
Seeking Critical Thinkers?
Sample Questions

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Questions 1 – 3

If the drinking water in a particular area is naturally low in minerals, sodium fluoride can be added to the water supply in order to help children develop healthy teeth. The following passage is adapted from a magazine article on fluoridation of drinking water.

The pro-fluoride lobby tends to be passionate about fluoridating water supplies because they believe the benefits — in reducing caries¹ — are so self-evident. The anti-fluoride brigade can be just as forceful in putting their concerns, which often reflect mistrust of scientific assurances about the safety of fluoridation.

Ironically, public support for fluoridation seems to have fallen at the same time as caries rates in children have declined — in 1977, 90% of 12-year-old Australian children had caries, compared with 46% in 1994. Water fluoridation can't take all the credit for this improvement, but a comparison of caries rates in Brisbane (the only capital city not to fluoridate water) with fluoridated Townsville highlights its important role.

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¹ Caries: tooth decay

- 1 The passage implies that caries rates
 - A have fallen in Brisbane since 1994.
 - B are higher in adults than in children.
 - C have increased in Brisbane since 1977.
 - D are at an unacceptable level in Townsville.
 - E are higher in Brisbane than in Townsville.

- 2 Which one of the following claims about fluoridation in Australia is supported by evidence presented in the passage?
 - A The anti-flouride lobby denies that fluoridation reduces caries.
 - B The pro-fluoride lobby represents wealthy and powerful interests.
 - C Caries rates in children have declined in most capital cities since 1977.
 - D Advocates of fluoridation place too much trust in scientific assurances.
 - E The number of Australians supporting fluoridation has fallen by 44% since 1977.

- 3 The word 'ironically' (line 5) suggests that the writer was expecting public support for fluoridation to
 - A vary according to people's age and education.
 - B be greater in capital cities than in regional centres.
 - C fall as the incidence of caries in children was reduced.
 - D rise if fluoridation reduced the rate of caries in children.
 - E vary according to the media exposure gained by the pro- and anti-fluoride lobbies.

Question 4

4 Which pair of observations most strongly supports the claim that drug use will be reduced if drugs are legalised?

A

Initially	Subsequently
Drugs illegal Drug use low	Drugs legalised Drug use remains low

B

Initially	Subsequently
Drugs illegal Drug use high	Drugs legalised Drug use increases further

C

Initially	Subsequently
Drugs illegal Drug use high	Drug use becomes legal Drug use drops

D

Initially	Subsequently
Drugs already legal Drug use low	Drug use becomes illegal Drug use remains low

E

Initially	Subsequently
Drugs already legal Drug use high	Drug use becomes illegal Drug use drops

Questions 5 – 7

The following passage is adapted from a work on criminology published in 1941. After reading it, answer the questions below.

It is often said that ‘crime does not pay’, but very few try to discover who it is that crime does not pay. The saying is generally supposed to refer to the criminal, but in reality it refers to that part of the community which pays the taxes. The taxpayer provides the money to pay for jails, prisons and penitentiaries. How much better it would be if we were sufficiently enlightened for such money to be used in training parents and teachers to guide children wisely; to provide adequate means of living; to sort out, before they get into difficulty, those who could never adjust themselves constructively to society; and to place them where they would be under proper supervision; not only to place them under proper supervision but to allow them to develop to the limit of whatever their capacity might be, and to keep them throughout life where they would be protected from society and where society would be protected from them.

- 5 The writer urges that resources be diverted from
- A prevention to cure.
 - B diagnosis to therapy.
 - C the criminal to the victim.
 - D punishment of crime to prevention.
 - E unproductive to productive members of society.
- 6 In quoting the saying ‘*Crime does not pay*’ the writer is
- A expressing regret at an unfortunate trend.
 - B emphasising the need for improved policing.
 - C implying that criminals are generally wealthy.
 - D drawing attention to the economic costs of crime.
 - E encouraging taxpayers to demand heavier sentences.
- 7 Which of the following statements constitutes an **objection** to the writer’s argument?
- A It is unjust to expose vulnerable people to the harsh competitive realities of life.
 - B It is unjust to limit the activities of people who have done no actual harm.
 - C It is unjust to expose the innocent to people who are certain to do harm.
 - D Potential deviants can be identified with complete reliability.
 - E Potential deviants can be rehabilitated given sufficient time.

Seeking Critical Thinkers? ANSWERS

1. **E**
2. **C**
3. **D**
4. **C**
5. **D**
6. **D**
7. **B**