



1.

87% of the world population are right-handed. The human world is organised to make success in life easier for the majority. Left-handed people should therefore be considered as having a disability and receive appropriate support.

Which one of the following, if true, weakens this argument?

- A Amongst top scientists, sportsmen, actors, musicians and politicians the percentage of left-handed people is much higher than 13%.
- B Left-handed people have poorer spatial skills which makes them more likely to have car crashes and other serious accidents.
- C Left-handed people are more likely to have health problems such as allergies, depression, epilepsy and sleeping disorders.
- D Hand tools, musical instruments and scissors are designed for use by the majority.
- E Many left-handed people were forced to write with their right hand when they were at school.

IMAT Q20 (2011)

Here, the answer is A.

The conclusion is highlighted in yellow whereby people who are left handed should receive support as this is considered a disability. The premise, highlighted in blue, states that the world is organised in order to make the attainment of success in people easier. Therefore, the assumption is that being left handed, presented as a minority in the text, is a disability which results in decreased success in life. Statement A is therefore correct because if we consider that top scientists, sportsmen, actors, musician and politicians have a greater percentage of being left handed, this acts to weaken the argument as these roles or occupations are widely accepted as successful roles or jobs. Therefore, it does not support the overarching conclusion that left handed people are less likely to achieve success in their lives and that they need additional help.

Statement B is irrelevant to the text as there is no discussion of spatial skills and the rates of car crashes.

Statement C also does not weaken the argument as there is no mention of health issues in left handed people.

Statement D is also irrelevant as no tools are mentioned in the text.

Statement E is also incorrect to the overarching conclusion as making left handed people write with their right hand does not act to weaken that argument.



2.

Recent research suggests that people are becoming less inclined to follow medical advice about how to prevent ill-health. They say that there is too much advice and it is often contradictory. However the general population is living longer and is healthier. This suggests that people are more aware of what is good for their own health and wellbeing than the medical profession is.

Which one of the following, if true, weakens this argument?

- A Advances in medicine have meant that doctors give advice on a wider range of issues.
- B People now have easy access to websites giving information on health.
- C People believe that they know better than doctors how to improve their own health and wellbeing.
- D The health improvements are in areas that exactly match the medical advice given by doctors.
- E Doctors prefer to give advice rather than medication.

IMAT Q32 (2011)

Here, the answer is D.

The conclusion, highlighted in yellow, states that 'people are more aware of what is good for their own health and wellbeing than the medical profession is.' The premise to the conclusion, highlighted in blue, states that people do not follow medical health advice as there is too much of it and it is often contradictory. Statement D therefore directly weakens this argument as it states that improvements of population health were observed in areas where people followed medical advice given by doctors. This directly opposes what is said in the premise.

Statement A, B and E are irrelevant to the premise and main conclusion of the text and therefore do not act to weaken the conclusion.

Statement C is incorrect because this argument would strengthen the main conclusion, as it suggests that people know how to improve their own health and well being without the advice or help of doctors. This is synonymous with the conclusion in the text.



3.

Rating figures for music are now much more difficult to calculate compared to a decade ago. The introduction of new formats for selling music means that figures have to be calculated based on more methods such as downloads, in addition to the sales of CDs in shops. Additionally, the availability of more formats means that there is more potential for copies of works to be shared with other fans, who do not pay for them. These fans do not show up in the ratings, so the official ratings do not reflect the relative popularity of a work.

Which one of the following, if true, would most strengthen the above argument?

- A The calculation of ratings based on downloads and sales together is not difficult.
- B Sharing copies of purchased works with others is against the law.
- C Artists are not interested in the popularity of their work, just the sales figures.
- D The sharing of works with other fans is more widespread for certain types of music.
- E Official ratings have never reflected popularity very well.

IMAT Q12 (2012)

Here, the answer is D.

The conclusion, highlighted in yellow, states that the popularity of certain music does not correlate with the official ratings of the music or artists. This can be supported by statement D. The fact that specific types of music have fans that share works more than other types of music implies that it is even harder to rely on the reliability of official ratings as a reflection of relative popularity of the work. This is because some work could be much more popular than it actually seems, where as other artists or works are under-represented by these official ratings. Therefore, statement D acts to strengthen the main conclusion.

Statement A to some extent contradicts what is being stated in the text that it is hard to know the extent of downloads and how much this is shared with other fans. Therefore, this is incorrect.

