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QUESTION 1

Tribal communities in North America believe that their traditional languages are valuable resources that must be maintained. However, these traditional languages can fall into disuse when some of the effects of the majority culture on tribal life serve as barriers between a community and its traditional forms of social, economic, or spiritual interaction. In some communities the barrier has been overcome because people have recognized that language loss is serious and have taken action to prevent it, primarily through community self-teaching.

Before any community can systematically and formally teach a traditional language to its younger members, it must first document the language\\'s grammar; for example, a group of Northern Utes spent two years conducting a thorough analysis and classification of Northern Ute linguistic structures. The grammatical information is then arranged in sequence from the simpler to the more complex types of usage, and methods are devised to present the sequence in ways that will be most useful and appropriate to the culture.

Certain obstacles can stand in the way of developing these teaching methods. One is the difficulty a community may encounter when it attempts to write down elements (particularly the spellings of words) of a language that has been primarily oral for centuries, as is often the case with traditional languages. Sometimes this difficulty can simply be a matter of the lack of acceptable written equivalents for certain sounds in the traditional language: problems arise because of an insistence that every sound in the language have a unique written equivalent ?a desirable but ultimately frustrating condition that no written language has ever fully satisfied.

Another obstacle is dialect. There may be many language traditions in a particular community; which one is to be written down and taught? The Northern Utes decided not to standardize their language, agreeing that various phonetic spellings of words would be accepted as long as their meanings were clear. Although this troubled some community members who favored Western notions of standard language writing or whose training in Western-style linguistics was especially rigid, the lack of standard orthography made sense in the context of the community\\'s needs. Within a year after the adoption of instruction in the Northern Ute language, even elementary school children could write and speak it effectively.

It has been argued that the attempt to write down traditional languages is misguided and unnecessary; after all, in many cases these languages have been transmitted in their oral form since their origins. Defenders of the practice counter that they are writing down their languages precisely because of a general decline in oral traditions, but they concede that languages could be preserved in their oral form if a community made every effort to eschew aspects of the majority culture that make this preservation difficult.

Based on the passage, those who hold the view described in the passage would be most likely to agree with which one of the following statements?

A. Even if left exclusively in oral form, traditional languages are likely to survive.

B. There has been a decline in communication among tribal members in general.

C. Some oral customs do not need to be preserved orally.

D. External influences have little effect on tribal customs.

E. Tribes must focus on establishing a written tradition.

Correct Answer: A

We\\'re asked in this one to locate the sentiment with which certain folks might agree, and the line reference leads us right to the group in question ?it\\'s those critics from the last who think that the whole translation of traditions from the oral to the written form is a waste of time. Well, we know what they think, so all that\\'s left is their reason for their doubt, and we touched on that above: many of these languages have always been oral, so translating them now into written form is "misguided and unnecessary." Evidently, these folks have greater faith in the oral tradition than the tribal leaders

instituting the teaching programs, and don\\'t seem to share their worries that the oral tradition is under serious attack from the majority culture. In arguing that translating the oral traditional languages into written form is unnecessary, they obviously feel that the traditional languages can survive as is, in oral form.

QUESTION 2

The process by which nylon is manufactured releases large amounts of the gas nitrous oxide, which is harmful to the environment. Since the processing of cotton fiber does not release environmentally harmful gases, there would be less environmental damage done if cotton fiber rather than nylon were used to make products such as thread and rope.

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

A. Even if the quantity of nitrous oxide released into the environment decreased, many environmental problems would remain unsolved.

B. Even if only some of the thread and rope that is currently being made from nylon were instead made from cotton fiber, some environmental damage would be avoided.

C. If cotton fiber replaced nylon in the production of thread and rope, there would be a resulting increase in the amount of nylon used in other manufactured products.

D. If the quantity of nylon manufactured annually decreased substantially, the volume of several pollutants that are released into the environment during its manufacture would be reduced.

E. If thread and rope continue to be made from nylon, the production of cotton fiber will not increase as rapidly as it would if all thread and rope were to be made from cotton fiber.

Correct Answer: C

Now we\\'re out to weaken an argument, so it pays to note its components while looking for gaps and possible alternatives. Making nylon involves the release of a gas that damages the environment. Making cotton fiber doesn\\'t release gases that harm the environment, so the author concludes that there would be less environmental damage if cotton were used for certain products instead of nylon. To weaken this, we\\'re looking for something that suggests that switching to cotton for certain products would not necessarily be a boon for the environment.

