

Test 33

Passage 1 - GDP

Questions 1-7

Paragraph Summaries

1. Many economists like GNP, but it is misleading. Human indicators are harder to measure, but better.
2. Economists say a higher GNP means higher human indicators. But this isn't always true. Also, a high GNP can disguise inequality.
3. Some countries realize this, and are focussing on human indicators instead of GNP.

Analysis

This passage makes an argument. There is a clear target: GNP, and the economists who think it is a good measure of a society's wellbeing.

The argument is reasonably strong because it allows the economists to make a counterargument in the second paragraph. The argument then refutes the counterargument.

The argument ends by showing us that it's proposal isn't just some theory with no application in the real world: some countries are putting it into practice.

Question 1

Remember that a good title should describe the *whole* passage.

- A. We're not given any history. And the passage doesn't say GNP's meaning has changed.
- B. This only describes the first half of the second paragraph. The argument is mainly focussed on *attacking* GNP.
- C. This sounds pretty good. The entire passage argues that human indicators are better.
(Correct)
- D. This only describes the second part of the second paragraph.
- E. What new method? The passage is arguing against using GNP; they likely don't care how it's calculated. We should focus on human indicators instead.

Question 2

Welfare is mentioned in line 6. It seems to mean the general well-being of a nation: how well everything is going.

- A. This sounds about right. The argument uses welfare in the most general sense. **(Correct)**
- B. This is a part of welfare, but only a very narrow part. Government services are a small part of our day.
- C. This is part of welfare, but not all of it. What good is money if we're all sick, or if our children die at birth?
- D. This may be a part of welfare, but there are other parts. Equal distribution of income if the country is so poor that everyone starves.
- E. Same as D, except this is even more narrow. We're not told if these efforts succeed.

Question 3

You should be able to eliminate the wrong answers by looking back to the passage.

- A. Lines 4-6 tell us how to figure out per capita GNP: take wealth and divide by population.
- B. Easy: per capita GNP. (Lines 1-3)
- C. The passage argues that human indicators give us a better picture of a country's economic health. So a country with good human indicators (healthy, happy, etc.) might be better off than a country with high GNP.
- D. This is the passage's main argument. Human indicators show different aspect of human well being that we value, apart from wealth. Who can say they value none of the things mentioned on lines 13-19?
- E. The passage argues against using GNP as a measure. The author has no interest in showing how to improve GNP. **(Correct)**

Question 4

The last paragraph says some countries fear that they will be worse off unless they stop using GNP as the only measure of well-being (lines 52-55).

To contradict it, we should show a country succeeding, despite using GNP as its main measure of wealth.

- A. Slow growth of GNP doesn't mean that a country is badly off. The whole point of the article is that a country can be better off even if GNP is not increasing.
- B. This example supports the economists mentioned in the second paragraph. Focussing on GNP helped human indicators. The countries in the final paragraph thought they would be doomed if they focussed on GNP. **(Correct)**
- C. The argument didn't say GNP would fall if a country focussed on human indicators. The main point was that a country would be better off using human indicators. GNP is irrelevant to that goal.

- D. This is the same as A. The argument didn't promise that focussing on human indicators would raise GNP. The passage argues GNP isn't very relevant.
- E. So? The countries in the final paragraph were *not* focussing on GNP. This country *was* focussing on GNP.

Question 5

The last paragraph shows the passage's views in action. Countries take the argument seriously, and many are focussing on human indicators rather than GNP.

- A. The economists' position isn't even mentioned in the last paragraph. There's no synthesis of the two views.
- B. Not so. The third paragraph shows the importance of human indicators.
- C. The third paragraph does more than this. It expands on the argument by showing how countries are applying the principles.
- D. Why would the author correct a weakness in his opponents' argument? He's disagreeing with them, and thinks their argument is weak.
- E. Yes. "Policy Implications" can be taken to mean: real world implications. The third paragraph shows that countries want to put the passage's argument into practice. **(Correct)**

Question 6

The economists think that GNP is a good measure of well-being (lines 1-3) and they think that an increase in GNP leads to improvements in human indicators (lines 21-24).

