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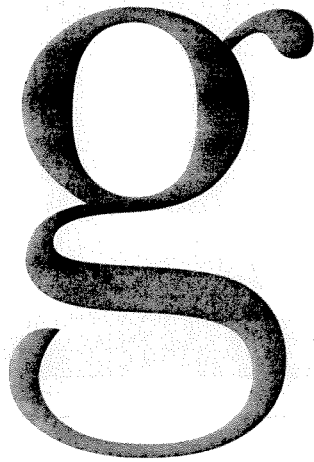
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CRITICAL REASONING & READING COMPREHENSION

Verbal Preparation Guide

This unique guide illustrates how to deconstruct arguments and reading passages using innovative diagramming techniques designed to build speed and improve accuracy. Understanding the underlying structures of arguments and passages is the key to quick reading and precise analysis.

Critical Reasoning and Reading Comprehension GMAT Preparation Guide

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Critical Reasoning

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Chapter 1

of
CRITICAL REASONING &
READING COMPREHENSION

ARGUMENT
STRUCTURE

In This Chapter . . .

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- Identify the Parts of an Argument
- Signal Words for Argument Parts
- Real Arguments: Identifying Premises and Conclusions
- Real Arguments: Not all the Same
- Conclusion in the Question
- 2 Conclusions: Internal vs. External

ARGUMENT STRUCTURE

The Critical Reasoning section of the GMAT involves reading brief arguments (each argument is generally one to three sentences long) and answering questions relating to those arguments.

In order to analyze GMAT arguments, it is important to understand their basic structure:

$$\text{(Assumptions) + Premises = Conclusion}$$

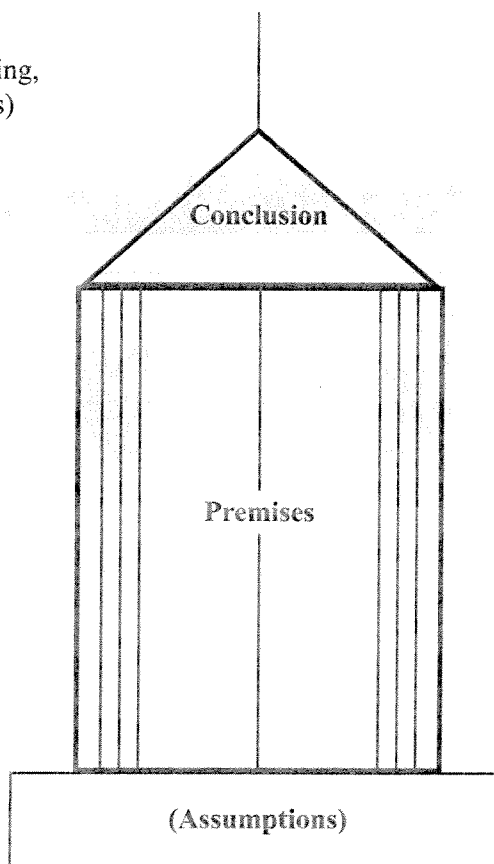
In words, assumptions and premises lead to a conclusion.

ASSUMPTIONS are UNSTATED parts of the argument that are necessary to reach the given conclusion. In the formula above, the word **Assumptions** is put in parentheses to signal that assumptions are NEVER stated in the written argument.

PREMISES are STATED pieces of information or evidence that are necessary to reach the given conclusion.

The main point of the argument is the CONCLUSION, which is logically supported by the assumptions and premises.

Think of the conclusion as the top of a building, supported by the building itself (the premises) and the unseen underground foundation (the assumptions).



Assumptions are never stated in the argument.

Identify the Parts of an Argument

In order to do well on GMAT Critical Reasoning questions, it is essential to be able to identify quickly the parts of an argument. Consider the following argument:

Studying regularly is one factor that has been shown to improve one's performance on the GMAT. Melissa took the GMAT and scored a 500. If she studies several times a week, Melissa can expect to improve her score.

In analyzing an argument, you should first look for the conclusion, which is the main point of the argument. The conclusion is often the last sentence of an argument, but not always. Sometimes the conclusion appears as the first sentence.

