GMAT Exam Changes 2025 March 5 Verbal Reasoning

Section: GMAT Verbal Reasoning Exams • **Total Questions:** 10 • **Format:** Verified Q&A

1. The passage uses the phrase viscerally unpleasant primarily to

> *In almost every purchasing decision, customers have the option to walk away. So the marketer's basic task is to persuade shoppers to part with their money. For example, retailers have known for years that allowing customers to delay payment can dramatically increase their willingness to buy. One reason delayed payments work is that the time value of money makes future payments less costly than immediate ones. But there is another, less rational basis for this phenomenon. Payments, like all losses, are viscerally unpleasant. So even small delays in payment can soften the immediate sting of parting with money and remove an important barrier to purchase. Yet the customer's aversion to losses offers marketers another strategy. There is overwhelming evidence that presenting customers with a particular option as a default increases the likelihood of that option's being chosen. This is illustrated by a case in which an Italian telecom company succeeded in increasing the acceptance rate of an offer made to customers who called to cancel their existing service. Originally, a script informed the customers that they would receive one hundred free calls if they kept their plan. When the script was reworded to say, We have already credited your account with one hundred calls, how could you use those? many more customers, not wanting to lose free talk time that they felt they already owned, kept their plan. A default, an unsolicited benefit the customer obtains unless the customer rejects it, works partly by instilling a perception of ownership before any purchase takes place, as the pleasure people derive from gains is less intense than the pain from equivalent losses. When we are given something by default, it becomes more valued than it would have been otherwise, and we are more loath to reject it. Defaults work best when decision makers are too indifferent, confused, or conflicted to consider their options. This principle is particularly relevant in a world that is increasingly awash with choices: a default eliminates the need to make a decision. The default, however, must also be a good choice for people. Attempting to mislead customers will ultimately backfire by breeding distrust.*

(A) suggest that consumers make rational purchase decisions even when certain irrational factors are operating in their decision-making processes

(B) suggest that marketers often fail to take into account certain important aspects of consumer behavior

(C) help illustrate the idea that consumers make impulsive purchases even when they may feel the cost is too high

(D) provide evidence of the confusion or inner conflict that can induce consumers to make bad purchasing decisions

(E) help convey the idea that the decision-making processes of consumers who intend to make a purchase are not entirely rational

2. Which of the following, if true, most weakens the support the experimental results provide for the researchers' conclusion?

> *In an experiment, researchers found that, on average, among volunteers with colds, those who consumed more dairy overall during a ten-day period experienced no more sinus congestion overall during the period than did those who consumed less dairy. The researchers concluded from this that dairy consumption does not increase sinus congestion in people with colds.*

(A) During the experiment, the volunteers who were experiencing more sinus congestion than average tended to substantially reduce, or even stop, their dairy consumption as a result.

(B) The volunteers who had regularly consumed more dairy before the experiment began also tended to consume more dairy during the experiment.

(C) During the experiment, volunteers who reduced their dairy consumption typically did not subsequently experience reduced sinus congestion.

(D) Before the experiment began, the volunteers who had habitually consumed less dairy had generally caught colds less frequently, on average.

(E) During the experiment, the sinus congestion of most of the volunteers varied substantially over the ten days even though their dairy consumption did not.

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3. It can be inferred that the author of the passage would probably agree with which of the following statements about France's 1998 decision to implement a 35-hour workweek?

> *Before the widespread acceptance of the efficiency-wage theory, scholars believed that increased worker productivity benefited workers in two ways: higher real wages and/or reduced working hours. According to the efficiency-wage theory, however, the causation can go the other way as well: productivity depends on the real wage paid by the firm. Productivity gains from higher wages result primarily from greater incentives to work coupled with diminished incentives to shirk, and secondarily from employers' ability to raise productivity by using higher wages to reduce turnover, improve morale, and attract superior applicants. Just as an efficiently higher wage may lower per-unit labor costs, so might judiciously shortened workweeks. Most workweek reductions, such as France's 1998 decision to implement a 35-hour workweek, are meant to ameliorate unemployment. While this is a worthy objective, the efficiency-week theory predicts far greater benefits. The theory asserts that an optimal number of hours worked per week will increase the productivity of the labor force for reasons akin to those argued by the efficiency-wage theorists. Moreover, an efficient week can have substantial social and economic benefits: workers will have more time to spend with family, as well as more time to consume a greater volume of goods.*

(A) The decision was unusual among workweek reductions in that it was designed primarily to ameliorate unemployment.

