

CONCLUSION
ADVANCED LEVEL

Drawing a conclusion means arriving at a reasonable decision justified by the stated evidence. People can draw an accurate conclusion from a statement, a paragraph, or a longer piece of writing only if they are "critical readers" (careful and thoughtful readers). They must think about what they have read and draw the conclusion supported by the facts and the intentions of the author.

Now read the following passage and determine afterwards which statement is the conclusion.

There are several ways a smoker could save money by quitting his smoking habit. First, money can accumulate by not spending it on cigarettes. In addition, money can also accumulate by not spending it on cold remedies and health care because smokers tend to suffer more illnesses. Dow Chemical has found that the average smoker took 5.5 more absentee days and eight more disability days than the average non-smoker. Also, money could be saved on life insurance. Smokers must pay more for life insurance because a smoker is about twice as likely to die prematurely as a nonsmoker.

- A. The average smoker takes more absentee days and more disability days than the average non-smoker.
- B. Smoking is detrimental to a person's health.
- C. Non-smokers pay less for their life insurance than smokers do.

If you chose conclusion for A, you are on the right track. It is supported by the direct facts from the paragraph: "the average smoker took 5.5 more absentee days and eight more disability days than the average non-smoker." It does not reflect the consideration of any moral overtones or ethical decisions. Nor does it reflect the opinions of the author.

Read the following passages. After the passage, select the letter of the statement which is the conclusion that could be drawn.

I. "These two guys kidnapped a girl, and I've been following them," Johnny started to explain. "If you call down to the Costa Mesa area, you'll find out what happened to the girl who was in their car."

But with his long, windblown hair and tattooed arms and a face covered with dirt from his earlier cycle ride, Johnny looked just as suspect as the two young men from the Oldsmobile who were standing near.

"What happened to your car?" asked the officer coldly. He took out a notebook and began questioning Johnny.

About ten minutes later, a call came in over the police radio. The officer who answered it conferred with the others. Suddenly, the police threw the two men up against the cars and handcuffed them.

Then, one by one, the officers came up to Johnny, congratulating him and shaking his hand.

- _____A. The two men from the Oldsmobile not only kidnapped the girl but raped her as well.
- _____B. Johnny had been in pursuit of the two men in the Oldsmobile for an hour and a half straight.
- _____C. The scene for the happenings in this passage is a police roadblock.
- _____D. At first, the officer who questioned Johnny suspected him of a possible crime.

II. The U.S. Constitution is the supreme law of the land. It was written in 1787 at a convention held in Philadelphia. The 55 delegates attending became known as the Founding Fathers. They included James Madison, George Washington, and Benjamin Franklin. The Constitution replaced the Articles of Confederation. After being ratified by nine states, it went into effect on June 21, 1788. By 1790, the four other states had ratified it.

- _____A. There were no women allowed to attend the constitutional convention held in 1787.
- _____B. There were only 13 states in the U.S. in 1790.
- _____C. At least one delegate from every state was present.
- _____D. At 81, Benjamin Franklin was the oldest of those present at the convention

III. Today, suicide is the second leading cause of death among teens. While not all teens who commit suicide are depressed, depression one of the main reasons for suicide in young people. It is commonly believed that teen suicide attempts are usually impulsive reactions to an immediate disappointment or problem such as breaking up with a girlfriend or not making the basketball team. However, teens who attempt suicide have usually had trouble coping with a series of difficulties or disappointments, and the current problem may just be the last straw. As a parent, it is important to be aware of the signs of suicide and take any suicide talk from their teens seriously.

- _____A. Depression is the leading cause of teen suicide.
- _____B. Drinking while driving is the leading cause of death among teens.
- _____C. Assisted suicide would be a wrong choice for a teen who is looking for a way out of his problems.
- _____D. Counseling for a teen who has exhibited many of the signs of adolescent depression and suicide could be helpful.

IV. Over its lifetime, it is drenched by more than a million gallons of water weighing almost 5,000 tons, baked by 50,000 hours of direct sunlight, stretched and squeezed by changes of temperature totaling one half million degrees, and swept by two million miles of passing wind. Only then--after 20 years--is an asphalt-shingle roof ready for replacement. Roofs of slate and tile do even better; they can shrug off nature a century or more.

Putting up roofs to withstand such punishment used to be the exclusive province of a skilled craftsman, who pieced each roof together from small, irregular units, locally made and individually fitted. This is no longer true. Over the years, the job has been made easier for both the professional and the amateur by the availability of standardized roofing materials designed for easy installation.

- _____A. Slate and tile roofs hold up to the wear and tear of the elements of weather better than asphalt roofs.
- _____B. Replacing your roof takes a lot of time, effort, and money.
- _____C. Roofing has become more and more difficult for the amateur to tackle.
- _____D. There are 7 common types of roof shingles.

V. About three-quarters of a century later, A.C. Bradley arrived at essentially the same conclusion. For him, "King Lear" was "too huge for the stage." Peter Brook, recent producer of the play, referred to it as "a mountain whose summit has never been reached." Nevertheless, there have been superior productions of "King Lear," early and late. Stage history has emphatically established the fact that a second-rate production does no more than exhaust and bore an audience, but a first-rate production is one of the most memorable of experiences in the theater.

- _____A. A. C. Bradley has reviewed several of Shakespeare's plays and is considered an expert in the area.
- _____B. Acting in a production of "King Lear" would've been extremely demanding.
- _____C. "King Lear" has the potential of frustrating or putting the audience to sleep if it isn't performed to its optimum potential.
- _____D. "King Lear" is Shakespeare's most difficult play to understand and follow.

ANSWERS

The following are the correct conclusions based on and supported by the actual facts in each of the five passages.

- I. D At first, the officer who questioned Johnny suspected him of a possible crime.
- II. B There were only 13 states in the U.S. in 1790.
- III. A Depression is the leading cause of teen suicide.
- IV. A Slate and tile roofs hold up to the wear and tear of the elements of Weather better than asphalt roofs.
- V. C "King Lear" has the potential of frustrating or putting the audience to sleep if it isn't performed to its optimum potential.