- A. Yes. Lines 21-24 support this. More GNP leads to improved human indicators. **(Correct)**
- B. What idiot would say that all the human indicators mentioned in lines 13-19 are irrelevant? Everyone thinks health is important. The economists point that if we focus on GNP, human indicators will get better too (lines 21-24).
- C. This is something the author might agree with, based on lines 33-40. But the economists don't mention distribution of wealth at all.
- D. Why would economists believe this? If everyone drops dead, that won't help the economy.
- E. The economists think that GNP is all we need (lines 1-3). Lines 21-24 suggest they believe that we'll improve human indicators anyway, as long as we improve GNP.

Question 7

The author makes an argument: we should focus on human indicators rather than GNP.

- A. Which method is that? We're not told how to *direct* efforts (i.e. build this, in that place), we're told what *goals* we should pursue (e.g. more health, rather than more wealth).
- B. Yes. The whole passage argues that GNP is a bad indicator of national welfare. **(Correct)**
- C. This is *part* of the argument, but the main point of the argument is to argue against GNP in general.
- D. The argument didn't say that inequality is inevitable. It just said that GNP can sometimes disguise inequality.
- E. Why would the argument say that? It constantly argues against political economists!

Test 33

Passage 2 - Harriet A. Jacobs Questions 8-14

Paragraph Summaries

1. Jacobs was a slave. She wrote a novel emphasizing the values of free women. She hoped to show them that slaves had the same desires as free white women.
2. Some criticize Jacobs for being too conformist. But her novel made clear that slave women had to act differently from free women, even if they wanted the same things. Her novel showed we couldn't understand slaves using conventional values alone.

Analysis

The passage describes Jacobs' novel *and* makes an argument. Her book was a slave novel that followed some of the domestic conventions of its time. The protagonist wanted the same things as free white women, but her situation forced her to use different methods to achieve her goals.

This is the author's answer to those who criticize Jacob's book for being conventional. The unconventional situation of a slave pursuing conventional goals forces us to reexamine our values

Question 8

The critics dislike Jacobson. The author is favorable to Jacobson. So we know C-E are out.

To choose between A and B, ask yourself two things:

1. Does the author have anything nice to say about the critics? No.
2. Does the author have anything bad to say about Jacobs? No.

So the author completely rejects the critics. A is correct.

(Some people would say: "But A is extreme!". That doesn't matter. The LSAT has nothing against extreme statements, if they're correct)

- A. The author has nothing but praise for Jacobs, and therefore nothing but rejection for the critics. **(Correct)**
- B. The author has nothing good to say about the critics; there's no reluctance.
- C. Line 27 shows that the author disagrees with the critics. They say "But," in response to the critics' views.
- D. Same as C. The author *likes* Jacobs' book.
- E. Same as C. The author spends the whole passage praising Jacobs' book.

Question 9

The main difference is that Jacob's protagonist is a *slave*, while most domestic novels featured free white women. This puts many obstacles in her path, and in the end she has to separate from her family (lines 43-45)

- A. The protagonist did make it to Canada, safe and free. (Lines 40-41). But she left her family behind.
- B. Lines 18-20 show that the protagonist wanted the same thing as free women.
- C. The protagonist *did* encounter *many* obstacles. She was a slave! See lines 37-39 for an example: she had to send her lover away.
- D. This is it. Lines 41-43 show that most protagonists in domestic novels achieved their ideals. Jacobs' protagonist didn't: she had to leave her family behind! See lines 43-45. **(Correct)**
- E. Err...Jacobs' protagonist *was* a woman and a slave, and she *did* face obstacles as a result. She had to send her lover away, and leave her family behind as she fled north.

Question 10

The critics argue that Jacobs' should have focussed more on the unique desires and experiences of slaves. See line 24: "shortchanged...experiences".

They think she failed at the genre of slave literature by focussing on conventional values.

The wrong answers make general claims about what happens when you mixed genres. The critics don't make any general claims. All we know is that they think Jacobs shouldn't have mixed genres, *in this case*.