Statement B is irrelevant to the argument.

Statement C is also irrelevant to the argument.

Statement E is synonymous with the conclusion. This is not an additional argument that acts to strengthen the conclusion.



4.

According to the Food Standards Agency, film goers should be told how many calories there are in the popcorn, ice cream and fizzy drinks that they buy in cinemas and smaller portions of popcorn and drinks should also be available. As two thirds of adults and a third of children are already obese or overweight, with serious risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer, the need for proper labelling to warn people about the calorie content of these items is urgent.

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

- A People who are overweight are sometimes more concerned with their looks than the long term health risks.
- B A large box of salted popcorn contains as many calories as a three course meal.
- C Cinemas rely on sales of food and drink to boost their profits.
- D Trials show that consumers alter their eating habits when food is calorie-labelled.
- E Many people think that the food and drink consumed at the cinema is as important to the visit as the film.

IMAT Q23 (2012)

Here, the answer is D.

The main conclusion, highlighted in yellow, states that calorie labelling of foods is important due to the secondary effects that obesity causes such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes. Statement D therefore strengthens the argument as when food is calorie labelled, consumers alter their eating habits. This may imply that if foods are labelled as having a high number of calories that consumers may change their choice of foods and may reduce obesity.

Statement A is incorrect because there is no mention of 'looks' in the text.

Statement B is incorrect because this does not directly act to support the argument that calorie labelling will help with the obesity crisis.

Statement C is incorrect because it is irrelevant to the main conclusion.

Statement E is also irrelevant to the main conclusion and therefore incorrect.



5.

After Northern Europe experienced the coldest weather for several years last winter, people are claiming that the theories of global warming are incorrect. This is not a conclusion that can be drawn from the information as it is only based on a single year's data. Global warming is based on long term changes in average temperature. It therefore does not mean that the temperature will increase every year. The extreme weather last winter was caused by cold air from the Arctic which is normally kept there by strong winds around the pole. Last winter those winds were not as strong.

Which one of the following, if true, would most strengthen the above argument?

- A Some of the people claiming that the theories of global warming are incorrect do not come from areas that had very cold weather last winter.
- B Although the weather was very cold last winter, the winter before was of average temperature.
- C Other regions of the Northern Hemisphere were hotter last winter than in previous years.
- D All the people claiming that theories of global warming are incorrect come from areas that had very cold weather last winter.
- E The claims that theories of global warming are incorrect are supported by further evidence.

IMAT Q34 (2012)

Here, the answer is C.

The conclusion, highlighted in yellow, argues that global warming is a longterm change in the average temperature of the world. Statement C acts to support this conclusion as it states that other regions in the Northern Hemisphere were hotter than previous winters. Therefore, this statement supports the conclusion as it argues that there has been a gradual incline in average temperatures over a longer period of time, despite the previous winter being colder than usual.



6.

Hundreds of miles of motorways are lit by unnecessary street lights. There is a need to save energy usage in all public services and it is time that the government considered turning off street lighting. Modern cars have powerful headlights which provide a clear view of the road ahead even without overhead lighting. There is also evidence to suggest that when drivers move from an area with lighting to an area without they are more likely to have an accident than those drivers who have driven exclusively on roads without lighting.

Which one of the following, if true, would most strengthen the above argument?

- A There is evidence that there are fewer daytime accidents on those motorways without lighting.
- B Driving in well-lit areas at night can lead to a lack of concentration.
- C Research suggests that older drivers find driving without lighting more difficult.
- D Many drivers find driving on unlit roads difficult.
- E Street lighting costs less than other types of road maintenance.

IMAT Q36 (2012)

Here, the answer is B.

The paragraph ends by explaining that driving in areas with less lit up roads increases the likelihood of accidents in comparison to those who have driven exclusively without lighting on roads. Therefore, the only difference between these two scenarios is that there was light in one and not in the other. Therefore, statement B strengthens the argument by stating that well lit areas may lead to a lack of concentration, which in turn can lead to an increase in accidents. Therefore, it supports the conclusion that parts of the road that are better lit than other can cause an increase in accidents.

Statement A is irrelevant as the passage discusses accidents caused at night and not during the daytime.

Statement C is incorrect because the passage speaks about accidents in general rather than the population that is more likely to experience an accident due to poor lighting.

