

### **Assumptions -1**

- An assumption is merely an unstated (implied) premise.
- In logically correct arguments which contain an assumption, the premise + assumption = conclusion.
- If the question stem asks you “what is assumed...” then you should identify unstated premise of passage. Look for a gap in logic.

### **Assumptions - 2**

Ask yourself, “What must be true to make the conclusion valid?” (Using the premise + assumption = equation formula).

- Remember, since the assumption is an UNSTATED premise, any answer choice that comes from the passage to support your assumption is necessarily incorrect. The answer will be implied, not explicitly stated.

### **Assumption -3**

An assumption bridges the gap between argument’s stated premises and conclusion.

- Use denial test.
- Compare premise words against conclusion.

For assumption questions, find the conclusion and determine which answer choice needs to be true for a conclusion to be valid.

### **Strengthen the Argument**

Find the logical gap and fix it with additional information. This is the ONLY type of GMAT question where additional information (outside of the question) can/should be used.

#### **• Correct answers to this question type will:**

- Connect evidence with conclusion better.
- Make conclusion stronger.
- Strengthen the evidence with new information (perhaps an assumption is needed to make the argument work)

### **Strengthen/Weaken**

Strengthen/Weaken questions are the most common Critical Reasoning (CR) question type on the GMAT.

- Break down piece of evidence.
- Attack validity of an assumption.
- Don’t try to prove or disprove conclusion.
- Tip the scales.

### **Strengthen/Weaken**

Don’t be careless! Wrong answer choices often have exactly opposite of desired effect.

- Double-check that your answer satisfies the question stem, not the opposite of the question stem.

### **Weaken/Strengthen**

When you compare two items, you must be sure that the two items are indeed comparable.

## **Inference**

Consider the evidence, draw a conclusion.

An inference is an extension of an argument, not a necessary part of it.

A valid inference is a conclusion, but not necessarily the conclusion, of a set of statements.

For inference questions, determine which answer choice must absolutely, positively be true based on what you've read.

- Pick the obvious answer choice.
- Avoid extreme answers (too strong or too weak)

## **Inference vs. Assumption**

An inference is a conclusion that can be drawn based on one or more of the statements in the stimulus. An inference must be true based on something that you read.

An assumption is a missing but necessary piece of evidence. An assumption is something that must be true in order for the argument to be complete

## **Numbers, Percentages**

Watch for the distinction between NUMBERS and PERCENTAGES.

## **Inference**

Inference questions are usually very basic, about one or more premises. PICK THE OBVIOUS ANSWER (even if it seems too obvious).

## **Resolve the Paradox**

To solve this type of question, look for a logically contradictory discrepancy.

- Often the correct answer will take a similar format (in terms of answer length or argument structure).

## **Mimic the Reasoning**

Follow same line of reasoning from the passage in the answer.

Eliminate the question stem detail to create a shorthand version of the argument structure.

- Question Stem: "If it rains, then I will stay at home today."
- Shorthand: "If A, then B."
- Answer: "If A, then B."

## **Statistical Assumptions**

Are the statistics representative?

Is the question stem doing a lure and switch in terms of numbers?

Is the question stem using numbers to assume something is so, when the numbers aren't actually helping explain the phenomenon given?

## **7 Principles of CR**

1. Understand structure of argument. Identify premise (P), conclusion (C) and any unstated assumptions. Look for structural signpost words which mark P and C.
2. Preview question before reading passage.
3. Paraphrase passage's point or main idea using one verb "i.e., explain, criticize, compare, contrast".<sup>3</sup>
4. Judge argument's persuasiveness while reading actively.
5. Answer question being asked.
6. Prephrase answer.
7. Keep SCOPE in mind. Moderate rather than strong words / qualifiers usually correct.

## **Paraphrasing and Prephrasing**

### **Paraphrasing**

- Actively translate passages into your own words.
- Pretend you are explaining the information in a passage to a 10-year-old kid.

### **Pre phrasing**

- Think about what form the correct answer will take.
- As you do more questions, you will begin to "guess" correctly, as you start to think as the test makers do.

## **Strategy**

Identify the conclusion and find the answer that addresses the conclusion. Most questions follow this guideline.

### **4-Step Method**

1. Preview question stem.
2. Read stimulus and paraphrase if tricky.
3. Prephrase answer.
4. Choose an answer which answers question stem

## **Indicate Flaw**

Use the information that is present in the passage to answer "Indicate the Flaw" CR questions.

Not about new information like "Weaken" CR questions.

## **Irrelevant**

Watch for irrelevant or overly strong answer choices in CR.

Stay within SCOPE and TONE of passage

## **Negate (Counterattack)**

For assumption questions, negate CR answer choice to see if the conclusion can survive

## **Statistics**

When an argument is based on statistics, it is usually assumed that the people polled are representative of the whole

## **Questions Involving Surveys**

Consider: Does the survey accurately represent the views of the whole group surveyed? Is there a statistics bait and switch?

## **Scope Shifts**

Be wary of scope shifts. Look for tentmakers' tricks:

- Sometimes a passage will begin with one group and draw a conclusion about another group. Similarly, a passage might have weak premises and then draw an overbroad conclusion.
- Other times the tone of the passage moves so far that the testtaker is left wondering, "How did that conclusion come about?"