(B) While the decision was motivated by a worthy objective, that objective is an extremely difficult one to realize.

(C) The decision was not made primarily with the view toward taking full advantage of all the effects that a workweek reduction can have.

(D) The rationale underlying the decision reflects mistaken assumptions about how workers typically respond to workweek reductions.

(E) The decision was based on an overestimation of the dangers of unemployment.

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4. The passage offers support for which of the following statements?

> *The average person would probably feel mildly alarmed on hearing that dental fillings contain locked-in stresses that can lead to fracture and to breakage. Eliminating such stresses from materials like dental fillings whenever possible seems highly sensible. However, it is difficult to work a rigid material without introducing such permanent, residual stresses. Most common manufacturing operations such as turning, grinding, and welding can create them. But sometimes residual stresses can be beneficial, and manufacturers may purposely introduce them. The valve springs of automobile engines, for example, are routinely treated by an operation called peening: the bombardment of a part with sand or small beads of metal or glass. Peening imparts a compressive stress field to the surface layer of the material, and this field slows the growth of cracks due to corrosion or local deformation-the field literally forces surface cracks closed. Springs treated in this manner last ten times as long as untreated springs. Many such stress-related effects and the recipes for obtaining them have long been known to machinists and other artisans. What is new today is scientists' ability to measure stress fields directly, rather than inferring their nature from observed warpage and breakage in a process of trial and error. Several trends in engineering design make this new analytical competence extremely important. One of the trends is the proliferation of nontraditional materials. The best way to work a sword blade is known, but no comparable body of lore exists for ceramic transducers or semiconductor wafers or composite airfoils. A second trend is the trimming of safety margins. Because residual stresses can add to the loads a structure must bear, bridges and other load-bearing structures have traditionally been built with several times the strength estimated as necessary to carry the maximum expected load; the lavish use of materials required by this practice is increasingly uneconomic. A third trend is the reduction in scale of many engineered systems. Residual stresses play a much more important role in the microscopic metal parts on the surface of a chip than they do in a thick electrical cable.*

(A) Residual stress in dental fillings is beneficial

(B) Peening is the most commonly used technique to create a beneficial stress field

(C) Nontraditional manufacturing materials do not have residual stresses

(D) Residual stresses are most often introduced into materials through errors in manufacturing processes

(E) Direct analysis of the residual stress in a sword blade would be of little practical value to manufacturers

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5. The passage most strongly suggests that a plant would most likely not be a source of rubber if it

> *No synthetic rubber yet matches natural rubber's resilience and strength. Moreover, synthetic rubber's price is tied to that of oil, from which it is made. Trees traditionally used for rubber, though, grow slowly and must be spaced widely or risk leaf blight, making it extremely difficult to increase production. Thus, a smaller rubber-producing leaf plant has appeal. One possibility is guayule, a desert shrub that produces rubber free of allergenic proteins that is useful in such products as rubber gloves. Desert plants, however, mature slowly-guayule takes two years. Another promising rubber source is Taraxacum kok-saghyz (TKS), a Russian dandelion, a robust, fast-growing plant that can be pulled up for processing and resown easily, potentially yielding two harvests a year. To make TKS usable, German scientist Christian Schulze Gronover is investigating the enzyme, polyphenol oxidase (PPO), that makes TKS's rubber sap coagulate. Coagulation benefits the plant; that's why rubber exists: it evolved to gum up herbivorous insects' mouths. Human users, however, want to delay coagulation to facilitate rubber extraction, so Schulze Gronover developed a technique called RNA interference. This intercepts and destroys the molecular messengers carrying instructions from the PPO gene to make the enzyme. Ultimately, if this approach can be combined with bioengineering leading to higher-rubber-yielding TKS plants, the rubber industry's fortunes will no longer be so closely tied to the price of oil.*

(A) lacked resistance to diseases that afflict trees traditionally used for rubber

(B) could not compete successfully with guayule in desert locales

(C) evolved in areas where herbivorous insects are not very common

(D) possessed allergenic proteins

(E) was generally not considered to be a weed

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6. Which of the following hypothetical situations best serves as an example of the conflict referred to in the highlighted text?

