



CLAT 2027

Critical Reasoning

# Identifying Arguments

*Premises, Counter-Premises & Complex Structures*

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Class 02 • Duration: 2 hours • Anurag Sir

*CLAT 2027 — Critical Reasoning Curriculum*

# Learning Objectives

By the end of today, you will be able to:

01

## Spot

Additional Premise indicators (furthermore, moreover, besides...) and Counter-Premise indicators (but, yet, however, despite...).

02

## Apply

The four-step Conclusion Identification Method to stimuli that have NO indicator words.

03

## Decode

Complex arguments with a Main Conclusion and Sub-Conclusions — the trick CLAT uses to hide the real conclusion.

04

## Detect

The "Some People Claim..." device and separate the opposing view from the author's real view.

05

## Solve

30 CLAT-style questions in today's practice test (Section A in-class, Section B homework).

## LR Section Size

CLAT 2026: 26 Qs | 4 passages | ~35 min

## Argument vs Fact Set

An argument HAS a conclusion. A fact set does NOT.

## Conclusion

What the author wants you to ACCEPT.

## Conclusion Indicators

thus, therefore, hence, so, clearly, consequently...

## 3 Parts of a Q

Stimulus → Question Stem → Answer Choices

## Premise

A statement offered as a REASON to support the conclusion.

## Premise Indicators

because, since, for, given that, due to, owing to...

## 13 Q-Types, 4 Families

Prove · Help · Hurt · Disprove

*Last year's students who LOST marks in LR shared one common error:*

***They treated every "however" and "but" the same way — and they assumed the first sentence was always the conclusion.***

## **CLAT loves to HIDE the conclusion**

The real conclusion often sits in the MIDDLE of the passage. Sub-conclusions at the end (with "therefore") are decoys.

## **"However" is a double-edged sword**

Sometimes it flags a counter-premise. Sometimes it flags the author pivoting to their real view. You must learn to tell these apart.

## **No-indicator passages are now the norm**

Editorial-style passages in recent CLATs often have ZERO indicator words. The Conclusion ID Method becomes essential.

# Anatomy of an Argument — Deepened

An argument is built from FIVE kinds of statement:

- 1 PREMISE**  
A reason given to support the conclusion.
- 2 ADDITIONAL PREMISE**  
An extra reason, layered on. ("Moreover...", "Besides...")
- 3 COUNTER-PREMISE**  
An opposing idea raised ONLY to dismiss it. ("However...", "Despite...")
- 4 SUB-CONCLUSION**  
A mini-conclusion. It proves a premise but is itself supported by deeper premises.
- 5 MAIN CONCLUSION**  
The final claim the author wants YOU to accept.

**Today's mission: learn to TAG every sentence with one of these five labels.**

# Indicator Words — You Already Know Two Types

## PREMISE INDICATORS

because · since · for · given that · due to · owing to · for the reason that · as indicated by · in that · we know this by

## CONCLUSION INDICATORS

thus · therefore · hence · so · consequently · as a result · accordingly · clearly · must be that · shows that · follows that · for this reason

## TODAY — Two New Families

- ▶ **ADDITIONAL PREMISE INDICATORS** → furthermore · moreover · besides · in addition · what's more
- ▶ **COUNTER-PREMISE INDICATORS** → but · yet · however · although · even though · despite · in spite of · on the other hand · admittedly · still · whereas · in contrast · after all

## Additional Premise — Definition

*An **ADDITIONAL PREMISE** is an extra premise that the author layers on top of a base premise to reinforce the conclusion.*

### Key features:

- It is a PREMISE (not a conclusion) — it supports, it is not supported.
- It is ADDITIONAL — it piles on after an initial premise has been given.
- It is often REMOVABLE — the argument usually survives if you cut it out.
- Introduced by: furthermore · moreover · besides · in addition · what's more

In a Weaken question, attack the LINK between the MAIN premise and the conclusion — not an additional premise. Additional premises are layered support; removing one rarely kills the argument.

