, so the third condition is satisfied.
- Exactly two of L, M, and R are reduced, so the fourth condition is satisfied.

Thus, since P could be reduced without violating the conditions, answer choice (D) can be ruled out. Furthermore, since P appears in the pair listed in answer choice (E), we can also see that answer choice (E) is incorrect.

This question was of moderate difficulty, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT. The most commonly selected incorrect answer choice was response (E).

Passage for Questions 2 and 3

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

- X cannot play first or second.
- W cannot play until X has played.
- Neither T nor Y can play seventh.
- Either Y or Z must play immediately after W plays.
- V must play either immediately after or immediately before U plays.

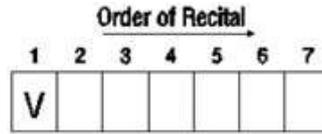
Question 2

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

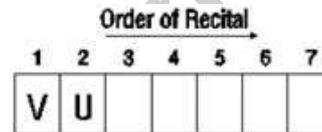
- (A) T plays sixth.
- (B) X plays third.
- (C) Z plays seventh.
- (D) T plays immediately after Y.
- (E) W plays immediately after X.

Explanation for Question 2

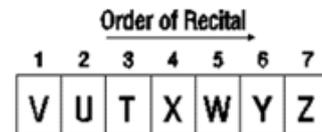
This question deals with an ordering relationship defined by a set of conditions concerning when seven piano students will perform. As an aid in visualizing this problem you can draw a simple diagram that shows the seven recital slots arranged in order from left to right. Student V is shown in the first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



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



Since the question asks us what must be true, we can eliminate incorrect responses by showing that they could be false. Response (A) is incorrect because the statement that “T plays sixth” is not necessarily true—we can place T in one of the slots other than sixth and still meet all the conditions of the problem. One such recital schedule, with T playing third, is shown in the diagram below:



This schedule can be derived as follows:

1. With V, U, and T in the first three positions, there are four positions left for W, X, Y, and Z.
2. W must come after X—because of the condition that “W cannot play until X has played”—so if X is fourth and W is fifth, this condition will be met.
3. This leaves two possible slots for Y and Z. Y cannot play seventh because of the condition that “Neither T nor Y can play seventh.” Suppose, then, that Y is sixth and Z is seventh.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A review will show that all of the suppositions given in the question and all the conditions in the passage are met by this schedule:

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

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT. The most commonly selected incorrect answer choices were (B) and (E). In answering this question, it is important to derive information not explicitly mentioned in the passage, such as that W cannot perform seventh.

Question 3

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

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

Explanation for Question 3

This question involves the same original conditions as the previous problem, but it begins with an additional supposition: “U plays third.” You must determine what effect this supposition would have on the possible positions in which Y can appear in the recital schedule.

The correct response is (D): Y can play as late as sixth. The diagram below shows a recital order that meets all the conditions and has Y performing in the sixth position:

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

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

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

Order of Recital						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		U			Y	

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

1. From our analysis of the previous question, we know that players T, W, and X cannot play seventh, but that Z can, so we can tentatively place Z in the seventh slot.
2. We also know that “Either Y or Z must play immediately after W plays.” If we place W in the fifth slot, this condition will be met.

3. By placing V in the second slot, we can meet the condition that "V must play either immediately after or immediately before U plays."
4. We must place the remaining two players, T and X, in the two remaining slots, the first and the fourth. Because the first condition states that "X cannot play first ...," we will place X in the fourth slot and T in the first. These positions will meet the conditions that apply to T and X: T will avoid playing seventh and X will play before W.
5. Since Y can play as late as sixth, response (D) is the correct solution.

1	2	3	4
	W		

The particular question here begins with the added supposition that "a wildlife preservation grant and a youth services grant are awarded in the same quarter of a particular calendar year." One possible way this could be satisfied is to have a youth services grant awarded in the second quarter in addition to the wildlife grant awarded in that quarter:

1	2	3	4
	W		
	Y		

This question was of middle difficulty, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Passage for Question 4

A charitable foundation awards grants in exactly four areas—medical services, theater arts, wildlife preservation, and youth services—each grant being in one of these areas. One or more grants are awarded in each of the four quarters of a calendar year. Additionally, over the course of a calendar year, the following must obtain:

- Grants are awarded in all four areas.
- No more than six grants are awarded.
- No grants in the same area are awarded in the same quarter or in consecutive quarters.
- Exactly two medical services grants are awarded.
- A wildlife preservation grant is awarded in the second quarter.

Question 4

If a wildlife preservation grant and a youth services grant are awarded in the same quarter of a particular calendar year, then any of the following could be true that year EXCEPT:

- (A) A medical services grant is awarded in the second quarter.
- (B) A theater arts grant is awarded in the first quarter.
- (C) A theater arts grant is awarded in the second quarter.
- (D) A wildlife preservation grant is awarded in the fourth quarter.
- (E) A youth services grant is awarded in the third quarter.