> *Addressing inequities that result from interactions between economic activity and large-scale ecological processes requires a theory of justice that takes into account how those interactions affect relative social position-the distribution of benefits and burdens in a society. For theorist John Rawls, the evaluation of relative social position is based on certain "primary goods"-consisting of rights and liberties, powers and opportunities, and income and wealth. In contrast, Martha Nussbaum bases this evaluation on central human functional capabilities, or conditions that make it possible for people to achieve things, such as "being able to have good health" and "being able to move freely from place to place." While some of Nussbaum's "capabilities" address the same "goods" that concern Rawls, income and wealth play a less central role in her theory. A person's capabilities, Nussbaum argues, are what indicate whether circumstances will allow that person to translate the things he or she has into actual achievements. Nussbaum's approach rightly suggests that identifying injustice in the distribution of benefits and harms that result from human interactions with the environment ultimately requires assessing how environmental conditions affect people's capacities. Such a theory of justice would certainly help societies as they face the real conflict between protecting environmental conditions necessary for basic capabilities and engaging in certain kinds of economic productivity.*

(A) Turbines can convert wind energy to electricity, but many people who reside in windy areas do not have the economic resources or expertise required to make use of this technology.

(B) In some nations with rich reserves of oil, the oil is concentrated in certain regions, and the money generated from its sale is not distributed equally among all the nation's citizens.

(C) Citizens have protested against the construction of a large retail store on a vacant lot because they object to the retailer's employment practices.

(D) People who rely on wetland ecosystems for their food or livelihood receive many more direct benefits from efforts to protect those ecosystems than other people do.

(E) The creation of levees to reduce natural flooding and protect commercial farmland leads to the loss of wetlands farther downstream, resulting in more severe storm surges in coastal towns.

7. The passage most strongly suggests that which of the following statements about rubber is true?

> *No synthetic rubber yet matches natural rubber's resilience and strength. Moreover, synthetic rubber's price is tied to that of oil, from which it is made. Trees traditionally used for rubber, though, grow slowly and must be spaced widely or risk leaf blight, making it extremely difficult to increase production. Thus, a smaller rubber-producing leaf plant has appeal. One possibility is guayule, a desert shrub that produces rubber free of allergenic proteins that is useful in such products as rubber gloves. Desert plants, however, mature slowly-guayule takes two years. Another promising rubber source is Taraxacum kok-saghyz (TKS), a Russian dandelion, a robust, fast-growing plant that can be pulled up for processing and resown easily, potentially yielding two harvests a year. To make TKS usable, German scientist Christian Schulze Gronover is investigating the enzyme, polyphenol oxidase (PPO), that makes TKS's rubber sap coagulate. Coagulation benefits the plant; that's why rubber exists: it evolved to gum up herbivorous insects' mouths. Human users, however, want to delay coagulation to facilitate rubber extraction, so Schulze Gronover developed a technique called RNA interference. This intercepts and destroys the molecular messengers carrying instructions from the PPO gene to make the enzyme. Ultimately, if this approach can be combined with bioengineering leading to higher-rubber-yielding TKS plants, the rubber industry's fortunes will no longer be so closely tied to the price of oil.*

(A) If RNA interference can be combined with a way of increasing rubber yields from TKS, TKS plants will, on average, yield at least as much rubber as guayule plants.

(B) Like rubber produced by guayule, rubber produced by TKS is free of allergenic proteins.

(C) Rubber produced by trees traditionally used for rubber is not likely to be able to meet future demand for rubber.

(D) Yields from trees traditionally used for rubber can be increased by means of RNA interference.

(E) Natural and synthetic rubber cannot be combined to produce a greater resilience and strength than that of synthetic rubber alone.

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8. The passage suggests that the author would agree with which of the following statements regarding the direct measurement of residual stresses?