# Additional Premise — Example 1

## STIMULUS

The Delhi Metro should **roll back the recent fare hike** **because** ridership has dropped by 14% since the new tariff came in. **Furthermore**, a higher fare pushes commuters back to cars, worsening the AQI that DMRC itself claims to improve.

## BREAKDOWN:

Main Conclusion

*"The Delhi Metro should roll back the recent fare hike."*

Premise (after "because")

*"Ridership has dropped by 14% since the new tariff."*

Additional Premise (after "Furthermore")

*"Higher fare pushes commuters back to cars, worsening the AQI."*

## Additional Premise — Example 2

### STIMULUS

A guaranteed Minimum Support Price (MSP) for all 23 notified crops is **essential for Indian farmers**. Without a legal MSP floor, farmers remain hostage to private traders who collude on procurement prices. **Moreover**, Swaminathan Committee data from 2006 already showed that market prices for pulses and oilseeds routinely fall 20–30% below the cost of cultivation. **In addition**, every major agricultural economy — from the EU to the United States — offers equivalent price guarantees.

### COUNT THEM:

#### CONCLUSION × 1

*MSP is essential for Indian farmers.*

#### PREMISE × 1

*Traders collude on procurement prices.*

#### ADDITIONAL PREMISES × 2

- ① *Swaminathan data: market prices 20–30% below cost.*
- ② *Every major economy (EU, US) does this too.*

*A COUNTER-PREMISE is a statement that goes AGAINST the author's conclusion — the author raises it only to acknowledge and then dismiss it.*

## Why does the author raise a counter-premise?

- To appear fair-minded ("Yes, I've considered the other side too...")
- To pre-empt an obvious objection the reader might raise
- To set up a strong contrast so the real argument lands harder

**A counter-premise is NOT the author's view. If you pick the counter-premise as the "main point" or "author's view", you lose the mark. CLAT writes wrong-answer traps that quote the counter-premise verbatim.**

# Counter-Premise Indicators — The Full List

*but*

*yet*

*however*

*on the other hand*

*admittedly*

*in contrast*

*although*

*even though*

*still*

*whereas*

*in spite of*

*despite*

*after all*

## THREE TESTS when you see one of these words

### ① Direction test

Does what follows go AGAINST the conclusion? If yes → counter-premise.

### ② Speaker test

Is the author himself endorsing this, or attributing it to "critics" / "some people"?

### ③ Next-sentence test

What follows the counter? If another "but/however" brings the author back → it WAS a counter-premise.

# Counter-Premise — Example 1

## STIMULUS

**Admittedly**, the 10% EWS reservation has been called economically blind because income cannot substitute for historical social disadvantage. **Yet** the policy **addresses a real inequality** that caste-based quotas alone cannot reach: the upper-caste farm labourer's son competing against the urban professional's child. A blanket dismissal of EWS ignores this gap.

## TAG EACH PART:

<b>Counter-Premise</b>	<i>"EWS has been called economically blind..." — raised with "Admittedly"</i>
<b>Pivot</b>	<i>"Yet" → author turns away from the counter</i>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<i>The policy addresses a real inequality caste quotas miss</i>
<b>Supporting Premise</b>	<i>Upper-caste farm labourer's son vs urban professional's child example</i>

## Counter-Premise — Example 2

### STIMULUS

India's FAME-II subsidy for electric two-wheelers **should be extended till 2028**. Critics point out that EV subsidies mostly benefit middle-class buyers in Tier-1 cities, and that 70% of India's grid is still coal-fired. **However**, ending subsidies now would collapse domestic EV manufacturing before it reaches scale economics — and **despite** the coal-grid concern, an EV charged on the dirtiest Indian grid still emits 35% less CO<sub>2</sub> than an equivalent ICE scooter, per IIT-Kanpur data.