Statement D is incorrect because this would weaken the argument.

Statement E is incorrect because this too is irrelevant to the main conclusion that roads that are better lit can lead to an increase in accidents.



7.

Any company that wishes to sell a new drug must provide the government with details of research about its safety and possible side effects. At present, this information is confidential, but there are plans to make it available to the public. While patients are surely entitled to more information about the drugs they are prescribed, this will also inevitably make public vital details about the ingredients of certain drugs and how they are manufactured. Drug companies are naturally reluctant to release this information to their competitors. Therefore, through fear of imitators, drug companies will no longer introduce new and important drugs into the country.

Which one of the following, if true, would most weaken the above argument?

- A There are sufficient drugs already on the market and so there is no necessity to introduce new ones.
- B The drug industry is a very competitive business and secrecy is vital if companies are to survive.
- C People may be reluctant to use certain drugs when they have fuller information about them.
- D People are better informed about the side effects of drugs abroad than they are in this country.
- E Strong patent laws prevent companies from using the information to create rival drugs.

IMAT Q2 (2013)

Here, the answer is E.

The conclusion of the passage, highlighted in yellow, argues that drug companies will stop producing important drugs in fear that rival drug companies will produce a similar drug. However, statement E weakens this argument by stating that strong patent laws prevent rival companies from using protected information to create such rival drugs. This therefore weakens the argument as drug companies would not have to worry about their competitors as a patent provides them with the protection and the license to be the sole producer in the market to produce that specific drug.

Statement A is irrelevant to the argument as there is no discussion about the quantity of new drugs.

Statement B is incorrect because this would act to strengthen the argument.

Statement C is incorrect because this does not influence the main conclusion.

Statement D is irrelevant as there is no comparison mentioned between other countries.

Assessing the Impact of
Additional Evidence

8.

There is concern at the moment about the way in which football referees are treated by players during games. The Football Association and the Referees' Association feel that there is too much verbal (and physical) abuse directed at referees. Various solutions have been suggested such as only allowing the captain of each team to approach and talk to the referee. The major difficulty is how such new rules should be introduced. The preferred suggestion seems to be that the rules should be changed first in the amateur game, the aim being to improve discipline in the game from the bottom upwards, until the whole game is improved.

Which one of the following, if true, would most weaken the argument above?

- A By introducing it first to amateur players, it reaches those who spend the least time playing football.
- B Not many professional players start out in the amateur leagues.
- C Amateur players are more likely to abuse referees than are professionals.
- D Referees should use their existing powers to control abusive players.
- E Referees in the amateur game are less proficient than those in the professional games.

IMAT Q10 (2014)

Here, the answer is B.

The passage concludes, as highlighted in yellow, that the rules should first be implemented in amateur games rather than at the professional level. Therefore, the game will adopt these changes from the bottom upwards. However, we are therefore assuming that professional players who play at the highest level will have started playing in an amateur team and therefore game. Thus, the argument that most weakens this conclusion is statement D. If not many professionals start playing in the amateur leagues, there is no guarantee that the changes adopted in the amateur leagues will reach the top leagues.

Statement A can weaken the argument but it does not suggest a way these amateur players would impact the top player level rules. Therefore, this is an assumption off of an assumption and is therefore incorrect.

Statement C is incorrect because the conclusion highlights the use of amateur players in order to change the action of players in top leagues rather than implementing these changes because the amateur players are the most abusive players.

Statement D & E are both irrelevant to the overarching conclusion.



9.

In many countries shocking images of the damage smoking can do to the body are displayed on cigarette packets. Images of rotting teeth, mouth tumours and cancerous lungs are among the grim pictures. A review concluded that shocking pictures of the damage smoking can do are a cost effective way to help smokers to quit and discourage others from starting. All countries should introduce these kinds of images to discourage smoking.

Which one of the following, if true, most weakens the above argument?

- A Pictures that arouse emotions are especially effective.
- B Smokers are likely to die younger than non-smokers.
- C The USA is planning to display shocking images on cigarette packets.
- D Governments receive a significant amount of revenue from taxes on tobacco products.
- E In countries using the images there are high taxes on tobacco and a ban on advertising.

IMAT Q13 (2014)

Here, the answer is E.