- A. The critics didn't like Jacobs' novel for mixing genres. So we have no evidence that they like mixed genres in other circumstances.
- B. This is too broad. We only know the critics think the genre of slave literature was compromised in *this* case.
- C. We know that the critics didn't like Jacobs' book. We don't know what they think about mixed genres in general.
- D. The critics never said when mixing genres is good or bad.
- E. This is better than B. The critics would agree that one of the genres was compromised in *this* case. **(Correct)**

Question 11

We can support the critics by showing that Jacobs compromised her experience as a slave.

- A. This strengthens the critics, who argued that Jacobs dulled the power of her work by fitting her experiences within the conventions of domestic literature. **(Correct)**
- B. This shows that Jacobs' work had a powerful impact, even though it was similar to a conventional domestic novel.
- C. This shows that Jacobs novel was more powerful because it was a domestic novel. That undermines the critics, who argued that Jacobs' novel's impact was weakened because it was domestic.
- D. This weakens the critics' point that Jacobs novel compromised its role as slave literature by adopting the forms of a domestic novel. It shows Jacobs' novel was broader than that.
- E. If so, then this shows the critics may have been too narrowly focussed. They forget that a novel often has to be gripping to convince us of its message.

Question 12

The author calls the novel "anti-domestic" to disagree with the critics, and show that Jacobs really did write a revolutionary work, despite its superficial similarity to conventional domestic novels.

- A. Huh? The protagonist is human...why wouldn't she be upset she was separated from her family? The passage never mentions this.
- B. Not true. The protagonist did want the same things as free women. But she faced many obstacles because she was a slave.
- C. Yes. See lines 31-35. It's hard to apply domestic values to someone who faces the difficulties of being a slave. **(Correct)**
- D. Where is this mentioned? It's hard to see why the protagonist's life would be any easier if she had given up on love. She would still have been a slave...
- E. Similar to D. The passage doesn't say the protagonist would have been better off if she had given up on love and family (domestic values).

Question 13

As with most questions, the answer can be confirmed using a few lines from the passage. Since you only have to check one answer (the one you think is correct), it's especially important to make sure.

- A. This is something the *critics* would agree with.
- B. Lines 25-28 show this is true. The author describes slave narratives and the domestic narrative as "two genres". **(Correct)**
- C. The author wouldn't agree; they like Jacobs' novel. And Jacobs' novel certainly doesn't obey the conventions of the "domestic" genre. The protagonist is a slave, instead of a free woman!
- D. We have no idea what the author thinks of autobiographies. They aren't discussed.

- E. Same as D. Autobiographies aren't mentioned. The novel is *autobiographical*, perhaps, but it's not an autobiography.

Question 14

The author believes Jacobs' book was valuable because it forced free women to consider their own values from the perspective of an outsider, from the perspective of a slave.

Many of the wrong answers are general. We only have information about Jacobs' novel. The right answer is general, too, but we know that the author of the passage does value shaking our cultural perspective. See lines 20-22 and lines 51-55.

- A. We're not told if Jacobs' novel captured the mood of a whole period. We only know it reflected Jacobs' life. But a period is a large thing, and Jacobs just one person among many.
- B. Did Jacobs' book accurately reflect the *details* of Jacobs' life? We know she and her protagonist were both slaves. But we're told little else of Jacobs' biography. Did she flee to Canada? Did she seek domesticity? We don't know.
- C. Yes. Jacobs' novel forces readers to consider the values of domesticity from the perspective of a black slave. It helps us better understand of those values. **(Correct)**
- D. Jacobs did *not* use a familiar perspective. She was a slave writing a book for free women.
- E. Hard to say. We're only give one example: Jacobs' novel. The author might think genre switching was useful in this case, but a poor idea in other circumstances.

Test 33

Passage 3 - CO₂ and Plant Growth Questions 15-22

Paragraph Summaries

1. CO₂ in the atmosphere is expected to increase quite a bit by 2100. But some say it will boost plant growth. More plants will slow CO₂ growth. We'll also have more agriculture.
2. Some plants will grow more. But some plants will do better than others. For example, weeds may do better than crops.
3. Plant growth would remove some CO₂. But higher temperatures would also likely release CO₂ from the permafrost. (So CO₂ growth will likely accelerate, rather than decrease.)