### NOTICE: TWO counter-premise moments, one conclusion

#### Counter-Premise 1

"Critics point out EV subsidies benefit Tier-1 middle class." → raised, walled off by "However".

#### Counter-Premise 2

"70% of India's grid is still coal-fired." → dismissed by "despite" + IIT-K data.

#### Conclusion

FAME-II subsidy should be extended till 2028. (Sentence 1 of the passage.)

(1) India should ratify the ICC's Rome Statute. (2) Our constitutional scheme already permits international accountability. (3) Moreover, ratification would give Indian victims of cross-border crimes a forum. (4) Admittedly, some argue the Statute dilutes sovereignty, (5) but the ICC's complementarity principle means it acts only where national courts fail — which is a safeguard, not a threat.

**Your task: match each numbered sentence to its label.**

(1) →

(2) →

(3) →

(4) →

(5) →

# Arguments Without Indicator Words

*Not every passage hands you a "therefore" or a "because". On CLAT, 40–50% of LR editorials have ZERO indicator words.*

**Example — find the conclusion:**

*Patna has added 1.2 lakh new vehicles in the last three years. Road-widening has halted since 2023. Traffic jams on Bailey Road now routinely cross 45 minutes in peak hours. The state government must immediately restart urban road expansion.*

***No "thus". No "because". How do you find the conclusion?***

## **THE CONCLUSION IDENTIFICATION METHOD**

Arrange the statements so that ONE is forced to be the conclusion and the REST are forced to be premises. The arrangement that actually makes logical sense is correct.

***Ask: "Does sentence X follow FROM the others?" — if yes, X is the conclusion.***

1

## List every statement

Break the passage into separate claims. Ignore filler words.

2

## Ask "why?" of each one

For each claim, is there another claim in the passage that answers the "why?". If yes, the asked claim is the conclusion.

3

## Run the Support Test

Which claim is SUPPORTED by the others? That's the conclusion. Which claims do the supporting? Those are premises.

4

## Check: does it make sense?

Read the passage with your labels in place. If the logic flows naturally, you're right.

*(A) Patna has added 1.2L new vehicles in 3 years. (B) Road-widening has halted since 2023. (C) Bailey Road jams cross 45 min. (D) The state must restart urban road expansion.*

**Apply the method:**

<b>Ask WHY of (A)</b>	<i>"Why are there 1.2L new vehicles?" — passage doesn't answer.</i>	Not a conclusion
<b>Ask WHY of (B)</b>	<i>"Why has widening halted?" — passage doesn't answer.</i>	Not a conclusion
<b>Ask WHY of (C)</b>	<i>"Why are the jams so long?" — because of A and B.</i>	Maybe — but weak
<b>Ask WHY of (D)</b>	<i>"Why must the state act?" — because A, B, C are all happening.</i>	<b>YES — the conclusion</b>

**ANSWER: (D) is the conclusion — "The state must immediately restart urban road expansion."**

## SIMPLE ARGUMENT

One main conclusion, one or more premises supporting it directly.

Structure:

Premise + Premise → Conclusion

## COMPLEX ARGUMENT

TWO OR MORE conclusions — one is the MAIN conclusion, the other(s) are SUB-CONCLUSIONS.

Structure:

Premises → Sub-Conclusion → Main Conclusion

## THE SUB-CONCLUSION: A DOUBLE AGENT

A sub-conclusion plays TWO roles at once:

- ▶ It is a CONCLUSION — because earlier premises support it.
- ▶ It is a PREMISE — because it, in turn, supports the main conclusion.

*Other names: subsidiary conclusion · secondary conclusion · intermediate conclusion · supporting conclusion*

CLAT often places the MAIN CONCLUSION in the FIRST sentence (with no indicator) and a SUB-CONCLUSION in the LAST sentence (with a loud "therefore" or "hence"). Students pick the one marked with "therefore" — and get it wrong.

## HOW TO TELL THEM APART:

### The "Why" Test

The MAIN conclusion is NEVER supported by other claims in a "because → so" chain going further. If asking "why do you believe X?" keeps producing answers within the passage, X is probably a sub-conclusion.

