



The Get Prepped!

Unofficial
Deconstruction of

The Official LSAT Sample PrepTest

(October 1996 LSAT, with modified Reading Comprehension
in February 2007)

LSAC and LSDAS have not reviewed or endorsed this deconstruction and analysis of the Official Sample PrepTest. LSAC and LSDAS have not endorsed any Get Prepped! class or product. LSAT is a trademark of the Law School Admissions Council, which is not associated with Get Prepped! in any way.

This copyrighted work is available only from Get Prepped!, under a limited license to the original purchaser or user, for their personal use in preparing for the LSAT. Any other use or redistribution is strictly prohibited.

Copyright 2002-07 by Get Prepped!.

Learn more about Get Prepped! at www.GetPrepped.com
You can also purchase study material or register for a Get Prepped! class

If you have not already downloaded and taken the LSAT Official Sample PrepTest, do so now. It is available for free at <http://www.LSAC.org>

General Introduction to the Law School Admission Test:

Congratulations--you have already made a smart choice. You are on your way to beating the LSAT. The LSAT is a complex and demanding test. The only way anyone, including you, can hope to survive, much less beat, the LSAT is to *first* learn the test-taking theories and techniques, and to *then* practice those techniques by taking as many real LSAT tests as possible.

A general caution about test-prep books and courses- Surprisingly, most LSAT test-prep books and prep courses do not use real LSAT questions; rather, they create simulated questions. Sometimes these non-authentic questions are well written and accurately reflect the true difficulty of real LSAT questions. Unfortunately, most of these non-authentic LSAT questions are too simple, too complex, or otherwise not realistic. Relying solely on those books and courses will give you an inaccurate view of the LSAT. For this reason, Get Prepped licenses real questions directly from LSAC to use in our courses. Although it costs more, our customers deserve the real thing.

Happy testing,
The Get Prepped! Staff

General Overview of The Official Sample PrepTest (the October 1996 LSAT, as modified in February 2007 to reflect changes to Reading Comprehension.):

If this was the first LSAT you have taken, don't get frustrated if you didn't finish in the allotted times. The LSAT is complex and demanding, and will require serious effort before you will be able to finish the test in the time allotted. Also, don't get frustrated if you scored low, or even extremely low. No one ever scores well on their first timed LSAT. The LSAT is highly formulaic, and until you learn these formulas, and how to use them to your advantage, you will score poorly.

This LSAT was as difficult as the average LSAT. Sections I, II, and IV were very typical in terms of difficulty. Section III, the analytical reasoning/puzzle games section, was as hard, or harder, than the typical LSAT puzzle game sections that have appeared in the last few years. Never worry if you get a "hard" section or a "hard" LSAT. First, no LSAT test is *significantly* easier or harder than another. Second, the scoring system used by LSAC adjusts scores so that it is immaterial whether your LSAT happens to be harder or easier than a previous or later LSAT. On an easy test you must get more answers correct to get the same scaled score than if you have a hard test. Just remember, do your best. Everyone else taking the test that day is in the same boat, and they are the only ones you are trying to beat.

How to use these explanations:

First, grade your LSAT using the answer sheet. When you finish, select a few questions you answered incorrectly. Go back to these questions and try to figure out for yourself *why* you chose the wrong answer. Sometimes the correct answer will be obvious when you are not rushed. Sometimes the answer will remain a mystery until you painstakingly examine each and every word multiple times. Self-analysis is slow and frustrating, but it is a great way to develop your own analytical skills and eventually, you test-taking skills. After you have done the self-analysis, refer to these explanations to help analyze the questions that stumped you, and to see if your self-analysis was correct. Read all explanations marked with a "!" even if you got the answer correct. The "!" explanations contain detailed discussions of helpful theories and techniques.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

Section I

General overview of section I- This is a logical reasoning section. There will be two scored logical reasoning sections on every LSAT. As the name implies, you must use your logic skills. Do not confuse this with the analytical reasoning questions (which are also called logic games, or puzzle games). Section III of this test is the logic games section.

"Logic" is: 1. *the science which investigates the principles governing correct or reliable inference*. 2. *a particular method of reasoning or argumentation* (emphasis added). Hopefully that makes it a little clearer. For now, just understand that you will see many logical reasoning questions that ask for inferences and method of reasoning.

Important strategy- Read the question first. It only takes only a few seconds to read the question, and doing so helps you immensely by "keying" your mind into what you must look for. This is not a suggested strategy; you *must* do this to succeed.

Analysis of the Questions:

1. ! French Divers- This is a straightforward "make a conclusion" question type. This is a fairly common question type. You will take all the facts in the passage and make a solid conclusion. The question stem will not always use this exact wording.

When making a conclusion, there is a delicate balancing act you must perform. Don't choose an answer choice that is logically possible but is not supported by the facts you were given. Also, don't choose the answer choice that essentially repeats the facts you were given in the passage.

Before getting into the answers, what can we conclude? Maybe that the stalagmites formed before water filled the cave. (A) While this conclusion might be true, the facts we have cut against this conclusion. (B) * This is pretty close to our tentative conclusion. Mark it as a possibility and check the other answers. (C) Who cares if they are French, and who cares if they were first? Do not get sidetracked by the "random distracters" the LSAT is so fond of using. Rather, understand that some answer choices are random distracters that you can quickly eliminate. (D) Again, this may be true, but it doesn't tell us how these water-covered stalagmites could have formed. (E) If the cave was full of water, the mineral content would be

immaterial, since a cave that is full of water can't form dripping stalagmites. If the cave was not full of water, the mineral content of sea water would also be immaterial. So (B) * is the correct answer.

In your first LSAT question, what have you seen? One false answer, one correct answer, one random distracter answer, and two immaterial answers. This is pretty standard for the LSAT. Usually two or three questions are easy to eliminate. You will spend most of your time weighing the remaining answer choices.

2. ! A director- The LSAT loves to ask you to "strengthen or weaken" a conclusion made in the passage. Testing for this skill makes sense, since lawyers must routinely strengthen their own argument or attempt to weaken another lawyer's argument. This is a very common question type; it pays to get good at them.

This question type is a good example of why we read the question first. While you are reading this you should look for the disconnect, the thing that the speaker may have overlooked. When juggling the answer choices, a simple technique is to say to yourself, "Yes, but..." and then plug-in each answer choice you are considering.

What did this passage say? You must know this before you can juggle the answer choices. Paraphrasing the passage, the director contends that vaccines don't make any money because they are only given once, unlike drugs that are given many times to the same person. There are a few ways to weaken the director's argument: maybe vaccines are cheaper to develop, manufacture, distribute, or administer, or (as is the case here), maybe you have a much bigger potential market for vaccines than for chronic illness drugs. (A) * This fits well; let's see if any other choices are better. (B) This doesn't really address the central issue. It is at best tangential, and more likely wholly irrelevant. (C) Bringing in a third group of products is irrelevant. (D) This sort of weakens the director's argument, since it shows that somebody is servicing the vaccine market, presumably without subsidies and presumably they are making a profit. You will have to weigh this against (A). (E) The director seems to focus on development and marketing costs, so it would be going too far for us to assume that administering costs come into the equation. Let's now consider (A) and (D). (D) is a possibility, but maybe that other company is losing money. If we didn't have (A), then (D) might prevail, but (A) gets more at the heart of the director's contentions regarding how non-repeat patients translate into less business.

3. ! Manager- "Assumption questions." Get used to this question type. Depending on the LSAT, this is the most common logical reasoning question. A good technique is to ask yourself, while you are reading the facts, "where does the speaker make a 'jump?'" Or, "how did the speaker get from these facts to this conclusion?" Just remember, you need to "read between the lines" to figure out how this speaker could have drawn this conclusion.

In general terms, it seems like this manager thinks that he can save more money by doing the installation during the day, even though this will disrupt the employees. (A) Ignore this choice. When the answer choice brings in a new factor, here the "network equipment," you can usually safely ignore it. (B) * This focuses on the issues of productivity expense, installation expense, and their relationship. (C) We are talking about costs, not crews. (D) This might initially look good, since it talks about productivity, but it misses the point we are trying to make. Certainly the manager assumes that productivity will increase, but that doesn't help us decide what time of day to do the installation. (E) This initially looks like a possibility. Certainly, the manager, by opting for a daytime installation, thinks that the effect on productivity will be smaller than the cost differential of the installation. And if "most" are not made unproductive, then this would indicate that there was some lesser amount of lost productivity and thus expense. So in the absence of (B), (E) would be the strongest choice. Note that when an answer choice uses a nebulous word like "most" or "many" you need to focus on that word and decide how it affects the rest of the answer choice.

4. An ingredient- Only four questions into the test and already we see our second "strengthen/weaken" question. You can see that these are very common. Take note of the subject matter. Although the subject matter is usually pretty bland, occasionally the LSAT will throw in a "hot button" issue like drugs, crime, racial tensions, teenage pregnancy, etc. It may not be done deliberately, but it seems likely that some test-takers get a little derailed when a subject they feel strongly about comes up. You don't want to get derailed—just focus on the objective and answer the question. Generally the LSAT subject matter is kept bland and uninteresting. Maybe this is to make it more difficult to keep focused. Since much legal research

and reading is bland and dry, maybe the LSAT is right to test your ability to handle boring subject matter.

The argument is pretty simple. Marijuana has THC. THC inactivates these viruses. When inactive, these viruses cause cancer. Thus, marijuana can cause cancer.

(A) This would make the argument stronger, so move on. (B) * This tentative statement, if true, would weaken the conclusion, possibly. Let's keep looking. (C) This would make the argument stronger, because it says that in addition to THC, other stuff in the drug causes cancer. (D) This answer choice is kind of off the mark, off key. It doesn't deal with cancer. (E) This actually is a further set of facts and conclusions that follow from the conclusion being made; it definitely does not weaken it.

5. Archaeologist- This question is looking for an assumption that would justify the conclusion. So once again, we meet our friend the "assumption" question. The speaker does not want the money because many parts have not been examined yet. So for the speaker, the public access is less important than making sure all possible evidence can be found. (A) The ownership of the site is not at issue. (B) Maybe; there was some talk about representing the civilization at its height. But the speaker seems more concerned about preserving evidence than debating how the civilization should be depicted. In fact, the speaker seems to say that representing it at its height is okay. (C) See the previous explanation. (D) There was no discussion of who would restore the site, just that the public might come and watch. (E) * This deals with both threads of the argument: public display and unexamined evidence.

6. Besides laying eggs- This is the second "make a conclusion" question. Are you starting to see how the questions are all variations on a few themes? Good. If not, go back and review the other explanations. Now, as discussed in question 1, take the facts, do your balancing act, and make a conclusion.

(A) If this were true, then there would be less to worry about, since the ducks wouldn't use the boxes unless they had to. (B) This is off key. If it said, "ducks who see other ducks' nests are more successful," at least this would be logically true. Even then, it wouldn't satisfy our objective. (C) If this were true, then there would be less to worry about, since the new eggs wouldn't fit. (D) * This certainly gets at the issue of boxes being visible and thus hurting the duck population. (E) This is initially possible. If there

aren't enough natural sites, the boxes would be better than nothing, so the humans' efforts would not be *as* self-defeating. At least some additional eggs might hatch. This answer choice appeals to those of us who are especially concerned about habitat destruction. Don't let the LSAT play on your prejudices and beliefs. Don't choose an answer choice because you think it is true or false; choose it because it answers the question accurately. Play the LSAT—don't get played by it.

7. ! The crux- The question has given you a series of facts from which you are to "make a conclusion." Simple stuff; we have already done that twice. The challenge in this question is that there are four true answers and one false one, and the false answer is the credited answer. Counterintuitive, isn't it? Welcome to the LSAT. To keep yourself on track, ask yourself if each choice is true. If it is, cross it out and move on. (A) through (D) are all true conclusions based on the facts. (E) * This is false because it posits that "some" discoveries are not variations, and this flatly contradicts the passage.

8. Millions of female- This is a "method of reasoning" question. A small number of questions ask you to describe how the passage is physically organized. For example, you must decide if the passage starts with a hypothesis, which is then examined and ultimately rejected, or if the passage starts with a series of facts that lead to a conclusion, which is then invalidated by a specific counterexample. There are many ways a passage can be organized. Ask yourself what each sentence is. Is it full of facts? Is it a conclusion? Is it countering a conclusion?

(A) This answer fails because there were no "representative" members discussed. All the bats were discussed in the facts. If 10 bats had been observed and then a conclusion was reached, then this choice would have been correct. (B) * The passage does seek to establish that the mother can recognize the pup's call (validity of one explanation), and since the call is the only mode of communication, and the pup can't find the mother (exclude alternate explanations), then this does accurately describe the organization of the passage. (C) This is just LSAT nonsense language. When you get a bunch of language that really doesn't make much sense, run away. (D) This is off key; there weren't "two groups." (E) We were never given a "particular case."

9. This is essentially a "strengthening/weakening" question. We want to bolster the conclusion that was made. The passage said that people made sick by a meal become averse to its strongest flavor. Also, kids are more likely to become averse to a given food. We need to add an extra piece to this puzzle. Our answer will discuss kids, food flavors, and sickness. How fun. (A) This is off key. (B) This contradicts the passage. (C) * This would show why kids are "especially likely" to both get sick, and to recognize the food they ate just before they got sick. (D) This is off the subject. (E) This is unrelated; obviously the kid already ate the food that made them sick.