Where is the CONCLUSION? The main point of this argument is the last sentence:

If she studies several times a week, Melissa can expect to improve her score.

After finding the conclusion, look for the premises that lead to the conclusion. Premises include ALL the pieces of information in the argument (except the conclusion). Premises provide evidence that supports, or leads to, the conclusion.

Where are the PREMISES? Since everything except the conclusion is considered a premise, each of the first two sentences is a premise.

Premise: **Studying regularly is one factor that has been shown to improve one's performance on the GMAT.**

Premise: **Melissa took the GMAT and scored a 500.**

Usually, all you will need to find are the conclusion and the premises. Sometimes, however, the GMAT will ask you to identify an assumption.

Where are the ASSUMPTIONS? Assumptions are unstated parts of the argument. Therefore, you will NEVER find an assumption stated in an argument. However, assumptions are necessary to reach the given conclusion. One assumption in this argument is that studying several times a week qualifies as studying regularly.

Premises present facts that support the conclusion of the argument.

Signal Words for Argument Parts

One way to recognize the conclusion of an argument is by looking out for certain “signal words” that often precede a conclusion.

The most common conclusion signals on the GMAT are:

Therefore	So
As a result	Consequently
Suggests	Thus
Indicates	Hence
Accordingly	It follows that

Conclusions are also signaled by their strong tone, often marked by words such as **should** (“This law **should** be enacted . . .”).

Premises can also be recognized by certain “signal words.” The most common premise signals on the GMAT are:

Since	Because
Due to	Given that

In order to separate the conclusion from the premises, look for the last deduction made in the argument. The deduction that takes place last (chronologically) is always the conclusion. (This does not necessarily mean that the conclusion will appear last in the passage.)

The conclusion happens last in time, but does not necessarily appear last in the text of the argument.

Real Arguments: Identifying Premises and Conclusions

The best way to understand the structure of GMAT arguments is to practice reading a particular argument, identifying each point as either a premise or the conclusion.

The following examples use arguments taken from real past GMAT exams. These arguments can be found in *The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition* or *The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review*.

A program instituted in a particular state allows parents to prepay their children's future college tuition at current rates. The program then pays the tuition annually for the child at any of the state's public colleges in which the child enrolls. Parents should participate in the program as a means of decreasing the cost of their children's college education.

The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review, #29
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This argument consists of three sentences:

The CONCLUSION of this argument is the last sentence, because this is the main point of the argument. Notice its strong tone through the use of the word **should**.

The first two sentences are therefore PREMISES. Notice that, in this argument, the premises are both facts.

The proposal to hire ten new police officers in Middletown is quite foolish. There is sufficient funding to pay the salaries of the new officers, but not the salaries of additional court and prison employees to process the increased caseload of arrests and convictions that new officers usually generate.

The Official Guide for GMAT Review (11th edition), #120
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This argument consists of two sentences:

The CONCLUSION of this argument is the first sentence, because this is the main point of the argument. Notice its strong tone through the use of the phrase **quite foolish**.

The second sentence contains several PREMISES, which provide important information.

The conclusion is the main point the speaker is trying to argue. Therefore, the conclusion should be *arguable* either way.

Real Arguments: Not all the Same

Not all GMAT arguments can be neatly broken down by sentence into premises and conclusions. Some arguments have a slightly different structure. Consider the following example:

Kale has more nutritional value than spinach. But since collard greens have more nutritional value than lettuce, it follows that kale has more nutritional value than lettuce.

The Official Guide for GMAT Review (11th edition), #107
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This argument consists of two sentences:

The CONCLUSION of this argument is the last part of the second sentence: **it follows that kale has more nutritional value than lettuce**. Notice the conclusion is signaled by the phrase **it follows that**.

The rest of this passage consists of PREMISES. The first sentence is a premise that presents information relating kale to spinach. The first part of the second sentence is a premise that gives information relating collard greens to lettuce.

This example illustrates that a premise and a conclusion can appear together in the same sentence.

Now consider an example that contains NO conclusion:

Increases in the level of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) in the human bloodstream lower bloodstream-cholesterol levels by increasing the body's capacity to rid itself of excess cholesterol. Levels of HDL in the bloodstream of some individuals are significantly increased by a program of regular exercise and weight reduction.

