Inductive Reasoning Practice Exercises

Use your reasoning skills to draw logical inferences. Read carefully the information you are given (the premises) and consider what would be the most logical conclusion to draw from that evidence.

1. Every summer, when the cotton wood trees bloom, you start to sneeze and your eyes water and itch. This morning, you saw a few cotton wood blossoms floating by. You can therefore logically conclude that:

   A. summer has just officially started
   B. you had better go out and buy some tissues
   C. there are more cotton wood trees in the area than any other species

2. Each time you go to your city's biggest department store, you end up buying far more than you had planned on. You carefully make a list and plan to spend $25, but usually spend twice that amount. You can therefore logically conclude that:

   A. the department store charges too much for its products
   B. you need more items than you had originally thought
   C. a need for immediate gratification is one of your main traits

3. For the past six months, you have gotten a massage. The therapist advises you to drink a big glass of water after each session, but you never do. Following each massage, you get a terrible headache. You can therefore logically conclude that:

   A. massages cause massive dehydration
   B. not drinking water is a serious health hazard
   C. massages may very likely give you headaches

4. Your older brother gave you a coffee pot for Christmas. Every time you brew a pot of coffee, it tastes scalded. You have tried several brands of coffee but it doesn't make any difference. You can therefore logically conclude that:

   A. there is a malfunction with the coffee pot
   B. it is time for you to stop drinking coffee
   C. the type of coffee makes a big difference

5. Every June, your Aunt Patricia sends you a birthday check in the mail. Every July, your Uncle Ian sends you a check with a belated birthday card. When you go out to the mailbox on June 16, there is an envelope with your name on it waiting inside. You can therefore logically conclude that you are getting:

   A. a check early from your Uncle Ian
   B. Aunt Patricia’s card
   C. a letter from a friend

Answers

1. **B.** Cotton woods bloom in the summer, but there is not enough information here to indicate that when they bloom, the season begins. There is also nothing to indicate that there are more cotton wood trees than anything else, just that they are in the area. Since the blooming causes you to sneeze, you will soon need tissues.

2. **C.** There is not enough information here to indicate there is anything wrong with the store's prices. Since you carefully make a list of items needed, it is unlikely that you need additional items on every trip. Much more likely is that once there, you keep purchasing things not on the list because you see them and want them right now.

3. **C.** Although your therapist recommends that you drink water, that is not enough information to indicate massages dehydrate a person. (Water is needed to help flush toxins from the muscles.) Being dehydrated is not a serious health hazard, even if it causes a headache, so option b is incorrect.

4. **A.** There is no reason for you to stop drinking coffee here and the problem already stated that you had tried different brands of coffee, so option c does not make sense. Instead, it is apparently a problem with the machine itself.

5. **B.** Your check from Uncle Ian traditionally does not come until July, so there is no reason to suspect it came early this time. There is no indication that you would be getting a letter from a friend.