### The "Deletion" Test

Delete the sentence. If the argument still makes sense and reaches a recognisable claim, the deleted sentence was a SUB-conclusion, not the main one.

### The Broader-Scope Test

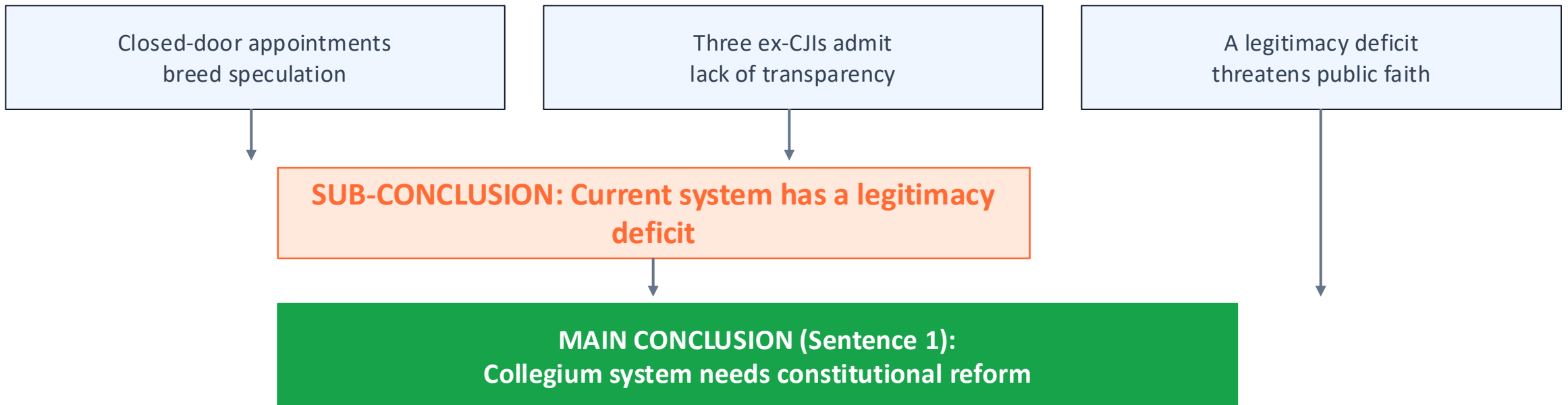
The MAIN conclusion usually has the broadest scope — a policy recommendation, a general judgment, an overarching evaluation. Sub-conclusions are narrower stepping stones.

# Complex Argument — Worked Example

## STIMULUS

**The Collegium system of judicial appointments is overdue for constitutional reform.** Appointments made behind closed doors breed speculation about favouritism. Three retired Chief Justices have publicly admitted the process lacks transparency. **Therefore,** the current system suffers from a legitimacy deficit. A legitimacy deficit in the appointment of the highest judges threatens public faith in the judiciary itself.

## DIAGRAM:



# The "Some People Claim..." Device

*A rhetorical move where the author raises an OPPOSING viewpoint at the beginning of the passage — then immediately disagrees with it.*

## PATTERN:

### STEP 1

**Author states the OPPOSING view**

*"Some people claim that..."*

### STEP 2

**Author PIVOTS**

*"However..." / "But this is wrong because..."*

### STEP 3

**Author's REAL view**

*This is the conclusion you care about*

Students who read only the first half attribute the "some people claim..." view to the AUTHOR. Wrong answers in CLAT quote this opposing view verbatim — it sounds like the passage said it, because it DID say it... but as the view being rejected.

