



NGO AND SONS PREPARATORY COLLEGE

ADDRESS: SUITE 4, LEVEL 1/45-47
SMART ST, FAIRFIELD NSW 216

PHONE: 0491 680 618

PREPARATORY COLLEGE

WEBSITE:
[HTTP://NGOANDSONS.COM.AU/](http://ngoandsons.com.au/)

SELECTIVE SPECIALIST PROGRAM

Term 4, Week 1

Lesson Contents:

- Introduction to Selective Specialist Program
- Theory Guide: Thinking Skills
- Question Mastery: Strengthens the Argument
- Question Mastery: Weakens the Argument

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Introduction to Thinking Skills (Revision)

Thinking Skills is the newest component to the NSW Selective Placement Test. It tests a child's ability to think critically and analytically prior to answering questions.

The test will consist of 40 questions with answer options from A to D. You will be given 40 minutes to complete it, equating to a rate of 1 minute per question.

General Thinking Skills Advice

1. Read ALL information and answer options provided before answering the question.
2. If there is information in bullet points, then number the bullet points. When applying the information, a reference can be made to the numbered point. This will ensure that all the data is being used and applied.
3. Use diagrams as a means of interpreting and arranging information, particularly relationships between information points.
4. Be prepared to keep more than one piece of information at a time. You will need to do this when there are different rules given.
5. DO NOT use any general information or knowledge to answer any of the questions. All the information you need is in the question. No extraneous information should be required to successfully answer the questions.
6. Identify the type of questions being asked so that you know what thinking skills you will be utilising.
7. Practice makes perfect; the types of questions you see, in essence, have the same structure. You just need to be able to decipher it and apply the rules.
8. Keep all booklets and notes from this class. Revise it and go through it again when you have time, to increase the amount of practice you get.

Strengthens and Weakens the Argument

In these questions, you are given a scenario with four answer options. You will be asked out of the four answer options, which would either strengthen or weaken the argument in the scenario.

Approach:

- 1) Read the stem in full, underlining key information or important pieces of data.
- 2) Identify the main argument in the text, making sure you are not too specific or vague.
- 3) Read the answer options, identifying their impact. Ask yourself whether they:
 - **Strengthen the Argument:** Does it help prove the argument provided?
 - **Weakens the Argument:** Does it help debunk the argument provided?
 - **Out of the Scope:** Does it not relate to argument or provide a non-biased piece of information?

Alternative Names:

Strengthens the Argument:

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Weakens the Argument:

Theory of Additional Information

Strengthens:

In order to strengthen an argument, an author may use the following methods:

- Provide an example or a case study to demonstrate the argument.
- Elaborate on how/why the argument is possible with further evidence.
- Explain why the opposite of the argument is wrong.
- Supporting the argument or the premise of the argument.

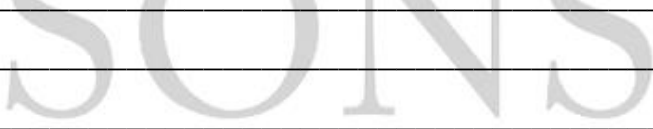
Task: Read the Paragraph below and write a sentence that strengthens it.

Anna's Baking Company has long been contemplating the use of gluten-free flour for all of their cakes and desserts. Whilst more expensive, the move from normal flour to gluten-free flour could be beneficial for the business.


a) Provide an example or case study:



b) Elaborate with further evidence:



c) Explain why the opposite is wrong:



d) Support the argument or the premise:

Weaken:

In order to weaken an argument, an author may use the following methods:

- Provide an example or a case study in which the opposite is true.
- Elaborate on how/why the argument is not possible with further evidence.
- Explain why the opposite of the argument is correct.
- Debunking the argument or the premise of the argument.

Task: Read the Paragraph below and write a sentence that strengthens it.

For many years, diamonds have been seen as a symbol of luxury and wealth. This is because diamonds are extremely rare due to the number of years and pressure that is required to produce a diamond. However, in recent years, debates have been arising about whether or not they should still continue to be considered a luxury.

a) Provide an example or case study:

b) Elaborate with further evidence:

c) Explain why the opposite is correct:

d) Debunk the argument or the premise:

Practice Questions:

1. With the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, many employees have sought to work remotely. However, a group of workers, such as doctors and nurses that could be impacted negatively by the pandemic as they are unable to work from home. Not only does this negatively affect the work they are able to do, but it is also extremely dangerous for them to do so.

Which of the following, if true, would weaken the conclusion?

- A** The work that doctors and nurses perform during the pandemic is of lesser quality than the tasks performed at a time.
 - B** Jobs that are most at risk during heat waves should have higher pay.
 - C** The fact that doctors and nurses have to work during the pandemic without adequate safety equipment is against human rights
 - D** Although there are higher risks in these jobs due to the risk associated with them, many hospitals have raised the safety standard for doctors and nurses.
2. Every year India suffers from massive floods. This is a natural occurrence due to the presence of many rivers and tributaries. As this has been part of the geography for a long time, the flora and fauna have evolved to withstand these floods. Environmental scientists have zeroed in on the reasons for the floods: unplanned cities, reclamation projects on river banks, and a lack of dams.

Which of the following, if true, helps to strengthen the above argument?

- A** The local tribes near the rivers know the river cycles and patterns to escape the flood.
 - B** India has a mountain range with snow and glaciers, hence the floods.
 - C** The government has sufficient data points to inform the people of future floods
 - D** Understanding flooding depends upon the deep analysis of various factors and how they interact with each other.
3. Cellphone brands have been making smartphones for more than a decade now. When they introduce a new smartphone to replace the old one, it is just a gimmick to increase the prices there are no real upgrades. This has been figured out by many smartphone users. So why do the brands continue to do this? They try to brainwash new smartphone users as they continue to develop an understanding of the market.

Which of the following is most strongly supported by the information above?

- A** The marketing teams study peoples' purchasing practices to effectively sell smartphones.
- B** The price difference is due to the different designs of smartphones.
- C** Cellphone companies employ psychological tactics to make us spend more money and accept ludicrous prices.
- D** New smartphone users should be educated on the tactics employed by large companies.

4. Rafael believes that practicing tennis with his coach will not help him win the French Open, he would rather spend his time traveling with his friends. His coach disagrees. He said: "Practising helps you consolidate your skill set and challenges you with a different type of skills. You can always travel with your friends after you have won the championship."

Which one of these statements, if true, most strengthens the coach's point?

- A** Traveling with friends helps a tennis player relax.
- B** Those who practice often outperform their competitors.
- C** Rafael should spend one-hour practicing every day.
- D** Rafael should only practice those skills that are not good at.

5. In the digital age, digital companies are constantly on the lookout for user information such as one's phone number, email address, search habits, and even home address. To safeguard one's privacy, people should be cautious of what information they disclose to digital companies.

Which of these statements, if true, most weakens the above argument?

- A** It is acceptable to share our information if everyone is doing it
- B** Many digital companies have adopted privacy policies to prevent data fraud.
- C** We should limit the information that we share with digital companies
- D** It is common for people to share their home addresses on the internet

6. Many new start-ups have started the green revolution to protect the planet. Instead of using harmful chemicals for the planet, they are using eco-friendly materials such as hemp, algae, and recycled paper. Buying from these start-ups will help to preserve the environment.

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the above argument?

- A** Since they contain different chemicals, eco-friendly cleaning products are not as effective
- B** Those who do not buy from these start-ups do not care about the environment.
- C** Eco-friendly products are more expensive.
- D** Harmful chemicals, as previously used, can break down into toxic chemicals.