Explanation for Question 4

This question deals with the awarding of grants during the quarters of a calendar year. As an aid in visualizing this problem, we can set up a simple table with columns representing the four quarters. Since the fifth condition in the passage states that "[a] wildlife preservation grant is awarded in the second quarter," we know that all possible solutions for any question based on the passage must include a wildlife preservation grant awarded in the second quarter, which we can represent like this:

Another possibility would be to have a wildlife preservation grant and a youth services grant both being awarded in some quarter other than the second quarter. Given the condition that "[n]o grants in the same area are awarded in the same quarter or in consecutive quarters," the only quarter in which a wildlife preservation grant could be awarded in addition to the second quarter is the fourth quarter. So the only alternative way to satisfy the added supposition is if both a wildlife preservation grant and a youth services grant are awarded in the fourth quarter:

1	2	3	4
	W		W
			Y

So far, then, we've determined that for this question there must be a youth services grant awarded in the second quarter or the fourth quarter.

Each of the incorrect answer choices for this question is a statement that could be true. The question asks you to identify the exception; that is, you need to find the statement that *cannot* be true. The correct answer choice is (E), which states: "A youth services grant is awarded in the third quarter." This could not be true without violating the third condition, which specifies that "[n]o grants in the same area are awarded in the same quarter or in consecutive quarters." We saw above that a youth services grant must either be awarded in the second quarter or the fourth quarter. On either possibility, awarding a youth services grant in the third quarter would result in two consecutive quarters where the youth services grant is awarded:

1	2	3	4
	W	Y	
	Y		

or:

1	2	3	4
	W	Y	W
			Y

In both cases, two youth services grants would be awarded in consecutive quarters, in violation of the third condition.

To see that each of the other answer choices could be true, it will suffice to construct a possible outcome for each one that is consistent with the supposition given in the question and the conditions in the passage. Consider the following possible outcome:

1	2	3	4
T	M	T	M
	W		
	Y		

A quick check of the conditions shows that this satisfies all of the conditions for the problem:

- A wildlife preservation grant and a youth services grant are awarded in the same quarter of a particular calendar year.
- Grants are awarded in all four areas. (The table includes at least one of each of the four letters—M, T, W, and Y.)
- No more than six grants are awarded. (The table contains exactly six entries.)
- No grants in the same area are awarded in the same quarter or in consecutive quarters. (In the table above, only T and M are repeated, and neither repetition appears in the same or consecutive columns.)
- Exactly two medical services grants are awarded. (The table contains exactly two M's, in columns 2 and 4.)
- A wildlife preservation grant is awarded in the second quarter.

Notice that in this possible outcome, a medical services grant is awarded in the second quarter (answer choice (A)) and a theater arts grant is awarded in the first quarter (answer choice (B)). So answer choices (A) and (B) are both incorrect.

Now consider the following possible outcome:

1	2	3	4
M	T	M	W
	W		Y

A check of the conditions shows that this satisfies the supposition and all of the conditions. In this outcome, a theater arts grant is awarded in the second quarter (answer choice (C)) and a wildlife preservation grant is awarded in the fourth quarter (answer choice (D)). So answer choices (C) and (D) are also incorrect.

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT. The most commonly selected incorrect answer choice for this question was response (A).

Passage for Questions 5 and 6

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

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

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

N cannot be selected unless L is selected.

Q cannot be selected unless K is selected.

Question 5

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

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

Explanation for Question 5

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

Since the second condition states "[e]ither N or P must be selected ...," we can infer from the new supposition (P is not selected) and the second condition (either N or P, but not both, is selected) that N is selected. And since N is selected, we know from the third condition that L is selected. In other words every acceptable selection must include both L and N.

We are now in a good position to enumerate the groups of four which would be acceptable selections. The first condition specifies that either J or K, but not both, must be selected. So you need to consider the case where J (but not K) is selected and the case in which K (but not J) is selected. Let's first consider the case where J (but not K) is selected. In this case, Q is not selected, since the fourth condition tells you that if K is not selected, then Q cannot be selected either. Since exactly four people must be selected, and since P, K, and Q are not selected, M, the only remaining person, must be selected. Since M's selection does not violate any of the conditions or the new supposition, N, L, J, and M is an acceptable selection; in fact, it is the only acceptable selection when K is not selected. So far we have one acceptable selection, but we must now examine what holds in the case where K is selected.

Suppose that K is selected. In this case J is not selected, but Q may or may not be selected. If Q is selected, it is part of an acceptable selection—N, L, K, and Q. If Q is not selected, remembering that J and P are also not selected, M must be selected. This gives us our final acceptable selection—N, L, K, and M.

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

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 6

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

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

Explanation for Question 6

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

One way to approach this question is to consider each option individually, and determine for each option whether only one acceptable group of four can be selected when the pair indicated in the option is selected. You may wish to vary the order in which the options are considered according to personal preferences. In the discussion here, we will consider the answer choices in order from (A) through to (E).

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

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

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

Choice (D): When L and Q are both selected, K must be selected (fourth condition). Consequently J cannot be selected (first condition). Either N or P must be selected (second condition), and there is nothing that rules out either N or P from being selected here. So, more than one group of four is acceptable under these circumstances: K, L, N, and Q may be selected, and K, L, P, and Q may be selected.

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

This was a very difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Passage for Questions 7 and 8

On a particular Saturday, a student will perform six activities—grocery shopping, hedge trimming, jogging, kitchen cleaning, laundry, and motorbike servicing. Each activity will be performed once, one at a time. The order in which the activities are performed is subject to the following conditions:

Grocery shopping has to be immediately after hedge trimming.