QUESTION 3

Passage

The Marshmallow Test for Grownups

(1)

Originally conducted by psychologist Walter Mischel in the late 1960s, the Stanford marshmallow test has become a touchstone of developmental psychology. Children at Stanford\\'s Bing Nursery School, aged four to six, were placed in a room furnished only with a table and chair. A single treat, selected by the child, was placed on the table. Each child was told if they waited for 15 minutes before eating the treat, they would be given a second treat. Then they were left alone in the room. Follow-up studies with the children later in adolescence showed a correlation between an ability to wait long enough to obtain a second treat and various forms of life success. And a 2011 fMRI study conducted on 59 original participants ?now in their 40s ?by Cornell\\'s B.J. Casey showed higher levels of brain activity in the prefrontal cortex among those participants who delayed immediate gratification in favor of a greater reward later on. This finding is important because of the research that\\'s emerged on the critical role played by the prefrontal cortex in directing our attention and managing our emotions.

(2)

As adults, we face a version of the marshmallow test nearly every waking minute of every day. We\\'re not tempted by sugary treats, but by our browser tabs, phones, and tablets ?all the devices that connect us to the global delivery system for those blips of information that do to us what marshmallows do to preschoolers.

(3)

Sugary treats tempt us into unhealthy eating habits because the agricultural and commercial systems that meet our nutritional needs today are so vastly different from the environment in which we evolved as a species. Early humans lived in a calorie-poor world, and something like a piece of fruit was both rare and valuable. Our brains developed a response mechanism to these treats that reflected their value ?a surge

of interest and excitement, a feeling of reward and satisfaction ?which we find tremendously pleasurable. But as we\\'ve reshaped the world around us, radically diminishing the cost and effort involved in obtaining calories, we still have the same brains we evolved thousands of years ago. This mismatch is at the heart of why so many of us struggle to resist tempting foods that we know we shouldn\\'t eat.

(4)

A similar process is at work in our response to information. Our formative environment as a species was information-poor as well as calorie-poor. The features of that environment ?specifically the members of our immediate community and our interactions with them ?typically changed rarely and gradually. New information in the form of new community members or new ways of interacting were unusual and notable events that typically signified something of great importance. Just as our brains developed a response mechanism that prized sugary treats, we evolved to pay close attention to new information about the people around us and our interactions with them. But just as the development of industrial agriculture and mass commerce has profoundly altered our caloric environment, global connectivity has profoundly altered our information environment. We are now ceaselessly bombarded with new information about the people around us ?and the definition of "people around us" has fundamentally changed, putting us in touch with more people in an hour than early humans met in their entire lives. All of this poses a critical challenge to our brains ?the adult version of the marshmallow test.

(5)

Not only are we constantly interrupted by alerts, beeps, and buzzes that tell us some new information has arrived, we constantly interrupt ourselves to seek out new information. We pull out our phones while we\\'re in the middle of a conversation with someone. We check our email while we\\'re engaged in a complex task that requires our full concentration. We scan our feeds even though we just checked them a minute ago. There\\'s increasing evidence suggesting that these disruptions make it difficult to do our best work, diminish our productivity, and contribute to a feeling of overwhelm.

(6)

The agricultural and commercial revolutions were clearly net gains for humanity, making it possible for more people to live better lives than ever before. It would be both wrongheaded and fruitless to suggest that we should turn back the clock on these advances. Similarly, the information revolution is helping us to make great strides as a species. But just as we need to be more thoughtful about our caloric consumption, delaying gratification of our impulsive urges in order to eat more nutritiously, we need to be more thoughtful about our information consumption, resisting the allure of the mental equivalent of "junk food" in order to allocate our time and attention most effectively. (This article has been picked from hbr.org and has been edited for use.)

Which one of the following can be reasonably inferred from the marshmallow study?

A. A major proportion of the children who did not wait for the second treat scored much higher on intelligence tests than those that did.

B. A majority of the children who waited for the second treat were at the same levels professionally as were the children

who did not.

