

Supported inferences and evidence

Reading and Writing / Information and Ideas / Inferences / Command of Evidence

Prerequisites: Distinguish observations, assumptions and conclusions

Level: Foundational to intermediate instruction

Coverage: 12 original questions: 1 diagnostic, 3 worked examples, 3 guided, 3 independent, 1 exit ticket and 1 extension. Selected skill coverage, not the complete SAT syllabus.

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Teacher answer edition

Use the diagnostic to identify prerequisites. Model examples before guided practice. Treat the exit ticket as a brief check, not a calibrated mastery score.

Question 1

Some seeds recovered from a dry cave germinated after watering. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. All old seeds can germinate.
- B. At least some recovered seeds remained capable of germination.
- C. The cave receives heavy rain.
- D. Dry storage always preserves seeds.

Answer: B

- A: The result concerns some seeds, not all old seeds.
- B: Successful germination establishes capacity in at least those seeds.
- C: Watering recovered seeds does not establish cave rainfall.
- D: One recovery does not support an always claim.

Question 2

A garden harvested more food this year and planted a larger area. It recorded no yield per area. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. Each square meter produced more food.
- B. Soil fertility increased.
- C. Total harvest increased, but increased yield per area is not established.
- D. Weather improved.

Answer: C

- A: A larger area can explain more total food without higher per-area yield.
- B: No soil measurement establishes a fertility change.
- C: The total increased, while the missing denominator prevents a per-area conclusion.
- D: The passage supplies no weather comparison.

Question 3

Visitors who chose an optional audio guide stayed longer on average than other visitors. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. Guide use caused longer visits.
- B. Every guide user stayed longer than every nonuser.
- C. The guide was compulsory.
- D. The groups differed in average visit length.

Answer: D

- A: Self-selection allows alternative explanations.
- B: Different averages do not establish individual ordering.
- C: Optional directly contradicts compulsory.
- D: The passage explicitly reports an average difference, without establishing cause.

Question 4

A bird species nests in both natural cavities and artificial boxes. In one study, boxes sheltered more nests than cavities. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. The species can use more than one type of nesting site.
- B. It never uses natural cavities.
- C. Boxes always improve survival.
- D. All birds prefer boxes.

Answer: A

A: Nesting in both types establishes flexibility in site use.

B: Natural cavities are explicitly used.

C: Nest counts do not establish survival or an always claim.

D: The study concerns one species and does not measure preference for all birds.

Question 5

Two historians agree on a bridge's completion year but disagree about its designer's overseas travel. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. They disagree on the completion year.
- B. Their disagreement concerns the designer's experience.
- C. Neither studied the bridge.
- D. The designer certainly traveled abroad.

Answer: B

- A: They agree on the year.
- B: The stated disagreement is about travel experience.
- C: Disagreement does not show a lack of study.
- D: The unresolved disagreement does not establish certainty.

Question 6

A detector recorded no signal above its threshold during a trial. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. No phenomenon occurred.
- B. The detector found no signal strong enough to exceed its threshold.
- C. The detector cannot function.
- D. Every future trial will be identical.

Answer: B

A: A signal below the threshold could remain undetected.

B: This preserves the stated detection limit.

C: A negative reading alone does not establish equipment failure.

D: One trial cannot determine all future trials.

Question 7

A survey sampled residents of one town. Most respondents supported a new park. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. Most people in every town support parks.
- B. Every sampled resident supported the park.
- C. A majority of respondents supported this park.
- D. The park will certainly be built.

Answer: C

- A: The sample does not cover every town.
- B: Most is not every.
- C: This matches the measured group and level of support.
- D: Support does not establish the final construction decision.

Question 8

A translation preserves the original's plot but changes several metaphors to fit the new language. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. It changes all story events.
- B. The translator preserved some features while adapting others.
- C. The original had no metaphors.
- D. The translation is more accurate in every respect.

Answer: B

- A: Preserving the plot contradicts changing all events.
- B: Plot preservation and metaphor changes show selective adaptation.
- C: The passage explicitly describes original metaphors.
- D: No overall accuracy comparison appears.

Question 9

The team repeated an experiment three times and observed similar results. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. The results were consistent across these trials.
- B. No future trial can differ.
- C. The explanation is certainly correct.
- D. Every instrument gives the same result.

Answer: A

- A: Similar results in the three trials support this limited consistency claim.
- B: Future outcomes remain unobserved.
- C: Replication alone does not prove a particular explanation.
- D: No comparison across every instrument appears.

Question 10

A species was observed at a higher elevation this year than in earlier records. The passage gives no cause. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. Climate change caused the shift.
- B. All members permanently moved uphill.
- C. The newest recorded location is higher than earlier recorded locations.
- D. The earlier records were false.

Answer: C

- A: The passage does not establish a cause.
- B: One observation does not establish all members or permanence.
- C: This preserves the recorded elevation comparison.
- D: New observations do not invalidate earlier locations.

Question 11

A student improved after using a study app and receiving tutoring during the same month. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. The app alone caused improvement.
- B. Tutoring had no effect.
- C. Improvement occurred while both supports were present.
- D. The app guarantees improvement for everyone.

Answer: C

- A: The simultaneous tutoring prevents attributing the change to the app alone.
- B: No evidence isolates tutoring's effect.
- C: The timing supports co-occurrence without isolating causation.
- D: One case does not establish a universal guarantee.

Question 12

An author notes that two proposed explanations fit the available evidence and further tests could distinguish them. Which conclusion is supported?

- A. One explanation is already proven.
- B. Both explanations are impossible.
- C. Further evidence may help choose between the explanations.
- D. Testing cannot add information.

Answer: C

- A: The passage retains two explanations rather than proving one.
- B: Both currently fit the evidence.
- C: The author explicitly identifies tests that could distinguish them.
- D: The proposed tests could provide distinguishing information.