10. This is another "methods of reasoning" type question. Here, the flaw we want to find concerns red cars and who drives them. Simply put, the passage missed the point that the fact that a car is red probably does not cause the accident; rather, it is more likely that the drivers who choose red cars are the less cautious type of driver. Certainly, if it can be shown that the mere fact that the car was red made it more accident-prone, maybe because it blinded other drivers who then ran into it, then this argument would not be flawed. (A) This is off key; don't let your negative view of your own car insurance company cloud your vision. (B) The loss of lives does not equate to the repair costs. (C) * Bingo. (D) Since the passage is dealing with general trends, a specific percentage does not seem necessary. (E) The passage does not say "every accident" results in death. It argues in more general terms.

11. A certain credit- For the third time we are asked to "identify an assumption." Are you starting to see the trend here? Note, in this question the answer choices are very long. This is not a good thing, since it eats up more time and you only have an average of 84 seconds for each question.

Essentially the factors are: mail purchases, retail store purchases, prices, and spending less. Note that the conclusion says "spend less"--it does not say "lower purchase price." (A) When an outside issue or factor is used, the choice is probably wrong. There were no "other credit card companies." (B) This is tough to decipher because of the double negative. Try crossing out the two "nots" and rereading it. When the LSAT test writer tries hard to make the real meaning obscure, you should usually avoid that answer choice. (C) Who cares? This is off the mark. (D) * This one successfully picks up on the subtle shift from purchase price to total amount spent. (E) This seems like a possibility, since it would mean stores are more

expensive. But note that it says "frequently," whereas the passage says "at any given time." A very subtle difference, but sometimes the LSAT is very subtle.

12. It is probably- Yet another "strengthen/weaken" question. Are you bored yet? The speaker says that colic is not caused by cow milk, since often breast-fed infants also get colic. To weaken this we need to find what the speaker overlooked or failed to account for. (A) This is irrelevant to our facts. (B) This answer misses the point. (C) This only helps establish the percentage of colic babies. (D) * This is possible. If cow milk in all forms is cut from the diet of the mother, and then the colic goes away, this seems to show that the antibodies are no longer getting passed to the baby. (E) This is more circular than helpful.

13. ! Yolanda- A note on two-question passages. You should plan to read the passage a second time when you are answering the second question. A note on "conversation" passages. The first question often deals with the interaction between the two participants. The second question invariably deals with the second participant's statements.

This is a rare question type; essentially, you must evaluate the arguments. The two speakers are debating the relative risk to the public's health created by two illegal activities. (A) They both agree that joyriding is physically dangerous. (B) They both agree that there is damage involved. (C) Both activities are criminal; the debate here is which one is more dangerous. (D) * This reflects the debate. Yolanda says computer hacking never creates a risk of physical harm, and Arjun says that it could create a risk, and give an example. (E) Yolanda admits that reckless use of property can be dangerous and is a crime.

14. ! Yolanda- See the discussion above. As promised, the second question of the set deals with the second speaker's passage. How can we pick on Arjun's argument? He gave a hypothetical example, which is less convincing than hard facts. (A) He doesn't have any problem making the distinction. (B) Actually, he did provide evidence against it—it was not particularly good evidence. (C) * This choice uses classic LSAT garbage language, but the choice still happens to be correct. Still, be wary of wordy nerd language. He did say that physical harm *would* come from computer

hacking, because a hacker *could* damage the hospital system. You have to read pretty closely to catch these subtle distinctions. (D) This is a classic LSAT wordy choice. And this one happens to be wrong. (E) Again, wordy language. Perhaps the person who wrote this question was tired when he or she wrote it, and relied on the wordy answer choices to trip up the test-takers who assume that answers they don't understand must somehow be the correct answers.

15. A report- This is a relatively rare type of question. It asks you to "evaluate the facts" of a scientific study or, more often, a survey. Essentially it is the same skill as used in a strengthening/weakening question. Ask yourself, "What did the pollster overlook, or not take into account?" Here the problem is that all the adults were asked the question, whether they were 19 or 99. Also, the survey did not account for the people who did not grow up in the town but who now live there. (A) Initially this looked good, but it fails when we reread the passage and see that we are not interested to know when they quit school. (B) Off key; the focus is on graduates. (C) * This matched one of our criticisms. (D) This is off key; the survey was meant only to show the drop-out rate, not deal with future issues. (E) The survey studied drop-out rates, nothing more.

16. Brown dwarfs- This was a hard one. Why? Maybe because the subject is scientific, which is not the strong point of most LSAT takers. Or maybe because you have to differentiate between the variations of the stars. The red dwarf language is a distracter. All you want to know is that the coolest brown stars can't destroy lithium. The conclusion is that if the star has no lithium, then it can't be a coolest brown star. What is the assumption? That the star did not first destroy the lithium and then become a coolest brown star. (A) * This kind of fits; let's look at our other options. (B) This is hard to sort out, but the use of "most stars" should make us wary, since the conclusion was "any star found." (C) This is certainly a true conclusion, but the argument does not rely on this as an assumption. (D) At issue is the presence or absence of lithium, not percentages. (E) This is off the subject, and we don't know if it is true or false. Remember that even the best LSAT taker misses a few questions. The only real mistake you can make is to waste time.

17. ! Whenever a company- This is a "parallel reasoning" question. You need to learn how to handle parallel reasoning questions. They are serious time wasters.

The first recommended step for most students is to skip parallel reasoning questions, leaving them for the end if time permits. Even if you have a facility for these questions, they normally require a lot more time than other questions, and so should be done last.

The second step is when the question asks about "flawed reasoning" is to identify the flaw in the argument. Here the argument says that when a company loses a lawsuit the stock price falls. It says that today the company's stock price fell. It concluded that the company must have lost a lawsuit today. The error is pretty clear, there could be lots of other things that cause the company's share price to drop. So the flaw in this argument is that it treats one cause (lose lawsuit) of an effect (price drops) as being the only possible cause. You want to find this same kind of flaw in the answer choice. So if an answer choice does not have a reasoning flaw, it is not the answer choice you are looking for. Remember, we want to mimic this reasoning, not correct it.

If an answer choice deals with the same subject or uses many of the same words as the passage, you should suspect that the answer choice is wrong. The test writer uses similar language in the wrong answer choices in order to capture the desperate test-taker who chooses the similarly worded choice because it looks familiar. For that reason alone, choices (A) and (E) are automatically suspect because they discuss "companies." Maybe you cannot yet eliminate them, but you can disfavor them by looking at them last. The more similar the wording, the more comfortable you are in eliminating them.

Third, consider the remaining answer choices. (A) This deals with a business, like the argument deals with a business. Sometimes we can eliminate answer choices because they cover the same subject matter as the argument. Also, this answer choice does not overlook other possible causes of an effect. (B) This contains a logical argument. If a change in fares hurts small airlines, a big change in fares seriously hurts small airlines. This is correct reasoning, not flawed reasoning. (C) This says that if it lacks leadership then respect declines, thus to increase respect, it should perform leadership. This is "if A, then B. Since B, then A" reasoning. (D) * This says that if one wins a fellowship then gets \$10,000. Since this person got \$10,000, she must have won the fellowship. But, of course, maybe she got a different scholarship, or maybe she took out a \$10,000 loan from the college. This parallels the argument because it overlooks alternative causes. (E) This

also deals with a company. Here the logic is not flawed. Also, it uses the modifier “likely” which is different than the argument, which was definitive.

Conclusion. You can see how time consuming this problem type is, even when you know exactly what to look for. Do yourself a favor and do these last, if time allows.

18. In recent years- This question type is not too common. The trick is to ask yourself, "How could this conclusion be made valid?" Essentially, this is a variation of the strengthening/weakening problem type. The passage says that despite better growing conditions, the yields will decrease. How is this possible? Maybe new pests will arrive. Maybe less land will be planted. There could be lots of reasons why. (A) We aren't concerned with southern Asia, only northern Asia. (B) If true, this would deepen the paradox, not resolve it. (C) * See above. (D) This would deepen the paradox. (E) If the growing season becomes longer, this too would deepen the paradox.

19. No one in- Another parallel reasoning question. You should expect to see two parallel reasoning questions in each logical reasoning section. Try to paraphrase the structure of the argument. In this argument, we are told that (1) no one teaches more than one introductory class and (2) there are no introductory classes next term. Therefore, this teacher will not teach two introductory classes next term. There are two independent rules, each of which is independently sufficient to bring about the result.

(A) This says that since it will be occupied, and occupied buildings get the new rates, therefore it will get the new rates. This pattern is (x) plus (y), then (z). (B) This says that since it was built in 1873 (x) then neither (y) nor (z) apply. (C) This says that since (x) and (y) are true, then (z) must be true. (D) * The building will be exempt if has public space. The building will be exempt if it is in this district. The building has public space and is in the district, thus it will be exempt. This states that rule 1 (x) and rule 2 (y) are each alone sufficient to reach the conclusion that it can't be taxed (z). (E) This states that the exempt don't pay (x) and the hospital is exempt (y), thus, the hospital won't pay (z). To repeat something discussed earlier, parallel reasoning questions are usually very difficult. Even if you put the time in on these questions, the chance of getting an incorrect answer is much greater than for the rest of the test. The moral of the story is to skip these until the end of the test.

20. ! Some people- We see another two-question passage. Some test-takers like this format, some don't. The questions types are just like those in the rest of the test, so it should not make any real difference to your performance.

The first question is an "assumption" question, which we should be good at by now. The only quirk is that the choices have four correct assumptions and one incorrect assumption. The EXCEPT questions are designed to trip up the fast reader who understands the passage perfectly, but didn't pay enough attention to the question stem.

Here it will be easier to skim the answer choices because if an answer choice makes sense, you know it is not the correct answer. So you will be looking for the answer choice that doesn't quite seem to fit. Another trick that might work for you is to ask yourself, "The speaker assumes:" and then plug-in each of the answer choices. For example, in (A) "the speaker assumes:" it is sufficiently available. (B) "The speaker assumes:" there is no other reason not to use it. (C) * "The speaker assumes:" that no further colds will result. You probably scratched your head (figuratively speaking) when you read this one. You asked yourself, "do *future* colds really matter here?" You know that something about this question is off kilter. You now have to fight to remember that you are looking for the answer choice that *is* off kilter, i.e. that does not belong. The hardest part about questions that ask "all of the following are true EXCEPT," is that the true answers are incorrect and that false answers are correct. Tricky enough for you? You have to love the LSAT. Do you still want to be a lawyer? Just to be sure, check the other choices. (D) "The speaker assumes:" that everyone knows about it. (E) "The speaker assumes:" that there isn't something better.

21. The second question of this pair is a "method of reasoning" question, our third so far. This one seemed hard, maybe because the correct answer is rather confusingly worded. (A) * This is rather confusing; let's leave it alone for now. (B) There was no acceptance of the claim. (C) I didn't see any conditions, did you? Also, the speaker did not establish the claim, he disputed it. (D) This looked promising, since there was discussion about "everybody." (E) This is more confusing gibberish. But we can rule it out because there was no discussion of anything becoming "more difficult." You probably used your 90 seconds before you arrived at the right answer. Remember to never spend too much time on any one question. To decide

between (A) and (D), you have to slowly--very slowly--work through each element of the choice, comparing it to the passage. (A) 1. States that the speaker finds the claim false (in the passage the speaker said "obviously not effective"); 2. On the grounds that if true, the consequence (everybody would use it) is not the case (not many people are using it.) (D) On closer examination, there were no representative instances cited--for example, an instance involving one person with a cold. This was definitely a difficult question.

22. To hold criminals- It asks us to evaluate the strength of the argument, so this is essentially a strengthen/weaken problem. This was a hard question. Note that unlike the SAT and some other standardized tests, the questions in the LSAT are not designed to become progressively harder, so you might see very difficult questions early in the test.

The passage says that environment creates a criminal's character, and since law-abiding folks create the environment, then this means that law abiding people create crimes. How is that for a lawyer's argument? When you get spurious or silly arguments like this one, avoid getting pulled into the trap of questioning who would make such a circular argument. Just answer the question. Fortunately, here we are asked to criticize the argument. (A) It is not true that the word "environment" is used two different ways. (B) This was off key. The issue of socially acceptable did not really come up. (C) Very impressive language, but what does it really mean? It doesn't really mean anything in this case. When you really scrutinize it, you find that the passage did not deny that someone is a criminal solely because they commit a crime. (D) There was no discussion of statistics. (E) * The conclusion (law-abiding people are responsible for crime) contradicts an earlier *implicit* principle (that law-abiding people don't commit, and aren't responsible for, crime.) This was a hard question. Don't get stressed-out by the hard questions--just move on.

23. Chronic back pain- "Make a conclusion" Remember, use the facts to make a conclusion. Don't pick an answer choice that simply rephrases one of the facts. The facts are: back pain is usually from damaged disks; the damage comes early but it doesn't start hurting until much later; if it starts to hurt it is because they didn't exercise. (A) This only talks about one of the facts--the age issue. And people over 30 could still damage a disk, could they not? (B) The answer fails because it is too precise. It says they "are

sure" never to have the pain, but the passage said "generally" the pain comes from not exercising. (C) We don't know if this is true or not. (D) This is overly definitive. There are lots of qualifications in the passage--words like "usually" and "generally." (E) * There is a strategy (it's called exercising) that can delay or prevent the onset of pain when you have a damaged disk. This flows nicely from the series of facts in the passage and ties most of them together neatly. Asymptomatic means that it is not showing any symptoms, i.e. pain. Having a good vocabulary is definitely a benefit on the LSAT.