Analysis

The passage is presented as a fairly neutrally worded scientific argument. There is no explicit conclusion given, but we can read between the lines: the experts in the first paragraph are wrong. We will likely see *more* CO₂ than they predict. And worse, many important ecosystems will be disrupted, along with agriculture.

Question 15

The main point must cover the entire passage: Opposing viewpoint, objection #1, objection #2.

- A. This only describes the opposing viewpoint.
- B. What contradictory viewpoints? The evidence from studies on agriculture in the second paragraph was *all* bad. And this ignores the first and third paragraphs.
- C. This is it. The second and third paragraphs strongly weaken the arguments made in the first paragraph. There are no benefits for agriculture, and increased tundra leakage will make up for the CO₂ absorbed by plant growth. **(Correct)**
- D. This is true, but what does it tell us? It doesn't say whether the opinion presented in the first paragraph is still correct, or not.
- E. This doesn't say anything about agriculture. Also, we're not told whether global warming will increase. We only know that CO₂ absorbed from plant growth can't compensate for the CO₂ released by the tundra (lines 54-56).
But there might be some other factor that slows the warming rate; CO₂ isn't the only variable.

Question 16

The first paragraph made two predictions: more agriculture (line 9) and slower CO₂ growth (lines 13-15). The second paragraph attacks the first prediction, and the third paragraph attacks the second prediction.

- A. This is the evidence the opinion from the first paragraph *does* count on. More CO₂ absorption would slow global warming.
- B. This is it. See lines 54-56. The melting tundra wipes out any gains from slower plant growth. **(Correct)**
- C. This isn't even true. Lines 56-60 say *high* latitudes will have the most warming.
- D. This might be true, but it doesn't say whether more CO₂ will be released. So it doesn't weaken the prediction that plants will lower the rate of CO₂ growth.
- E. This is the argument made in paragraph one. They certainly considered this.

Question 17

The last paragraph attacks the second part of the argument from the first paragraph (more plants means less CO₂).

Plant growth likely won't slow CO₂ growth, because higher temperatures will release CO₂ from the tundra.

- A. Yes. The hypothesis was that increased plant growth would slow overall CO₂ growth. Unfortunately, the last paragraph tells us that CO₂ reduction from plant growth will likely be offset by CO₂ released from the tundra. **(Correct)**
- B. There are no solutions given, just a grim prediction: melting tundra will release CO₂.
- C. There's no explanation given. Instead, the third paragraph *attacks* the first paragraph.
- D. The second paragraph talked about agriculture and wildfires. The third paragraph doesn't address that; it talks about CO₂ from the tundra.
- E. This is close. But doubt is cast on the information from the *first* paragraph. The second paragraph is about agriculture, and the third paragraph leaves that alone.

Question 18

Patterson and Flint are mentioned in line 25. They claim that weeds may harm crops. The weeds will grow faster, relative to crops, thanks to CO₂.

- A. We don't know what the scientists think about most plants. We only know what they think about a few weeds.

- B. Patterson and Flint didn't say if crops would grow slower. They just said weeds will grow faster, which has the same effect.
- C. The researchers argue the opposite. Lines 22-25 say that plants with low photosynthetic efficiency are currently slower to grow, but they'll likely grow better if CO₂ increases.
- D. This is true. The two researchers agree that some weeds will grow faster relative to some crops. **(Correct)**
- E. We have no idea. Those plants might see increased growth, but weeds will grow even faster, unfortunately.

Question 19

This is subtle. The author disagrees with one of the predictions made in the first paragraph. He doesn't think that increased plant growth will lower CO₂ growth.

But make no mistake. The author does think some plants *will* grow faster. It's just that this will overshadowed by the release of CO₂ from the permafrost.

- A. Yes. The author agrees some plants will grow faster (thanks to photosynthesis), and absorb more CO₂. But, this effect will be overcome by the release of CO₂ from the permafrost. **(Correct)**
- B. The author uses the second paragraph to *disagree* with this. Unfortunately, weed growth will likely reduce agricultural output.
- C. This is wrong twice. First, the author uses the third paragraph to disagree that plant growth will slow CO₂: more CO₂ will be released from the tundra. Second, nobody argued that plant growth would *reverse* global warming. The first paragraph just argued that plant growth would *slow* the increase in CO₂.
- D. The author argues in the second paragraph that more plant growth will lead to an abundance of *some* plants: weeds!
- E. The author agrees with this (lines 53-55), but CO₂ release from the tundra will offset any decrease in the growth rate of CO₂ that comes from plant growth.

