A programmer will install eight software applications–L, M, N, O, P, Q, R and S–one at a time. Each application is installed only once. The following conditions apply:

>S is installed before N.
>O is installed after R but before N.
>L is installed after both P and R.
>O is installed after both Q and M.

1. If N is the seventh software application to be installed, which one of the following CANNOT be the fifth software application to be installed?

A. Q
B. R
C. O
D. L
E. P

2. Which one of the following could be true?

A. L is installed first.
B. O is installed second.
C. N is installed sixth.
D. M is installed seventh.
E. S is installed eighth.

3. If L is installed third, which one of the following could be true?

A. S is installed second.
B. O is installed fifth.
C. R is installed fourth.
D. N is installed fourth.
E. P is installed fifth.

4. If R is installed fifth, which one of the following could be true?

A. S is installed after O.
B. S is installed after L.
C. M is installed after L.
D. N is installed before L.
E. N is installed before P.

5. If P is installed before both Q and R, which one of the following could be true?

A. L is installed fifth.
B. O is installed fourth.
C. N is installed sixth.
D. M is installed eighth.
E. S is installed eighth.

6. Which software application CANNOT be installed fourth?

A. S
B. N
C. L
D. P
E. R

Game 26 – Software Programmer

1. D
2. C
3. A
4. D
5. A
6. B

On this straight game of putting things in order, all the rules are relational, and any diagram you make is going to be where the elements are relative to each other. For instance, Question 1 is D because if N is seventh, L must be eighth–nothing else can come after it.

On Question 2, four of the answer choices break a rule, as you should be able to see from a diagram (if not try again to symbolize all the rules together). For Question 3, you can deduce that S must be first or second, and with this or otherwise, eliminate four of the answers. (For example, answer B is wrong because O must have N and S in front of it in addition to M, R and Q)

The information in Question 4 places L, N, and O in the last three places, since all of these elements must follow R. This makes D possible, if not necessarily true. Question 5 allows you to deduce that P must follow O and N, since it precedes elements that come before them. This eliminates four of the answers. Finally, Question 6 is B because N must be preceded by O, which must be preceded by M, R and Q.