The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review, #2
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This argument consists of two sentences:

Both sentences present factual information; neither presents a compelling main point or claim. Thus, this is an argument that consists of several PREMISES but no real CONCLUSION.

Many GMAT critical reasoning questions ask you to draw a conclusion, make an inference, or explain a situation (chosen from a set of answer choices) based solely on a passage of premises.

Not all GMAT arguments have a stated conclusion. Sometimes the conclusion is in the answer choices.

Conclusion in the Question

Sometimes the conclusion of a particular argument is not in the passage itself, but instead can be found in the question that follows the passage. Consider the following example:

Firms adopting “profit-related-pay” (PRP) contracts pay wages at levels that vary with the firm’s profits. In the metalworking industry last year, firms with PRP contracts in place showed productivity per worker on average 13 percent higher than that of their competitors who used more traditional contracts.

If, on the basis of the evidence above, it is argued that PRP contracts increase worker productivity, which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken that argument?

*The Official Guide for GMAT Review (11th edition), #118
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Notice that the passage itself consists of two sentences, which are both PREMISES. The first premise explains the term **PRP**. The second premise gives statistical information about PRP usage in the metalworking industry.

The **CONCLUSION** of this argument is given in the question: **PRP contracts increase worker productivity**. This is the main point of the argument. (The question goes on to ask for a way to weaken the argument.)

If the language of the question is specific to the argument, look for the conclusion there.

2 Conclusions: Internal vs. External

Sometimes a passage contains TWO conclusions that are opposed to one another. The first conclusion is inside the passage itself—termed the **internal** conclusion. The second conclusion is found in the question. This second conclusion—termed the **external** conclusion—makes its own assessment (usually a negative assessment) of the first conclusion. Take a look at the following example:

A certain mayor has proposed a fee of five dollars per day on private vehicles entering the city, claiming that the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion. The mayor reasons that, since the fee will exceed the cost of round-trip bus fare from many nearby points, many people will switch from using their cars to using the bus.

Which of the following statements, if true, provides the best evidence that the mayor's reasoning is flawed?

*The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review, #39
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The passage focuses on the mayor's proposal to institute a five dollar daily fee on private vehicles entering the city. The mayor's conclusion is found in the first sentence: **the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion.**

The second sentence consists of premises leading up to this conclusion. One premise is the fact that **the fee will exceed the cost of round-trip bus fare from many nearby points.** Another premise is the mayor's claim that **people will switch from using their cars to using the bus.** Note that this claim is not considered the conclusion, because it is not the mayor's final claim. Rather, this claim *leads* to the mayor's ultimate conclusion that the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion.

When we move on to the question that follows the argument, we see that the question makes its own assessment of the mayor's conclusion. The question asks for evidence that **the mayor's reasoning is flawed.** This is an external conclusion—a statement that assesses (negatively, in this case) the conclusion made by the mayor.

Thus, we have an example of a passage that has two competing conclusions. The internal conclusion, found in the argument, is the mayor's ultimate point. The external conclusion, found in the question, is a claim that *comments on* the mayor's conclusion.

Some passages have both an internal conclusion and an external conclusion.

Critical Reasoning

Now that you have completed your study of ARGUMENT STRUCTURE, it is time to test your skills on passages that have actually appeared on real GMAT exams over the past several years.

The problem set that follows is composed of 20 Critical Reasoning passages from two books published by GMAC (Graduate Management Admission Council):

The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition (pages 468-504)

The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review (pages 116-142)

The passages below exhibit a representative sampling of ARGUMENT STRUCTURES. For each passage, complete the following in a notebook:

- (1) Find and write out the conclusion of the passage. Be sure to check both the argument and the question, as occasionally the conclusion can be found in the question. Also, be aware that some passages have both an internal and an external conclusion.
- (2) If the passage does not include a conclusion, indicate this with the words **no given conclusion**.

Note that you are not actually answering these questions! You are only identifying the conclusion of each argument. In subsequent problem sets, you will be answering these questions. For now, however, concentrate only on identifying the conclusion.