Kitchen cleaning has to be earlier than grocery shopping.

Motorbike servicing has to be earlier than laundry.

Motorbike servicing has to be either immediately before or immediately after jogging.

Question 7

If laundry is earlier than kitchen cleaning, then hedge trimming must be

- (A) fifth
- (B) fourth
- (C) third
- (D) second
- (E) first

Explanation for Question 7

This problem is concerned with determining the order in which six activities will be performed. As with many questions involving relative ordering or ranking, it is likely that you will find it useful to diagram the various relationships given in the passage.

The first condition in the passage tells us that grocery shopping has to be immediately after hedge trimming, which we can abbreviate as follows:

1. HG

The second condition tells us that kitchen cleaning has to be earlier than grocery shopping, which we can abbreviate as follows, where “...” is used to represent “earlier than” (which means any time before, including immediately before):

2. K...G

The third condition tells us that motorbike servicing has to be earlier than laundry, and the fourth condition tells us that motorbike servicing has to be either immediately before or immediately after jogging. These conditions can be abbreviated as follows, where the / symbol is used to represent “or”:

3. M...L

4. MJ/JM

Notice that the information specified in these four conditions can be collapsed into two ordering statements:

I. K...HG (first and second conditions)

II. MJ/JM...L (third and fourth conditions)

Question 7 introduces the new supposition “laundry is earlier than kitchen cleaning”:

L...K

This new supposition works to further collapse the ordering statements in I and II to the single statement below; that is, if L must be earlier than K, then we know that the activities must be ordered like this:

MJ/JM... L ... K ...HG

So, with the addition of the new supposition, there are exactly two possible orderings of the six activities, differing only with respect to whether motorbike servicing is immediately before or immediately after jogging:

1	2	3	4	5	6
M	J	L	K	H	G
J	M	L	K	H	G

Question 7 asks what position hedge trimming must be in, given the new supposition. What we see here is that hedge trimming must be the fifth activity performed, and so answer choice (A) is correct.

This was an easy question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT. The most commonly selected incorrect answer choices were response (B) and response (C).

Question 8

Which one of the following, if substituted for the condition that motorbike servicing has to be earlier than laundry, would have the same effect in determining the order of the student’s activities?

- (A) Laundry has to be one of the last three activities.
- (B) Laundry has to be either immediately before or immediately after jogging.
- (C) Jogging has to be earlier than laundry.
- (D) Laundry has to be earlier than hedge trimming.
- (E) Laundry has to be earlier than jogging.

Explanation for Question 8

This question asks you to select the condition which, if substituted for the third condition in the passage (repeated below), would have the same effect as the original condition.

Third condition: Motorbike servicing has to be earlier than laundry.

In this case, you can deduce that the correct answer choice is (C):

(C) Jogging has to be earlier than laundry.

The fourth condition in the passage tells you that motorbike servicing has to be either immediately before or immediately after jogging. That is, M and J must be ordered as a block, either MJ or JM, with respect to the other four activities. Thus, if, as the original third condition states, M has to be earlier than L, then we know that J must also be earlier than L. Conversely, if, as the new condition in answer choice (C) states, J has to be earlier than L, then we know that M must also be earlier than L. In short, the third condition and answer choice (C) have exactly the same effect. Therefore, answer choice (C) is correct.

Another way to approach this kind of question is to attempt to eliminate all of the incorrect answer choices. Under this approach, you want to rule out any answer choice that does either of the following:

- rules out outcomes that the original condition allows
- allows outcomes that the original condition rules out

Let's see how this approach would enable us to eliminate answer choices (A), (B), (D), and (E).

Consider the condition presented in answer choice (A):

(A) Laundry has to be one of the last three activities.

We can first ask whether this condition would rule out outcomes that the original third condition allows. To answer this question, we must simply determine whether there is an outcome allowed by the original third condition along with the other conditions in which laundry is one of the first three activities. Here is such an outcome:

1	2	3	4	5	6
M	J	L	K	H	G

Because the original third condition allows this outcome, but the condition in answer choice (A) does not, answer choice (A) cannot be correct.

Consider answer choice (B):

(B) Laundry has to be either immediately before or immediately after jogging.

Again, we want to first determine whether this new condition would rule out outcomes that the original third condition allows. To answer this question, we must simply determine whether there is at least one outcome allowed by the original third condition along with the other conditions in which laundry is neither immediately before nor immediately after jogging. Here is one such outcome:

1	2	3	4	5	6
K	H	G	J	M	L

This outcome, although allowed by the original third condition, would be ruled out by the alternative condition given in answer choice (B). Thus, answer choice (B) cannot be correct.

Next consider answer choice (D):

(D) Laundry has to be earlier than hedge trimming.

Again, we want to first determine whether this new condition would rule out outcomes that the original third condition allows. To answer this question, we must simply determine whether there is at least one outcome allowed by the original third condition along with the other conditions in which laundry is not earlier than hedge trimming. One such outcome was given immediately above: since L is not earlier than H in this outcome, it would be ruled out by the condition in answer choice (D). So, answer choice (D) rules out an outcome that the original third condition allows, and therefore (D) cannot be the correct answer choice.

Finally, consider answer choice (E):

(E) Laundry has to be earlier than jogging.