Question 20

Lines 47-50 say that peat decomposes and releases CO₂ when tundra melts.

- A. Yes. Rising temperatures melt permafrost, and that leads to decomposing peat, as stated in lines 47-50. **(Correct)**
- B. Unfortunately, no. Peat *releases* CO₂.
- C. Peat is decomposing *now*. More would decompose if temperatures rose further, but the process has already begun.
- D. We have no idea. There's no mention of peat at lower latitudes.
- E. Same as D. There is less *warming* at lower latitudes, but there's no mention of where most peat is.

Question 21

Lines 22-25 say that some crops like corn and sugarcane may grow less quickly, compared to other plants.

- A. This is possible. The passage says that low photosynthetic plants might gain a new advantage.
- B. This is exactly what lines 22-25 predict: high photosynthetic plants lost their advantage.
- C. This isn't perfect. We're not told that photosynthetic efficiency is the *only* factor in plant growth. But it's still the least consistent answer. Lines 22-25 say that plants with high photosynthetic efficiency lose their edge with high CO₂, and this seems to contradict that.
(Correct)
- D. This could happen. Photosynthetic efficiency is unlikely to be the only factor in plant growth.
- E. Lines 22-25 don't tell us anything about leguminous plants. Maybe they hate CO₂, and so we should expect they will decrease.

Question 22

Billings is mentioned in lines 43-54. It's a long excerpt. He found that plants grew more when CO₂ was high, but that the tundra released more CO₂ as well.

It's related to the question of whether the rate of CO₂ growth will slow due to plant growth.

- A. This is mentioned in lines 54-60, but it's not clear that the information is based on Billings' research.
- B. Billing estimated what would happen *if* summer temperatures rose. He didn't say *whether* they would.
- C. Yes. Billings findings suggest that plant growth won't be enough to lower the rate of CO₂'s increase. CO₂ causes plant growth, but it also leads to more CO₂ leakage from permafrost. This accelerates warming. **(Correct)**
- D. This is very tempting. But we're not told if Billing was researching the year 2100, or whether Billing was just researching a doubling of CO₂ at any time. C is a better answer, because it's more general and thus easier to support in this case.
- E. Billing only researched tundra. He didn't compare it to other habitats.

Test 33

Passage 4 - Bentham Questions 23-28

Paragraph Summaries

1. Evidence law in Bentham's time was similar to ours, but also strange. For example, you couldn't testify in your own case.
2. There was a reason for most rules (e.g. Hearsay: banned because you couldn't cross examine someone not present). But such reasons often led to irrationality (relevant and reliable evidence was often excluded).
3. Tradition and vested interests prevented reform. Bentham swept the old rules aside, and declared almost everything admissible apart from a few exceptions.
4. Problem: some evidence is too misleading to admit. Another problem: if some evidence (confessions to priests) shouldn't be admitted, then why not prevent the admission of other privileged evidence?
5. Bentham's non-exclusion principle is the basis of modern evidence law, even if we make more exceptions than he did.

Analysis

This passage gives a brief summary of Bentham's reforms to evidence law. The state of the law before Bentham is described, Bentham's reforms and principles are given, and the result is announced: Bentham's principle underlies modern evidence law.

Question 23

Overall, the passage agrees with Bentham's ideas. There are a few differences of opinion, (e.g. line 50) but generally the author accepts that Bentham had the right idea.

- A. Bentham questioned the *old* rules of evidence. This questioning *led* to modern rules of evidence.
- B. Yes. Imperfect doesn't mean "terribly flawed". It just means "not perfect". The author generally likes Bentham's reforms, even if they disagree on a few points such as the testimony of parents and social workers (line 50). **(Correct)**
- C. Which developments? The author doesn't say Bentham's rule needed much changing.
- D. Inevitably? The author might think that a few areas of evidence law don't lead to conflict.
- E. The entire passage is about how Bentham *did change* the law of evidence.