The answers to the 20 passages in this exercise can be found on the following page.

Find the Conclusion

11th Edition: 3, 18, 34, 56, 64, 65, 67, 73, 78, 79, 102

Verbal Review: 3, 6, 27, 36, 53, 57, 61, 71, 77

11th Edition:

3. Conclusion: Third sentence: **Thus, in those days . . . prime of life.**
18. Conclusion: Second sentence: **As a result . . . a seat belt.**
34. **No given conclusion**
56. **No given conclusion**
64. Conclusion: End of second sentence: **any fever that . . . the malarial parasite.**
65. Conclusion: First sentence: **Most consumers do . . . equipment they purchase.**
67. Conclusion: Second sentence: **Therefore, the citizens . . . of Town T.**
73. Internal Conclusion: Second sentence: **To attract students to physics . . . visual images.**
External Conclusion: Part of the question: **proposed curriculum will be successful . . . students.**
78. Conclusion: Second sentence: **Therefore, replacement of . . . of typing costs.**
79. Conclusion: First sentence: **An overly centralized . . . came to power.**
102. Conclusion: Second sentence: **If a newlywed . . . remained in Louisiana.**

Verbal Review:

3. Conclusion: First sentence: **A cost-effective . . . 500 miles apart.**
6. Conclusion: Third sentence: **Obviously, the mayor's publicity . . . bus to work.**
27. Conclusion: End of third sentence: **so some alarm boxes are still necessary.**
36. Conclusion: End of second sentence: **scientists have . . . the reproductive cycle.**
53. Conclusion: Part of the Question: **To support a . . . surgical procedures.**
57. **No given conclusion**
61. **No given conclusion**
71. Internal Conclusion: Middle of the first sentence: **Home Dec . . . plans to maximize its profits.**
External Conclusion: Part of the Question: **profits are likely to decline if the plan is instituted.**
77. **No given conclusion**

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Chapter 2

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CRITICAL REASONING &
READING COMPREHENSION

DIAGRAMMING

In This Chapter . . .

S

- How to Diagram an Argument
- Diagramming Real Arguments
- Reorder When Needed
- Conclusion in the Question
- Arguments with No Conclusion
- Faulty Reasoning
- Diagramming Internal and External Conclusions

DIAGRAMMING

The most effective way to improve your Critical Reasoning performance on tough problems is to **DIAGRAM** the argument. The diagramming strategy works for several reasons:

- (1) Diagramming **SAVES** time: Critical Reasoning arguments are short but complex. They are almost always between one and three sentences long. However, reading an argument once is generally not sufficient to understand it. Rereading the argument several times adds little to understanding, while taking up valuable time. On the other hand, diagramming an argument on the first reading makes it readily understandable and eliminates time spent on repeated rereading.
- (2) Diagramming **CATCHES** key details: Many Critical Reasoning arguments hinge on key details. These details are designed to escape your notice during reading. On the other hand, diagramming helps to highlight the key details of an argument. Translating a passage into a diagram forces you to notice and evaluate details.
- (3) Diagramming **FOCUSES** on argument structure: The questions which the GMAT asks about Critical Reasoning passages are almost always related to one of the structural parts of the argument: the premises, the conclusion, or the hidden assumptions. Diagramming involves identifying the structural parts of each argument. Since a question generally asks about one part of an argument, a diagram allows you to focus your attention on that specific element.

Diagramming can help you identify the conclusion of the argument.

How to Diagram an Argument

Diagramming an argument is a simple process that involves translating a passage that you read into something visual that you write. The form of the diagram is NOT essential; it is the act of writing that matters, as it dramatically increases your understanding of the argument. Several principles should guide your diagram:

- (1) Go sentence by sentence. Read one sentence and then rewrite it. Read the next sentence and then rewrite that. DO NOT read the whole passage through once and then begin rewriting. This wastes valuable time.
- (2) A diagram is a LIST, not an elaborate drawing. A good diagram consists of a passage rewritten as a list of brief informative points. Each point gets its own line. Though not necessary for an effective diagram, drawings can be used to illustrate the structure of an argument. For example, some arguments can be effectively diagrammed by placing each point on a timeline or in a comparison chart.
- (3) Rewriting a point does not mean putting it in your own words. When you are rewriting a passage, your goal is to make each point brief. This means eliminating unnecessary words. It does not mean changing important words by paraphrasing them. Feel free to keep the EXACT key wording of the points. Paraphrasing, while sometimes helpful, can also unintentionally eliminate important details.
- (4) Underline key words and details. As you are writing each point, underline any words or details that you think may be key to the argument. In particular, be sure to underline 'boundary words,' which will be discussed later.
- (5) Use arrows for cause and effect. Cause and effect comes up frequently in arguments. Use an arrow to signal that one event causes another event.
- (6) If an argument contains speakers or dates, keep them organized by placing them before a given point with a colon (e.g. **Martha: The GMAT is easy because ...**).
- (7) Label each point in your list as either a premise (P) or the conclusion (C). This is the key to your diagram. Each point MUST be assigned either the letter P or the letter C.
- (8) Number the premises in a logical order, either chronologically or by cause and effect. It is essential that you order the premises, so that you can fully understand the structure and logic of the argument, identify the conclusion, and evaluate potential flaws and assumptions. After you number the premises, assign the last number to the conclusion, since the conclusion is the final point in the argument.

Include all numbers and statistics in your diagram.

Diagramming Real Arguments

Diagramming is a powerful strategy that is best learned by repeated practice with REAL GMAT arguments. The following examples provide model diagrams for arguments taken from real past GMAT exams. These arguments are the same ones used as examples in the previous section covering argument structure. Now, instead of simply analyzing the structure of each passage, we will actually diagram each passage.

All of the following examples use arguments taken from *The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition* or *The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review*.

A program instituted in a particular state allows parents to prepay their children's future college tuition at current rates. The program then pays the tuition annually for the child at any of the state's public colleges in which the child enrolls. Parents should participate in the program as a means of decreasing the cost of their children's college education.

The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review, #29
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- (1) **P** Program: Parents prepay children's future college tuition at current rates
- (2) **P** Program will pay tuition for child at any state public college
- (3) **C** Parents should participate to decrease cost of children's college ed

This diagram is a list of three points. The first two are premises, labeled with the letter P. The third point is the conclusion, labeled with the letter C. Each point uses essentially the same wording as that of the original passage. The only change is that the points eliminate unnecessary words from the passage, and some use abbreviations.

Notice that key words and details are underlined. In particular, the specific boundary of the program—**any state public college**—is underlined. The specific reason given in the conclusion—**to decrease cost**—is underlined as well.

Also notice that the points are numbered in a logical order. FIRST, parents prepay tuition; only THEN will the program pay for the child to attend a state public college. THEREFORE, these things being true, parents should participate. Note that the conclusion should always be numbered last.

Identify each point as either a premise or a conclusion.

Reorder When Needed

Often, the logical order of the premises is different from the order in which they appear in the text. When this is the case, you can write them as they appear in the text and then number them more logically afterwards.

Consider the argument below:

The proposal to hire ten new police officers in Middletown is quite foolish. There is sufficient funding to pay the salaries of the new officers, but not the salaries of additional court and prison employees to process the increased caseload of arrests and convictions that new officers usually generate.

*The Official Guide for GMAT Review (11th edition), #120
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The conclusion can appear at the beginning of the argument.

- (4) **C** Middletown Proposal to hire 10 new police officers is foolish
- (1) **P** There is funding for new officers
- (3) **P** There is not funding for additional workers needed for bigger caseload
- (2) **P** New officers usually generate increased caseload of arrests and convictions

Notice that the second sentence has been divided into 3 points (all premises). The key to successful diagramming is giving each point its own line. Assign numbers to rearrange the order of the points logically, always ending with the conclusion.

Words like THEREFORE, HOWEVER, AND, and BUT can help you logically order the argument and identify the conclusion. You will also be able to locate gaps in the argument. **There is funding for new officers; HOWEVER, these new officers will generate an increased caseload, AND there is not funding for additional workers to process this increased caseload. THEREFORE, the proposal is foolish.** Even though the conclusion is the first sentence in the passage, it is numbered last, since it hinges upon the logic provided in the premises.