C. All the students on whom the experiment was conducted belonged to the roughly the same social status.

D. In its original form, the study tested children on their confidence and interpersonal skills.

E. Most of the children who did not wait for the second treat were relatively poorer at controlling their emotions.

Correct Answer: E

There are two major conclusions drawn from the marshmallow study. Firstly, children who waited for the second treat showed "various forms of life success." Secondly, children who waited for the second treat showed "higher levels of brain activity in the prefrontal cortex." This discovery is significant because "the prefrontal cortex in directing our attention and managing our emotions."

Option [A major proportion of the children who did not wait for...] is incorrect because it contradicts the information given in the passage. If anything, the students who did not wait for the second treat should have been less intelligent than the ones that waited (assuming that intelligence and success are correlated). Option [A majority of the children who waited for ...] is incorrect because it shows that waiting for the second treat has no bearing on professional success.

Option [All the students on whom the experiment was conducted...] is incorrect because the information

about the students and their social class is not mentioned in the passage.

Option [In its original form, the study tested children on their...] is incorrect because in its original form, the

marshmallow test just evaluated children on their willpower or their ability to wait for another treat rather

than just consuming the first.

Hence, it is far-fetched to believe that the confidence and interpersonal skills of students were tested.

Option [Most of the children who did not wait for the second treat...] is correct because children who waited

for the second treat showed more activity in the prefrontal cortex, which is correlated with managing

emotions. Hence, it is fair to infer that those who did not wait for the second treat were poorer at controlling

their emotions.

QUESTION 4

Exactly seven toy-truck models ?F, G, H, J, K, M, and S ?are assembled on seven assembly lines, exactly

one model to a line. The seven lines are arranged side by side and numbered consecutively F through 7.

Assignment of models to lines must meet the following conditions:

F is assembled on a lower-numbered line than J.

M is assembled on the line numbered one lower than the line on which G is assembled.

H is assembled on line 1 or else line 7.

S is assembled on line 4.

If K is assembled on line 2, which one of the following must be true?

A. F is assembled on a lower-numbered line than S.

B. H is assembled on a lower-numbered line than G.

C. J is assembled on a lower-numbered line than H.

D. M is assembled on a lower-numbered line than J.

E. S is assembled on a lower-numbered line than J.

Correct Answer: A

The new piece of information in the stem, that K is in 2, allows us to deduce something about the placement of the "MG" bloc. "MG" must be fit in either 5 and 6, or 6 and 7. Either way, space 6 must be occupied by one of M or G.

QUESTION 5

Some people claim that the reason herbs are not prescribed as drugs by licensed physicians is that the medical effectiveness of herbs is seriously in doubt. No drug can be offered for sale, however, unless it has regulatory-agency approval for medicinal use in specific illnesses or conditions. It costs about $200 million to get regulatory-agency approval for a drug, and only the holder of a patent can expect to recover such large expenses. Although methods of extracting particular substances from herbs can be patented, herbs themselves and their medicinal uses cannot be. Therefore, under the current system licensed physicians cannot recommend the medicinal use of herbs.

The argument depends on the assumption that

A. the medical ineffectiveness of many herbs a streatments for specific illnesses or conditions is well established

B. the only time a substance is properly used as a drug is when it is prescribed as a drug by a licensed physician

C. a licensed physician cannot recommend the medicinal use of an herb unless that herb is offered for sale as a drug

D. some other substances, besides herbs, are not available as drugs because the illnesses they could effectively treat are too uncommon to allow those substances to be marketed profitably as drugs

E. the cost of medical care would be substantially reduced if faster ways of obtaining regulatory-agency approval for new drugs could be found

Correct Answer: C

The author commits a bit of a scope shift early on, one that needs to be repaired by the central assumption. She reports that people are questioning the reason why physicians don\\'t prescribe herbs; they think it\\'s because physicians doubt herbs\\' effectiveness. Next she says "No drug can be offered for sale, however, unless..." -- emphasis ours, to highlight the scope shift -- and the rest of the argument details the seemingly insuperable problems obstructing the offering of drugs for sale. But the issue was sheer prescription, or the word the author later uses, "recommendation." What about, one might ask in response, physicians prescribing free herbs? Couldn\\'t they do so? Not to the author, they couldn\\'t. So she must be assuming that a necessary condition of a physician\\'s prescription be that the herb be offered as a "drug for sale." If option [a licensed physician cannot recommend...] is false -- if a physician can recommend an herb that\\'s not a drug for sale -- then the argument falls apart.