The passage concludes, highlighted in yellow, that the use of shocking pictures of the damage smoking causes is a cost effective way to decrease rates of smoking. As a result of this, all countries should implement such techniques to discourage smoking. However, statement E most weakens this argument because it offers another possibility as to why smokers may be discouraged to smoke and quit. Therefore, weakening the conclusion that shocking imagery used on cigarette packages is a cost effective way to help smokers quit.

Statement A is incorrect because this would strengthen the argument.

Statement B is incorrect because although it is an argument against smoking it does not directly mention the effect these images have on smokers.

Statement C is making an assumption off of an assumption that because other countries are encouraged to do so that for example the USA is planning on using such techniques. Thus it is incorrect.

Statement D is irrelevant to the main conclusion and is therefore incorrect.



10.

Although the Earth supports life, it has a mysterious carbon deficit. Compared with other bodies in the solar system the Earth has far less carbon than would be expected for a planet that supports life. Originally it was thought that in the inner region of the dust disc where the Earth formed, temperatures soared high enough for the carbon to boil away. However, observations of developing solar systems have now suggested that the temperature would not have been high enough. It is more likely that fire is to blame. Hot oxygen atoms would have readily combined with carbon, burning to produce carbon dioxide. There would have been fewer of these oxygen atoms further away from the Sun.

Which one of the following, if true, would most strengthen the above argument?

- A The carbon that is present on the Earth could have arrived at a later date from an asteroid.
- B The abundance of carbon in the asteroid belt surrounding the inner planets increases the further away you get from the Sun.
- C There is no theoretical reason why life has to be carbon-based.
- D There are other solar systems with Earth-like planets that have an abundance of carbon on them.
- E At temperatures that are high enough for carbon to boil away, oxygen would also have boiled away.

IMAT Q1 (2015)

Here, the answer is B.

The paragraph summarises that hot oxygen atoms may have combined with carbon which would have burnt to produce carbon dioxide. The amount of oxygen atoms would decrease the further away from the Sun. Statement B therefore strengthens this conclusion because if the abundance of carbon dioxide increases the further away from the Sun, then it would explain how it would be possible for planets to form given the concluding statement.



11.

Children are being encouraged to take up gardening through special events at shows and activities in schools. It is hoped that an interest in gardening, and particularly growing one's own food, will make children more interested in learning about their food and they will therefore be deterred from eating junk food. The initiative should be supported and spread to more schools as quickly as possible.

Which one of the following, if true, would most weaken the above argument?

- A The practical experience of gardening is not a traditional academic subject.
- B The events to encourage children to garden also included stands where junk food was for sale.
- C Some schools do not have a garden.
- D It tends to be older people who are interested in gardening and growing their own food.
- E Most children have enjoyed the events provided, but have not gained an interest in gardening itself.

IMAT Q5 (2015)

Here, the answer is E.

The conclusion here, highlighted in yellow, states that if children are exposed to activities such as gardening that they will thus become interested in gardening itself.

This would hopefully lead to an increase children being more interested about where their food comes from and will be deterred from eating junk food. Therefore, statement E is correct because it weakens the argument the most. If children did enjoy the gardening events but did not gain an interest in it, then the conclusion is weakened.

Statement A is incorrect because it is irrelevant to the argument.

Statement B is incorrect because there is no mention of junk food stands being present at the school and the sort of impact this would have on children.

Statement C is irrelevant to the overarching conclusion.

Statement D is also irrelevant to the overarching conclusion as the passage discusses the introduction of gardening in children at school.



12.

Children born in Japan today can expect to live five years longer than their American counterparts. Life expectancy has been rising in all countries, but the slowest rate of increase has been in the USA. What could account for this, given that the percentage of people who smoke is roughly the same in all rich countries? Of course, the USA is the birthplace of fast food restaurants that sell unhealthy food. Moreover, a recent survey of American lifestyles has found that overeating and failure to exercise are widespread amongst the population. So we must assume that obesity and lack of exercise have caused the USA to lag behind in the increase in life expectancy.

Which one of the following, if true, most weakens the above argument?

- A Most rich countries have the same standard of medical expertise.
- B The USA spends more money on fast food than any other nation.
- C Japanese children had a healthier diet in the 1960s than they do today.
- D In the 1960s and 1970s the USA had the highest percentage of smokers.
- E American fast food restaurants are now found in most rich countries.

