

LSAT Mock Exam - Answer Key and Detailed Explanations for Reading Comprehension

Reviewing these explanations will help reinforce the logical principles and pacing strategies required for the LSAT.

SECTION II: READING COMPREHENSION (Q1-Q5)

Question	Correct Answer	Question Type
1	B	Main Idea
2	A	Inference
3	C	Function
4	C	Author's Stance
5	D	Specific Detail

Question 1 (Main Idea)

- **Analysis:** The passage begins by introducing the proponents of **original intent** (a fixed, stable methodology) and dedicates the majority of its length to presenting and elaborating on the **critiques** of this doctrine. The final, most compelling critique centers on the political misuse of original intent.
- **Correct Answer: (B)** This option captures the primary structure: introducing the doctrine, then detailing why it is **flawed, impractical**, and ultimately used to **mask political agendas**.

Question 2 (Inference)

- **Analysis:** Proponents of original intent rely on the principle of **judicial restraint**, believing that the judiciary must be limited to applying the law's meaning *at the time of its creation*.
- **Correct Answer: (C)** If a judge's interpretation **significantly alters the practical effect** from the **initial understanding**, it would violate the core principle of **fixed meaning** and **judicial restraint** that proponents value, making them likely to oppose it.

Question 3 (Function)

- **Analysis:** The first two paragraphs focus on **theoretical** problems: difficulty establishing unified intent and the irrelevance of freezing meaning. The third paragraph introduces the "more compelling critique" of the **performative aspect**—the idea that judges *selectively* use historical evidence to support their **political preferences**, essentially committing judicial activism.
- **Correct Answer: (C)** The paragraph marks a clear rhetorical shift from abstract flaws to a focused claim of **ideological misuse** (disguising activism).

Question 4 (Author's Stance)

- **Analysis:** The author presents the theoretical and practical critiques of original intent, but labels the selective application critique as "**more compelling**." The passage concludes that the most honest approach is the one that the critics advocate (**transparency about updating abstract legal concepts**), suggesting the author aligns with the critics' fundamental goal.
- **Correct Answer: (C)** The author is **strongly supportive**, advocating for the critics' call to abandon pretense and engage in a **candid discussion** (a more honest and functional path).

Question 5 (Specific Detail)

- **Analysis:** The first paragraph states: "The appeal of this approach lies in its promise of **judicial restraint**, supposedly preventing unelected judges from imposing their own political preferences under the guise of interpretation."
- **Correct Answer: (C)** This directly quotes the passage's explanation for the doctrine's popularity among its adherents.

SECTION II: READING COMPREHENSION (Q6-Q10)

Question	Correct Answer	Question Type
6	C	Main Idea
7	C	Specific Detail
8	E	Inference
9	B	Function
10	C	Author's Attitude

Question 6 (Main Idea)

- **Analysis:** The passage dedicates its entire length to introducing the **top-down model** (trophic cascade) and then elaborating on the **Yellowstone wolf reintroduction** as the primary example. The text is descriptive and illustrative, detailing the complex and far-reaching impacts of the wolves.
- **Correct Answer: (C)** The passage's goal is to use the **case of Yellowstone's wolf reintroduction** to illustrate the comprehensive, **complex, system-wide effects of a trophic cascade**.

Question 7 (Specific Detail)

- **Analysis:** The third paragraph addresses this directly, stating the wolves achieved the effect in two ways: direct reduction of elk and the "behavioral cascade." The passage then emphasizes the latter: "The *fear* of predation caused the elk to **avoid exposed areas** like valleys and riverbanks."
- **Correct Answer: (C)** The primary cause of the tree recovery was the change in the elk's grazing **behavior and choice of location** due to the threat of the wolves.

Question 8 (Inference)

- **Analysis:** The final paragraph notes that the wolves changed the elk's behavior, which in turn caused the **regenerating forests to stabilize the riverbanks**, leading to the **deepening of river channels and improved water quality**. The stabilization and channel changes are non-biological, physical characteristics of the river environment.
- **Correct Answer: (C)** This inference is supported by the example of the wolves (biological) influencing elk behavior, which then determined the **physical geography** (non-biological) of the river.

Question 9 (Function)

- **Analysis:** The author mentions beavers disappeared because the willows (their food/material) were overgrazed, and then they returned when the willows recovered. This recovery was an *indirect* effect of the wolves changing the elk's *behavior*. The beavers serve to demonstrate the chain of environmental effects beyond the elk population itself.
- **Correct Answer: (B)** The beavers are a clear, specific example of a subsequent, **indirect effect** resulting from the **change in elk behavior** triggered by the wolves.

Question 10 (Author's Attitude)

- **Analysis:** The author states the top-down model has gained "**significant traction**" and uses positive, strong language to describe the results of the cascade: "**dramatic reversal**," "**stunning series of changes**," and "**profoundly complex**." The author clearly views the model as a highly effective way to understand ecology.
- **Correct Answer: (C)** The author is **strongly supportive**, viewing the trophic cascade as a powerful model for demonstrating the deep interconnectedness of an ecosystem.

I hope this detailed breakdown is helpful for your studies! Let me know if you would like to go

over the answers and explanations for the first mock exam, **LSAT Mock Exam (Sample)**, next.