

CRITICAL REASONING – 3

STRENGTHEN WEAKEN ARGUMENTS

Direction: In each questions below is given a statement followed by two Arguments numbered I and II. You have to consider the statement and the following Arguments and decide which of the Arguments is strong in the statement.

- a) If only Argument I is strong;
- b) If only Argument II is strong;
- c) If either I or II is strong;
- d) If neither I nor II is strong;
- e) If both I and II are strong;

1. Statement: Should agriculture in rural India be mechanized?
Arguments: I. Yes. It would lead to higher production.
II. No. Many villagers would be left unemployed
2. Statement: Should girls learn arts like judo and karate?
Arguments: I. Yes. It will enable them to defend themselves from rogues and ruffians.
II. No. They will lose their feminine grace.
3. Statement: Should the political parties be banned?
Arguments: I. Yes. It is necessary to teach a lesson to the politicians.
II. No. It will lead to an end of democracy.
4. Statement: Should the educated unemployed youth be paid "unemployment allowance" by the Government?
Arguments: I. Yes. It will provide them some monetary help to either seek employment or to kick start some self-employment venture.
II. No. It will dampen their urge to do something to earn their livelihood and thus promote idleness among the unemployed youth.
5. Statement: Should foreign films be banned in India?
Arguments: I. Yes. They depict an alien culture which adversely affects our values.
II. No. Foreign films are of a high artistic standard.
6. Statement: Should all the practicing doctors be brought under Government control so that they get salary from the Government and treat patients free of cost?
Arguments: I. No. How can any country do such an undemocratic thing?
II. Yes. Despite many problems, it will certainly help minimize, if not eradicate, unethical medical practices.
7. Statement: Should higher education be completely stopped for some time?
Arguments: I. No. It will hamper the country's future progress.
II. Yes. It will reduce the educated unemployment.
8. Statement: Should there be more than one High Courts in each state in India?
Arguments: I. No. This will be a sheer wastage of taxpayers' money.
II. Yes. This will help reduce the backlog of cases pending for a very long time.
9. Statement: Are nuclear families better than joint families?
Arguments: I. No. Joint families ensure security and also reduce the burden of work.
II. Yes: Nuclear families ensure greater freedom.
10. Statement: Should India give away Kashmir to Pakistan?
Arguments: I. No. Kashmir is a beautiful state. It earns a lot of foreign exchange for India.
II. Yes. This would help settle conflicts.
11. Statement: Should students take part in politics?
Arguments: I. Yes. It inculcates in them qualities of leadership.
II. No. They should study and build up their career.

12. Statement: Should there be concentration of foreign investment in only few states?
Arguments: I. No. It is against the policy of overall development of the country.
II. Yes. A large number of states lack infrastructure to attract foreign investment.
13. Statement: Should luxury hotels be banned in India?
Arguments: I. Yes. They are places from where international criminals operate.
II. No. Affluent foreign tourists will have no place to stay.
14. Statement: Should India engage into a dialogue with neighbouring countries to stop cross-border tension?
Arguments: I. Yes. This is the only way to reduce the cross border terrorism and stop loss of innocent lives.
II. No. Neighbouring countries cannot, be relied upon in such matters, they may still engage in subversive activities.
15. Statement: Should a total ban be put on trapping wild animals?
Arguments: I. Yes. Trappers are making a lot of money.
II. No. Bans on hunting and trapping are not effective.