24. Each December 31- Another "make a conclusion" question. You have probably lost count by now, but this is the fifth one in 24 questions. Now do you believe that there are recurring question types? The facts of this passage are pretty easy. There was more leftover coal in 1990 than in 1991. What conclusion can we draw? Since so much of the wording is mirror language, pay special attention to the non-mirror language. This is where the key to the answer lies. (A) Maybe it's true, maybe not, but we don't care about "mined." (B) * This might be true. Let's not mark it off just yet. (C) We don't know how much was consumed either year; we just know there were different surpluses. (D) Again, we don't know which year saw higher coal consumption, though initially we might, without basis, assume that they had to use more coal in 1991. (E) This is really out there, since we don't know anything about half-year consumptions. Now we look back at (B). There are three possibilities. If they had consumed exactly as much as they mined in 1991, then the surplus would be *exactly* the amount of coal leftover from 1990. If they consumed less than they mined in 1991, then they would have added *extra* coal to the surplus left over from 1990. If they consumed more than they mined in 1991, then they could start using up the surplus left over from 1990.

25. Tom- As is often the case with two-speaker passages, the question focuses on the interplay of the two parties' statements. (A) Mary isn't analyzing, and she isn't talking about undesirable results. (B) There was no discussion of trends by Mary. (C) Mary provided no information. (D) * Mary does present a consideration (that jobs won't magically appear simply by requiring students to work), and this undercuts Tom's assumption that enough jobs exist for students to work at in order to learn the skills. (E) Mary does not defend anything and there is no alternate solution.

Learning how to take the LSAT-

Before you begin in taking practice LSATs in earnest, you must learn the theories behind the test. There are many useful techniques, short cuts, and tricks that make the test go faster. Although practicing with real tests is vital, you must first learn the basic theories. Once you understand the basics of the LSAT, you can build on this understanding with every additional test you take. Get Prepped! classes provide you with these theories, techniques, and tips, so that you get the most out of your practice time.

2 2 2 2 2 2

Section II

General overview of section II - This is a Reading Comprehension section. There will be only one scored Reading Comprehension section on a real LSAT. You will read four passages and answer 5-8 questions for each passage.

Important strategy- There are several different overall strategies that you might use in the Reading Comprehension section. Without delving into too much detail here, you may want to skim the questions before reading the passage. Or, you may want to use the special outlining techniques that help divide the passage into a usable format. Finally, some students find it helpful to skim the passage looking for the specific key words and issues. This is the one section where you will have to experiment with each of the major techniques to decide which works best given your personal reading style.

There are some strategies that everybody can use. First, you will find that here, like in the Logical Reasoning section, there are a limited number of question types, and they appear again and again (and again and again). Learn to identify them now. With practice and work, you will learn to instinctively read the passage looking for these question types. You will actually learn to read for a fairly narrow set of issues. Second, it is a good idea to glance at all four passages before starting. You want to see if any passage deals with a subject matter with which you are familiar. Also, you want to see if any passage has significantly more questions associated with it. If you find either of these to be the case, then that passage is the best passage to start with, especially if you find that you normally do not have enough time to finish all four passages.

Analysis of the Questions:

Overview of the entire section-

Note that passage #2 had 8 questions and passage #4 had only 5. If the order had been reversed, this would have been a very big blow to many

test-takers, especially those who do not finish all four sections. As it worked out in this case, the order of the two passages actually helped the slower readers at the expense of the faster readers.

For most students, passages 1 and 4 were easier, and passages 2 and 3 were harder. Knowing something of the subject matter, especially when new or quirky terminology is used, is a big boost to moving through the passage more quickly. Knowing the subject doesn't actually help you answer the substance of the questions, but it does help you read the passage more quickly and focus only on the important tested elements.

Overview of passage #1- Miles Davis

This passage was easier than an average LSAT passage. The subject matter (Miles Davis and jazz music) should not be unfamiliar or difficult to grasp. The language is fairly clear and simple, with relatively few unusual or complex terms.

1. ! Main point question- Questions that ask for the main point of the passage are the most commonly asked Reading Comprehension questions. You will be asked at least one "main point" question in every passage. Between one-fourth and one-third of all Reading Comprehension questions are main point questions. The phrasing of these questions varies slightly, but when you examine them closely you will see that they are asking for the big picture, the global view, of the passage. Put another way, find the answer choice that sums up the passage in one sentence.

Sometimes you can mentally summarize the passage after you finish it. If you can, this helps you quickly eliminate the answer choices that don't match. This author seems to think Miles Davis was a great musician who was so innovative that he was always charting new musical territory, but critics didn't know how to categorize him, so they disliked him. (A) Miles' style shifted, but this author thinks Miles was fabulous, not that Miles failed to reach his potential. (B) * This matches with our summation, and, looking at line 3, we see that his "genius never received its due." (C) His career was long and productive, but dying is not a prerequisite for acclaim. If he had died, he might not have had time to alienate the critics. (D) Yes, it was long and productive, but the use of the word "most" should throw up warning flags. He was productive, but the author never asserts this much. (E) "Admiration" makes this answer wrong. You were not paying attention if you got the impression the critics admired Miles.

2. ! Detail question- A fairly large minority of Reading Comprehension questions ask for details, specific information, facts, or figures. Plan on having about one-fifth of your questions being detail questions. Detail questions are unlike the other types of Reading Comprehension questions because they ask you to focus in on a particular fact or figure in the passage. The other question types test your ability to comprehend the passage in a more general way. Detail questions test your ability to ferret out a fact that is sitting there in black and white, just waiting for you to find it.

The technique here is to find the right part of the passage to examine. Since "West Coast cool" is in quotes in the passage, at line 16, it is easy to find. Often you will be given a word in quotes, or a line number to consult. Once you find the right part of the passage, read the sentence(s) before and/or after it. The answer will be here, just waiting for you. (A) We aren't told who, if anybody, made this style popular. (B) This one looks like an initial possibility; it would be okay to leave it for further examination. (C) This also looks like an initial possibility. We will come back to it. (D) There was no discussion of chord changes. (E) * New York City was mentioned, so this one might work too.

As is often the case, we have two or three answers that initially seem interesting. Now we need to read more closely to distinguish the answer. When we reread the preceding two sentences, we see that Miles joined a group that met in New York City, and that this group did work that played more ensembles, and became the seedbed of the "West Coast cool" style. Now it gets tricky and requires picky reading. The passage says that this group used ensemble playing AND that (by the way) their work became the seedbed of the "West Coast cool" style. It does not say the group used ensembles which (as a result) BECAME a feature of the "West Coast" style. Even if you did not see this fairly slight distinction, you should have recognized that (B) and (C) were saying the same general thing. When two answers say the same thing, they both must be incorrect choices. Also, other mechanical clues to eliminate these two answer choices are the words "integrated sound" and "large ensembles," neither of which can you find support for in the passage.

3. ! Detail question- This question merely asks you to think slightly differently about the same segment of the passage that question 2 dealt with. Again, we were given "1948," which we find in the passage. We see that

prior to 1948 he studied bebop, but then he surprised everyone by slowing down the tempo and using ensemble playing. So, he must have been playing faster tempos and solos prior to 1948. (A) * Fits the bill nicely. (B) If we look at the passage again, we see that Miles' new style had about equal ensemble and solo playing, so there must have been far more solos prior to 1948. (C) There was no mention of restrictive styles in this part of the passage--this did not come up until line 20. (D) It seems that the opposite is true. (E) We don't know where he played.

4. ! Attitude question- These are pretty rare questions. Just ask yourself, what, based on the adjectives used by the author, does the author really think about this subject? Here, it is obvious that the author thinks Miles is the best thing since sliced bread, and that all the critics out there just aren't smart and perceptive enough to appreciate the demi-god of jazz that was Miles Davis. (A) Uneasy? Not this author. (B) Neutrality. This author is a heavy advocate. (C) Grudging. No. (D) Moderate. No moderation in the adjectives used by this author. (E) * Appreciative advocacy. This answer choice doesn't even fully reflect the level of advocacy--fawning advocacy would have been more accurate, but it is the best answer choice we have.

5. ! Misc./Organization question- These are also fairly rare questions. They ask you to understand the style, organization, or pacing of the passage, or a part of the passage. We look at the fourth paragraph for his studio procedure. He would have musicians improvise from the base score and then cut and paste the results, like a movie director. Now we need to find an analogous situation. (A) This is more like the traditional jazz. We want an answer that involves a director manipulating the results. (B) This really doesn't match any of the elements. (C) Although there is a person bringing it all together, it isn't really the cut and paste action we are looking for. (D) * This looks possible. People are told what to do generally, they execute it according to their own thoughts, and someone cuts and pastes it. (E) The teacher is not manipulating the results into a cohesive end product.

6. Main idea- This is essentially a strengthening/weakening question, just like we saw in the Logical Reasoning section. To undercut the passage, we first need to know what it is trying to achieve. The passage contended that jazz critics could not neatly fit Miles into a single category, and so they

hated him for it. Once we know this, then we find a stinging comeback that will make the author's whole argument look silly and wrong. (A) This would probably strengthen the argument if the critics favored improvisers over people like Miles, who rejected it to some degree. (B) * If critics really liked other people who did exactly what Miles did, then the author's whole thesis falls apart. (C) This would partially weaken the argument. Remember, electronic instruments were a minor issue. (D) This would strengthen the argument, as discussed in line 54. (E) This doesn't seem to apply to anything.

Overview of passage #2- Freedom of information laws

This passage was harder than an average LSAT passage. The subject matter (freedom of information laws) is not one that most people are familiar with. This passage employed the Comparative Reading format. In this format, there are two shorter passages instead of one longer passage. Most questions will test your grasp of how the two passages relate to each other, while a few questions will test your understanding of just one of the passages. The most important thing to accomplish in comparative reading is to understand how the two passages relate. They may be generally in agreement, or they may express completely opposite viewpoints. By knowing how they relate to each other, you are better able to eliminate answer choices that don't accurately reflect this relationship.

7. Main idea- This question asks for the main idea of passage A only. A good answer needs to encapsulate the passage in a single sentence. Essentially, they need to make a law that ensures public access to government information that works better than similar policies adopted by the previous government. (A) This is a bit too generic. Passage A never says that the previous government was not committed to openness. (B) * Passage A criticized the Code of Practice, and said that the new legislation would remedy many of its failings. This is the main point of passage A. (C) This information is too general. Yes, the passage is based on this assumption, but it is not the main point of the passage. (D) Although this choice has the right tone, it fails to hit the nail on the head. For example, the previous government was not trying to score a legislative victory. (E)

Although this is certainly addressed as part of passage A, it is a minor point that leads to the main point that this new legislation needs to be passed.

8. Detail- We want to find some fact that is in passage B, but not passage A. What components did B mention as being necessary? It discussed a presumption in favor of disclosure, subject to exemptions that are narrowly defined, with consideration for harm versus public interest. There should also be a possibility of appeal. Passage A mentioned exemptions and weighing public interest with harm. The biggest difference is A's omission of an appeal process.

(A) Passage A does mention classes that are exempt. (B) * This is correct. Passage A never addresses the issue of what to do after a request for information is denied. (C) Both passages argue for statutory guarantees of public access. (D) Neither passage mentions an agency for processing requests. (E) Passage A wants to limit the number of exemptions.

9. Misc./Define a word- The word "regimes" is used in both passages. Quickly read the relevant parts of the passages to determine how this word is used. They both appear to use the word in the same way, as meaning a general organizational system.

(A) If anything, the opposite would be true. In passage A there was a discussion of informal arrangements. Passage B discussed a formal system. (B) Passage A does not refer to governments that have been in power at particular times, and passage B does not refer to statutes enacted by those governments. (C) Again, there was no discussion of governments that have been in power at particular times, except for the mention of the "previous Government" in passage A. (D) * Yes. The word "regimes" refers to an organizational system to ensure public access to information. (E) There was no discussion of political ideologies.

10. Inference- If the author of B were to read passage A, what would he conclude? It seems like he could conclude lots of things. Let the answer choices guide you. (A) * True, he would probably conclude, as would anyone else that read passage A, that the Code of Practice is not a particularly good mechanism to ensure public access. (B) There is nothing in passage A to indicate that it would be "premature" to enact statutory safeguards. (C) Although passage A mentions the drawbacks that the new

legislation will address, we have no reason to think that the author of B would find these steps to be unnecessarily complex. (D) Passage A indicates that partial disclosure is okay (line 31). (E) In lines 35-41 passage A discusses how public interest needs to be clarified, and passage B discusses public interest, so B would not conclude that “public interest” cannot be defined.

11. Misc./Attitude- What attitude does each passage display? Passage A is combative in tone, and deals with specifics, while passage B is more neutral in tone, and discusses this issue in general terms. (A) * Yes, it is fair to say that passage A is partisan. In several parts of the passage the author is dismissive of the work done by the “previous Government”. (B) It could be said that passage B is more tentative than A, but the question did not ask for B’s attitude. (C) It could be said that B is more detached and analytical, but the question did not ask about passage B. (D) Once again, B was more general in focus, but the question asked about A’s attitude. (E) Neither passage is particularly pessimistic. Passage A has some contempt for the previous government, but this is not pessimism.

