SKIP THE TRAPS · SOLVE THE SCALABLES

THE PASSAGE | READING COMPREHENSION

> Can a democracy avoid being a welfare state for long? Why cannot mass welfare be left entirely to the markets? There is a built-in tension between markets and democracy. Markets do not work on a one-person-one-vote principle as democracies do. What one gets out of the market place depends on one's endowments, skills, purchasing power and the forces of demand and supply. Markets reward individual initiative and skill, and may also lift many from the bottom rungs of society, but some people never get the opportunity to develop skills that markets demand; they are simply too poor and too handicapped; or skill formation takes too long. By creating jobs, markets may be able to help even unskilled people, but capitalism has always witnessed bursts of unemployment.

With reference to the above passage, the following assumptions have been made: (1) Modern democracies rely on the market forces to enable them to be welfare states. (2) Markets ensure sufficient economic growth necessary for democracies to be effective. (3) Government programmes are needed for those left behind in economic growth. Which of the above assumptions is/are valid?

Valid Assumptions | Three-Statement Code | Hidden Trap: statements that sound economic but are not in the passage

(a) 1 and 3 only
Statement 1 is wrong. The passage doubts that welfare can be left to markets.

(b) 3 only ✓
Only the need for government programmes for those left behind is supported.

(c) 2 and 3 only
Statement 2 is not made. The passage speaks of bursts of unemployment, not guaranteed growth.

(d) 1, 2 and 3
Includes two unsupported statements.

CRACK THE HIDDEN RULE

A valid assumption is something the passage needs, or leans on. If the passage argues against a statement, or never touches it, the statement is invalid.

Judge each statement separately before reading the code.

Check each statement: needed by the passage, or opposed, or silent?

STATEMENT 1	STATEMENT 2	STATEMENT 3
Opposed: markets cannot do it alone	**Silent: no guarantee of growth**	**Needed: some are left behind**

WORKED IN 3 CLEAN STEPS

1 Test statement 1
The passage asks 'Why cannot mass welfare be left entirely to the markets?' It doubts reliance on markets. Invalid.

2 Test statement 2
Nothing says markets ensure enough growth. Unemployment bursts are mentioned. Invalid.

3 Test statement 3
Some people are too poor, too handicapped or lack time for skills. Someone must help them, so government programmes are needed. Valid.

ANSWER: (b) 3 only

THE 3-SECOND SHORTCUT

Test the most extreme-sounding statement first. Statement 1 contradicts the opening question, so options (a) and (d) are out. Statement 2 has no line, so (c) goes. Only (b) remains.

each statement alone | opposed or silent → invalid | kill by contradiction first

→ The opening two questions already tell you the passage doubts the market-only approach.
→ Statement 3 is the only one that answers the problem the passage raises.

WHY ASPIRANTS LOSE MARKS HERE

1. **Ticking statement 1 because markets are mentioned.** Mention is not support. The passage argues against reliance.
2. **Ticking statement 2 because markets create jobs.** The passage says markets 'may' help and that unemployment returns.
3. **Ignoring the people 'too poor and too handicapped'.** They are the reason statement 3 holds.

ATTEMPT	FLAG	SKIP
~50 sec	if a statement is half supported	rarely
Three tests, one option left.	Look for the exact line before ticking.	Solid and scoreable.

THE ONE-LINE TAKEAWAY

Test statements one at a time. A statement the passage opposes or never mentions is not a valid assumption.

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