When you diagram on the GMAT, you do not need to rewrite the points in order. Simply assigning them numbers will help you to make sense of the chronology or logical order.

Conclusion in the Question

Sometimes, the conclusion of the argument is in the question itself. When the language of the question is specific to the situation described in the argument, this can often be a clue that the conclusion is in the question.

Consider this argument:

Firms adopting “profit-related-pay” (PRP) contracts pay wages at levels that vary with the firm's profits. In the metalworking industry last year, firms with PRP contracts in place showed productivity per worker on average 13 percent higher than that of their competitors who used more traditional contracts.

If, on the basis of the evidence above, it is argued that PRP contracts increase worker productivity, which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken that argument?

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- (1) **P** Firms adopting PRP contracts pay wages that vary with firm's profits
- (2) **P** Metal: PRP firms showed 13% higher worker productivity vs. non-PRP firms
- (3) **C** PRP contracts increase worker productivity

Notice how the question contains language such as **PRP contracts** and **worker productivity**. This should indicate to you that the conclusion may be contained within the question. Be sure to include the conclusion in your diagram even when it is located in the question.

Be sure to include all the key details in your diagram.

Arguments with No Conclusion

The conclusion of the argument is not always present. Sometimes, you are asked to select the correct conclusion from among the answer choices. In these arguments, simply diagram the premises. This will make it easier for you to identify the conclusion later.

Consider this argument:

Increases in the level of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) in the human bloodstream lower bloodstream-cholesterol levels by increasing the body's capacity to rid itself of excess cholesterol. Levels of HDL in the bloodstream of some individuals are significantly increased by a program of regular exercise and weight reduction.

Use arrows to show cause and effect in your diagram.

*The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review, #2
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- (3) **P** Increase in level of HDL in blood → lowers blood cholesterol
- (2) **P** HDL increases body's capacity to get rid of excess cholesterol
- (1) **P** Regular exercise + weight reduction → increase HDL level in some people

Note that this passage consists solely of premises without a conclusion. All of the points are statements of fact; none are arguable. No claim seems to be made at all. Notice, as well, that the arrow is used as a quick way to show that one event causes another event. Finally, notice that the word **some** is underlined, as it provides an important boundary for that premise.

We have reordered these premises by assigning numbers to the them. Exercise and weight reduction increase the levels of HDL in some people. This is significant because HDL helps the body get rid of cholesterol. Therefore, increased HDL lowers a person's cholesterol. Ordering the premises in the argument will help us to identify the logical conclusion from among the five answer choices.

Faulty Reasoning

As you diagram, you may notice flaws in the argument structure. For example, the premises may not lead directly to the conclusion, or there may be a clear gap in the reasoning. This is something that the GMAT question relating to this argument will address. It is not something you should worry about in your diagram. The purpose of the diagram is simply to list (not evaluate) the given information.

Consider this argument:

Kale has more nutritional value than spinach. But since collard greens have more nutritional value than lettuce, it follows that kale has more nutritional value than lettuce.

*The Official Guide for GMAT Review (11th edition), #107
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- (1) P kale > spinach
- (2) P collard greens > lettuce
- (3) C kale > lettuce

In this example, the expression **more nutritional value** has been replaced with the shorthand mathematical symbol >. Notice that the last point—**kale > lettuce**—is labeled as the conclusion because of the signal words **it follows that**.

It seems clear that the two premises in this passage don't necessarily lead to the given conclusion. Diagramming can help you become aware of the flaws in the argument's reasoning, so that you can better answer the question asked about the argument.

Diagramming Internal and External Conclusions

Let's look at a final argument:

A certain mayor has proposed a fee of five dollars per day on private vehicles entering the city, claiming that the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion. The mayor reasons that, since the fee will exceed the cost of round-trip bus fare from many nearby points, many people will switch from using their cars to using the bus.

Which of the following statements, if true, provides the best evidence that the mayor's reasoning is flawed?

*The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review, #39
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Diagram the argument first; this will help you evaluate the reasoning later.

