

Method

<p>QUESTION STEM KEYWORDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • argument proceeds by • argumentative technique • method of reasoning • strategy of argumentation • responds by • describes 	<p>POPULARITY About 0-2 questions per section</p>
	<p>WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A provable description of what happened in the stimulus</p>
	<p>ROLE OF THE LOOPHOLE OR CONTROVERSY You have to know what happened in the Argument to design your Loophole or Controversy. The correct answer to a Method question is just what happened in fancy words.</p>
<p>QUESTION STEM EXAMPLES</p> <p>Which one of the following most accurately describes how the argument proceeds?</p> <p>Of the following, which one most accurately describes Tom's strategy of argumentation?</p> <p>The relationship of Denise's response to Malcolm's argument is that Denise's response</p> <p>Wendell responds to Domenick's argument by</p>	<p>TL;DR STRATEGY</p> <p>You have a Loophole or a Controversy, so you know what happened.</p> <p>Go find an answer choice that describes what happened.</p> <p>BACK-UP PLAN</p> <p>Did this happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, choose it. • If no, cross it off. • If you're not sure, leave it for later.

METHOD GAME PLAN

Method questions ask you to describe what happened in the stimulus in abstract terms. This is perfect! You already designed your Loophole, so you know the stimulus well enough to describe it.

When you see it's a Method question, bring your knowledge of the stimulus to the forefront. Look back over the stimulus and describe to yourself how the argument arrived at its conclusion. Method questions don't want you to be creative. **When you're choosing an answer, you have to be sure of one thing: It actually happened.**

You may be wondering, "I *really* just have to describe what happened in the stimulus? What's the catch?" The catch is one thing: language. **Method questions have some of the wordiest answer choices in all of LR.**

That's why there's a big word list on the next page. The Method Vocab List is filled with words you'll see in Method answer choices. If you're unsure about *any* of these words, memorize the definition. **You can't just "kinda get the gist" of these words.** You need to feel ultra-comfortable, like you could use the phrase in a sentence *easily*. If it's not *easy* to use, you don't know it well enough for the LSAT. As you go over this list, highlight the words you don't know to differentiate them from the rest.

THE METHOD VOCAB LIST

VEXING WORDS

qualify/qualified

implicit premise

suggests its conclusion is incorrect

questions the adequacy of a conclusion

phenomenon/phenomena

drawing a distinction

an instance

refute

appeals to

purported

apply

sole

corresponding

disanalogous

(pre)supposition/(pre)suppose

counterargument

counter assertions

inconsistent statements

proposition

supposed (pronounced *suppose-ED*, like “suppose” + the beginning of “education”)

treats an X as a Y

scope

WHAT THEY MEAN

to limit a claim, qualified claims are limited to make them more provable

assumption

says the facts of the conclusion are not true

says the conclusion has not been proven

a thing! or things!

pointing out a difference between two things

a specific example of something being discussed

tear down someone else’s argument

looks to something to support their point

something that is claimed to be true, but probably not true, usually used to throw shade

to be relevant, if something doesn’t apply, it shouldn’t be used in the argument

only one

a similar thing in another situation

not similar

assumption/assume

an argument against a given point

make an argument against something

the two statements contradict one another

statement

poorly assumed, usually used to throw shade

pretends that X is Y

the world of whatever you’re talking about



Believe it or not, this is the abridged version of the Method Vocab list. There are many more potentially confusing words. If you didn’t *really* know three (or more) of the words listed here, visit elementalprep.com/bonus for the complete, uncut Method Vocab List.



Start using these words (at least in your head) throughout your daily life as you study for the LSAT. If you want this level of language to not feel foreign, you have to use it. These are all words you’re going to be expected to use in law school, so you might as well internalize them now.

Any ambiguity in the meaning of these words is an opening for the test makers to exploit you. You must be very confident that you know what Method answer choices mean in order to resist the most tempting wrong answers. You may feel like you *basically* know what these phrases mean, but basically is not enough.

TINY TIPS

- You are literally asking, “Did this happen?” to every answer choice. Method is that simple.
- You need confidence in your knowledge of the stimulus. When an answer choice says something happened in the stimulus and you don’t remember it happening, you have to trust your memory instead of thinking, “Oh, maybe I’m wrong...” **You’re probably not wrong. Any given answer choice has an 80% chance of being wrong. Unless you’re missing 20+ questions per untimed LR section, you’re mathematically more likely to be correct than any random answer choice. Trust yourself, not the answers.**

BIGGEST TRAPS

- Wordy Method answers confuse test takers to lure them into bad decisions. Translate to avoid mistakes.

REAL METHOD EXAMPLE

16.3.25



OK, first translate.

The government doesn’t have the right to tax labor earning because the laborer has to work partly for the government. This means they’re partly working for another’s purpose. Involuntary servitude can be defined as working for another’s purpose. Involuntary servitude is pernicious, so taxes are too.

There’s a lot going on here! First, identify the main conclusion. It’s the first sentence (“The government has no right to tax earnings from labor”). That’s what the rest of the argument is proving, despite the tricky conclusion indicators introducing the intermediate conclusions.

But there’s a dangling variable! Notice how there’s no mention of having a right to do anything in the premises. The closest we get is the last sentence calling taxes pernicious, but what if the government can still do pernicious things? That leads us straight to our Loophole:

LOOPHOLE

What if the government has the right to do pernicious things?

I see it’s a Method question, so I have to describe the stimulus. The stimulus established similarities (“involuntary servitude” and “taxing earnings from labor”) to say a quality of one thing must apply to the other (involuntary servitude is pernicious, so taxes are too). That’s all we need heading into the answer choices — two things are similar, so a property of one applies to the other. Got it.

Don’t let the crazy vocab in this stimulus get to you. “Pernicious” just means harmful.

A)

*So deriving a general rule about individual rights from judgments about government obligations. Did this happen? No. There's no general rule about the rights of individuals in the stimulus. The conclusion was about what the government doesn't have a right to do. That knocks **A** out. Not provable.*



"derive" = conclusion
"from" = premises

B)

So inferring what will happen from a description of what happened before. Did this happen? Nah, there's nothing about past to future in the stimulus. Not provable.



Break difficult answer choices into bite-sized pieces. Translate those pieces. Don't try to evaluate confusing answer choices all at once.

C)

Inferring that since two institutions are similar in one way they're similar in another way. Did this happen? Yeah, it matches what we said about similarity! It covers the two similar things and transferring a property from one to the other. It's conceptually provable.

REAL LSAT
QUESTION
REDACTED

D)

*So referencing an economic theory's authority to justify a moral rule. Did this happen? No! Where was the economic theory? Where was the moral rule? Nowhere. Don't let them trick you into making **D** fit. None of this stuff happened.*

E)

*So assuming an inevitable class hierarchy to go against an economic practice. **E** makes me so happy. It's wrong, but oh so right. Did this happen? No! Don't let yourself go off the deep end thinking about how labor and taxes could somehow relate to a hierarchical class system. **The correct answer works for you; you don't work for it. E is so not provable. Cross it off and feel amazing about it.***



Was this particular Method example chosen just because of my irrational love for answer choice **E**? One guess.

C is the correct answer. It's the only answer choice that describes the stimulus.

METHOD CHALLENGE

18.2.5

REAL LSAT QUESTION REDACTED



Where's the answer key?

You'll find the answer key for all the Challenge Questions at the end of the chapter on page 357.