IMAT Q14 (2016)

Here, the answer is D.

The passage concludes, highlighted in yellow, that the reason for the decreased life expectancy is due to obesity and lack of exercise compared to other rich countries.

However, statement D offers an alternative possibility as to why the USA may have a reduced life expectancy compared to other rich countries and is therefore the correct answer.

Statement A is incorrect because this does not weaken the argument. It reinforces the idea that a variable such as healthcare is at the same standard in most rich countries and so is not a reason for the USA to have a reduced life expectancy.

Statement B is incorrect because it is irrelevant to the overarching conclusion.

Statement C is incorrect because this would act to strengthen the argument that Japan has a healthier diet compared to the USA.

Statement E is incorrect because this levels the playing field amongst other rich countries.

Assessing the Impact of
Additional Evidence

13.

While some animal rights activists have long accepted that there is a link between bovine tuberculosis (TB in cattle) and badgers, others have argued that it was not proven. They felt that the culling of badgers to stop the spread of TB in cattle was not justified if a link was unproven. But direct evidence of the transmission of TB between badgers and cattle has now been found. DNA sequencing of the TB bacteria in cattle and in badgers has shown that the disease crosses species barriers. This latest discovery completely undermines the case of those who have opposed badger culling. To protect farmers from severe loss of their cattle and hence their livelihoods – and to protect one of our primary sources of meat and milk – the badger population should be culled.

Which one of the following, if true, would most weaken the argument in the passage above?

- A Animal rights activists are interested in the protection of badgers per se, whatever risk they pose.
- B There may be factors other than badgers, such as the movement of cattle, which contribute to the spread of TB in cattle.
- C It is too expensive and logistically difficult to vaccinate all cattle against TB.
- D Badger culling would be unpopular with a substantial number of people.
- E Not all farmers are convinced that the culling of badgers would stop the spread of TB.

IMAT Q15 (2016)

Here, the answer is B.

The paragraph concludes, highlighted in yellow, that research has found that badgers can transmit TB to cattle and cause serious disease and death. Therefore, in order to protect farmers from loss of their cattle and livelihood, culling of badgers should be allowed. This conclusion is weakened by statement B which provides an alternative possibility regarding the origin and spread of TB. It implies that badgers are not the sole reason as to why cattle are dying from TB. Therefore, statement B is correct.

Statement A is incorrect because this is not relevant to the overarching conclusion, that badgers transmit TB to cattle and should therefore be culled.

Statement C is irrelevant to the argument.

Statement D is also irrelevant to the argument.

Statement E does not act to weaken the argument as the conclusion argues that culling badgers would protect cattle and so is incorrect.



14.

The government is considering changing the law to assume consent for the donation of organs after death. People opposed to the idea would have to deliberately 'opt out' of the scheme, although relatives would still be consulted. The supply of healthy organs available for transplant would be vastly increased under this scheme. If the government really wants to improve the lives of people with long-term health problems, this is a measure it must take.

Which one of the following, if true, would most strengthen the argument in the passage above?

- A Bereaved relatives find donation decisions very distressing.
- B The number of voluntary organ donors is small and not increasing.
- C Not all of the organs donated are suitable for transplant.
- D There would be opposition by civil liberties groups to this measure.
- E It is not known how many people would 'opt out' of the compulsory scheme.

IMAT Q18 (2016)

Here, the answer is B.

The conclusion, highlighted in yellow, states that if the government wishes to improve the lives of those living with long term health problems, that they should implement an 'opt out' organ donation scheme. Statement B strengthens this argument because if the number of voluntary organ donations remains small and does not increase, then the conclusion offers an appropriate method to increase organ donations.

Statement A is incorrect because it does not relate to the overarching conclusion.

Statement C is incorrect because it would act to weaken the argument, because even if organ donations increased, the organs may not be suitable to those who need them.

Statement D is incorrect because it is irrelevant to the overarching conclusion.

Statement E is incorrect because this would also act to weaken the argument, as the conclusion assumes that the opt-out organ donation scheme would increase organs donated.

Assessing the Impact of
Additional Evidence

15.