> *The average person would probably feel mildly alarmed on hearing that dental fillings contain locked-in stresses that can lead to fracture and to breakage. Eliminating such stresses from materials like dental fillings whenever possible seems highly sensible. However, it is difficult to work a rigid material without introducing such permanent, residual stresses. Most common manufacturing operations such as turning, grinding, and welding can create them. But sometimes residual stresses can be beneficial, and manufacturers may purposely introduce them. The valve springs of automobile engines, for example, are routinely treated by an operation called peening: the bombardment of a part with sand or small beads of metal or glass. Peening imparts a compressive stress field to the surface layer of the material, and this field slows the growth of cracks due to corrosion or local deformation-the field literally forces surface cracks closed. Springs treated in this manner last ten times as long as untreated springs. Many such stress-related effects and the recipes for obtaining them have long been known to machinists and other artisans. What is new today is scientists' ability to measure stress fields directly, rather than inferring their nature from observed warpage and breakage in a process of trial and error. Several trends in engineering design make this new analytical competence extremely important. One of the trends is the proliferation of nontraditional materials. The best way to work a sword blade is known, but no comparable body of lore exists for ceramic transducers or semiconductor wafers or composite airfoils. A second trend is the trimming of safety margins. Because residual stresses can add to the loads a structure must bear, bridges and other load-bearing structures have traditionally been built with several times the strength estimated as necessary to carry the maximum expected load; the lavish use of materials required by this practice is increasingly uneconomic. A third trend is the reduction in scale of many engineered systems. Residual stresses play a much more important role in the microscopic metal parts on the surface of a chip than they do in a thick electrical cable.*

(A) Making such measurements will become a routine part of the work of machinists and artisans

(B) Such measurements will facilitate the process of developing reliable and longer-lasting components for tiny electronic systems

(C) Dental fillings subjected to such measurements will last longer than dental fillings whose residual stresses are unknown

(D) As a result of such measurements, manufacturers will for the first time be able to introduce beneficial residual stress into rigid materials

(E) Such measurements will promote modifications in manufacturing processes that will help to eliminate the problem of permanent locked-in stresses

9. The primary purpose of the passage is to

> *In almost every purchasing decision, customers have the option to walk away. So the marketer's basic task is to persuade shoppers to part with their money. For example, retailers have known for years that allowing customers to delay payment can dramatically increase their willingness to buy. One reason delayed payments work is that the time value of money makes future payments less costly than immediate ones. But there is another, less rational basis for this phenomenon. Payments, like all losses, are viscerally unpleasant. So even small delays in payment can soften the immediate sting of parting with money and remove an important barrier to purchase. Yet the customer's aversion to losses offers marketers another strategy. There is overwhelming evidence that presenting customers with a particular option as a default increases the likelihood of that option's being chosen. This is illustrated by a case in which an Italian telecom company succeeded in increasing the acceptance rate of an offer made to customers who called to cancel their existing service. Originally, a script informed the customers that they would receive one hundred free calls if they kept their plan. When the script was reworded to say, We have already credited your account with one hundred calls, how could you use those? many more customers, not wanting to lose free talk time that they felt they already owned, kept their plan. A default, an unsolicited benefit the customer obtains unless the customer rejects it, works partly by instilling a perception of ownership before any purchase takes place, as the pleasure people derive from gains is less intense than the pain from equivalent losses. When we are given something by default, it becomes more valued than it would have been otherwise, and we are more loath to reject it. Defaults work best when decision makers are too indifferent, confused, or conflicted to consider their options. This principle is particularly relevant in a world that is increasingly awash with choices: a default eliminates the need to make a decision. The default, however, must also be a good choice for people. Attempting to mislead customers will ultimately backfire by breeding distrust.*

(A) compare the effectiveness of two different marketing strategies

(B) critique the prevailing views about a particular marketing strategy

(C) describe a strategy marketers can use to help sell their goods or services

(D) alert consumers to marketing strategies that exploit their aversion to loss

(E) describe successful applications of a particular marketing strategy

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10. The statements above would best serve as support for the claim that

> *In 2005, United States sales of compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs)-which use much less energy than conventional bulbs-accounted for less than 5 percent of U.S. lightbulb sales. In 2007-the year the public was bombarded with news of a looming threat of climate change due to by-products of global energy consumption-CFLs accounted for an estimated 20 percent of lightbulbs sold, and companies selling them increased their revenues significantly.*

(A) sales of CFLs would have significantly increased by 2007 due to the reduced amount of energy used

(B) some consumers who began to use CFLs in 2007, or later, did so for environmental reasons

(C) governments did not place sufficient priority on educating the public about the danger of human-caused climate change

(D) advertising was the main factor in helping consumers change their behavior

(E) sellers of CFLs marketed them as a money-saving product rather than as an environmentally friendly product

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