

9. V.A-arguments · Verbal arguments: assumptions, alternative causes and evidence direction

Starter Quiz ·

GRE General Test

Name: _____ Score: _____

1. Hypothetical argument: after brighter streetlights were installed, reported burglaries fell from 100 to 70; therefore the lights contributed to a fall in actual burglaries. Which new fact most weakens that inference among these choices?
 - ☐ Burglaries are a serious crime.
 - ☐ Residents prefer brighter streets.
 - ☐ The lights use less energy than the old ones.
 - ☐ Police patrols doubled at the same time and began covering previously unpatrolled streets.
2. Hypothetical argument: after brighter streetlights were installed, reported burglaries fell from 100 to 70; therefore the lights contributed to a fall in actual burglaries. Which fact most strengthens the inference among these choices?
 - ☐ The manufacturer printed its name on the lamps.
 - ☐ The lights were expensive.
 - ☐ Comparable towns with similar prior trends and recording coverage, but no new lights, saw no fall; patrol patterns and other major measured changes were alike.
 - ☐ The town is large.
3. Fictional workshop: registration and attendance at a safety briefing are both listed requirements. Lin is a student. The target conclusion is that Lin meets both listed requirements. Which condition is necessary for that target conclusion?
 - ☐ Lin prefers morning workshops.
 - ☐ All future workshops will use the same rules.
 - ☐ Lin is registered.
 - ☐ Every student likes the workshop.
4. Information related to the topic always strengthens or weakens the argument.
 - ☐ True ☐ False
5. To test whether an assumption is necessary, imagine its _____.

6. Which conclusion permits both streetlights and increased patrols to contribute to the same decline?
 - ☐ Streetlights contributed to the decline.

- ☐ No other factor affected the decline.
 - ☐ Streetlights alone caused the entire decline.
 - ☐ The entire decline must be assigned to one factor only.
7. A fall from 100 recorded burglaries to 70 proves that actual burglaries fell, even with no information about recording coverage.
- ☐ True ☐ False
8. Which feature most directly makes a comparison town useful for evaluating the lighting explanation?
- ☐ It has comparable prior burglary trends and recording coverage, with important other changes assessed.
 - ☐ It has a similar name.
 - ☐ Its lamps have the same paint colour.
 - ☐ It is mentioned in the same newspaper.
9. Fictional workshop: registration and attendance at a safety briefing are both listed requirements. Lin is a student. The target conclusion is that Lin meets both listed requirements. Select all correct statements.
- ☐ Lin's registration is necessary for the target conclusion.
 - ☐ Lin's registration alone guarantees the target conclusion.
 - ☐ Every student must complete both requirements for Lin to complete both.
 - ☐ Lin's registration and briefing attendance together are sufficient for the target conclusion.
- Tick every correct option.*
10. What is the exact negation of "The reporting method did not change"?
- ☐ Every burglary was omitted.
 - ☐ The reporting method changed and caused the entire fall.
 - ☐ The reporting method changed.
 - ☐ The lights had no effect.

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Answers ·

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1. Police patrols doubled at the same time and began covering previously unpatrolled streets.

The patrol change supplies a plausible competing explanation for the decline. It weakens attribution to the lights from the before-and-after count, but does not prove patrols caused the entire change or that lights had no effect.

2. Comparable towns with similar prior trends and recording coverage, but no new lights, saw no fall; patrol patterns and other major measured changes were alike.

A relevant comparison supports the lighting explanation by addressing important differences. It does not guarantee that every possible confounder is absent. The other facts supply no stated burglary-effect link.

3. Lin is registered.

Lin cannot meet both registration and briefing requirements without being registered. This is necessary for the target but does not alone establish briefing attendance; the question does not assert that Lin actually registered.

4. False

Topic relevance alone does not establish evidential direction. The information must bear on the stated inference, its evidence, comparison or an alternative explanation.

5. negation

Use its exact negation: make the candidate statement false without adding a stronger causal, numerical or universal claim. Then test whether the stated reasoning depends on it.

6. Streetlights contributed to the decline.

Contributed allows multiple influences. Alone, entirely and no other factor are stronger claims excluding other contributions.

7. False

The same records can arise from fewer actual incidents or from lower recording coverage. The observation alone does not distinguish those possibilities.

8. It has comparable prior burglary trends and recording coverage, with important other changes assessed.

Relevant prior trends, incident definitions, recording coverage and other changes help assess comparability. Location or appearance alone does not establish it.

9. Lin's registration is necessary for the target conclusion.; Lin's registration and briefing attendance together are sufficient for the target conclusion.

Registration is required but does not settle attendance. Registration and attendance together establish exactly the two listed requirements. A universal claim about every student is stronger than needed.

10. The reporting method changed.

Negation denies no change. It does not by itself add under-recording, a crime effect or an explanation of the entire fall.