Again, we want to first determine whether having this new condition would rule out outcomes that are allowed when the original third condition is in place. To answer this question, we must simply determine whether there is at least one outcome allowed by the original third condition along with the other conditions in which laundry is not earlier than jogging. One such outcome was given above: since L is not earlier than J in this outcome, it would be ruled out by the condition presented in answer choice (E). So, answer choice (E) rules out an outcome that the original third condition allows, and therefore (E) cannot be the correct answer choice.

In sum, answer choices (A), (B), (D), and (E) can all be eliminated because in each case the condition is one that rules out outcomes that the original condition allows. For this particular question, there was no need to consider whether any of the options could be eliminated because they allowed outcomes that the original condition ruled out.

This question was of middle difficulty, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT. The most commonly selected incorrect answer choices were response (A) and response (B).

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LOGICAL REASONING QUESTIONS

Arguments are a fundamental part of the law, and analyzing arguments is a key element of legal analysis. Training in the law builds on a foundation of basic reasoning skills. Law students must draw on the skills of analyzing, evaluating, constructing, and refuting arguments. They need to be able to identify what information is relevant to an issue or argument and what impact further evidence might have. They need to be able to reconcile opposing positions and use arguments to persuade others.

Logical Reasoning questions evaluate the ability to analyze, critically evaluate, and complete arguments as they occur in ordinary language. The questions are based on short arguments drawn from a wide variety of sources, including newspapers, general interest magazines, scholarly publications, advertisements, and informal discourse. These arguments mirror legal reasoning in the types of arguments presented and in their complexity, though few of the arguments actually have law as a subject matter.

Each Logical Reasoning question requires you to read and comprehend a short passage, then answer one question (or, rarely, two questions) about it. The questions are designed to assess a wide range of skills involved in thinking critically, with an emphasis on skills that are central to legal reasoning.

These skills include:

- Recognizing the parts of an argument and their relationships
- Recognizing similarities and differences between patterns of reasoning
- Drawing well-supported conclusions
- Reasoning by analogy
- Recognizing misunderstandings or points of disagreement
- Determining how additional evidence affects an argument
- Detecting assumptions made by particular arguments
- Identifying and applying principles or rules
- Identifying flaws in arguments
- Identifying explanations

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

Suggested Approach

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

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

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

Nine Sample Logical Reasoning Questions and Explanations

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

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

Question 1

Laird: Pure research provides us with new technologies that contribute to saving lives. Even more worthwhile than this, however, is its role in expanding our knowledge and providing new, unexplored ideas.

Kim: Your priorities are mistaken. Saving lives is what counts most of all. Without pure research, medicine would not be as advanced as it is.

Laird and Kim disagree on whether pure research

- (A) derives its significance in part from its providing new technologies
- (B) expands the boundaries of our knowledge of medicine
- (C) should have the saving of human lives as an important goal
- (D) has its most valuable achievements in medical applications
- (E) has any value apart from its role in providing new technologies to save lives

Explanation for Question 1

This question asks you to identify the point on which Laird and Kim disagree with respect to pure research. Laird identifies two contributions of pure research: its medical applications ("technologies that contribute to saving lives") and its role in expanding knowledge and providing new ideas. Of these, Laird considers the second contribution to be more worthwhile. Kim, on the other hand, maintains that "Saving lives is what counts most of all." Since pure research saves lives through medical applications, Kim disagrees with Laird about whether pure research has its most valuable achievements in medical applications. The correct response, therefore, is (D).

Response (A) is incorrect since we can determine, based on their statements, that Laird and Kim agree that pure research "derives its significance in part from its providing new technologies." Laird explicitly cites the value of pure research with respect to providing new technologies. Kim indicates agreement with (A), at least in the case of medical technologies, by asserting that "Without pure research, medicine would not be as advanced as it is."

Response (B) is incorrect since we can determine, based on their statements, that Laird and Kim would likely agree that pure research "expands the boundaries of our knowledge of medicine." Laird notes that pure research provides us with new technologies that have medical applications. Kim points out that "Without pure research, medicine would not be as advanced as it is."

Response (C) is incorrect. Kim indicates agreement that pure research "should have the saving of human lives as an important goal" since Kim's position is that "Saving lives is what counts most of all." Since Laird cites the saving of lives as one way in which pure research is worthwhile or valuable, Laird also indicates agreement that pure research "should have the saving of human lives as an important goal," although Laird indicates that expanding knowledge and providing new ideas should be an even more important goal of pure research. The same activity can of course have more than one goal.

Response (E) is incorrect. Laird clearly agrees that pure research has value "apart from its role in providing new technologies to save lives," given that Laird explicitly cites a second way in which pure research is valuable. However, nothing in what Kim says suggests disagreement with (E). Kim's position is that the greatest value of pure research is its role in providing new technologies to save lives. We cannot infer from this that Kim believes this role to be the only value of pure research.

This question was of medium difficulty, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 2

Executive: We recently ran a set of advertisements in the print version of a travel magazine and on that magazine's website. We were unable to get any direct information about consumer response to the print ads. However, we found that consumer response to the ads on the website was much more limited than is typical for website ads. We concluded that consumer response to the print ads was probably below par as well.

The executive's reasoning does which one of the following?