Critical Reasoning Topic: WEAKEN

16. A certain baseball team has just completed its season. In stadiums that seat 20,000 or fewer people, the team averaged 1 home run per game; in stadiums that seat between 20,000 and 40,000 people, the team averaged 2 home runs per game; and, in stadiums that seat 40,000 or more people, the team averaged 3 home runs per game. Obviously, the excitement of playing in front of large crowds motivated the team to hit more home runs. **Assuming that all stadiums during the season were filled to capacity, which of the following, if true, most undermines the argument above?**
 - a) The team's leading home run hitter hit more home runs in mid-sized stadiums than in large stadiums.
 - b) The fans in the larger stadiums often cheered against the team.
 - c) The team averaged only 2 home runs per game when playing in the league's largest stadium.
 - d) In order to create seating for the additional fans, the outfield walls in the larger stadiums were constructed closer to home base.
 - e) The team's announcer cited crowd noise as a major motivator for the team.
17. The recent decline in the employment rate was spurred by predictions of slow economic growth in the coming year. However, those predictions would not have affected the employment rate if it had not been for the lack of capital reserves of major industries. So if major industries increase their capital reserves, the employment rate will not decline in the future. **Which of the following, if true, casts the most doubt on the validity of the argument above?**
 - a) Major industry foresaw the drop in employment.
 - b) Some major industries had appreciable capital reserves.
 - c) An increase in labor costs could adversely affect the employment rate.
 - d) The government could pass legislation mandating that major industries set aside a fixed amount as capital reserves every year.
 - e) The drop in the employment rate was more severe this year than last.
18. Farmers in developing countries claim that the United States government, through farm subsidies, is responsible for the artificially low global price of wheat. Because the U.S. government buys whatever wheat American farmers are unable to sell on the open market, American farmers have no incentive to modulate the size of their crops according to the needs of the global market. As a result, American farmers routinely produce more wheat than the global market can absorb and the global price of wheat is kept low. Without these subsidies, the farmers in developing economies claim, American farmers would produce only the amount of wheat that they could sell on the open market and the global price of wheat would rise. **Which of the following, if true, most weakens the claims of the farmers in developing countries regarding the price of wheat?**
 - a) Wheat that is not processed for consumption is often used for certain industrial applications.
 - b) Non-governmental buyers of wheat and wheat products are able to predict how much wheat they will need several years in advance.
 - c) The United States government offers similar subsidies to soybean farmers, though the global price of soybeans is significantly higher than that of wheat.
 - d) Other countries, such as Canada and Russia, are likely to produce more wheat if the United States were to reduce its output.
 - e) The price of sorghum, a crop for which the United States government offers no subsidies, is lower than that of wheat.

19. The amount of money estimated to be lost by Hollywood studios due to DVD piracy overseas increased to more than \$500 million last year. As a consequence, Hollywood studios have little prospect of making money this year by exporting their films worldwide. **All of the following, if true, weaken the argument except:**
- \$500 million represents a very small fraction of overseas profits.
 - New laws and heightened international enforcement aimed at this piracy were implemented in January of this year and have been effective.
 - Even in countries where DVD piracy is widespread, theatrical first-run distribution is both very popular and profitable.
 - Last year, all films that were nominated for an Academy Award were known to have been pirated on DVD.
 - Domestic DVD sales were sharply higher last year; in the past, strong domestic sales have been an indicator of higher international DVD sales in the following year.
20. Political Analyst: Because our city is a border city, illegal immigration is an important issue in the current race for mayor. Of the two candidates for mayor, one supports a plan that would attempt to deport the city's 9,000 illegal immigrants and the other does not. Surveys consistently show that about 60% of the city's residents are opposed to the plan, while about 35% are in support of the plan. Therefore, the candidate who does not support the plan will win the election for mayor. **All of the following statements weaken the analyst's argument, EXCEPT:**
- In the city at issue, most voters make their voting decisions based on the candidates' positions on abortion.
 - Of the 35% of residents who support the plan, some are willing to consider alternate plans for addressing illegal immigration.
 - Many of the residents who oppose the plan are not registered voters.
 - The candidate who supports the plan is the incumbent mayor, and has been elected to four consecutive terms despite taking controversial positions on many important issues.
 - Just under 30% of the city's residents are illegal immigrants who cannot vote.

