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QUESTION 1

Every year since 1986, some of the world\\'s most daring runners have gathered in the desert of Morocco. They are there to take part in one of the most difficult races in the world. The Marathon of the Sands, as it is called, covers over 125 miles of desert and mountain wilderness. The runners complete the course in fewer than seven days, and they run with their food, clothing, and sleeping bags on their backs. The Marathon of the Sands was founded in 1986 by Patrick Bauer. His idea was to give the runners, who come from all over the world, a special kind of adventure. Most of the runners in this race have found that they form deep friendships with the other runners during their days and nights in the desert. Facing terrible heat and complete exhaustion, they learn much about themselves and each other.

For most of the runners, though, the challenge of the race is the main reason for coming. On the first day, for example, they run fifteen miles across a desert of sand, rocks, and thorny bushes. Few runners finish the day without blistered and raw feet. They also suffer from a lack of water. (They are allowed less than nine quarts of water during each day of the race.) Most of all, they are exhausted when they arrive at the campsite for the night. The second day, the runners are up at 6:00 a.m. Within a few hours, it is 100 degrees F, but the runners do not hesitate. They must cover eighteen miles that day. That night, they rest. They must be ready for the next day\\'s run. On the third day, the runners must climb giant sand dunes- the first they have faced. Dust and sand mix with the runners\\' sweat. Soon their faces are caked with mud. After fifteen miles of these conditions, the runners finally reach their next camp. The race continues like this for four more days. The fourth and fifth days are the worst. On the fourth day, the runners pass through a level stretch and a beautiful, tree-filled oasis, but then, on this and on the next day, they cross more than twenty-one miles of rocks and sand dunes. The temperature soars to 125 degrees F, and many runners cannot make it. Helicopters rush fallen runners to medical help. Runners who make it to the end of the fifth day know that the worst is over. On the sixth day, heat and rocks punish the racers terribly. In the Valley of Dra, the wind picks up and, as the desert heat is thrust against them with great force, they grow more and more exhausted. The seventh day is the last, with only twelve miles to be covered. The dusty, tired, blistered runners set out at daybreak. Near the finish line, children race along with the runners, for everybody has caught the excitement. The ones who have run the whole marathon know they have accomplished what most people could not even dream of. "During the hard moments," says one contestant who has raced here twice, "I\\'d think, `Why am I here?\\' Then I\\'d realize I was there to find my limits."

What is the main idea of this passage?

A. The Marathon of the Sands race tests the limits of human endurance.

B. The runners run at their own pace.

C. The race causes the strong to stumble and the weak to not finish.

D. The seventh day is the hardest day of the race.

E. Every runner runs the race to find their human limits.

Correct Answer: A

QUESTION 2

The television show Henry was not widely watched until it was scheduled for Tuesday evenings immediately after That\\'s Life, the most popular show on television. During the year after the move, Henry was consistently one of the ten most- watched shows on television. Since Henry\\'s recent move to Wednesday evenings, however, it has been watched by far fewer people. We must conclude that Henry was widely watched before the move to Wednesday evenings because it followed That\\'s Life and not because people especially liked it.

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

A. Henry has been on the air for three years, but That\\'s Life has been on the air for only two years.

B. The show that replaced Henry on Tuesdays has persistently had a low number of viewers in the Tuesday time slot.

C. The show that now follows That\\'s Life on Tuesdays has double the number of viewers it had before being moved.

D. After its recent move to Wednesday, Henry was aired at the same time as the second most popular show on television.

E. That\\'s Life was not widely watched during the first year it was aired.

Correct Answer: C

Henry was a bomb until piggybacked with the popular That\\'s Life. Then Henry became popular. Then it was moved to another night and began to tank again. The author\\'s conclusion is the obvious one that Henry\\'s sudden Tuesday night success can be attributed to its following That\\'s Life and not to any merits of its own. Anything that reinforces this general pattern would help strengthen the argument. If option [The show that now follows That\\'s Life on...] is true, and the new show following That\\'s Life has suddenly doubled its ratings, then it seems even more reasonable to believe that the factor governing Henry\\'s popularity was its proximity to That\\'s Life, as the author maintains.