- (A) bases a prediction of the intensity of a phenomenon on information about the intensity of that phenomenon's cause
- (B) uses information about the typical frequency of events of a general kind to draw a conclusion about the probability of a particular event of that kind

- (C) infers a statistical generalization from claims about a large number of specific instances
- (D) uses a case in which direct evidence is available to draw a conclusion about an analogous case in which direct evidence is unavailable
- (E) bases a prediction about future events on facts about recent comparable events

Explanation for Question 2

This question asks you to identify how the executive's reasoning proceeds. The ads discussed by the executive appeared in two places—in a magazine and on the magazine's website. Some information is available concerning the effect of the website ads on consumers, but no consumer response information is available about the print ads. The executive's remarks suggest that the ads that appeared in print and on the website were basically the same, or very similar. The executive reasoned that information about the effect of the website ads could be used as evidence for an inference about how the print ads likely performed. The executive thus used the analogy between the print ads and the website ads to infer something about the print ads. (D), therefore, is the correct response.

Response (A) is incorrect. The executive's conclusion about the likely consumer response to the print ads does not constitute a prediction, but rather a judgment about events that have already transpired. Moreover, the executive's conclusion is not based on any reasoning about the cause of the consumer response to the print ads.

Response (B) is incorrect. The executive does conclude that certain events are likely to have transpired on the basis of what was known to have transpired in a similar case, but no distinction can be made in the executive's argument between events of a general kind and a particular event of that kind. There are two types of event in play in the executive's argument and they are of the same level of generality—the response to the website ads and the response to the print ads.

Response (C) is incorrect. The executive does not infer a statistical generalization, which would involve generalizing about a population on the basis of a statistical sample. The executive merely draws a conclusion about the likely occurrence of specific events.

Response (E) is also incorrect. The executive does use the comparability of the print and website ads as the basis for the conclusion drawn; however, as noted above, the executive's conclusion about the likely consumer response to the print ads does not constitute a prediction about future events, but rather a judgment about events that have already transpired.

This was an easy question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 3

During the construction of the Quebec Bridge in 1907, the bridge's designer, Theodore Cooper, received word that the suspended span being built out from the bridge's cantilever

was deflecting downward by a fraction of an inch (2.54 centimeters). Before he could telegraph to freeze the project, the whole cantilever arm broke off and plunged, along with seven dozen workers, into the St. Lawrence River. It was the worst bridge construction disaster in history. As a direct result of the inquiry that followed, the engineering "rules of thumb" by which thousands of bridges had been built around the world went down with the Quebec Bridge. Twentieth-century bridge engineers would thereafter depend on far more rigorous applications of mathematical analysis.

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

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

Explanation for Question 3

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

Response (A) is incorrect. (A) asserts that bridges built before about 1907 were unsafe for the public to use because they were built without thorough mathematical analysis. But this conclusion goes far beyond what is established by the passage. The pas-

sage gives evidence only about the safety of bridges built before 1907 while they were *under construction*. It is silent on whether bridges built before about 1907 were safe when *open for use by the public*. Moreover, the passage indicates that the rules of thumb used in bridge construction before 1907 were abandoned because the use of those rules did not provide adequate assurance of safety for bridges under construction. It does not follow that bridges built using those rules of thumb (those built before about 1907) actually were unsafe, either while under construction or when open for public use.

Response (B) is incorrect in claiming that Cooper's absence from the construction site caused the breaking off of the cantilever. The passage does not establish that, had Cooper been at the site, he could have successfully intervened to prevent the cantilever from breaking off. By freezing the project, he might have spared lives by stopping work, but there is nothing in the passage to indicate that he necessarily would have prevented the collapse.

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

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

This question was of medium difficulty, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 4

The supernova event of 1987 is interesting in that there is still no evidence of the neutron star that current theory says should have remained after a supernova of that size. This is in spite of the fact that many of the most sensitive instruments ever developed have searched for the tell-tale pulse of radiation that neutron stars emit. Thus, current theory is wrong in claiming that supernovas of a certain size always produce neutron stars.

Which one of the following, if true, most strengthens the argument?

- (A) Most supernova remnants that astronomers have detected have a neutron star nearby.
- (B) Sensitive astronomical instruments have detected neutron stars much farther away than the location of the 1987 supernova.
- (C) The supernova of 1987 was the first that scientists were able to observe in progress.
- (D) Several important features of the 1987 supernova are correctly predicted by the current theory.
- (E) Some neutron stars are known to have come into existence by a cause other than a supernova explosion.

Explanation for Question 4

This question asks you to identify the response that most strengthens the argument. The argument concludes that "current theory is wrong in claiming that supernovas of a certain size always produce neutron stars" based on the observation that no evidence has been found of a neutron star left behind by the supernova event of 1987. However, the failure to find evidence of the predicted neutron star does not necessarily indicate that such evidence does not exist. It may instead indicate that the instruments used to search for the evidence are not powerful enough to detect a neutron star in the area where the 1987 supernova event occurred. The argument would thus be strengthened if there was evidence that the search instruments used would in fact be capable of finding the predicted neutron star if that star existed. Response (B) provides such evidence. If "sensitive astronomical instruments have detected neutron stars much farther away than the location of the 1987 supernova," then it is less likely that the predicted neutron star is outside the detection range of "the most sensitive instruments ever developed." Thus, (B) is the correct response.