12. Inference- What can we conclude that both authors would believe? There is a lot of overlap in their viewpoints, so go to the questions and let them guide you. (A) * Correct. Both of the passages discuss situations where information requests are denied. They do not feel that the right is absolute. (B) Both of the passages address the idea of public interest, but they do not say that the concept is too vague. (C) Passage B makes no mention of categories, so they can’t both hold this view. (D) The author of passage A would seriously disagree that noncompulsory policies will ensure public access. (E) There is no mention by either passage of “specified branches of government.”

13. Misc./Structure- How do the passages relate? Passage A is specific, dealing with a particular piece of legislation. Passage B has a more general outlook on the subject. (A) Passage B does not suggest that passage A contains anything “fallacious”. (B) Passage B never actually addresses anything mentioned in passage A. (C) Passage B does not present a paradox. (D) Nothing in passage A would prevent passage B from being

true. (E) * Passage B dealt with general principles behind public access to information. Passage A proposes doing many of the steps set out in passage B. So if the steps set out in passage B are valid, then this helps make the case for doing what passage A proposes.

14. Misc./Analogy- First we need to know how the two passages relate, then we can find an analogous relationship. Passage B discusses general principles; passage A is an application of those principles. (A) Both of these titles indicate that the past and current management is lacking. (B) These titles sound like a statement and a rebuttal. But passage B does not rebut passage A. (C) * This matches. The first title talks about improving this specific restaurant, and the second title talks about ways to improve restaurants in general. The first is specific, the second in general, just like the two passages. (D) The first title discusses proposals for an ad campaign, while the second title talks about developing a sales team. These are two different things. (E) Both of these titles deal with two different steps in the same process.

Overview of passage #3- Bird status.

This was an average LSAT passage. It may have even been a little faster since the flow of ideas was fairly linear. The author explains the background of what status signaling is, and then says the scientist's experiment did not support the signaling theory, but that the second experiment did support the theory. The subject matter (birds and visual status signaling) was unfamiliar, but the concept was fairly easy to pick-up. The language was fairly straightforward, with only a few unusual terms.

15. Detail- The author told us that birds signal instead of fighting, and the better bird gets better food and shelter. The question asked what a signal does for a particular bird who may not be the better bird. (A) It is true that a bird with a better signal would get a better mate/food/shelter, but that wasn't the exact question. (B) * It is true that the signals are a way to avoid painful and self-destructive fighting. (C) See answer (A). (D) This was not discussed. (E) The signal was a proxy for fighting ability, not a cause of fighting ability.

16. Detail- The author, in lines 31-2 and the surrounding sentences, points out that the adult Harris sparrow is usually dark throated in order to show that the throat color does not indicate individual status, but rather group status, and so is not correctly called status signaling.

(A) * This matches the explanation above. (B) The author argues the opposite. (C) There was no mention of modifying the hypothesis. (D) The author said the opposite. (E) There was no discussion of other flocking birds.

17. Inference- We want to undercut the experiment with the titmouse, where a larger stripe created greater status. (A) If all the birds came from different flocks, this would strengthen the argument because it would show that all the birds recognize the signals. (B) * If the experiment bird was really big, this could explain why the other birds were scared of it. (C) This would not totally weaken the argument, but would somewhat weaken it. (D) An odd statement, but if the birds don't eat the food anyway, maybe then the other birds weren't competing with the dummy bird. To be picky, the use of "in the wild" undercuts the answer choice, since the birds could still compete for food that they wouldn't normally eat. (E) Since signals are the way to avoid fighting, the fact that the birds didn't attack would not necessarily matter under the experiment conclusions.

18. Misc./Organization- Remember: when answering organization questions, you want to consider all the paragraphs in the passage and decide what the author was trying to do with each one. (A) * A hypothesis (an external signal announces fighting ability and reduces actual fighting) is introduced and studies (the Harris sparrow and the greater titmouse experiments) are discussed and evaluated. (B) There was only one explanation for why the birds signal. (C) Signaling is not a behavior, no causes are discussed, and there is no assessment. (D) There is no recounting of history. (E) A theory (the SSH) is outlined, but there is only one opinion given, and the experiments do not support different sides; one experiment is lacking.

19. Organization- What did Rohwer think of SSH and what did his experiments show? (A) The first part is correct, but his data did not relate to any other issues. (B) He did not revise SSH. (C) He did not attempt to disprove it. (D) He did not alter SSH. (E) * He did advocate SSH, and his research did fail to confirm it, according to this author.

20. Inference- We probably don't need to refer back to the passage for this question. High status birds are better fighters and so have better access to resources. (A) Only some species of high status birds have dark throat plumage. (B) We were never told if they were bigger. (C) We were never told if their offspring were high status. (D) We can infer that since status signaling is a proxy for fighting ability, the better fighters have a higher status and a higher status signal. (E) Avoiding injuries is the whole reason for having status signaling.

21. Inference- Again, read between the lines to find your answer. (A) No, the plumage tells us nothing about individual status. (B) * This seems to be the case. The older birds have darker plumage, and the darker plumage is a higher status signal, so they get better access to the food. (C) No, the plumage does not affect individual status. (D) We have no idea if this is true. (E) We have no idea if this is true.

Overview of passage #4- Mayan civilization.

This was an average LSAT passage. The author introduces John Lowe's methods, explains the conclusion Lowe makes, and then criticizes the flaws. The subject matter (Mayan civilization and scientific theories) may be unfamiliar, but it was not difficult to understand what was going on in the passage. The language was not unusual, and the few new terms were easy to understand based on the context.

22. Organization- Go back and trace the steps the author took in writing the passage. The author describes a methodology, introduces a theory, and then attacks that theory. (A) This doesn't match the organization at all. (B) The hypothesis was not presented first, and the hypothesis was not confirmed.

(C) This does not match the organization. (D) * The basis of a study is described (lines 1-23), a theory is presented (lines 24-43), and a possible flaw is pointed out (lines 43-59). (E) No.

23. Main idea- The work we did for the previous question will help answer this question. (A) The author did not feel Lowe was successful. (B) No, in line 5 we learn that previous academics have used this method. (C) Lowe does use existing data to document the changes in construction, but this really is not the main point of the passage; it is merely a component part. (D) We actually don't know if Lowe accurately portrayed the facts. (E) * This sums up the passage, and we see in the last paragraph that we can't verify Lowe's assumptions on which his theory rests.

24. Inference/Analogy- Here you must first find the assumption being made, then make an analogy. The assumption Lowe made is that the monuments ceased to be built as a result of the decline of the civilization and thus the cities were abandoned. This is a difficult question. None of the answers are obviously wrong on the first reading. All of the choices are logical, but only one of them is a correct analogy. (E) * This is the best match, because the pattern is similar. The person/Lowe, assumes the friend/Mayans, sold stamp collection/abandoned cities, BECAUSE of not buying new stamps/not building new monuments. This side-by-side reading technique is very effective, but is probably too time-consuming to use regularly.

25. Inference- Read between the lines to understand what the author thinks. (A) The author does not think Lowe is innovative, line 5. (B) * Lowe's method is generally accepted, but the author questions the validity of the method. (C) The author does not think it highly reliable, nor is there any mention of being outdated. (D) The author feels it is scientific and ineffective. (E) The author feels that it is conventional.

26. Inference- You were given facts, and now you have to decide what the author thinks is true. (A) The author spends the last part of the passage questioning the accuracy of the reconstructions. (B) We aren't told anything about reconstructing day-to-day activities. (C) The duration of the civilization never came up as a factor in determining accuracy. (D) The

author does not go quite this far. (E) * This meshes with the author's stance better than any of the other choices.

Conclusion of Reading Comprehension-

For most students the Reading Comprehension section is the area where it is hardest to improve. This is due to the fact that reading speed and accuracy plays an enormous role in this section. But by learning the question types, all students can learn to read the passages more selectively, since some unnecessary information can be filtered out.

Only after you have made the easy improvements in the other LSAT sections should you spend time improving this section.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Section III

General overview of Section III- This section was the Analytical Reasoning section, hereafter referred to as the Puzzle Game section. There will be only one scored Puzzle Game section on a real LSAT. It is similar to Reading Comprehension, in that you have four separate passages, each with 5-8 associated questions. But it is very different in every other respect. You will read a series of rules ("John must be here," "the red door cannot be open," "if Templan is up, then Surham is down," etc.). These rules determine how you can organize the named members (like John, Templan, and Surham; or red, blue, green, and white). Without a doubt, this is the hardest section for every test-taker. It is also the one section of the test where hard work and effort will really pay off. Once you learn to master the basic puzzle fundamentals, you can use these building blocks to answer any kind of puzzle.

Important strategies- The most important single strategy in the Puzzle Games is to use the correct diagram. This is the best way to keep the members correctly organized, and usually it is the only way. More than 95% of the LSAT puzzles in the last 10 years could be answered using a diagram, and most puzzles were virtually impossible to answer without using a diagram. The second vital strategy in the Puzzle Games is to get adept at discovering the extra conclusions that will be the key to unlocking the puzzle. Other strategies include using the correct series of steps to make sure you efficiently wring the most you can out of each condition, and using good bookkeeping so as to not overlook a crucial condition.

More on puzzle types. There are three main puzzle types. They are the simple line, the multiple line, and grouping games. There are several minor puzzle types: matrix games, network games, and organization charts. Finally, there are many hybrid possibilities, which will combine elements of two or more puzzle types. Although hybrids have become more common in recent years, they are not more common than the basic puzzles. If you have a solid understanding of the basic puzzles, a hybrid do not present any special difficulty.

Analysis of the Questions:

Overview of the entire section-

Just like you should do in Reading Comprehension, you should skim all four games to find out which has the most questions, and also to determine what kind of puzzles will be used for each one. As you learn more, you will find that some puzzles are easier for you. These would be the puzzles to start with, especially if you have trouble completing the puzzle games sections.

This section was about average difficulty for the LSAT. If you did not even come close to finishing, don't worry. We can fix that, but it will take time and effort.

Overview of puzzle set #1- Airplane seats

This was an unpleasant introduction to the Puzzle Games. But it was only slightly harder than the average LSAT puzzle game administered since 1998.

Remember the Puzzle Game strategies discussed above, or you will suffer immensely. (You are already suffering enough!)

! The first strategy is: Find the diagram! Here the LSAT folks threw you a bone and explicitly drew the diagram. This doesn't happen often, so don't get used to it. If they hadn't given you the diagram, you would have had to figure out that this is a "multiple line" diagram, which, simply put, means that you have two or more parallel lines on which you setup the members. The best thing to do here is to draw three rows of three dashes each. You might want to put the corresponding number below each of the dashes, because two of the questions focus on seat numbers.

Now that we have the diagram roughly sketched, what do we do with the people? Skimming each of the rules you see the seven travelers. (Almost always, the names of the members will start with different letters. That's the LSAT way of making you life easier.) You see nine seats, so a quick conclusion to make is that two seats will be empty. You see that the various members are located in various places relative to each other. How do you deal with this?

First, many, but not all, puzzles will have at least one "anchor rule" that will help you "anchor" the rest of your diagram. Here the anchor rule is Oribe being in the last row. We don't know which seat--just that he is in the back row. The best thing to do is to put an "O" next to the back row (Figure 1). Next, cross off any rule as soon as you have it on the graph. This helps you later, since it is one less rule you need to read. Note, often--but as we saw here, not always--the anchor is the final rule in the list. We don't have any other anchors, so we should move to the rules that are related to our anchor.

Second, where there is an anchor, there is usually a rule related to that anchor. Here we actually don't have any rules that explicitly tie-in with "O," so we have to go to the next step.

Third, we look at variable rules that will help us fix positions. Here we know that "P" sits next to "R" and next to an empty seat--let's call that "X1." Note that we don't know if the left to right order is "R-P-X1" or "X1-P-R." Is there any further conclusion to be made? Well, we know that "P" "R" and "X1" aren't in the last row, because "O" is taking one of the spots in

that row. That means they are in the front or middle row (Figure 1). Make a note that this is the case and move on to the next variable rule.

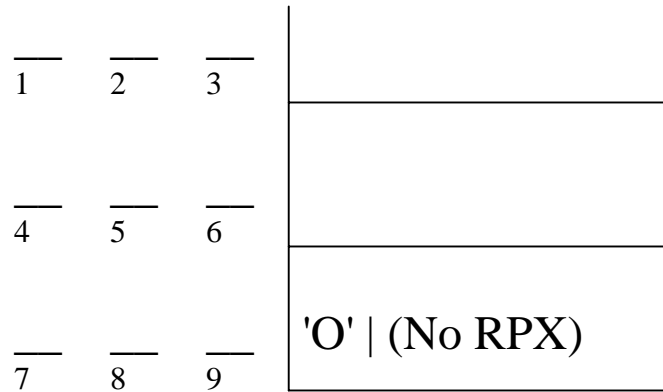


Fig. 1

We read that "R" has to be in the row behind "N." Now we are getting somewhere. Looking at our diagram, we see that "R" can be in the front or middle, but if "R" must be behind "N," then "R" can't be in the front row. By fixing R in the middle row, we also fix P and the empty seat in the middle. Also, we have fixed "N" in the front row. Cross off this rule and move to the last one (Figure 2).

