

## **GRE AWA Practice Paper 4**

### **GRE Issue Sample Essay**

#### **1. Issue**

It is more harmful to compromise one's own beliefs than to adhere to them.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

#### **2. Issue**

Claim: Major policy decisions should always be left to politicians and other government experts.

Reason: Politicians and other government experts are more informed and thus have better judgment and perspective than do members of the general public.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim and the reason on which that claim is based.

#### **3. Issue**

Educational institutions should actively encourage their students to choose fields of study that will prepare them for lucrative careers.

Write a response in which you discuss your views on the policy and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider the possible consequences of implementing the policy and explain how these consequences shape your position.

#### **4. Issue**

"True beauty is found not in the exceptional but in the commonplace."

Write an essay in which you take a position on the statement above. In developing and supporting your essay, consider instances in which the statement does and does not hold true.

#### **5. Issue**

“When someone achieves greatness in any field such as the arts, science, politics, or business that person’s achievements are more important than any of his or her personal faults.”

**6. Issue**

All college and university students would benefit from spending at least one semester studying in a foreign country.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

**7. Issue**

We learn our most valuable lessons in life from struggling with our limitations rather than from enjoying our successes.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim. In developing and supporting your position, be sure to address the most compelling reasons and/or examples that could be used to challenge your position.

**8. Issue**

The best way to solve environmental problems caused by consumer-generated waste is for towns and cities to impose strict limits on the amount of trash they will accept from each household.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim. In developing and supporting your position, be sure to address the most compelling reasons and/or examples that could be used to challenge your position.

**9. Issue**

All college and university students would benefit from spending at least one semester studying in a foreign country.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

**10. Issue**

We learn our most valuable lessons in life from struggling with our limitations rather than from enjoying our successes.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim. In developing and supporting your position, be sure to address the most compelling reasons and/or examples that could be used to challenge your position.

## **GRE Argument Sample Essay**

### **1. Argument**

The following appeared in a letter to the editor of a Relannian newspaper.

Industry analysts report that the number of dairy farms in Relanna has increased by 25 percent over the last decade. Also, recent innovations in milking technology make it possible for farmers to significantly increase the efficiency of the milking process, allowing them to collect more milk in less time with minimal human intervention. In fact, data from the Relannian Department of Agriculture indicate that labor costs at the majority of Relannian dairy farms are actually lower now than they were ten years ago. Despite increased efficiency and lower labor costs, a carton of cream — a dairy product made from milk — at the local food market costs twice as much as it did two years ago. The only explanation for this dramatic price increase is that farmers are inflating the price of cream to increase their profits.

Write a response in which you discuss one or more alternative explanations that could rival the proposed explanation and explain how your explanation(s) can plausibly account for the facts presented in the argument.

### **2. Argument**

Archaeologists have long thought that an artifact called the pemchint was used by the Dodecan people solely as a musical instrument. Pemchints consist of hollowed pieces of bone, shell, or wood that are tied together with long straps. When whirled in the air, the pemchints create pleasant tones. Until recently, pemchints were found only at locations known to be used for Dodecan rituals and celebrations. Additionally, they were always excavated in proximity to other musical artifacts. Recently, however, a pemchint was found along with Dodecan hunters' tools located miles from the nearest known Dodecan settlement, while no other music-related objects were found in the area. Clearly, then, the pemchint was used by Dodecan hunters, who most probably used the sounds to repel dangerous wildlife.

Write a response in which you discuss one or more alternative explanations that could rival the proposed explanation and explain how your explanation(s) can plausibly account for the facts presented in the argument.

### **3. Argument**

Several recent studies have shown a link between health and stair usage. One recently completed study shows that people who live in stairs-only apartment buildings (that is, buildings without elevators) live an average of three years longer than do people who live in buildings with both elevators and stairs. A second study shows that elderly residents of buildings with elevators make, on average, twice as many visits to doctors each year as do residents of buildings without elevators. Furthermore, several doctor's offices are reporting that residents of stairs-only buildings scored higher than average on questionnaires administered to new patients, in which the patients were asked to rate several aspects of their own health (e.g., fitness, sleep quality, susceptibility to injury, etc.). The clearest explanation for these findings is that the moderate daily exercise required of residents who must use the stairs instead of elevators increases people's health and longevity.

Write a response in which you discuss one or more alternative explanations that could rival the proposed explanation and explain how your explanation(s) can plausibly account for the facts presented in the argument.

