

### **DRILL: STRENGTHENING & WEAKENING ARGUMENTS**

1. The Australian government has pledged significant investment and introduced various measures to protect the Great Barrier Reef, including a \$4.4 billion commitment, phasing out gillnets by 2027, establishing "no fishing" zones, and aiming for a considerable reduction in pollution and carbon emissions. These measures are crucial for the reef's survival and will significantly reduce the threats it faces.

**Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the above argument?**

- A. The majority of the coral bleaching events in the past decade have been attributed to factors other than local fishing and pollution.
- B. A significant portion of the \$4.4 billion investment is allocated for community engagement and education about reef conservation.
- C. The global community is increasing efforts to combat climate change, with many countries setting more ambitious carbon reduction targets.
- D. Previously, the Great Barrier Reef has shown signs of recovery in specific areas of no fishing zones and strict pollution controls.

2. SolTech is a solar energy company known for producing solar panels with exceptionally high efficiency, converting sunlight into electricity at rates higher than the global average. SunPower, another solar energy company, is therefore likely to produce highly efficient solar panels as well.

**Which one of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's argument?**

- A. The government mandates strict efficiency standards for all solar panels produced in the country.
- B. European solar panels are known for their aesthetic design rather than their efficiency.
- C. SunPower specialises in solar battery storage systems rather than solar panels.
- D. SolTech has been a leading solar panel manufacturer for the past decade.

3. In June 2023, OceanGate's submersible, the "Titan", embarked on an expedition to the Titanic wreckage located deep in the North Atlantic Ocean. The craft experienced a catastrophic implosion. Controversially, the Titan was controlled by a repurposed Logitech G F710 Wireless Gamepad, a tool typically used for video gaming. Despite this, similar gaming controller models have been successfully used in military training, bomb disposal, and medical technology. Given these examples of successful implementation, it is not appropriate to directly link the Titan submersible disaster to the use of the gaming controller.

**Which of the following, if true, most weakens the argument above?**

A. OceanGate's technicians, who modified the Logitech G F710 Wireless Gamepad for Titan's use, lacked experience with adjusting gaming controllers for deep-sea navigation.

B. Post-incident revelations pointed to several pre-existing quality issues with Titan, including the lack of certification by any reputable marine group.

C. Acoustic data collected by the US Navy suggested that the Titan submersible suffered a catastrophic internal failure unrelated to navigation.

D. Other deep-sea exploration vessels using a similar Logitech controller reported occasional connection problems during high-pressure, deep-sea navigation.

4. To preserve the integrity and sustainability of culturally significant sites such as Uluru, we must limit the number of tourists. The recent overcrowding at Uluru, before the climbing ban in 2019, showed the environmental and cultural damage excessive tourism can cause. Implementing a cap on visitors would protect these sites, ensuring they remain for future generations while respecting Indigenous Australian cultural heritage. This approach has seen success in other global destinations, safeguarding their cultural and natural resources.

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

A. Restricting tourist numbers has led to improved preservation and visitor experiences at sites similar to Uluru.

B. Tourism provides significant economic benefits to local communities around culturally significant sites, including funding for conservation efforts.

C. Advanced booking systems and visitor education programs have effectively managed tourist impact without limiting numbers.

D. A recent study found that the environmental impact of tourists at Uluru has been minimal since the implementation of stricter visitor guidelines.

5. The Australian education system should significantly increase its investment in video games as a key educational tool. Video games offer an interactive learning experience, enhancing engagement and understanding in subjects ranging from history to mathematics. With Australian students' declining scores in international assessments, innovative methods like educational video games could revolutionise learning, making it more engaging and effective. Some recently released games in 2024 have already demonstrated the potential of combining education with entertainment to enhance learning outcomes.

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

A. Educational video games have been shown to moderately improve cognitive skills and academic performance among Australian students.

B. A significant number of teachers in Australia lack the training to effectively integrate video games into their teaching methods.

C. Many parents believe that video games in education will lead to increased screen time and distract from traditional learning methods.

D. Video games are increasingly being used in UK schools, with positive feedback from both students and educators.

6. **Mrs Woodall:** "The education system in NSW, should shift away from single-sex schooling towards a fully co-educational model. Single-sex schools support outdated gender norms and do not prepare students for the real-world environments that are co-educational and diverse. Students from single-sex schools may struggle with social interactions in mixed-gender settings, such as universities and workplaces, which can hinder their personal and professional development."

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

A. National testing shows that single-sex schools in Sydney's western suburbs achieve higher academic results than their co-educational counterparts.

B. Research has shown that students from single-sex schools have higher self-esteem than their co-educational counterparts.

C. Surveys of university students from single-sex schools report no significant challenges in adapting to co-educational settings, compared to their peers from co-ed schools.

D. Several single-sex schools across NSW have implemented comprehensive programs that challenge gender stereotypes, emphasising to students the importance of equality and inclusivity.

7. A recent study ranked Australian cities according to ten different criteria, including among others, the incidence of crime, cost of living, ease of transportation, and cultural amenities. Since Sydney ranked third overall and Melbourne sixth, we can conclude that Melbourne has a more serious crime problem than Sydney.

**Which of the following, if true, most weakens the argument above?**

A. The cost of living is higher in Melbourne than in Sydney.

B. Sydney ranked higher than Melbourne on seven of the ten criteria.

C. Both Adelaide and Brisbane, which have more serious crime problems than Melbourne, ranked higher than Melbourne on the overall index.

D. Sydney and Melbourne both have more serious crime problems than Canberra, which ranked first in overall desirability.

8. The motor vehicle company Xcelsior Motors has been found to sell cars that do not meet safety standards. They have faked tests and tricked the public into believing that their cars meet the standards.

**Chloe:** "Xcelsior Motors must have made an innocent mistake. After all, the extensive safety testing revealed that their cars met industry standards."

**Which of the following, if true, would most weaken Chloe's claim?**

A. Most Xcelsior Motors cars have a sound safety rating.

B. Xcelsior Motors accidentally used cars with premium safety standards in their tests.

C. An Xcelsior Motors spokesperson admitted to knowingly using different, safer cars to test the safety standards.

D. Safety ratings provide a general rather than precise gauge of safety.

ANSWERS:

- 1.D
- 2.A
- 3.D
- 4.B
- 5.B
- 6.C
- 7.B
- 8.C