

Name _____

Intro to Logic – Fallacies Study Guide

1. Two types of fallacies
 - a. Formal
 - b. Informal
2. A fallacy is
3. **Equivocation**
 - a. Definition
 - i. The same word is used with two different meanings
 - b. Example
 - i. Jesus is the Word of God
The Bible is the word of God
Therefore, Jesus is the Bible
 - ii. Christianity teaches that faith is necessary for salvation
Faith is irrational; it is belief in the absence of or contrary to evidence
Therefore, Christianity teaches that irrationality is rewarded
4. **Ad hominem (abusive)**
 - a. Definition
 - i. Argument that does not focus on the evidence, but rather on the character or personal traits of the person advancing the argument.
 - b. Example
 - i. “Don’t listen to that guy/girl!”
 1. They’re an atheist.
 2. They didn’t finish school.
 3. They smell weird.

5. Ad hominem (circumstantial)

- a. Definition
 - i. Instead of focusing the content of the argument, you focus on the relationship between the person making the claim and the person's circumstances
 - ii. You judge a person's claim based on their intentions
- b. Example
 - i. Me: I believe that modern biology supports the idea of an intelligent designer
Atheist: Of course you do. You're religious. (Implication is that, therefore, modern biology does not support the idea of an intelligent designer)

6. Argument from ignorance

- a. Definition
 - i. Assuming that since something has not been proven false, it is therefore true and vice-versa
 - ii. "Absence of evidence is evidence of absence."
- b. Example
 - i. Atheist: There is no God, because I have never seen any evidence for one.
 - ii. Christian: There is a God, because no one has proven that He doesn't exist
 - iii. Christian: No one has shown evolution happening. Therefore, evolution is false.

7. Appeal to pity

- a. Definition
 - i. Attempt to persuade using emotions rather than evidence
- b. Example
 - i. "What about the deaf, blind, mentally retarded, aborigine infant in Africa that has never heard the gospel (unevangelized)?"

8. **Consensus Gentium**

- a. Definition
 - i. Deciding truth by a majority vote rather than by supporting evidence
- b. Example
 - i. The vast majority of scientists believe in evolution. Therefore, evolution is true.
 - ii. Christian: 90% of earth's population believes in a god. Therefore, a god exists.

9. **Argument because of age**

- a. Definition
 - i. Claims that all truth is subject to aging, therefore, a claim appealing to the past is more than likely false
- b. Example
 - i. "You can't trust in the bible, because it was written 2000 years ago."
 - ii. "Treating homosexuality as a sin is an Old Testament thing."

10. **Begging the question (circular reasoning)**

- a. Definition
 - i. Argument where the conclusion is sneaked into the premises.
 - ii. Assuming what you are trying to prove
- b. Example
 - i. Christian: "The bible is inspired because 2 Timothy 3:16 says, 'All scripture is inspired by God.'"
 - ii. "We know that God exists, since the Bible says God exists. What the Bible says must be true, since God wrote it and God never lies."

11. Straw man

- a. Definition
 - i. Draw a false picture of the opposing argument, and then knock it down.
- b. Example
 - i. Misrepresenting cosmological argument
 - 1. Everything needs a cause.
God is a thing.
Therefore, God needs a cause.
 - ii. Attack on the Trinity by cults
 - 1. "Trinitarianism holds that there are 3 gods *and* 1 god at the same time!"

12. Red herring

- a. Definition
 - i. Rather than answering the question at hand, you evade the question by changing the subject. Then, you proceed as if you answered the question
- b. Example
 - i. Christian: "...Therefore, it is reliable to believe that Jesus rose from the dead."
Atheist: "But what about the unevangelized?! What about all the wars started by religion?!"

13. Hasty generalization

- a. Definition
 - i. Make a general or absolute rule out of a single, atypical case
- b. Example
 - i. Atheist: "When I was younger, Christians at my church were horrible. Therefore, all Christians are horrible."
 - 1. Christians can be guilty of the same, as well.

14. Appeal to Nature

- a. Definition
 - i. Arguing that because something is “natural” it is therefore valid, justified, inevitable, good or ideal.
- b. Example
 - i. Homosexuals are “born that way,” therefore, homosexuality is good.
 - ii. We see homosexuality being practiced in the animal kingdom all the time. Therefore, homosexuality is justified.