In recent years there has been increased concern that fashion models reflect an unrealistic and unattainable image of femininity and that this has a negative effect on the self-esteem of many young women. Many major designers continue to design for an exceptionally tall and flat-chested female frame. It should be no surprise therefore that there have been several cases recently when designers have favoured male models on their catwalks to model their womenswear. Rather than being a cause of surprise or concern, this should be welcomed as a recognition of the fact that these designs are unsuitable for most women and it draws attention to the major differences between catwalk fashion and clothing for the real world.

Which one of the following statements, if true, would most strengthen the argument above?

- A Some designers have favoured male models simply to generate more media attention for their collections.
- B Some female models struggle to maintain the necessary physique for catwalk modelling.
- C Some designers are recognising that the physique of many catwalk models represents an unhealthy ideal for most women.
- D Very few observers noticed initially that the male models were not in fact women.
- E Surveys of young women have suggested that the use of male models makes the typical model physique less desirable to attain.

IMAT Q19 (2016)

Here, the answer is E.

The conclusion, as highlighted in yellow, states that catwalk fashion is not suitable for most women and how they do not represent clothing in real life. The conclusion is supported by the premise that male catwalk models are being used to model women's fashion, supporting that women's catwalk fashion is indeed not suitable for women.

Statement E supports this conclusion because if surveys of young women's opinions suggest that the use of male models makes the typical model physique less desirable to attain, then this further reaffirms that fashions used are not appropriate and do not reflect a realistic and attainable image of femininity.

Statement A is incorrect because this does not relate to the main overarching conclusion.

Statement B is incorrect because there is no mention of this.

Statement C is also incorrect as this does not relate to the overarching conclusion.

Statement D is also irrelevant to the argument.



16.

Next week the European Parliament will vote on whether to ban trawling, a method of fishing that involves pulling large fishing nets behind boats. The fishing industry is opposed to a ban and has argued strongly against it. Trawling is not as damaging to ecosystems as environmentalists claim. Trawling the seabed doesn't always create 'dead zones' in the ocean. It can boost fish numbers, since the species that are more resistant to the effects of trawling can proliferate. So trawling on flat sandy beds in shallow areas can benefit marine life.

Which one of the following, if true, most weakens the above argument?

- A Trawling creates new habitats by making parts of the sea more habitable.
- B Trawling in deep waters is expensive and an ineffective use of fishing resources.
- C Trawling in shallow waters can damage the bottom of fishermen's boats.
- D Trawling in shallow waters can alter the ecology in beneficial ways.
- E Trawling nets have a destructive impact on many endangered species.

IMAT Q11 (2017)

Here, the answer is E.

The passage concludes, as highlighted in yellow, that trawling can be beneficial to fish populations who can in fact proliferate when resistant to the effects of trawling.

Therefore, 'trawling on flat sandy beds in shallow areas can benefit marine life.'

Therefore, the assumption is that it will only benefit resistant species but does not mention other species that are perhaps not resistant to trawling. Therefore, statement E best weakens this argument because endangered species who are perhaps not resistant to the effects of trawling can be severely affected.

Statements A & D act by strengthening the argument as both state positive aspects of trawling, therefore supporting the argument.

Statements B & C are irrelevant to the overarching conclusion.



17.

Over the last ten years there has been a huge increase in the number of television programmes involving the work of forensic scientists. This media attention has been matched by a massive increase in the number of courses and qualifications available in this field. Although this new attention has led to greater public awareness, it has not led to the creation of more jobs in this field. The work of forensics professionals has continued unchanged. Therefore, those who choose to study these courses will find that there is fierce competition for difficult and unpleasant work.

Which one of the following, if true, would most weaken the above argument?

- A Each year around 1500 graduates in forensic science compete for 200 jobs in the sector.
- B Many students of forensic science go on to pursue careers in other areas.
- C New technologies have brought about a decrease in the number of forensics staff required in laboratories.
- D The number of university courses in forensic science has grown at an unprecedented rate.
- E Salaries for forensic scientists compare well with those in other scientific fields.

IMAT Q14 (2017)

Here, the answer is B.

The passage concludes, as highlighted in yellow, that studying to become a forensic scientist has become more popular due to its increase in media attention in television programmes. Therefore, an increase in forensic scientist graduates will make it harder to attain a job in the field. This conclusion is best weakened by statement B, whereby if many students of forensic science go on to pursue careers in other areas therefore do not face the fierce competition in a job in forensic science.

Statement A & C would act to strengthen the argument.