Question 24

The author doesn't seem to think much of the lawyers. Lines 21-25 show that lawyers' interests made it very difficult to find out the truth in a court proceeding.

- A. Sympathetic? Show me a single word of sympathy for lawyers. The author thought they blocked progress by holding onto irrational rules.
- B. Yes. The lawyers blocked progress for no good reason. **(Correct)**
- C. Not really. The only time lawyers are mentioned is when the author says they prevented the truth from emerging in court cases, because they blocked reform.
- D. This goes too far. The author may not be pleased with the lawyers, but he is hardly full of scorn and hatred towards them.
- E. This would only be true if the author had said something nice about lawyers, as well as accusing them of blocking progress. But the author had no kind words.

Question 25

The author seems to agree that those conversations are like confessions to a priest: they should be excluded from evidence on moral grounds and for reasons of privacy.

- A. Yes. The author suggests that those conversations should also be excluded. **(Correct)**
- B. These are *modern* objections. There were no social workers (as such) in Bentham's time, so that could be hardly an objection made against him.
- C. We're not really told what the conflict is. The author gives these two situations as an example, and we're expected to know why the example is reasonable. But if the author wanted to "illustrate" a conflict then they would need to give more detail.
- D. Huh? I don't even know what this means...lines 47-48 mention social interests and social values, but the terms aren't defined.
- E. Bentham's principle excluded very few situations. The examples of parents and social workers are given to show that there may be other situations that should be excluded too.

Question 26

As with all questions that ask you to use information in the passage, make sure you *use information from the passage*. Too many people try to answer these based on gut feeling.

- A. Lines 1-4 show that most of the common law rules of evidence are still used today. It was just in a few areas that major changes were made, such as admissibility.
- B. Lines 21 shows this: "Morass...technicalities". The law was inflexible. Rational rules produced irrational results (lines 13-20). **(Correct)**
- C. From the sounds of it, it was the common law system that implemented Bentham's ideas. See lines 51-53 "approach...after death". That could make non-exclusion a common law principle. We're not told where Bentham got his ideas, either. Maybe he found inspiration from within the common law. Or perhaps non-exclusion already was a common law principle, but it took Bentham's help to make it win. Who knows?

- D. Lines 1-4 say *modern* evidence law had taken shape in the late eighteenth century. But surely evidence law existed before that, with somewhat different rules.
- E. We know late eighteenth century evidence rules were based in common law. Why, then, would we assume earlier evidence rules were *not* common law? It's an old system.

Question 27

The passage is mainly concerned with assessing Bentham's reforms to the rules of evidence.

- A. This is it. Bentham's non-exclusion swept away some unjust rules, such as the rule preventing a defendant from testifying at his own trial. But some evidence will always mislead a jury (lines 40-44), so the author thinks that Bentham was wrong to say we should include it all and let the jury decide. **(Correct)**
- B. This doesn't even mention Bentham. It's true the old laws of evidence had deficiencies, but the main point of the paragraph was to discuss how Bentham helped fix them.
- C. What are those inadequacies? The author seems to think modern evidence law does pretty well. We admit more evidence than the old system, but exclude some problematic things that Bentham would have included.
- D. This only describes paragraph 4. The passage also listed the disadvantages of the old system and the advantages of the new principle.
- E. Which proposal has been dismissed? Bentham's proposal has largely been *accepted*.

Question 27

Bentham discusses this in lines 36-39. We should let the jury decide if information is useful. Otherwise we'd prefer not knowing about the evidence (ignorance).

He was responding to the argument that hearsay and interested party testimony should be excluded.

- A. Bentham is talking about a specific case of admissibility, not legal convention in general.
- B. Again, Bentham is just talking about a couple of specific cases of admissibility. He's not discussing legal reform in general.
- C. Confessions come later, in lines 45-48.
- D. Yes. This is stated directly in lines 36-37. The question was only testing whether you could find the line and understand what it referred to. **(Correct)**
- E. In lines 36-39, Bentham is arguing to *include* evidence. The exceptions come later.

The explanations above were a sample of the reading comprehension explanations available at:

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