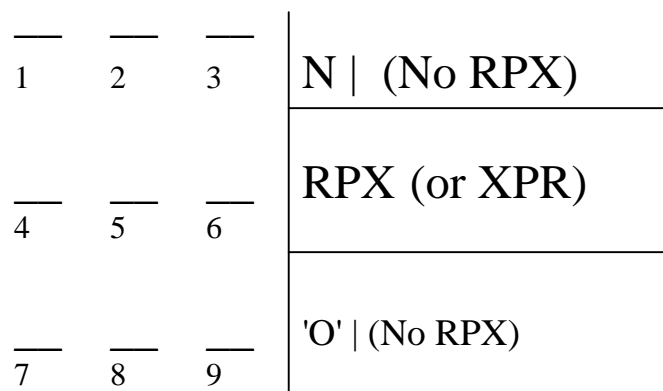


Fig. 2

Neither "S" nor "U" will sit next to "N." Note that this rule does not say that either of them can or can't be in the same row; all we know so far is that they can't sit next to "N." And right now, we don't know which seat "N" occupies in the front row, so we can't do much to fix "S" or "U." We might not want to cross this rule off just yet (Figure 3).

Finally, as is often the case, there is a member unaccounted for. Here it is "T" who will be quite flexible and can sit in any seat in the front or last row. Also, remember that we have one empty seat, "X2," that must be in the front or last row. (Figure 3)

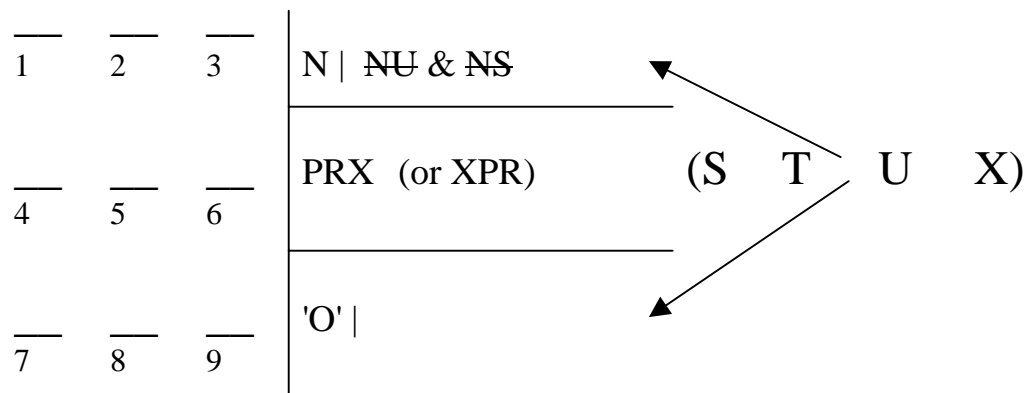


Fig. 3

Are there any more conclusions we can make and place on our diagram? It doesn't look like it, so let's move to the questions and see if we did the diagram correctly. This is normal. You will never have a graph that is more than half complete.

1. Always consult your graph to answer a question. If your graph is correct, the wrong answers will be fairly obvious, and you will need to do little or no work to find the correct answer. Looking at our diagram, we can quickly eliminate (C) and (D) because P and R can't be in either the front or last row. Also, (B) fails because O can't be in the front row. (If this answer choice had said U, O instead of O, U it would be a possibility.) That was quick, wasn't it? Now the harder work starts. N can certainly be in seat #2, and the only restriction on S is that he can't be next to N, which is not an issue here. (A) This is a possibility. (D) T can go virtually anywhere, so let's look at U. If U is in the front row, he can't sit next to N, but if U were in seat #2, he

could hardly avoid having N as a seatmate, so this answer choice bites the dust. (A) * Our winner.

2. Again, your graph will help you--use it! Here, as is often the case, the question gives another condition to worry about. Unfortunately, the condition isn't very detailed. Let's take care of some easy stuff and come back to it. (B) and (C) are quick to go, since our graph shows us where P and R can and can't be. Now, looking back at our condition, can we graph it? Since S and U must be in different rows, and the middle row is full, then S and U must be in the front and last rows. We don't know which one is where. Remember N, who can't sit next to S or U? Well, the only way we can make it work is to put N in seat #1 (or #3) and S or U in seat #3 (or #1). This, happily, shows us that there is no way N is in #2. (A) * Is correct. Note that T is not someone you should focus on, since T is so flexible. Also, U could be in seat #1, #3, or #7-9 (Figure 4).

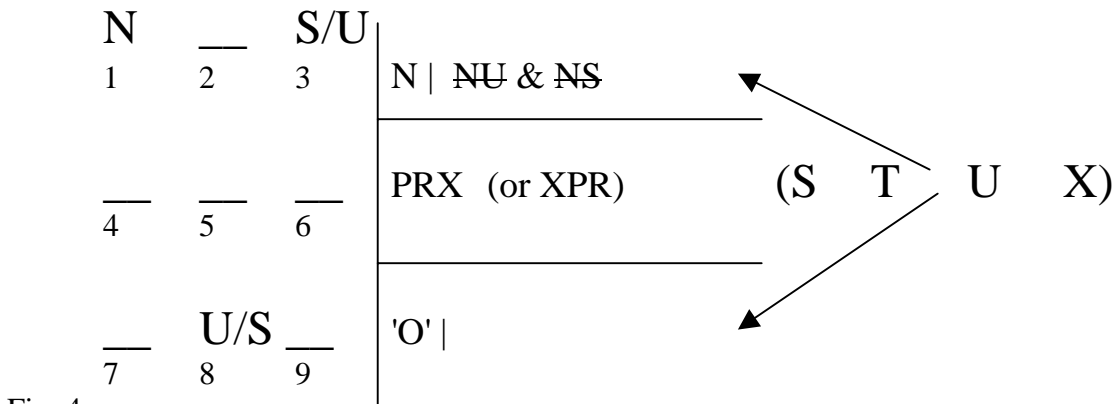


Fig. 4

3. Again, we have a new condition, which means new conclusions and an addition to our graph. First, take the new condition and think. If S and U are in the same row, and neither can sit next to N, they aren't going to be able to sit in the front row. The middle row is already full. So S and U are in the last row, which they share with O. Draw your graph accordingly. Note that it doesn't matter for this question the exact seat assignment (Figure 5). Now, we look at the questions and see that O, S, and U are filling the last row--no empty seats here. (A), (C), and (E) are eliminated. (B) is easy to eliminate, since we know that R is always next to P, and not next to empty seats. (D) * Good-old flexible T can sit next to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

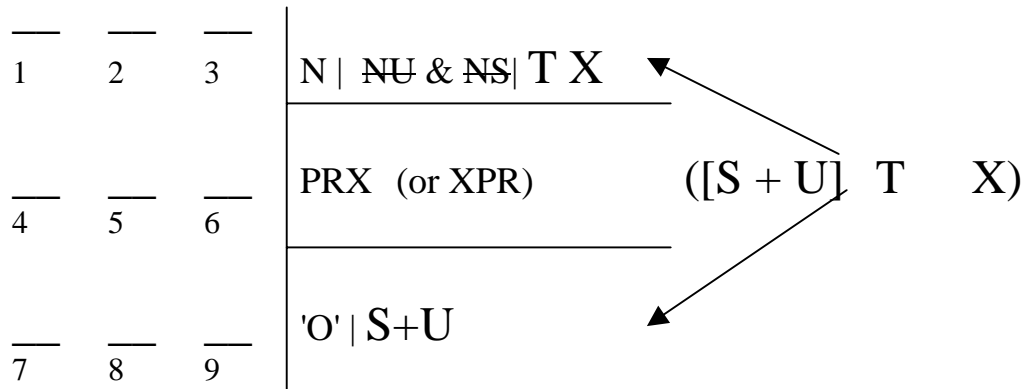


Fig. 5

4. This new condition places T next to an empty seat and next to a full seat. So we have: ?,T,X or X,T,?. We know that T is not in the middle row. Is he in the front row? Well N, T, X is okay, and so is X,T,N. And we can put O,S, & U in the last row. See the previous answer. Now, could T be in the last row? It would be O,T,X or X,T,O, and then S and U would need to be up front--but neither of them are allowed to sit next to N, so this stymies T's attempt to sit in the back. So we can eliminate (B), but we still need to check the other answers to make sure we didn't misread something. (C) O can sit next to S or U, but is not required to sit next to S. (D) O can't sit next to T, because S and U are taking the two remaining rear seats. (E) S and U might sit next to each other, but it isn't required that they do so. So (A) * is our winner.

5. Now O has an empty seat next to him, which means that only one other member will be in the last row. What does this mean? It means that either S or U must sit in the front row, and avoid N while they are doing it. (A) We don't know exactly where O sits in the row; nothing prevents him from moving around. (B) * T can be in seat #2, and when we see that he can't sit in the last row, we realize he must sit in #2. (C) U could be in #1, #3, or in the last row. (D) and (E) Either #4 or #9 could be assigned, or not assigned.

Overview of puzzle set #2- Library Grouping

This was an average to easy puzzle game. (Sorry to have to tell you that.) It was a fairly common type of puzzle called a grouping game. Here, as is normal, we must create our own diagram. The grouping diagram is pretty easy to understand and execute. With good bookkeeping to keep careful track of the rules, this one will fall into place quickly and easily. We skim the conditions and see that there are really two groups: the LMR group, of which 2 must be used, and the other 5, of which 3 must be used. This is the major division in the diagram (Figure 1).



Fig. 1

Now we only need to "connect the letters." Most takers find that the arrow with an "x" on it is a good way to show that two members can't be together, but feel free to play with your own types of notation, even if you end up using this style. Our graph now shows all the rules, so we can cross off them all off and work solely with our diagram. There really aren't many good conclusions to be drawn. While we could work through a large number of permutations to find patterns, it's not normally a good use of your time (Figure 2).

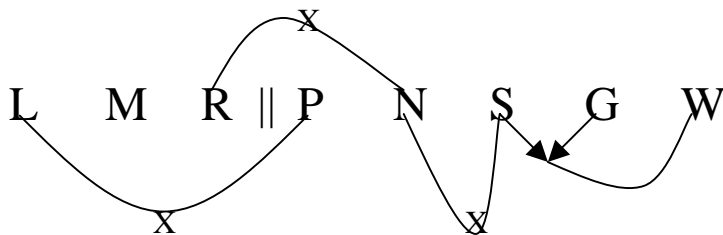


Fig. 2

! The vast majority of LSAT takers don't know (but now you do) one very important fact about puzzle games. When a puzzle game set has many questions (like 7 or 8), it is actually an easier set. The reason this is true is that when you have only 9 minutes to do a full set of questions, a difficult graph will eat up time, leaving less time to do questions. Conversely, an

easy graph allows more time to do questions. So the irony of it is, when you have more questions in a set, that set will be easier, yet it will earn you more points than the harder set.

6. With this kind of problem, the thing to do is look for the impossibilities. (A) * This might work; let's check the others. (B) L and P can't be grouped together. (C) N and R can't be grouped together. (D) If S and G are grouped, then W must be included, and wasn't here. (E) Only two of the LMR group can be reduced, not all three. So (A) * wins.

7. We have a new condition. If W is reduced, then the first thing to look at is what arrows are connected with W. If S and G are reduced, W must be reduced--but this doesn't work backwards, so we can't say yet if S and G are or are not reduced. Let's look at the answer choices and eliminate false choices. (A) Fails because exactly two of the LMR group must be used. (B) Fails for the same reason. (C) L and P can't be grouped together. (D) Exactly two of the LMR group must be used. (E) * This is a permutation.

8. Follow along with this train of logical steps. If P is reduced, then L is not reduced. Since L is not reduced, then M and R must be reduced. Since R is reduced, then N is not reduced. Since N is not reduced, then S may (but is not required to) be reduced. Now it gets trickier. If S is reduced, then G cannot also be reduced, since doing so would require that we also reduce W, and we don't have enough slots to do this. Anyway, we should have enough to start answering this question, and we can always come back to work through one or two permutations. This kind of question is best solved by finding one counter-example for each answer choice, thus eliminating it. (A) One counter example is MRPGW. (B) * This is correct. When L could not be grouped, then M and R had to take the two slots reserved for the LMR group. (C) This doesn't work because N can't be reduced. (D) A counter example is MRPGW. (E) A counter example is MRPGW.

9. Fill in our slots. We see that L must be reduced, leaving one spot for either M or R. Thus, P cannot be reduced. Any answer choice with P is wrong. Also, if S is reduced, there are only two slots left to determine. Drawing our five slots, we see that L, M/R, and S fill three slots, leaving two

Overview of puzzle set #3- Bead line-up

Normally the simple line games are fairly easy. This one was made more complex due to the fact there were no anchors at all--everything "floats." We can't do much by way of an initial graph. About the only thing you might want to do is make some quick notations in the margins next to the rules. The notations are: RPYR / PYPR; No doubles, except G; No OR / RO; each color used once. Rest assured, the questions will supply anchors.

13. ! Since we don't have any graph worth talking about, the best way to solve this question is to find the false choices, where the explicit rule has been violated. (A) We can't have a RO pair. See condition #3. (B) No double R, see condition #2. (C) * Maybe; mark it and check the others. (D) No RO pairs, condition #3. (E) Must use at least one of each color; here no O were used. See condition #4. Now we can recheck (C) and see that it satisfies all four conditions. ! A tip for when you are using the conditions to eliminate answer choices. Often, as was the case here, the LSAT will have one answer choice that is eliminated by one of the rules, and only one. Once you have used that condition to eliminate an answer choice, then it is unlikely you will use it to eliminate another answer choice. So what you might try to remember is to use each of the conditions, and if you have an answer choice that you can't eliminate, ask yourself if there is a condition that you have not yet used. If so, that is probably the one that will eliminate the answer choice.