QUESTION 3

Many educators in Canada and the United States advocate multicultural education as a means of achieving multicultural understanding. There are, however, a variety of proposals as to what multicultural education should consist of. The most modest of these proposals holds that schools and colleges should promote multicultural understanding by teaching about other cultures, teaching which proceeds from within the context of the majority culture. Students should learn about other cultures, proponents claim, but examination of these cultures should operate with the methods, perspectives, and values of the majority culture. These values are typically those of liberalism: democracy, tolerance, and equality of persons.

Critics of this first proposal have argued that genuine understanding of other cultures is impossible if the study of other cultures is refracted through the distorting lens of the majority culture\\'s perspective. Not all cultures share liberal values. Their value systems have arisen in often radically different social and historical circumstances, and thus, these critics argue, cannot be understood and adequately appreciated if one insists on approaching them solely from within the majority culture\\'s perspective.

In response to this objection, a second version of multicultural education has developed that differs from the first in holding that multicultural education ought to adopt a neutral stance with respect to the value differences among cultures. The values of one culture should not be standards by which others are judged; each culture should be taken on its own terms. However, the methods of examination, study, and explanation of cultures in this second version of multicultural education are still identifiably Western. They are the methods of anthropology, social psychology, political science, and sociology. They are, that is, methods which derive from the Western scientific perspective and heritage.

Critics of this second form of multicultural education argue as follows: The Western scientific heritage is founded upon an epistemological system that prizes the objective over the subjective, the logical over the intuitive, and the empirically verifiable over the mystical. The methods of social-scientific examination of cultures are thus already value laden; the choice to examine and understand other cultures by these methods involves a commitment to certain values such as objectivity. Thus, the second version of multicultural education is not essentially different from the first. Scientific discourse has a privileged place in Western cultures, but the discourses of myth, tradition, religion, and mystical insight are often the dominant forms of thought and language of non-Western cultures. To insist on trying to understand nonscientific cultures by the methods of Western science is not only distorting, but is also an expression of an attempt to maintain a Eurocentric cultural chauvinism: the chauvinism of science. According to this objection, it is only by adopting the (often nonscientific) perspectives and methods of the cultures studied that real understanding can be achieved.

The version of multicultural education discussed in the first paragraph is described as "modest" most likely because it

A. relies on the least amount of speculation about non-Western cultures

B. calls for the least amount of change in the educational system

C. involves the least amount of Eurocentric cultural chauvinism

D. is the least distorting since it employs several cultural perspectives

E. deviates least from a neutral stance with respect to differences in values

Correct Answer: B

The answer to this Inference question may be somewhat difficult to predict because the author doesn\\'t exactly elaborate upon what "more modest" means. However, once you toss out the four wrong choices, the logic of the one remaining probably makes sense.

QUESTION 4

Because addictive drugs are physically harmful, their use by athletes is never justified. Purists, however, claim that taking massive doses of even such nonaddictive drugs as aspirin and vitamins before competing should also be prohibited because they are unnatural. This is ridiculous; almost everything in sports is unnatural, from high-tech running shoes to padded boxing gloves to highly-specialized bodybuilding machines. Yet, none of these is prohibited on the basis of its being unnatural. Furthermore, we should be attending to far more serious problems that plague modern sports and result in unnecessary deaths and injuries. Therefore, the use of nonaddictive drugs by athletes should not be prohibited.

Which one of the following statements, if true, would be the strongest challenge to the author\\'s conclusion?

A. Massive doses of aspirin and vitamins enhance athletic performance.

B. Addictive drugs are just as unnatural as nonaddictive drugs like aspirin and vitamins.

C. Unnecessary deaths and injuries occur in other walks of life besides modern sports.

D. There would be more unnecessary deaths and injuries if it were not for running shoes, boxing gloves, and bodybuilding machines.