Here is a diagram for the preceding argument:

- (1) **P** Mayor: Proposed a \$5 fee per day on private vehicles entering the city
- (4) **IC** The fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion
- (2) **P** Fee will exceed the cost of round-trip bus fare from many nearby points
- (3) **P** Many people will switch from using their cars to using the bus
- (5) **EC** The mayor's reasoning is flawed

Notice that the words **private** and **entering** are underlined to highlight the boundaries of the mayor's proposal. The fee is only on private vehicles (as opposed to public) and is only assessed when these vehicles enter the city (as opposed to when they exit the city).

The words **alleviate** and **many** are also underlined because they limit the scope of the mayor's claims. The mayor does not claim that the traffic congestion will end *completely*, only that it will be **alleviated**. The mayor does not claim that *everyone* will switch from using their cars to using the bus, only that **many** people will switch.

In assigning numbers to each of the points in the argument, consider the most logical way for the claims to be ordered. One potentially confusing issue here is that the mayor makes two claims. The mayor claims that **the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion** and that **many people will switch from using their cars to using the bus**. In trying to determine which of these is the mayor's ultimate claim—the conclusion—consider which of the following orderings is more logical:

The fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion.
THEREFORE, many people will switch from using their cars to using the bus.

OR

Many people will switch from using their cars to using the bus.
THEREFORE, the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion.

Clearly, the second of these two options is more logical. Thus, the mayor's claim that many people will switch from using their cars to using the bus is a premise leading to the mayor's conclusion that the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion.

Beyond the mayor's conclusion that **the fee will alleviate the city's traffic congestion**, there is another conclusion that is found in the question that follows the passage. This conclusion makes the assessment that **the mayor's reasoning is flawed**. The mayor's conclusion is labeled **IC** for *internal conclusion*, while the conclusion in the question is labeled **EC** for *external conclusion*.

Number your diagram to make the structure of the argument more clear.

Critical Reasoning

Now that you have completed your study of DIAGRAMMING, it is time to test your skills on passages that have actually appeared on real GMAT exams over the past several years.

The problem set that follows is composed of 20 Critical Reasoning passages from two books published by GMAC (Graduate Management Admission Council):

The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition (pages 468-504)

The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review (pages 116-142)

The passages below exhibit a representative sampling of argument structures. These are the same passages used in the previous problem set. Now, however, instead of simply locating the conclusion of the passage, you will be diagramming each passage.

For each passage, complete the following in a notebook:

- (1) Diagram each passage, sentence by sentence, using as guides the diagramming guidelines and model examples given in the previous pages.
- (2) Be sure your diagram is in the form of a list and includes:
 - One point per line, labeled as P or C
 - Underlined key words (especially details and boundary words)
- (3) Number your listed points in a logical order with the conclusion at the end.
- (4) Time yourself and aim to complete each diagram in approximately 60 to 90 seconds (although your first few diagrams will probably take considerably longer).

Note that you are not actually answering these questions! You are only diagramming them. In subsequent problem sets, you will be answering these questions. For now, however, concentrate only on becoming a diagramming expert.

Although diagrams will vary, model answers to the 20 passages in this problem set can be found on the following pages.

Diagramming

11th Edition: 3, 18, 34, 56, 64, 65, 67, 73, 78, 79, 102

Verbal Review: 3, 6, 27, 36, 53, 57, 61, 71, 77

11th Edition:

3:

- (1) **P** Life expectancy: average age at death of live-born population
- (2) **P** Mid-19th cent: life expect in N. Am = 40 yrs
- (3) **P** Now it is nearly 80 yrs
- (4) **C** In those days, people were considered old at age we now consider prime of life

18:

- (1) **P** Opponents of mandatory seat belt laws for drivers and passengers:
In free society people have right to risks as long as risks don't harm others
- (2) **C** Each person should decide whether or not to wear a seat belt

34:

- (1) **P** Past 3 years: two company divisions performed w/great consistency
- (2) **P** Pharmaceuticals: accounts for 20% dollar sales and 40% profits
- (3) **P** Chemicals: accounts for 80% dollar sales and 60% profits

56:

- (2) **P** Social scientists are underrep on advisory councils of NIH
- (1) **P** Councils advise NIH directors and recommend policy
- (3) **P** Underrep of soc scientists → lack of NIH financial support for research in soc sciences