Statement D may to some extent support the argument if we assume that an increase in forensic science courses has led to an increase forensic student graduates.

Statement E is irrelevant to the main overarching conclusion.



18.

Action has to be taken now to stop the spread of bovine tuberculosis (TB). Experts agree that reducing the number of badgers in the most heavily infected areas will help to break the cycle of infection between badgers and cattle and begin to reduce TB in both species. Although badgers can be vaccinated, there is no vaccine available to protect our cattle, and best estimates suggest it will be ten years before one is available. The only way to stop bovine TB spreading is to kill badgers.

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

- A Five annual vaccinations are necessary to protect a badger fully against bovine TB.
- B Less than ten per cent of the dairy cows destroyed each year are destroyed because of bovine TB.
- C In a trial, killing ten thousand badgers reduced the TB rate in cattle by only fifteen per cent.
- D Shooting large numbers of badgers is more expensive than vaccinating them.
- E When efforts are made to remove badgers, many are injured rather than killed outright.

IMAT Q8 (2018)

Here, the answer is A.

The passage concludes, as highlighted in yellow, that cattle cannot be protected from badgers who have TB, despite badgers being able to vaccinated against TB. Therefore, the only way to stop bovine TB is through the killing of badgers. Statement A acts to strengthen this conclusion because if five annual vaccinations are necessary to contain TB in one badger, then we can assume that this may not be a feasible way to contain TB within badgers. Thus, it helps to strengthen the argument that badgers should be culled in order to prevent the spread of bovine TB.

Statements B, C, D & E in fact act to weaken the argument and suggest a reason why culling badgers is not an effective, necessary or sufficient method to contain bovine TB.



19.

A leaking undersea oil well in the USA caused massive damage to wildlife and was extremely expensive to clear up. Worst of all, it destroyed the livelihoods of poor people living in the area. Despite this, in the developed world we still don't take seriously the risks of deepwater drilling. Until we can be satisfied that regulation is effective and that oil companies are operating safely, deepwater drilling should be banned.

Which one of the following, if true, most weakens the above argument?

- A The risks of deepwater drilling were known prior to the accident in the USA.
- B Oil companies involved in the accident in the USA paid money to compensate the victims.
- C A ban on deepwater drilling would cause oil prices to rise, which would affect poor people most.
- D Oil companies will operate more safely in future than they did before the accident in the USA.
- E Alternatives to fossil fuels may eventually be able to meet our energy needs.

IMAT Q16 (2018)

Here, the answer is C.

The passage concludes, highlighted in yellow, that deepwater drilling should be banned without clear and strict regulations that prevent oil spills from occurring. Therefore, allowing these oil drills to function safely in order to protect and maintain the livelihoods of people living in these areas that would be affected by spills from these drills. Statement C acts to weaken the overarching conclusion because it implies that banning such deepwater drilling would have a negative feedback effect on poor people as this would cause a rise in oil prices which would have even greater negative repercussions compared to spills from deepwater drilling.

Statements A, B, D & E do not directly relate to the overarching conclusion and are therefore incorrect.



20.

Once again it has become fashionable for householders to replace their carpets with wooden floors. Sales of laminate and solid floors, such as oak, have seen a massive increase in the last ten years. This trend seems more in tune with our eco-friendly aspirations: carpets are often plastic-based and use vast quantities of underlying material, or underlay, made from petrochemicals. For this reason, it seems unlikely that wooden floors will go out of fashion in the near future.

Which one of the following, if true, most weakens the above argument?

- A Carpets can harbour dust mites and allergens.
- B Not all wooden floors need a layer of underlay.
- C Most types of laminate and wood floors use petrochemicals in their manufacture.
- D Wooden floors may look longer-lasting but can be more easily damaged than carpets.
- E Sales of carpets made of synthetic materials have decreased in the last ten years while woollen carpets have seen an increase.

IMAT Q4 (2019)

Here, the answer is C.

The passage concludes, as highlighted in yellow, that solid and laminate floors have become more fashionable over carpeted floors, primarily because they are more eco-friendly. Therefore, statement C acts to weaken this conclusion because if most laminate and wooden floors used petrochemicals in their manufacture, it contradicts the primary reason why consumers are switching from carpeted floors to laminate and wooden floors.

Statements A, B, D & E are all irrelevant to the overarching conclusion and are not directly mentioned in the text either.