Response (A) reports that most supernova remnants that astronomers have detected have a neutron star nearby. Since (A) gives no information about the size of the supernovas that produced these remnants, it is possible that all of the remnants detected to date are consistent with the current theory's claim that supernovas of a certain size always produce neutron stars. (A), therefore, lends no support to the argument that the current theory is wrong in this claim.

Response (C) reports that the supernova of 1987 was the first supernova that scientists were able to observe in progress. This information has no direct bearing on the question of whether this event produced a neutron star and thus cannot be used to strengthen the argument that the current theory is wrong.

Response (D) asserts that several important features of the 1987 supernova are correctly predicted by the current theory. This bolsters the support for the current theory and would thus, if anything, weaken the argument that the current theory is wrong.

Response (E) reports that not all neutron stars are the products of supernova events. Since this information pertains to neutron stars that were not produced by supernovas, it is irrelevant to the question of whether all supernovas of a certain size produce neutron stars, as the current theory claims. Hence, (E) lends no support to the argument.

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 5

Political scientist: As a political system, democracy does not promote political freedom. There are historical examples of democracies that ultimately resulted in some of the most oppressive societies. Likewise, there have been enlightened despotisms and oligarchies that have provided a remarkable level of political freedom to their subjects.

The reasoning in the political scientist's argument is flawed because it

- (A) confuses the conditions necessary for political freedom with the conditions sufficient to bring it about
- (B) fails to consider that a substantial increase in the level of political freedom might cause a society to become more democratic
- (C) appeals to historical examples that are irrelevant to the causal claim being made
- (D) overlooks the possibility that democracy promotes political freedom without being necessary or sufficient by itself to produce it
- (E) bases its historical case on a personal point of view

Explanation for Question 5

This question asks you to identify how the reasoning in the political scientist's argument is flawed. The argument bases its conclusion—that democracy does not promote political freedom—on two sets of historical examples. The first set of examples demonstrates that democracy is not sufficient for political freedom, and the second set demonstrates that democracy is not necessary for political freedom. But it does not follow from these examples that democracy does not *promote* political freedom. Even if democracy is not, by itself, sufficient for political freedom, it can still promote political freedom by contributing to it in most instances. Even if democracy is not necessary for political freedom, it can still be true that democracy is something that promotes political freedom wherever it is found. Thus, (D) is the correct response.

Response (A) is incorrect. The political scientist's argument does not indicate that any particular conditions are necessary for political freedom, nor does it indicate that any particular conditions are sufficient to bring about political freedom. Thus the argument could not be said to confuse these two sorts of conditions. Rather, the political scientist's argument attempts to demonstrate that democracy does not promote political freedom on the grounds that democracy is neither necessary nor sufficient for bringing about political freedom.

Response (B) is incorrect. The argument does fail to consider whether a substantial increase in the level of political freedom would cause a society to become more democratic, but this does not constitute a flaw in its reasoning. The truth of the claim that increased political freedom causes greater democratization would not by itself undermine the political scientist's conclusion that democracies do not promote political freedom. Nor does that claim engage with the argument's

premises, which are concerned with the effect of democracy on political freedom, not the effect of political freedom on democracy.

Response (C) is incorrect. The "causal claim being made" could only be the argument's conclusion that democracy does not promote political freedom, which denies that there is a causal connection between democracy and political freedom. The historical examples in the argument are relevant to this claim, however. These examples are an important part of the larger body of historical evidence that one would look to when investigating the issue of whether democracy promotes political freedom.

Response (E) is also incorrect. The political scientist does not express a personal point of view or base the historical examples on such a view. On the contrary, the historical examples themselves are an impersonal, though flawed, basis for the argument's conclusion.

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 6

Journalist: To reconcile the need for profits sufficient to support new drug research with the moral imperative to provide medicines to those who most need them but cannot afford them, some pharmaceutical companies feel justified in selling a drug in rich nations at one price and in poor nations at a much lower price. But this practice is unjustified. A nation with a low average income may still have a substantial middle class better able to pay for new drugs than are many of the poorer citizens of an overall wealthier nation.

Which one of the following principles, if valid, most helps to justify the journalist's reasoning?

- (A) People who are ill deserve more consideration than do healthy people, regardless of their relative socioeconomic positions.
- (B) Wealthy institutions have an obligation to expend at least some of their resources to assist those incapable of assisting themselves.
- (C) Whether one deserves special consideration depends on one's needs rather than on characteristics of the society to which one belongs.
- (D) The people in wealthy nations should not have better access to health care than do the people in poorer nations.
- (E) Unequal access to health care is more unfair than an unequal distribution of wealth.

Explanation for Question 6

The journalist states that pharmaceutical companies have both a need for profits to support future research and a moral obligation to provide medicines to those who most need them and cannot afford them. In order to balance these requirements they have adopted a practice of selling drugs at lower prices in poorer countries. The journalist's conclusion is that this practice is unjustified. To support this claim, the journalist points out that different individuals in the same nation have differing abilities to pay, but this consideration does not, by itself, establish that the pharmaceutical company's policy is unjustified. The question asks you to choose the principle that would most help to justify the journalist's reasoning.