# "Some People Claim..." — Variations & Example

## VARIATIONS — all function the same way:

*Many people believe...*

*Some argue that...*

*Some critics claim...*

*It is often said that...*

*A common view holds that...*

*There is a widespread notion that...*

*Defenders of X maintain...*

*Conventional wisdom suggests...*

### INDIAN-CONTEXT EXAMPLE

**Many people believe** that the Right to Education Act's 25% quota in private schools hurts the schools it regulates. **But this view ignores a decade of data.** NCERT longitudinal studies across Delhi and Tamil Nadu show that RTE-quota cohorts integrate academically by Class 4, bring no measurable drag on school averages, and deliver higher long-term social mobility for their families. The case against RTE quotas has weakened, not strengthened, with evidence.

### NOT the author's view

*"RTE's 25% quota hurts private schools."*

### Author's REAL view

*"The case AGAINST RTE quotas has weakened with evidence."*

Sometimes the stimulus has TWO explicit speakers — each presenting their own argument.

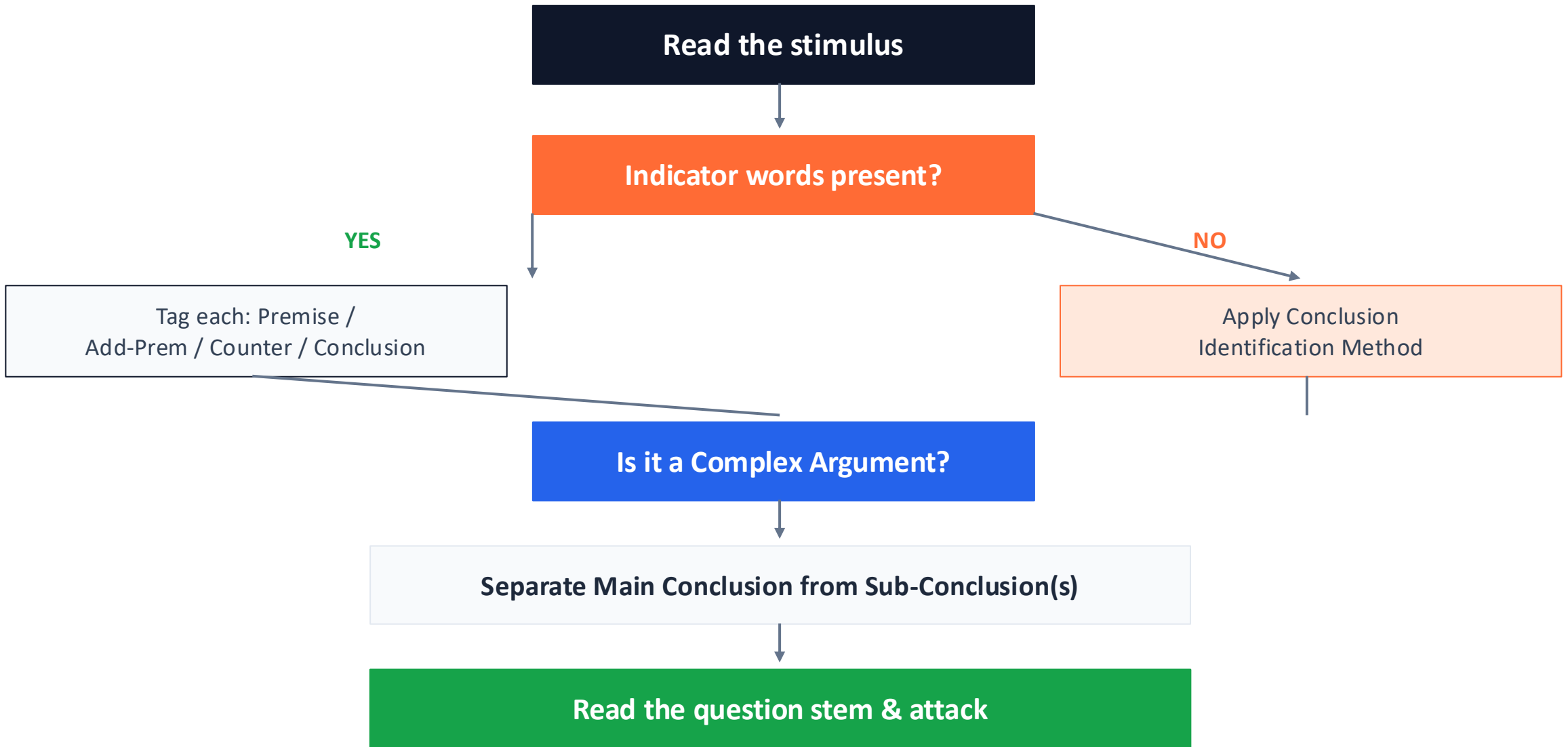
**Priya:**

*"The government's push for Hindi as the compulsory third language in CBSE schools is counterproductive. Linguistic minorities see it as cultural imposition, and enrolment in three-language scheme schools has fallen 18% in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka since 2022."*

**Rohan:**

*"The 18% figure reflects pandemic-era migration, not cultural rejection. A trilingual student performs 23% better on competitive exams, per UGC data. The policy must stay — perhaps better implemented, but the principle is sound."*

**Q-type signal: "Point at Issue" questions usually follow. The two DISAGREE — find the precise point of disagreement.**



# Five Pitfalls That Cost Students Marks

01

## Treating every "however" as a turn

"However" may be a counter-premise (dismiss) OR a pivot (toward author's real view). Look at what follows.

02

## Picking the "therefore" sentence automatically

In complex arguments, "therefore" often marks the SUB-conclusion. The MAIN conclusion can sit earlier, indicator-free.

03

## Attributing the "some people claim" view to the author

That's the view being rejected. Always read past the pivot before labelling a conclusion.