14. A quick diagram might help here. Draw several dashes and place the O on the fourth dash. Now turn your focus on the 2nd and 3rd dashes and work through the answers. (A) Fails because condition #2 does not allow for double O. (B) Condition #3 does not allow for RO pairs. (C) No purple pairs are allowed, condition #2. (D) * This doesn't explicitly violate any conditions. Remember that G can be paired with G, but is not actually required to be paired with G. (E) A YP pair must be followed (and preceded) by an R. So by process of elimination, using the conditions, we have eliminated our way to the correct answer.

15. A quick diagram will definitely help you here. Draw the eight dashes and fill them in accordingly. _ R G Y _ P R _. Remember, no doubles (#2),

and we have to use O at least once (#4), but not next to R (#3). Which means O is between Y and P. Which...oops! Looks like we solved that one. (A) Could be P, or G, or Y. (B) It could be G, except that O must be in position 5 in order to get one of each color in the eight-bead strand. (C) * See above. (D) Can't have O next to R. (E) This is possible, but so is P or G.

16. ! Our quick diagram gives us six dashes left to right. P Y _ _ _ _ . Condition #1 requires a PY to be followed by R, resulting in P Y R _ _ _ . The fourth spot can't be filled by O (#3), nor by R (#2). Can it be filled with a P or Y? Maybe. But spaces 4-6 must have at least one O and one G. So O must be in space 5 or 6. When we look at our answer choices, we see that only (E) * does not show O in space 5 or 6, so we know that (E) is the one that cannot be true, and thus, in the perverse LSAT world, the correct answer choice. ! When four (or even three) answer choices use the same wording (here, G), you should be very alert to this fact and focus in on it. One way or another, this repetition will lead you to the correct choice. Just seeing that four answer choices used G and one did not should make you assume that the answer choice that omitted G is the correct choice. In normal questions that don't use the CANNOT technique, if four of the answer choices used G, you could assume that G was valid, so you would not spend your time checking for the validity of G.

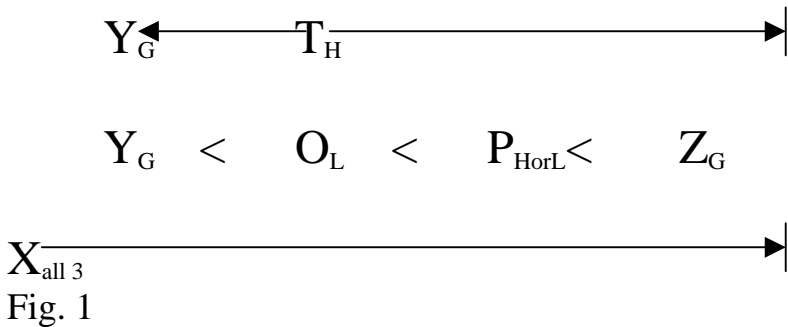
17. This problem is very similar to the previous problem in that P, Y, and R fill up most of the spaces, leaving us to fit in O and G at the end. The real trick they tried to pull here is that this is a nine-bead string, but we still have to remember to get all 5 colors into the eight consecutive bead string. Very tricky. When you do the graph you have:
 P Y _ P Y _ _ _ _ . Graphing for condition #1: P Y R P Y R _ _ _ . To keep from getting tricked by the eight-bead/ nine-bead trick, do this on your graph:
 P Y R P Y R _ _ | _ . Now we see that we have two spaces to put O and G, and O can't go next to R, thus P Y R P Y R G O | _ . Now the answers are a piece of cake. (A) No, just look at the graph. (B) Nope. (C) No. (D) Since O is in position #8, R can't be in #9. (E) * This is possible, thus, this is the correct answer.

18. Filling out our anchors we have: R Y G R _ _ _ . The field is still wide open for positions 5 and 6. At this point we can try solving for permutations, which is always an option, or we can try to be more proactive and restrict things by filling up spaces. When being proactive, start with the most broad-reaching members, which are Y and P. If we were to put a YP pair in positions 5 and 6, this would require that space 7 be R, and this would mean that space 8 could not be an O. But if we don't put an O in, we violate condition #4. Thus, when we see that P and Y can't be in spaces 5 and 6, this allows us to find (D) * to be the correct answer choice.

Overview of puzzle set #4- Concert singers

This starts out as a very, very easy "earlier than/later than" simple line problem (it really was too easy, so you knew there would be a catch), but then it takes a quirky turn by adding in the singers and certain restrictions on who can sing what, and when. The "earlier than/later than" problems are pretty easy to graph. But to take into account the vocalists, we need to get a bit more creative. Before doing that, though, it was vital to notice that the vocalists only sang certain songs, and that there was actually very little overlap in what they could sing. Hopefully you saw, or see now, that G is the only one who can sing Y and Z. Also, H is the only one who can sing T. Finally, L is the only one who can sing O. All three can sing X, and H or L can sing P. Don't try to graph all this; just make a mental note of it, and put a pencil star next to the condition. The next step is to get the songs and the singers in a workable diagram (Figure 1).

Notice that X and T can "float," which is the most important feature of simple line games that have this kind of rule.



19. Consult the graph. We see that either X or Y must be first. Unfortunately, this doesn't help us eliminate any answers. Next, let's look for answers that don't show the correct O < P < Z order. That eliminates (B) and (D). (A) is wrong because T can't come before Y. (C) and (E) * remain. Now we have to consider who can sing, and when. G must sing Y and Z, but the same person can't sing first and sixth, so (C) is wrong. By process of elimination, (E) * is correct.

20. This should be easy, since we already figured out who can sing what. (A) Any of the three can sing X. (B) This is false. (C) * This is true. (D) H or L can sing P. (E) Any of the three can sing X.

21. Make this easy. Which songs can't be last? Answer: Y, O, and P, because at least one song must come after each of these. Follow the arrows to see who can be last. T, X, or Z can be last. That brings us to the correct answer (D) *. (A) If you answered this you must have misread the question to mean "the last three songs." (B) Since O is buried, this is a terrible choice. (C) Since P is buried, this is also a bad choice, but slightly less bad than O. (E) Since P is buried, this is wrong.

22. Now we have an anchor of sorts to work with. Our songs are now $X < Y < O < P < Z$. And somewhere after Y we have to place T. Skip (A) and (B) for now, because they are adding an extra level of complexity. (C) This is the answer choice for people who forgot to remember that T floats. (D) * This is the answer choice of people who looked at their graph. You could have even forgotten about T floating and gotten this correct. (E) One look at your graph should eliminate this one. Since we have our right answer, it is pointless to waste the time it would take to solve (A) and (B).

23. Remember to go back to our original graph, not the one we used for the last question. Here we have four correct permutations, and we want the one incorrect permutation. A typical LSAT mind game. First, look for the obvious flaws. Y or X must go first, and the OPZ order must be observed. Neither of these was violated, so we have to focus on who is singing, and when. If Y is sung first, then G sings first, thus he can't sing last. So Z can't be sung last. This is the key to our correct answer (B) *.

24. An easier way to tackle this is to ask which songs can never be sung second, third, or fourth. Since any of the five songs could be sung second, third, or fourth, we have to try a little harder to eliminate something. Now look for a song that is out of order, like Z coming before O. This eliminates (B). (C) is still possible. (D) is wrong because O must precede P. (E) This is possible still, as is (A). Now we have the harder task of determining who is singing, and when. Since Y is sung first, that means G sings first. If G

sings first, he can't sing Z last. Doing the three permutations: (A) Y T X O P Z. This doesn't work because G can't sing last, but Z must be sung by G. (C) * Y X O P Z T. This can work, since Z is not last. (E) Y X T O P Z. Since it ends with Z, this does not work.

Review of the Puzzle Games:

You probably found the puzzle section difficult. Most people do, so you are not alone. But, to do well at the LSAT, you must learn the puzzles inside and out. Here we saw variations on the most common LSAT puzzle types, including the multiple line, the grouping games, and the simple line. You did not see the less common problem types. You saw a little hybridization, especially in the last problem set. Since 1998 the LSAT has been more actively utilizing hybrid problems. Possibly this is in response to the increasingly sophisticated graphing methods that LSAT takers are learning from prep courses. One thing is certain: the puzzle games are an arms race, and to merely score as well as previous test-takers, you need to learn much more about the puzzles than they ever knew. If there is one failing in much of the commercially available prep material, it is that it has not kept pace with the dramatic increase in puzzle difficulty.

4 4 4 4 4 4 4

Section IV

General overview of section IV - This section is a logical reasoning section. This was the second logical reasoning section. There will be two scored logical reasoning sections on every LSAT.

Do you remember everything that was discussed in the first logical reasoning section? If not, just remember that you will see many questions that deal with inferences and methods of reasoning.

Important strategy- Remember, when you approach a logical reasoning question, you should read the question first. Once you develop this habit, it takes only a few seconds, and it helps you immensely by "keying" your mind into what you are looking for in the passage. This is not a suggested strategy--you must do this.

Analysis of the Questions:

1. ! Critic- Again, we see our old friend the "assumption" question. By now you have already seen several of these, so the concept should not be new. This is often the most commonly tested question in the logical reasoning section. Remember the trick for this question type: while you read the facts in the passage, ask yourself, "where does the speaker make a 'jump?'" or, "how did the speaker get from these facts to this conclusion?" Just remember: you need to "read between the lines" to figure out how this speaker could have drawn this conclusion.

This question was difficult for many people; perhaps it gave you trouble too. If you read the passage, then read the answers, then reread the passage because nothing clicked yet, you need to make a decision. Will this question be one of the ten "sacrifice questions" that you can lose before your LSAT score is noticeably hurt? If so, try to eliminate the likely wrong answers, mark your guess, and if time allows, come back to the question when you finish the section.

! The easiest way to approach this question, as is the case with most questions, is to eliminate the wrong answers, narrowing your options to two or three. So what can you eliminate here without spending too much time thinking? (A) May be possible; let's leave it alone for now. (B) The reason you can eliminate this choice is the use of "only." ! Here "only" is a "red-

flag word." As you become more familiar with the LSAT, you must become adept at recognizing red-flag words. A red-flag word is a modifier that makes the whole answer choice too broad or too narrow, too general or too specific, too vague or too definitive, etc. Any which way, your LSAT antenna should always go up when you see a red-flag word because they are the key to eliminating many answer choices. Certainly, your tendency is to agree that disrespectful comedians are successful. But this answer choice is too broad because it say "only" disrespectful comedians succeed. The passage did not say "only" disrespectful comedians to well. The passage actually said that "many" popular (and thus successful) comedians are disrespectful. (C) The passage doesn't really talk about people who disapprove of the disrespectful comedians. Certainly, it could be true that some people don't like this kind of comedy, but the passage doesn't really say that they exist or that they don't exist. Whether true or not, it certainly is not an assumption on which the speaker's argument depends. (D) This can't be easily eliminated, so leave it alone for now. (E) This answer choice brings in a new concept, sort of. It talks about people failing "more frequently" then in the past. This is another red-flag word. Read the passage, there is no mention of people failing to live up to their own standards more or less frequently.

Now the hard part begins. You may have decided to choose between your two remaining choices and move on. If so, congratulations--you are thinking like a smart LSAT taker. No single question is worth too much of your scarce time. But let's chisel away at this problem and see what we get. Our first choice says, to paraphrase, that the people who like these comedians do not highly respect others. Our second choice says that people don't always live up to the ideals that they value. Our passage says in the first sentence that "people today" value respect. Note that the way it is written indicates that ALL people value respect. This undercuts our first choice. Our passage says in the second sentence that people do fail to live up to their ideals, but that exaggerating this is funny. This would seem to support our second answer choice. So it was a long, difficult deconstruction, but (D) * is the correct choice.

2. ! The law firm- This argument analysis question is fairly unusual. First, argument analysis questions are not particularly common. Second, it asks for a flaw that already exists. So unlike a "weakening" question, where you need to supply the mistake, in this question this mistake has already been made, and it is just up to you to identify it. Many students have problems

with answer choices like the ones here, which say things like "false because it presupposes the truth of the conclusion that is being made." This confusing extra verbiage is deliberate. It is designed to slow you down and confuse you. Remember, there are some very hard questions on the LSAT. Fully 99.9% of the test takers do not get every problem correct. Put another way, out of 100,000 test takers, fewer than 100 get every question correct. It was hard to see, but that the whole second sentence was a distracter. Who cares if the acquittal rate is 90%? We were told: This firm primarily specializes in criminal work. They have a 90% criminal acquittal rate (irrelevant). Dalton primarily does divorces. Therefore, Dalton can't be in this firm.

All that aside, there are several answer choices that should have been pretty easy to eliminate, making your final choices fewer. (A) This might be initially appealing to some test-takers. It can be eliminated when we realize that there really is no contradictory evidence provided, just various pieces of evidence. Look back at the analysis--there is no contradiction. (B) This is just completely off key. There was no talk about, or hint of, non-lawyers practicing law. (C) * Yes, essentially the passage said "this firm is primarily criminal cases, and this attorney is primarily divorce, so he isn't part of this firm." But stop and think. What if there are 10 attorneys. Nine do primarily criminal work, and Dalton does primarily divorce. Then the firm would be primarily criminal, because Dalton wouldn't bring down their percentages. (D) Although the rate of success is discussed, there is no mention of Dalton's success, so this choice is off the mark. (E) This is classic LSAT garbage language all dressed up to look sophisticated. The hope of the test designer is that by making the answer choice look really sophisticated, the unsophisticated test taker will conclude, "Hey, it has lots of big words I don't really understand, so it must be correct." Think about it. If you were designing an answer choice to fool your friend, wouldn't you engage in this doubletalk in order to confuse him?