The principle stated in response (C) connects the question of whether special consideration is deserved to personal, rather than societal, needs. The pharmaceutical companies' practice provides special consideration based on the characteristics of one's society, and not based on one's personal needs. As a result, according to this principle, the practice tends to deny special consideration to some who deserve it (the poorer citizens of wealthier nations), while giving special consideration to some who do not deserve it (the middle class citizens of poorer nations). In this way the practice is failing to meet the pharmaceutical companies' obligation to provide special consideration for those who most need the drugs and cannot afford them, and, in giving undeserved special consideration, failing to generate income that could have been used to support new drug research. The principle in (C) thereby provides strong support for the journalist's reasoning that the pharmaceutical companies' practice is unjustified. Thus, (C) is the correct response.

The principle stated in response (A) applies to balancing the consideration deserved by ill people and healthy people. However, the pharmaceutical company's practice, and the journalist's argument against that practice, concerns only ill people (that is, people who need drugs). As a result, response (A) is not relevant to the journalist's reasoning.

The principle stated in (B) requires that wealthy institutions use some of their resources to aid those in need. This tends to affirm the pharmaceutical companies' moral imperative to provide medicines to those who need them but cannot afford them. However, this principle gives no support to the journalist's reasoning, which contends that the pharmaceutical companies' pricing policy is not justified by this moral imperative.

The principle stated in (D) that people in wealthy nations should not have better access to health care than those in poorer nations, is a principle that tends to support the companies' practice, because the companies' practice is one that tends to lessen the health care disparities between wealthy and poorer nations. For this reason, (D) actually runs counter to the journalist's reasoning.

The principle stated in (E) concerns whether an unequal distribution of health care or an unequal distribution of wealth is more unfair. However, this is a different issue than the one the journalist is addressing. Response (E) is thus not relevant to the journalist's reasoning.

This was an easy question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 7

Several critics have claimed that any contemporary poet who writes formal poetry—poetry that is rhymed and metered—is performing a politically conservative act. This is plainly false. Consider Molly Peacock and Marilyn Hacker, two contemporary poets whose poetry is almost exclusively formal and yet who are themselves politically progressive feminists.

The conclusion drawn above follows logically if which one of the following is assumed?

- (A) No one who is a feminist is also politically conservative.
- (B) No poet who writes unrhymed or unmetereed poetry is politically conservative.
- (C) No one who is politically progressive is capable of performing a politically conservative act.
- (D) Anyone who sometimes writes poetry that is not politically conservative never writes poetry that is politically conservative.
- (E) The content of a poet's work, not the work's form, is the most decisive factor in determining what political consequences, if any, the work will have.

Explanation for Question 7

This question asks you to identify the option containing information that makes the conclusion of the argument follow logically. The conclusion of the argument is that it is false that any contemporary poet who writes formal poetry is performing a politically conservative act. To draw this conclusion logically, one only needs to show at least one contemporary poet who is writing formal poetry and is not thereby performing a politically conservative act. Showing such an instance would provide a counterexample to the claim attributed to the critics, demonstrating that the critics' generalization is false.

The premise given is that there are two contemporary and politically progressive feminist poets who write formal poetry—Molly Peacock and Marilyn Hacker. If no one who is politically progressive is capable of performing a politically conservative act, and Peacock and Hacker are politically progressive, it follows logically that neither is capable of performing a politically conservative act. Since both write formal poetry, their writing of formal poetry cannot be a politically conservative act. This shows that one can write formal poetry without performing a politically conservative act, so (C) is the correct response.

If it is true that no one who is a feminist is politically conservative, as response (A) says, we can conclude that Peacock and Hacker, who are identified as being feminists, are not politically conservative. But we already knew this, as they were also identified as being politically progressive. As long as people who are not themselves politically conservative are ca-

pable of performing politically conservative acts, the question of whether it is possible for someone to write formal poetry without performing a politically conservative act remains unanswered. (A) is thus incorrect.

If no poet who writes unrhymed and unmetred poetry is politically conservative, as response (B) indicates, this tells us little about Peacock and Hacker, whose poetry, we are told, is almost exclusively formal. Insofar as (B) may indicate that Peacock and Hacker are not politically conservative (because they write some poetry that is not both rhymed and metered), we already knew this, as they are identified as being politically progressive. Since the argument works by presenting Peacock and Hacker as counterexamples to the claim that to write formal poetry is to perform a politically conservative act, (B) contributes nothing in the way of additional support for the conclusion.

Response (D) says that anyone who sometimes writes poetry that is not politically conservative never writes poetry that is politically conservative. However, to make the conclusion of the argument follow logically, one must show that some contemporary poets who write formal poetry are sometimes not performing a politically conservative act. The information in (D) is not applicable to this question.

Response (E) concerns the effects of the content of a poet's work on determining the political consequences of the work. However, the question that must be answered is whether any contemporary poet who writes formal poetry is performing a politically conservative act, not what the consequences of that poetry might be. The question of whether writing a particular poem is a politically conservative act is different from the question of what that poem's political consequences will be. Moreover, because the content of neither Peacock's nor Hacker's work has been specified, (E) does not even allow us to draw a conclusion about the political consequences of their work.

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 8

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

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

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

- (A) A library charges a late fee in order to induce borrowers to return books promptly. The library uses revenue from the late fee to send reminders to tardy borrowers in order to reduce the incidence of overdue books.
- (B) A mail-order store imposes a stiff surcharge for overnight delivery in order to limit use of this

option. The store uses revenue from the surcharge to pay the extra expenses it incurs for providing the overnight delivery service.