04

## Ignoring "Moreover / Furthermore" statements

These are additional premises — they support the conclusion. Forgetting them weakens your analysis of strengthening/weakening questions.

05

## Assuming no indicator = no argument

Many editorials use no indicator words. Apply the Conclusion ID Method — don't declare the passage a "fact set".

# Seven Takeaways to Lock In

- 1 ADDITIONAL PREMISE indicators = furthermore · moreover · besides · in addition · what's more.
- 2 COUNTER-PREMISE indicators = but · yet · however · although · even though · despite · admittedly · in contrast · on the other hand · still · whereas · in spite of · after all.
- 3 A counter-premise is NEVER the author's view. It is raised to be dismissed.
- 4 No indicator? Use the Conclusion Identification Method: list claims → ask "why?" → test support → check sense.
- 5 In a COMPLEX ARGUMENT, the MAIN conclusion is the broadest. Sub-conclusions are narrower stepping stones.
- 6 "Some people claim..." (and all its variants) introduce the OPPOSING view. The author's real view comes after the pivot.
- 7 The CLAT decoy: "therefore" at the END of a passage often marks a SUB-conclusion. Don't get trapped.

**NOW: 20 MINUTES OF SILENCE. NO DISCUSSION. NO PHONES.**

*Attempt Section A (Passages 1 & 2, Questions 1–15). 20 minutes on the clock.*

## INSTRUCTIONS:

- Read each passage ONCE carefully. You should spend ~3 minutes on each passage.
- Tag premises (P), additional premises (AP), counter-premises (CP), sub-conclusions (SC) and main conclusions (MC) in the margin.
- For each question, eliminate two options first, then choose between the remaining two.
- Mark all answers on the practice sheet itself — circle the correct option letter.
- If stuck on a question for more than 90 seconds, mark it "\*" and move on.

## AFTER 20 MINUTES

Stop writing. We will discuss Section A for 15 minutes — I will walk through the 2 passages and ask you to defend your answers. Section B (Passages 3 & 4) is homework — bring answers to next class.



CLASS 02 — COMPLETE

Next Class

# Argument Validity

*Strong vs Weak · Scope · Truth vs Validity*

Before Class 03, complete Section B (Qs 16–30) and  
memorise the indicator lists.

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*Critical Reasoning — Class 02 of 30*