3. Opponents- This is a pretty plain-vanilla strengthening/weakening question. This is not the first one we have seen in this test, and it certainly will not be the last. Paraphrase the passage. It says that the triple-trucks are not more dangerous, they are less so, because in the west, where the trucks are used, the triple-truck fatality rate is lower than the national average. What flaws can we find? A bunch. Maybe dangerous means injuries and death. Maybe there is less to run into in Wyoming than there is in Maryland. Actually, there is. Anyway, don't spend any time at this mental exercise

during the test--just get a gut feeling that the real weakness is that the speaker is extrapolating national results based on a regional sample.

(A) is wrong because the issue here is safety, not hauling capacity. (B) * This would match our argument that there is nothing to run into in Wyoming, or elsewhere in the west, not to pick on Wyoming. This choice says that there is just a fraction of the accidents in the west, so this makes everything, including triple trucks, appear safer than the national average. (C) Who cares what they opposed and when they opposed it? (D) This would mildly weaken the argument, maybe. But, the issue is not licensing, because certainly if the triple-trucks were used elsewhere, then the same licensing regulations could be used nationally as are used in the west. (E) This appears to be mildly relevant, but fails to be so. No one cares if the yearly rates fluctuate a bit, or a lot, as long as the western triple-trucks are safer than the national commercial vehicles.

4. Whittaker- This was a quirky little question, and actually kind of funny, once you grasp the concept and the flaw. In essence, you are trying to describe the method of reasoning used by Hudson. In sum, Whittaker said that if you never attain the status (of being a second-year student), then there is no such thing as the number of people who fail to achieve the status. This isn't correct logically, but it takes awhile to grasp it. Hudson then says that if he doesn't have a million dollars in the bank he can't die, because he can't die before he has his first million in the bank. (A) * Yes, the conclusion is untenable, and the second argument is analogous to the first. (B) There was no specific example given. (C) Confusing, sophisticated LSAT language again. But Whittaker doesn't mention necessary or sufficient conditions, and there are no "possible situations." (D) Whittaker does not act at all. (E) Whittaker does not analyze any single case; he uses generalizations.

5. ! A newly developed- There are a few things worth noting in this question. First, this is a strengthening question. Second, this is an "everything is true EXCEPT" question. So, there will be four logically true answers (that are incorrect), and one illogical answer (that is the correct answer). Confusing, isn't it? But what do you expect--we are talking about lawyers here. This requires you to shift your mental gears to adjust. Hard to do, but what you have to say to yourself is: "This third answer choice is totally weird; it can't be the one I want. Oh, wait--I DO want the weird answer choice this time. OK, I'll pick the third answer choice." Caution: Do

not audibly engage in this little conversation during the test, or everyone will think you are nuts.

Turn your attention back to the passage. It says the bulb costs, say \$3 (instead of the normal \$1 bulb), but that it lasts as long as 10 normal bulbs, so you get \$10 worth of bulbs for \$3. Sounds like a great deal, so dream up some ideas why customers would still not buy it. They don't like the packaging; the bulbs use so much electricity that they are uneconomical; the bulbs aren't distributed widely, etc. Again, there are many possibilities, and little time, so don't spend much time on this step.

(A) People do not like the way these bulbs look. That is a good reason why nobody would buy them. (B) You can't get much more direct than that. People who buy light bulbs like cheap ones that they have to replace more often, so this new expensive bulb that never needs changing does not appeal to them. (C) This is the argument that they are more expensive in the long run. (D) * If people had more choices on quantity, they would be more likely to buy, so this doesn't explain why they wouldn't buy them. (E) This shows that everybody may be waiting until the price drops before buying bulbs, which I am very sure that people really do. I do; don't you?

6. ! The *Rienzi*- This is a "make a conclusion" question. These are not common, and they are not very hard. Darn, why can't we have more of these easy ones? Actually, it really would not make a difference, since the scaled scores would still be the same. Anyway, the passage gives a series of facts, and you need to decide which is the best conclusion based on these facts. There are a few pointers when doing a "make a conclusion" question. First, your choice must be a conclusion that is logically based on the facts provided. Second, your choice cannot simply repeat a fact given in the passage. Third, if you think you have two possible conclusions, pick the narrower choice. A note on the second pointer: It is true in much of the LSAT that incorrect answer choices will repeat, or "parrot back," some word or fact from the passage. This is deliberate. The hope of the evil test creator is that at least some of the test-takers will recognize the word or fact, and choose this incorrect answer choice simply because it looks familiar. And it is familiar; you just read it, after all. Don't be fooled by this "mirroring" language.

So what is this passage about? The ship may have been sabotaged. Normally this ship would implode, unless it was sabotaged. It did not implode, which supports the conclusion made in the first sentence.

(A) Sinking due to impact is not an issue at all. (B) No, if a ship is fully flooded, it has to be so before it sinks to the bottom. (C) * Hopefully you saw the "red-flag" language. Where, you ask? Here the red-flag word was "normally," which actually appeared in the passage. The facts allow for the possibility that the ship can be fully flooded without being sabotaged. (D) This contradicts the facts. (E) This one is tricky, because if we accept this new fact--strong construction--that would explain the lack of implosion. That's the trick. We really shouldn't accept new facts, especially when we have a respectable answer already available.

7. For every 50- "Evaluating the facts" questions aren't common, but the skill is actually similar to strengthening/weakening problems. This is also somewhat similar to question 5. Finally, this uses a common LSAT technique where the speaker "compares" two different items, but does not directly compare them. In essence, the speaker compares apples and oranges, and you need to recognize this. (A) "All causes" ruins this answer choice. It is way too broad. We only care about this disease and vaccine mortality rates. (B) Who cares about other pets? We certainly don't. (C) Who cares about other diseases? Not us. (D) This also is not relevant. The fact that the dog may get another unrelated disease doesn't affect our decisions regarding this disease. (E) * Finally, a discussion of this disease and this vaccine. If this disease only strikes one in every million unvaccinated dogs, then we don't want to vaccinate one million dogs, since one in five thousand (200 total) dogs will die. We don't want that, do we?

8. The symptoms- We haven't seen an "assumption" question for a while. It is nice to be back on familiar territory. Analyze the facts. The first sentence is a time waster. Some patients respond fine to therapy, while some patients must have drugs to correct a chemical imbalance. (A) * This is a little uncertain, but could be the one. (B) The red-flag word here is "always." (C) "Most" is the red flag word here. All we know is that "some" respond to therapy, "some" to drugs. (D) "Is always" is the red flag. Some patients do fine without drugs. (E) We don't know if this is true or not, and it does not seem that the assumption was based on it. Looking back to (A) * we see that the argument seems to be that chemically imbalanced people must get drugs, because nothing else will work to fix the chemical imbalance.

9. ! Curator- A note on two-question passages. You should plan to read the passage a second time when you are answering the second question. A note on "conversation" passages. The first question often deals with the interaction between the two participants. The second question invariably deals with the second participant's statements. Usually there is one two-question passage per logical reasoning section, but increasingly there are two sets of two-question passages per section. Just something to think about if you have problems with this technique.

This is an argument evaluation. We don't need to read the second half of the argument to answer question 9. The curator asserts that a later artist painted it red. Why did the curator assert this? This one can be a bit tricky. (A) and (B) * both seem likely. Let's eliminate the losers. (C) There is no clarification of any term. (D) A classic LSAT tactic--sophisticated language, signifying nothing. (E) The main point is that the painting should be altered to the green color underneath the red. Bringing in the later artist would help explain WHY this should be done, but it doesn't reiterate that is SHOULD be done.

Returning to (A) and (B) *, we compare them and ask, was the mention of a later painter itself the main point, or a conclusion that supports the main conclusion? This is pretty hard to distinguish. If the later painter was the main point, then the painting should be left alone. If there was a later painter, then maybe the painting should be changed back to the way it was. What is the main conclusion of the curator? That the painting should be changed to the green found underneath the red. Clarifying the main conclusion helps us choose (B) * as correct.

10. Curator- Here you are asked to make a conclusion based on the art critic's facts. (A) This seems possible; mark it for later. (B) There is no discussion of this issue. (C) * This seems possible; mark it for later. (D) Value is not at issue here. (E) This seems possible; mark it. Now it gets very tricky. What did the art critic say? He says that the cloak was red at, or near, the time of the artist's death. (E) This choice might go a bit too far, since we aren't given any insight into the artist's intentions. (A) and (E) both seem promising. You may want to cut your losses at this point and guess. For those who struggled with it (naughty you--don't you know better by now?) the analysis might be this: (A) discussed "the original," but that is the problem, isn't it? First of all, what is the original? The painting when it was first created? Or the painting as altered later by the original artist? Or the painting as it appears at the death of the artist? Second, even if we agree that

original means the painting as first created, even if later altered by the artist, we don't know if the artist altered it, though it seems he did not. (C) * The art critic said that it is almost certain that the cloak was red when the artist died. If this explanation seems vague and unsatisfying, that is because the two answer choices are vague and unsatisfying. A big part of the problem is the indefinite time frame, because the copy was not made at or before the artist's death. Once in every three or four LSATs there will be a question that does not really seem to make sense. If so, don't sweat it. You have 99 easier points waiting for you to snatch them up. Leave these time wasters for the less prepared takers to crash and burn on.

11. John works- A familiar friend, the assumption question. Remember the technique. Ask yourself while you are reading the facts in the passage, "where does the speaker make a 'jump?'" or, "how did the speaker get from these facts to this conclusion?" What were we told? He works five days a week, excluding vacations and holidays. On FRIDAYS he works as a smithy. On FOUR days he is an insurance company. Note the classic LSAT switcheroo. They hoped that you missed the distinction between Friday and four days. Or, they hoped that you assumed that John works Monday through Friday. Either way, this is the key to the solution. (A) This isn't even on the subject. (B) This is also irrelevant. (C) Again, we were told no holidays or vacations occurred during the week in question. (D) * Yes, this would be the only assumption that would allow him to work the schedule set out in the passage. (E) This would be a potential issue if you wanted to be hyper-technical and argue that he could work full shifts at both places on a single day. But, really, the facts require him to work 5 days, so if he worked on Friday, he would have to put in four days at the company. So this answer choice actually rephrases the facts. This was a fairly easy question. Remember, some questions ARE easy. Even the worst LSAT taker gets about 20 questions correct.

12. After several attempts- This is a fairly unusual question, but what we need to do is evaluate the argument and come up with an overarching principle that will justify the conclusions made about George and Carla. George should not have hit (even gently) the parrot to prevent it from eating the furniture, since the parrot's bad behavior was not going to hurt the parrot. Carla was right to hit the puppy (not gently) to prevent it from running into the street, since the puppy could be hurt if it ran into the street. So the

person making this judgment sees things in black or white. If harm could result from the behavior, then any level of hitting to prevent the behavior is okay, and vice versa. (A) The mention of hands in the facts was meant to allow this question to appear somewhat relevant, but it really isn't. (B) * This matches the parameters discussed. (C) Alternate strategies were not discussed in the facts. (D) No, Carla was applauded for smacking her puppy. (E) No, Carla was applauded for hitting the puppy after one transgression, while George was upbraided for gently tapping the parrot to save his furniture. Get rid of that lousy parrot, George!

13. Mature white pines- This is a common variation on the "make a conclusion" question. Here we need to complete the sentence. One very minor trick with paragraph completion questions is that you can plug your remaining answer choices into the sentence and see if one sounds better. The facts are that this tree hogs all the light and water, so much so that juvenile trees of this type can't grow up under mature ones. I personally have no idea what the conclusion could be yet, so let's keep an open mind. (A) * Maybe; let's mark it. (B) The passage doesn't say that white pines can't grow up among other types of trees, only that they can't grow up under mature white pines. (C) If all the pines are mature, and thus about the same size, then they won't compete for light. (D) Actually, the opposite is true; the white pines will kill off any new trees by denying light and water. (E) This one is harder to eliminate, but looking back at the argument facts, we see that the pines are all mature. Not that this means that they can't be slightly different ages and thus slightly different heights, but this answer choice seems like more of a truism than a logical conclusion. Looking at (A) * we now understand that once trees in this stand become mature, no new trees will grow, so the youngest tree in the stand could not have started growing after the nearby trees has already matured. This was a medium difficulty problem.

14. Advertisement- A flaw in the reasoning of an advertisement. Does such a thing really happen? How scandalous. The ad says that laptop owners earn more than non-owners, so thus, it was owning the laptop that got them the high-paying job. Hold the phone! Isn't that what the automakers tell us will happen when we buy their sports car? We get the good-looking girl/guy, right? Isn't that what the soda companies tell us will happen if we drink their soda? We will be happy, fun people, and will sing and dance like

pros, right? Folks, I think we may have uncovered a conspiracy here. Anyway, if you aren't already very good at picking apart advertisements like the one in this passage, then you haven't been paying attention to advertisements for the last twenty-plus years of your life. Yes, this question really was easy. Remember, even the worst LSAT takers get more than 20 questions correct. (A) We weren't told anything about the sample size, so we can't say that that is the flaw. (B) Common double-talk. If you are unsure, simply re-read the conclusion and you will see that this conclusion was not claimed earlier in the argument. (C) * Lots of words here, which should normally indicate a wrong answer. But in this case, the wordy answer is the correct one. Basically, the higher paid people have laptops, because they are higher paid. They aren't higher paid because they have laptops. (D) This answer might trip up some folks. The information does not show the conclusion is false, though--depending on how you look at it, it could be used to support the opposite conclusion. (E) There was no trend anywhere in sight. Hopefully you did not choose this answer.

