

Question 1

In the earliest stages of common law, a party could have their case heard by a judge only upon the payment of a fee to the court, and then only if the case fit into one of the forms for which there existed a writ. At first the number of such formalized cases of action was very small, but judges invented new forms which brought more cases and greater revenues.

Which of the following conclusions is most strongly suggested by the paragraph above?

1. The first common law decisions were inconsistent with one another and did not form a coherent body of law.
2. Early judges often decided cases in an arbitrary and haphazard manner.
3. In most early cases, the plaintiff rather than the defendant prevailed.
4. One of the motivating forces for the early expansion in judicial power was economic considerations.

Question 2

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the recommendation and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, describe specific circumstances in which adopting the recommendation would or would not be advantageous and explain how these examples shape your position.

Question 3

The following is a recommendation from the Board of Directors at a bookstore.

We recommend that this bookstore open a café. This bookstore has been in business for over twenty years and has a large customer base due to its wide selection of books. Opening the café would obviously attract more customers. We could open space for the café by closing the children's book section, which will most likely become less profitable due to a recent national census showing a significant decline in the population under age ten. Opening a café will allow our store to attract more customers and compete with rival bookstores that recently opened their own cafes.

Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation is likely to have the predicted result. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.

Question 4

The best ideas arise from a passionate interest in commonplace things.

Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement above 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 those considerations shape your position.

Question 5

The argument to be analyzed is as follows:

Hospital statistics regarding people who go to the emergency room after roller-skating accidents indicate the need for more protective equipment. Within that group of people, 75 percent of those who had accidents in streets or parking lots had not been wearing any protective clothing (helmets, knee pads, etc.) or any light-reflecting material (clip-on lights, glow-in-the-dark wrist pads, etc.). Clearly, the statistics indicate that by investing in high-quality protective gear and reflective equipment, roller skaters will greatly reduce their risk of being severely injured in an accident.

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