Inferences: logical completion from a text

An inference question asks what most logically follows from the information given



Lesson `rw.infoideas.I3`

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The idea

An inference question asks what most logically follows from the information given. The correct inference is supported by the text and stays within its limits: it does not rely on outside assumptions, does not overstate beyond the evidence, and does not contradict the passage.

What does the text actually establish, and what conclusion does that evidence warrant?

List what the passage states. Choose the option that follows from it without extra assumptions, without overstatement, and without contradiction, and that adds a conclusion rather than restating a fact.

Watch every step

The new bus route reduced average commute times in the neighborhood. Yet ridership on the route remained low throughout the year.

Which choice most logically completes the text? It can be inferred that

- **A.** shorter commute times alone were not enough to attract many riders.
- **B.** the new bus route was the fastest in the entire city. ✗ *unsupported leap*
- **C.** no one ever rode the new bus route. ✗ *overstatement*
- **D.** the route actually increased commute times. ✗ *contradiction*

Why **A** — "shorter commute times alone were not enough to attract. . . ." Select the warranted inference.

Now a harder one

Researchers found that a species of frog changes color more dramatically in environments with many predators than in environments with few.

Which choice most logically completes the text? It can be inferred that

- **A.** the color change likely serves a defensive purpose related to predators.
- **B.** the frogs prefer to live where predators are numerous. ✗ *unsupported leap*
- **C.** the frogs change color by the same amount regardless of predators. ✗ *contradiction*
- **D.** the frogs change color more when predators are numerous. ✗ *restatement-not-inference*

Why **A** — "the color change likely serves a defensive purpose related. . . ." Select the warranted inference.

The method, in one line

Inferences: logical completion from a text

List what the passage states. Choose the option that follows from it without extra assumptions, without overstatement, and without contradiction, and that adds a conclusion rather than restating a fact.

Is it supported by the text alone? Is its strength within the evidence? Does it avoid contradicting the passage? Is it a new conclusion, not a restatement?

Watch out: two traps to dodge

⚠ unsupported leap

Infers something the text gives no basis for, requiring an outside assumption.

⚠ overstatement

Draws a conclusion stronger than the evidence allows (often turning 'low' into 'none' or 'some' into 'all').

Name the trap before you pick — most wrong answers are one of these two.

Try it, then watch the walk-through

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Watch the walk-through