15. Rhonda- It has been a long time since we have seen a parallel reasoning question. Remember, these questions are usually quite hard to handle, so your LSAT strategy should include a plan for dealing with this question type. Don't waste time on these questions. Many Get Prepped! students choose to skip this question type until they complete the rest of the section.

Graph this out if that helps. If P (goes to the concert) then R (goes to the movie). If T (goes to concert) then P (goes to concert). Therefore, if no T (doesn't go to concert) [then no P (goes to concert) and] then no R (goes to movie). Make it simpler. If T > P > R. Thus if no T > no P > no R. At its most basic, this pattern is that if one is true, all are true, but if one is not true, then none are true. Find an answer choice that follows this same pattern. (A) If J > no M. If no B > no J. Since B > J > M. (B) * If P goes to work > G (washes clothes). If C (is ill) > P (goes to work). Since no C (is not ill) > no P (does not go to work) > no G (doesn't wash clothes). This is a pretty tough pattern to unravel, but it can be done with time. Your problem is that time is a precious commodity, not to be wasted. (C) If R (no rain) and T (trout is available) > BBQ. Since maybe R and no T > no BBQ. You can see that this pattern is two elements going into one result, unlike the "if A then B then C" structure we want. (D) If J or K > L. Since J > L. This doesn't look anything like the pattern. (E) If M (goes) > G (goes). If PM (postpone most) > M (goes). Since PS (postpone some) > M (goes). This one fails for two reasons. First, it used "postpone most" and "postpone some"

which are two different things. Second, it mentioned George once, then didn't include him again in the pattern, which doesn't match our pattern.

16. Private industry- Assumption questions should be second nature by now. Even if you are not yet great at them, the concept should be familiar. Remember, you need to read between the lines to figure out where the speaker made a logical "jump." Reading the argument, the first two sentences tell us the facts--that private industry scientists are paid more than their government counterparts. Now watch out, here it comes the conclusion, drum roll please. Therefore, government scientists will leave for the higher pay of industry, unless they are motivated by public interest. What is the speaker assuming? Quite a few things, actually. First, he assumes that money is the only motivator for staying or leaving. Maybe they like all the federal holidays. Maybe they work fewer hours. Maybe they enjoy all the red tape. Second, he assumes that higher salaries are the only kind of monetary compensation that exists. Maybe government scientists get bonuses, paid childcare, great dental plans, etc. Anyway, it is not necessary for you to do this level of analysis. You just want to know that the first two sentences are facts, and the third sentence is the conclusion, which you want to analyze to make sure you understand all the stated facts and unstated assumptions that went into it.

(A) This would be one more reason government scientists would want to leave, not a reason to stay. Unless of course they didn't want any recognition, but we are safe in assuming that most people like recognition. (B) This is not immediately eliminateable. (C) Since the argument talked only about "comparably skilled" scientists, this answer choice brings in a new concept and can be eliminated. (D) * This matches with our initial impressions. (E) This matches with part of our initial impression. Now we need to balance our three choices. (B) On second reading, this does not really seem to help us much, since it really only adds a new fact. The fact only says that the government scientists don't make more money, but we already knew that. (D) * Answers directly the compensation issue. The scientists have good benefits that are worth a lot of money. (E) This would be a partial explanation of why government scientists accept less money, but it is not as direct as (D).

17. Using fossil energy- This is a slightly different technique, but it is only asking you to weaken the argument. Simple stuff by now, right? The

argument says that efficiency is good, but must come from new standards. The objector wants market forces to determine efficiency implementation. (A) "All at once." This should stick out like a sore thumb. Big red-flag language; it is extreme and wasn't mentioned in the argument. (B) This could support the objector; it says that market participants would realize the inefficiency and act accordingly. (C) This really doesn't help us. It is simply a new set of facts. (D) This strongly supports the objector's contention that consumers in the market can make informed decisions. (E) * This choice points out a fundamental disconnect in the market function, where the person who chooses the energy source is not the person who pays for the operating costs of that source. Thus the choosing person has no incentive to choose the lowest cost, or most efficient source. The objector assumed that the market is comprised of those who bear the costs, but this answer shows a fairly common example where those who bear the costs are not able to choose the source.

18. Dobson- Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to evaluate the facts. We are told that the stone-ring builders may have understood celestial events. The fact that supports this contention is that two stones lie in a certain way. But this very well could have been random coincidence. Thus, these builders did not understand the celestial workings. Now, what is the error? We know there is at least one. Maybe the speaker is correct, that these two stones coincidentally pointed in this direction. But for the speaker to say that this therefore proves that the builders didn't know anything about celestial events goes beyond this counter explanation. (A) * Yes, the simple fact that the stones may have accidentally ended up pointing the right way doesn't prove that the builders did not understand the celestial events. (B) His conclusion (that the builders did not know) is not contradicted by anything in the argument. (C) There is no statement that absolutely establishes his conclusion. (D) This answer choice is harder to explain away. Dobson's conclusion could be verified as fact if we had more facts about these builders. (E) There is no "key term" being interpreted here.

19. Nearly all mail- Make a conclusion. You are given facts; now draw a logical, but not overbroad, conclusion based on those facts. Fact: nearly all correct mail takes two days. If correct mail is damaged, it takes more than two days. But, most mail takes three days. You have two factors here. Maybe a lot (or more than half) of correct mail is damaged. Maybe most

mail is not correct. Find an answer that fits. (A) This seems to fit. Check the other choices. (B) This might be true, but it doesn't directly tie into what we read. (C) This might be true, but it doesn't do much to explain why most mail takes three days. (D) * This would explain why most mail takes three days, even though correct mail takes only two days. Do some hypothetical math if that helps. Nearly all correct mail (say 99%) arrives in two days, unless damaged. But most mail (say, 51%) takes three days. But maybe only 10% of mail is correctly addressed. So 9.9% (10% of 99%) of total mail will take two days. The other 90.1% of mail (the incorrect mail) will take longer. This would explain why most mail takes more than two days. (E) This contradicts the facts. So why did (A) not win? The reason it failed is because it did not successfully explain the distinction between correctly and incorrectly addressed mail. Also, if we read the facts, they say that "nearly all" (as in, nearly 100%) of correct mail arrives in two days. The only time it doesn't take two days is when it is damaged, which apparently isn't too often, since "nearly all" arrives in two days.

20. The report released- Pattern of reasoning questions are hard. Don't be afraid to put them off until the end. We are told: a report shows the program to be a big success; that a smart person says the program could not have been a success; and therefore, the facts in the report are wrong. Have you ever heard of an *ad hominem* argument strategy? In an *ad hominem* attack, the speaker attacks the other side's argument by impugning the person making that argument. This passage was the opposite of an *ad hominem* attack. It attacked the argument by praising the person opposing the argument. So we want an answer choice that disputes the truth of a contention, for the sole reason that a smart person says that the contention can't be true. (A) This pattern doesn't really match, nor is it erroneous. He does know where the keys are. (B) This pattern doesn't match, and is not erroneous. She has not had the opportunity to be in a play. (C) This is closer to what we want, but not quite there. Here, the doctor is an expert in the field of human health, unlike the mathematician who is not an expert in land reclamation. (D) This is close, but is more confusing than the right answer should be. When we really try, we see that she asserts something, but he, an expert in the time of day, says her assertion is false. Then she says she did not listen to the news, and he says she could not have listened to the news. But this is just a distraction; it doesn't help us at all. (E) * Here we have an observer (Moirra / the report) that states something is true (Adams won the race / that a 19% increase happened). Then a different

person who knows something about a slightly different field (bike engineering / math) says that the observation can't be correct. Finally a conclusion that the observer (Moira / the report) was wrong.

21. Wirth- This is a two-question passage using the two-speaker technique. Often, but not always, the two-question passage uses the two-speaker technique. Remember that when we have two question passages, the first question will usually concern the interaction of the two speakers. The second question will usually deal with the response of the second speaker.

Wirth says there is no one gene causing this malady and therefore people can't be genetically predisposed to the malady. Chang says that there is evidence that several genes cause the malady, so a person can be genetically predisposed. (A) This seems promising. (B) Chang doesn't dispute this. He agrees that no single gene causes it. (C) Both speakers agree on this. (D) * This seems promising. (E) No mention of how thorough it was. Now balance our two choices. (A) They are disputing whether all the efforts failed. (D) They are disputing whether research shows people are genetically predisposed. It is hard to see the correct answer. Now we have to get very picky and look at each word. Read the answer choices and the argument yet again. What did Wirth conclude? Hint: conclusions are usually at the end of an argument, and on the LSAT, they are often preceded by a word like "thus" or "therefore." Wirth concluded that this malady is not genetic in origin. Chang then says that he disagrees with this conclusion; he thinks the studies show people are genetically predisposed. This supports answer (D). Another way to eliminate (A) is to notice that it uses all the same language as the first sentence of the Wirth argument, but with the addition of "or set of several genes." Always worry when the answer choice uses mirror language. If you got this one correct, congratulations. If you didn't, don't worry, as long as you got it down to the two answer choices.

22. Wirth- The wording of this question made it a bit unclear. Chang uses the same studies as Wirth, but points to additional facts in those studies that Wirth ignored. Then Chang draws a different conclusion than Wirth. (A) * Although this is the correct answer, it is not a terribly good answer choice. A better answer choice would have focused on how Wirth cited only select aspects of the studies in order to support his contention and conclusion. (B) There was no contradictory evidence, just contrasting conclusions based on

the same evidence. (C) No, this is not the case. (D) Oh, big words--how impressive. Again, this is flowery sophisticated language that is meaningless. (E) "Merely unlikely" and "impossible" didn't really seem to have any place here.

23. Garbage dumps- Review the note on EXCEPT problems in Question 5. We want to find four choices that weaken the argument and one that does not. The facts are: baboons eating garbage grow faster and have more babies than non-garbage eaters. The conclusion: Garbage dumps don't hurt wildlife. (A) Perhaps the garbage-eating baboons would have grown faster and had more babies regardless of eating garbage. (B) This would weaken the conclusion. (C) This would weaken the conclusion, by pointing out one health indicator that is not better for the garbage-eaters. (D) * Who cares? This is totally off the subject. Oh, wait--we actually want the answer choice that doesn't weaken the conclusion. (E) This would indicate that their health is worse for eating garbage.

24. ! Marianne- Our third two-question set. It has been observed that the LSAT is making greater use of the two-question set in recent years. In previous years, the two-question set would occur at most once in a section. Now the average is two or more sets in each logical reasoning section. This question set did not use the two-speaker technique, which is used about half the time. Facts are: She hums. She was ordered to stop. She said it was involuntary. She concluded that she can't be held responsible for involuntary behavior.

Which of the following strengthen her argument? Imagine that--a strengthening question. (A) This tit-for-tat doesn't really make her argument stronger. (B) * She says that voluntary actions are the only ones she should be punished for. (C) This would hurt her argument. (D) This is a legalistic argument, and it actually hurts her argument. (E) This would somewhat support her argument.

25. Marianne- Now we need to weaken her argument. That is easy; just do the opposite of what we did in the last question. Don't get confused as to your objective. (A) We only care about what goes on during matches. (B) Amateur chess is not relevant. (C) Maybe; leave it for now. (D) * Maybe; leave it for now. (E) This would make her argument stronger. (C) This fails

when we read her conclusion that only voluntary actions should be punished. Even if she were aware of it, it would still be involuntary. (D) * This choice says that, although it may be involuntary now, it need not remain involuntary. Since she might control it, it is not truly involuntary.

26. Smoking in bed- The skill here is strengthening an argument by providing an extra fact of your own. Facts: Smoking causes fires. Fewer people smoke now. But, the number of people dying in fires has not dropped at the same rate as the drop in smoking. Now we need to find the one choice that doesn't explain away this discrepancy. (A) This would show that smoking fires never really killed anyone. (B) * Hard to see how this fits, so it might be right. (C) This is hard to fit too. Mark it. (D) This would make up for any drop in smoking-related fire deaths. (E) This would show why the percentage of deaths has not fallen. (B) * This explains why people might die if they smoke in bed, but it doesn't explain why the number of deaths in fires has not dropped at the same rate as the drop in smoking in general. (C) This actually would show why people are still dying from smoking in bed. Although the general population of smokers has fallen, the kind of people who smoked in bed in the past are still smoking in bed, and their numbers have not dropped as fast as has the general population of smokers.

Conclusion-

We hope this deconstruction has helped you better understand the LSAT. No matter how you prepare for the LSAT, whether using books, a Get Prepped! class, or another company's class, make sure that you first learn the theories behind the test. Then make sure you practice, extensively, with real LSAT questions. There is no other way to do it. We have taught so many students over the years that we know there is no short cut. Don't get frustrated when you get stumped, or run out of time. This is why you practice--to improve.

Good Luck!

The Get Prepped! Staff