E. Taking massive doses of aspirin or vitamins can be physically harmful.

Correct Answer: E

We begin answering a Weaken question by figuring out the components of the argument. The conclusion is that the use of nonaddictive drugs such as aspirins and vitamins should not be prohibited. Why?

Because nonaddictive drugs are just as unnatural as sporting equipment, and people have no objection to sporting equipment. Furthermore, there are more serious problems than nonaddictive drugs in modern sports that should be addressed -- problems leading to injury and death. One way to weaken the argument is to connect the factor that the author\\'s not concerned about with the one he is: The correct answer will tend to connect nonaddictive drugs in some way to harm. Perhaps you prephrased a weakener along these lines, or if not, hopefully you saw the devastating effect that E., if true, would have on the argument. If the use of nonaddictive drugs by athletes caused injury or death, then nonaddictive drug use would fall squarely into the category of the author\\'s "more serious problems," and the argument to not prohibit such drugs would be weakened.

QUESTION 5

Most scientists who study the physiological effects of alcoholic beverages have assumed that wine, like beer or distilled spirits, is a drink whose only active ingredient is alcohol. Because of this assumption, these scientists have rarely investigated the effects of wine as distinct from other forms of alcoholic beverages. Nevertheless, unlike other alcoholic beverages, wine has for centuries been thought to have healthful effects that these scientists ?who not only make no distinction among wine, beer, and distilled spirits but also study only the excessive or abusive intake of these beverages ?have obscured.

Recently, a small group of researchers has questioned this assumption and investigated the effects of moderate wine consumption. While alcohol has been shown conclusively to have negative physiological effects ?for example, alcohol strongly affects the body\\'s processing of lipids (fats and other substances including cholesterol), causing dangerous increases in the levels of these substances in the blood, increases that are a large contributing factor in the development of premature heart disease ?the researchers found that absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream occurs much more slowly when subjects drink wine than when they drink distilled spirits. More remarkably, it was discovered that deaths due to premature heart disease in the populations of several European countries decreased dramatically as the incidence of moderate wine consumption increased. One preliminary study linked this effect to red wine, but subsequent research has shown identical results whether the wine was white or red. What could explain such apparently healthful effects?

For one thing, the studies show increased activity of a natural clot-breaking compound used by doctors to restore blood flow through blocked vessels in victims of heart disease. In addition, the studies of wine drinkers indicate increased levels of certain compounds that may help to prevent damage from high lipid levels. And although the link between lipid processing and premature heart disease is one of the most important discoveries in modern medicine, in the past 20 years researchers have found several additional important contributing factors. We now know that endothelial cell reactivity (which affects the thickness of the innermost walls of blood vessels) and platelet adhesiveness (which influences the degree to which platelets cause blood to clot) are each linked to the development of premature heart disease. Studies show that wine appears to have ameliorating effects on both of these factors: it decreases the thickness of the innermost walls of blood vessels, and it reduces platelet adhesiveness. One study demonstrated a decrease in platelet adhesiveness among individuals who drank large amounts of grape juice. This finding may be the first step in confirming speculation that the potentially healthful effects of moderate wine intake may derive from the concentration of certain natural compounds found in grapes and not present in other alcoholic beverages.

It can be inferred from the passage that the author would most likely agree with which one of the following statements?

A. Scientists should not attempt to study the possible healthful effects of moderate consumption of beer and distilled spirits.

B. The conclusion that alcohol affects lipid processing should be questioned in light of studies of moderate wine consumption.

C. Moderate consumption of wine made from plums or apples rather than grapes would be unlikely to reduce the risk of premature heart disease.

D. Red wine consumption has a greater effect on reducing death rates from premature heart disease than does white wine consumption.

E. Beer and distilled spirits contain active ingredients other than alcohol whose effects tend to be beneficial.

Correct Answer: C

It can be inferred" and "most likely agree" clearly suggest Inference, which in turn clearly suggests that we will have to work a little harder than in Detail questions to turn up the right response. Prediction seems futile here; let\\'s proceed to the choices.