Critical Reasoning Topic: STRENGTHEN

21. The United States government uses only a household's cash income before taxes to determine whether that household falls below the poverty line in a given year; capital gains, non-cash government benefits, and tax credits are not included. However, yearly cash income is not a fool-proof measure of a given household's disposable income. For example, retirees who live off of capital gains from an extensive portfolio could earn hundreds of thousands of dollars, yet be classified by the government as living in "poverty" because this income is not included in the calculation. **Which of the following, if true, validates the contention that the government's calculation methods must be altered in order to provide statistics that measure true poverty?**
- For more than 99% of those classified as living in poverty, yearly cash income comprises the vast majority of each household's disposable income.
 - While the government's calculation method indicated a 12.5% poverty rate in 2003, the same calculation method indicated anywhere from a 9% to a 16% poverty rate during the preceding decade.
 - Most established research studies conducted by the private sector indicate that the number of people truly living in poverty in the U.S. is less than that indicated by the government's calculation method.
 - Several prominent economists endorse an alternate calculation method which incorporates all income, not just cash income, and adjusts for taxes paid and other core expenses.
 - The government's calculation method also erroneously counts those who do not earn income in a given year but who have substantial assets on which to live during that year.
22. Historically, the drug industry promoted its products to physicians by educating them in their offices or at industry conferences. In the last 10 years, it has become much more commonplace for drug companies to advertise prescription drugs directly to consumers, via television advertising and other media. Some public health advocates have become concerned that patients, encouraged by advertising, may pursue the use of prescription drugs that may be inappropriate for the individual patient or situation. However, since physicians must prescribe these medications, there is no reason for such concern. **Which of the following pieces of information would be most helpful in addressing the concern articulated by the public health advocates?**
- Certain over-the-counter medications are as effective for many common medical conditions as more powerful nonprescription medications.
 - Prescription medication television advertisements directed at the general public only appear on certain programs and are not seen by many potential consumers.
 - Physicians are also subject to prescription drug advertisements that are directed toward consumers.
 - Physicians are not susceptible to pressure from patients in determining appropriate courses of treatment, including drug prescriptions.
 - Prescription medicines have been proven to be safe and effective treatments for many patient conditions.

23. Studies in restaurants show that the tips left by customers who pay their bill tend to be larger when the bill is presented with the server's name hand-written on the bill. Psychologists hypothesize that simply seeing a handwritten name makes many consumers feel more of a personal identification with the server, encouraging larger tips. **Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the psychologists' interpretation of the studies?**
- The effect noted in the studies applies to patrons paying with either credit cards or cash.
 - Nametags for servers have not been shown to have any effect on the size of the bill.
 - Greeting card companies have found that charities which send holiday cards with handwritten signatures are more likely to receive donations than those which send cards with printed signatures.
 - The studies indicated much larger average tips if the customer ordered alcoholic beverages with his or her meal.
 - Many of the restaurants in which the studies were conducted are located in tourist areas, where people are traveling for leisure activities.
24. Analyst: The pace of technological development brings a constant stream of new devices to the market, and many of them enjoy commercial success. But announcing new technology too soon after the introduction of a successful device can backfire. Once consumers hear about the new device, they may stop buying the one currently on sale. So, if a company wishes to announce the upcoming sale of a new device, it should wait until purchases of the old device have begun to decline. **Which of the following, if true, would best support the analyst's main assertion?**
- New technology often becomes less expensive after an initial surge in sales.
 - Media outlets, such as television programs and magazines, often report on the planned introduction of new devices while the sales of old devices are still strong.
 - Many consumers are unable to determine whether new technology is superior to current technology.
 - Surveys have shown that some consumers make only one or two technology purchases per year, whereas others make more frequent purchases.
 - Consumers tend to be loyal to technology companies whose products they enjoy using.
25. More and more companies have begun to consume less energy by making themselves more efficient. Over time, these efforts could place the United States at the forefront of an emerging global market for cleaner technologies. Such efforts are also essential to tackling the two big energy-related issues of the age: global warming and the dependence on precarious supplies of oil. The federal government should encourage these efforts by providing the necessary incentives, whether as loans, direct grants or targeted tax breaks. **Which of the following, if true, provides the most effective support for the argument?**
- On the average, Canadian companies are more energy efficient than those in the United States.
 - Experts believe that energy efficiency could lower the energy use of the United States to the level of 1995.
 - In the past, government incentives have made advances in energy conservation feasible, especially in the auto industry.
 - The dependence on foreign oil is a greater problem in the present than global warming.
 - The market for cleaner technologies is currently relatively small because of the infrastructure requirements.

Answer Key

1. A	2. A	3. B	4. E	5. D	6. B	7. D	8. B	9. E	10. B
11. A	12. E	13. B	14. A	15. D	16. D	17. C	18. D	19. D	20. B
21. C	22. D	23. C	24. B	25. C					