

## Quantitative Question Type: DATA SUFFICIENCY

Number of Data Sufficiency Questions  
About 15 (out of 37 total Quant questions)

Recommended Time per Question  
A little less than 2 minutes

Here's an Example of a GMAT Data Sufficiency Question:

If  $abc \neq 0$ , is  $a > 0$ ?

- (1)  $\frac{3a}{b} > 0$   
(2)  $\frac{b}{(ac)^4} < 0$

- (A) Statement (1) ALONE is sufficient, but statement (2) alone is not sufficient to answer the question asked.  
(B) Statement (2) ALONE is sufficient, but statement (1) alone is not sufficient to answer the question asked.  
(C) BOTH statements (1) and (2) TOGETHER are sufficient to answer the question asked, but NEITHER statement ALONE is sufficient.  
(D) EACH statement ALONE is sufficient to answer the question asked.  
(E) Statements (1) and (2) TOGETHER are NOT sufficient to answer the question asked, and additional data specific to the question are needed.

And Here's How a Kaplan-Trained GMAT Test Taker Would Answer This Question:

**Step 1—Analyze the Question Stem:** This is a Yes/No question. To have sufficiency, we need to be able to answer the question definitively: either  $a$  is always greater than zero, or  $a$  is always less than or equal to zero. Any scenario in which we are not sure, or in which both situations are possible, means that we have insufficient information. Furthermore, since we are told that  $abc$  does not equal zero, we know that none of the variables individually equals zero. Each is either positive or negative.

**Step 2—Evaluate the Statements Using 12TEN:**

Statement (1): Because this fraction is positive, we know that the variables  $a$  and  $b$  must have the same sign—either both positive or both negative—but we don't know which sign. This statement is insufficient, so we eliminate choices (A) and (D).

Statement (2): Because any nonzero value raised to an even exponent must be positive,  $(ac)^4$  must be positive. Because the overall fraction is negative,  $b$  must be negative. However, we still don't know about  $a$ , so this statement is also insufficient; eliminate choice (B).

Together: Because Statement (2) says that  $b$  is negative, then according to Statement (1),  $a$  must also be negative. So what kind of answer does that give us to the question of whether  $a > 0$ ? We can answer that question definitively "always no," so the statements together are sufficient. Answer choice (C) is correct.

12TEN is an acronym to help you remember the Data Sufficiency answer choices, which never change:

- 1 Statement (1) is sufficient; Statement (2) is NOT sufficient.
- 2 Statement (2) is sufficient; Statement (1) is NOT sufficient.
- T (Together) Statements (1) and (2) individually are NOT sufficient; Statements (1) and (2) together are sufficient.
- E (Each) Statement (1) is sufficient; Statement (2) is sufficient.
- N (Neither) Statements (1) and (2) are NOT sufficient, either individually or together.

Key Takeaway:

Data Sufficiency is perhaps the most feared question type on the GMAT. Kaplan's strategies will help you focus on answering the question at hand, without drowning in complex, unnecessary calculations.