- (C) The park management charges an admission fee so that a park's users will contribute to the park's upkeep. In order to keep admission fees low, the management does not finance any new projects from them.
- (D) A restaurant adds a service charge in order to spare customers the trouble of individual tips. The service charge is then shared among the restaurant's workers in order to augment their low hourly wages.
- (E) The highway administration charges a toll for crossing a bridge in order to get motorists to use other routes. It uses the revenue from that toll to generate a reserve fund in order to be able one day to build a new bridge.

Explanation for Question 8

This question presents an analysis of a situation and asks you to select, from among the options, another situation for which the analysis is appropriate. The analysis states that the two objectives described in the original situation are related in such a way that more success in the first objective, the reduction of driving, will result in less success in the second, a reduction in the price of electricity. To see this, suppose that the gasoline taxes mentioned in the passage prove successful in inducing people not to drive. This would mean that people would have a diminished need to purchase gasoline, since they do not drive as much. Since less gasoline is being purchased, there is less revenue from taxes on gasoline purchases. There is therefore less revenue from the gasoline tax with which to subsidize electricity. With less of a subsidy, there will be less reduction in the prices charged for electricity. Among the options, (E) is the one that presents a situation that fits the analysis in the same way. The more motorists there are who begin to use other routes, thus reducing bridge traffic, the less toll money there will be for the new bridge fund. Thus (E) is the correct response.

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

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

Response (C) is incorrect. We cannot infer that more success in achieving the first objective—getting park users to help keep up the park—will cause less success in the second objective—keeping the fees low. It is conceivable that success in the former would enable the fees to be lowered; after all, if there were enough park users paying the fees (i.e., contribut-

ing to the park's upkeep), then the park management would not have to charge a high fee—fifteen park users paying \$1.00 generates more revenue than one park user paying \$10.00. Furthermore, there is nothing in the passage that functions like the statement in (C) that management does not finance any new projects from admission fees.

Response (D) is incorrect. The two objectives in this situation, sparing customers an inconvenience and augmenting restaurant workers' wages, are not necessarily related in such a way that more success in the former would cause less success in the latter. Adding a service charge might very well augment the restaurant workers' wages more than they would be augmented if no service charge is added, if the proceeds from the service charge are greater than what the workers would have received from individual tips.

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

Question 9

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

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

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

Explanation for Question 9

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

Response (E) helps to answer that question. It presents an undesirable consequence that would have followed from the use of water power in heavily populated regions: social unrest due to significant loss of livelihood. By doing this, (E) identifies a negative aspect of water power use in heavily populated areas, and that gives a reason not to use it in regions dominated by large cities. Thus, (E) is the correct response.

Response (A) is incorrect. Rather than explaining the puzzling situation, it merely describes the ancient Romans' ability to supply water over distances. If this has any bearing at all on the issue of water power, it would be to remove one possible impediment to the use of water power in regions dominated by large cities; it would not give a reason that the Romans did without it in those regions.

Response (B) is incorrect. While it speaks of the areas where water power was not used, which would include the regions dominated by large cities, it indicates the natural water supply in those areas was substantial although seasonally variable. This gives a reason to expect the use of water power in regions dominated by large cities, not a reason the Romans did without it in those regions.

Response (C) is incorrect. By noting that water power was relatively vulnerable to sabotage, (C) presents a possible reason to avoid the use of water power in important regions, but (C) also undermines that possible reason by describing how easily any damage could be repaired. So (C) does nothing to explain the puzzling situation.

Response (D) indicates that "more traditional" energy sources were used in areas without water power, which would include the regions dominated by large cities. This may help explain how these regions got along without water power—the use of traditional sources prevented them from being entirely without energy—but it adds little to our overall understanding, since we could already presume that these regions had energy sources. The fact that traditional sources of energy were employed in these regions does not explain why water power was not employed there, and that question would have to be addressed in order to explain the discrepancy in the Romans' use of water power. Response (D) is thus incorrect.

This was a difficult question, based on the number of test takers who answered it correctly when it appeared on the LSAT.

THE WRITING SAMPLE

On the day of the test, you will be asked to write one sample essay. LSAC does not score the writing sample, but copies are sent to all law schools to which you apply. According to a 2006 LSAC survey of 157 United States and Canadian law schools, almost all use the writing sample in evaluating at least some applications for admission. Failure to respond to writing sample prompts and frivolous responses have been used by law schools as grounds for rejection of applications for admission.

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

The writing prompt presents a decision problem. You are asked to make a choice between two positions or courses of action. Both of the choices are defensible, and you are given criteria and facts on which to base your decision. There is no "right" or "wrong" position to take on the topic, so the quality of each test taker's response is a function not of which choice is made, but of how well or poorly the choice is supported and how well or poorly the other choice is criticized.

The LSAT writing prompt was designed and validated by legal education professionals. Since it involves writing based on fact sets and criteria, the writing sample gives applicants the opportunity to demonstrate the type of argumentative writing that is required in law school, although the topics are usually nonlegal.

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

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

The two example topics below are typical of decision prompts that have been administered with the LSAT in the past.

Directions:

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

Example 1

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

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

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

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

Example 2

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

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

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

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