64:

- (1) P Red blood cells w/malarial parasite are removed from body after 120 days
- (2) P Malarial parasite cannot travel to new gen of red blood cells
- (3) C Fever in person more than 120 days after moving to malaria-free region is not due to malarial parasite

65:

- (4) C Most consumers do not get much use out of sports equipment they buy
- (1) P 17% of US adults own jogging shoes
- (2) P Only 45% of j-shoe owners jog more than once/year
- (3) P Only 17% of j-shoe owners jog more than once/week

67:

- (1) P More newspapers are sold in Town S than sold in Town T
- (2) C Town S citizens are better informed re: world events than Town T citizens

73:

- (1) P Local board of ed: current phys curric has little relevance to today's world → phys classes attract few h.s. students
- (2) IC Board: curric that emphasizes phys principles involved in producing + analyzing visual images will attract students to phys classes
- (3) EC Proposed curric will be successful in attracting students

78:

- (1) **P** EFCO keyboard places most used keys nearest typists' strongest fingers
- (2) **P** Result: Faster typing + less fatigue
- (3) **C** Replace standard with EFCO → immediate reduction in typing costs

79:

- (3) **C** Overly centralized economy (not climate changes) → poor agric prod in Country X since new gov came to power
- (1) **P** Neighboring Country Y has experienced same climatic conditions as Country X
- (2) **P** Agric prod in Country Y has been rising

102:

- (1) **P** Average life expectancy for U.S. pop as a whole = 73.9 yrs
- (2) **P** Children born in Hawaii = 77 yr average
- (3) **P** Children born in Louisiana = 71.7 yr average
- (4) **C** If a couple from L has children born in H, the children can expect to live longer than if they were born in L

Verbal Review:

3:

- (3) **C** Cost-effective solution to airport congestion: high speed ground transport between major cities 200-500 miles apart
- (1) **P** Ground transport plan would cost less than expanding airports
- (2) **P** Ground transport plan would reduce # planes clogging airports + airways

6:

- (1) P Mayor's bus campaign began 6 months ago
- (2) P Since then morning car traffic in midtown has decreased 7%
- (3) P Since then, 7% increase in bus riders to midtown
- (4) C Mayor has convinced people to take bus (not cars) to work

27:

- (1) P Mayor to deactivate city fire alarm boxes since most calls from them are false
- (2) P Mayor: most people have access to public/private phones so boxes not needed
- (3) P Commercial district has greatest risk of fire, and few res, few public phones
- (4) C Editorial: alarm boxes are still necessary

36:

- (1) P 20 years after ER Dam was built: none of 8 native species are still reproducing adequately in river below dam
- (2) P Dam reduced range of water temp from 50 to 6
- (3) C Scientists: Rising water temp involved in signaling to native species to begin reproducing

53:

- (1) P Great geographical variation in frequency of many surgical procedures
- (2) P Variation: up to tenfold per 100,000 in #s of hys, prost, tons
- (3) C Much of variation is due to unnecessary surgical procedures

57:

- (1) P Meteorite explosion in Siberia had force of 12 MT nuclear blast
- (2) P Such explosions in Earth atm occur once per century
- (3) P Highly automated computer controlled systems have unpredictable response to unexpected circumstances

61:

- (3) P Tobacco industry is profitable and projections say it will remain so
- (1) P In US this year: total amount of tobacco sold by farmers has increased
- (2) P In US this year: # of adults who smoke has decreased

71:

- (1) P Postage rates are rising
- (5) IC HD plans to maximize profits
- (2) P HD plans to cut number of issues per year in half
- (3) P Quality + number of articles, and subscription price will not change
- (4) P Market research: Plan will not affect # of subscribers or advertisers
- (6) EC If plan is instituted, HD profits are likely to decline

77:

- (1) P Parasitic wasps lay eggs directly into eggs of host
- (2) P Wasps lay eggs in exactly right # given the size of host egg
- (3) P If too many eggs in host → wasp babies compete to death for food + space
- (4) P If too few eggs in host → part of host egg would decay killing wasp babies