### **4. Argument**

*The director of the International Health Foundation recently released this announcement:*

*"A new medical test that allows the early detection of a particular disease will prevent the deaths of people all over the world who would otherwise die from the disease. The test has been extremely effective in allowing doctors to diagnose the disease six months to a year before it would have been spotted by conventional means. As soon as we can institute this test as a routine procedure in hospitals around the world, the death rate from this disease will plummet."*

Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on the assumptions and what the implications are if the assumptions prove unwarranted.

### **5. Argument**

The following appeared in a memorandum written by the vice president of Nature's Way, a chain of stores selling healthy food and other health-related products.

"Previous experience has shown that our stores are most profitable in areas where residents are highly concerned with leading healthy lives. We should therefore build our next new store in Plainsville, which has many such residents. Plainsville merchants report that sales of running shoes and exercise clothing are at all-time highs. The local health club, which nearly closed five years ago due to lack of business, has more members than ever, and the weight training and aerobics classes are always full. We can even anticipate a new generation of customers: Plainsville's schoolchildren

are required to participate in a 'fitness for life' program, which emphasizes the benefits of regular exercise at an early age."

### **6. Argument**

The following appeared in the editorial section of a national news magazine:

"The rating system for electronic games is similar to the movie rating system in that it provides consumers with a quick reference so that they can determine if the subject matter and contents are appropriate. This electronic game rating system is not working because it is self-regulated and the fines for violating the rating system are nominal. As a result, an independent body should oversee the game industry and companies that knowingly violate the rating system should be prohibited from releasing a game for two years."

Discuss how well reasoned you find this argument. Point out flaws in the argument's logic and analyze the argument's underlying assumptions. In addition, evaluate how supporting evidence is used and what evidence might counter the argument's conclusion. You may also discuss what additional evidence could be used to strengthen the argument or what changes would make the argument more logically sound.

### **7. Argument**

The following appeared in a memo from a vice president of Quiot Manufacturing.

"During the past year, Quiot Manufacturing had 30 percent more on-the-job accidents than at the nearby Panoply Industries plant, where the work shifts are one hour shorter than ours. Experts say that significant contributing factors in many on-the-job accidents are fatigue and sleep deprivation among workers. Therefore, to reduce the number of on-the-job accidents at Quiot and thereby increase productivity, we should shorten each of our three work shifts by one hour so that employees will get adequate amounts of sleep."

*Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on these assumptions and what the implications are for the argument if the assumptions prove unwarranted.*

### **8. Argument**

The following appeared in a memo from the new vice president of Sartorian, a company that manufactures men's clothing.

"Five years ago, at a time when we had difficulties in obtaining reliable supplies of high-quality wool fabric, we discontinued production of our alpaca overcoat. Now that we have a new fabric supplier, we should resume production. This coat should sell very well: since we have not offered an alpaca overcoat for five years and since our major competitor no longer makes an alpaca overcoat, there will be pent-up customer demand. Also, since the price of most types of clothing has increased in each of the past five years,

customers should be willing to pay significantly higher prices for alpaca overcoats than they did five years ago, and our company profits will increase.”

*Write a response in which you discuss what specific evidence is needed to evaluate the argument and explain how the evidence would weaken or strengthen the argument.*

### **9. Argument**

The following appeared in a letter from a firm providing investment advice to a client.

“Homes in the northeastern United States, where winters are typically cold, have traditionally used oil as their major fuel for heating. Last year that region experienced twenty days with below-average temperatures, and local weather forecasters throughout the region predict that this weather pattern will continue for several more years. Furthermore, many new homes have been built in this region during the past year. Based on these developments, we predict a large increase in the demand for heating oil. Therefore, we recommend investment in Consolidated Industries, one of whose major business operations is the retail sale of home heating oil.”

*Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation and the argument on which it is based are reasonable. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.*

### **10. Argument**

The following appeared in a memo from a vice president of Quiot Manufacturing.

“During the past year, Quiot Manufacturing had 30 percent more on-the-job accidents than at the nearby Panoply Industries plant, where the work shifts are one hour shorter than ours. Experts say that significant contributing factors in many on-the-job accidents are fatigue and sleep deprivation among workers. Therefore, to reduce the number of on-the-job accidents at Quiot and thereby increase productivity, we should shorten each of our three work shifts by one hour so that employees will get adequate amounts of sleep.”

*Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on these assumptions and what the implications are for the argument if the assumptions prove unwarranted.*