15. Genetic fallacy

- a. Definition
 - i. An argument is judged to be false based on the source or origin of an idea.
- b. Example
 - i. “You’re only a Christian because you grew up in America. If you were born in India, you’d be a Hindu.”
 - ii. “Only fundamentalist Christians believe that the bible is literally true.”

16. Category error

- a. Definition
 - i. Ascribing a quality to an object that doesn’t or can’t possess them
- b. Example
 - i. “If God made the universe, then who made God?”

17. Faulty analogy

- a. Definition
 - i. Arguing that since two objects are alike in one or more respects, they are necessarily alike in other respects. However, the relationship between the two objects is weak.
- b. Example
 - i. “Believing in Jesus is like believing in the tooth fairy or Santa Clause.”

18. False dilemma

- a. Definition
 - i. Occurs when the opponent forces one into an either/or answer when the question has a third alternative.
 - ii. Key is to find the third alternative
- b. Example
 - i. Euthyphro dilemma
 - 1. Is something good because God approves it, or does God approve something because it's good?

19. Appeal to force**20. Ad hominem (tu quoque)****21. Appeal to authority****22. Appeal to the future****23. Special pleading****24. Cliché****25. Complex question****26. Slippery slope****27. Fallacy of composition****28. Fallacy of division****29. Recommended Sources**

- a. <http://www.onegoodmove.org/fallacy/toc.htm>
- b. <http://www.nizkor.org/features/fallacies/index.html>
- c. <http://www.logicalfallacies.info/>
- d. <http://www.fallacyfiles.org/taxonomy.html>
- e. <http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/rhetological-fallacies/>
- f. <https://bookofbadarguments.com/>
- g. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/fallacy/>

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Logical Fallacies Exercises - Part 2

Determine which fallacy is being committed in the following exercises. They may be more than one fallacy present for each example.

1. Either God exists or evil exists; you can't have both.
2. There is no scientific proof for creation, therefore evolution must be true.
3. All Christians are hypocrites, just look at Jim Bakker.
4. Where did God come from?
5. Most scholars reject the natural arguments for God's existence.
6. I am firm in my belief that if you weren't so pig-headedly stubborn, you would see the truth of Christianity.
7. You are defending the existence of God because you already believe in him, not because you are searching for truth.
8. Natural arguments for God's existence are something that they did during the Middle Ages when they had nothing better to do. Today what's important is living a meaningful religious life.
9. If a person gives up belief in the inerrancy of the Bible, it won't be long before he stops believing in God.
10. Some say that our belief in Christ's second coming is just sensationalism. Well, I think the Bible is a pretty sensational book.
11. I know philosophers are intelligent people because if they weren't intelligent, they wouldn't be philosophers.
12. My biology professor says there is no God, and he's a scientist so he would know.
13. We should not feel bothered if we offend people with the gospel. After all, in order to make an omelette you have to break a few eggs.
14. Have you stopped cheating on exams?
15. You can't trust anything he says. He's an atheist and has no basis for morality.

16. You Christians believe you are the only ones who have the truth.
17. Salvation can't be a free gift. As the old saying goes, "You get what you pay for."
18. Atheistic philosophers have made some good points, so atheism is a legitimate worldview.
19. You'd better believe that Christianity is true or else you'll go to hell!
20. Nobody believes that Adam-and-Eve story anymore.
21. We Christians must choose. We either break the law and block the doors of abortion clinics, or we take the guilt of the death of these unborn babies on ourselves.
22. I know that every action we perform is predetermined because no one has proved we have free will.
23. I believe that everyone will go to heaven because God understands that we aren't perfect, but we try hard to be good.
24. Aristotle said in his *Nichomachean Ethics* that the 'good' is whatever a good man approves of, and you can tell a good man because he always approves of the good.
25. Where was the man when he jumped off the bridge?
26. If you study theology you will become so rationalistic that you will lose your first love for God. Your heart for God will become pure head knowledge.
27. Kant disproved the ontological argument; therefore none of these rational arguments are accepted anymore.
28. Most Americans are pro-choice.
29. The terms we used to discuss concepts like 'soul' and 'mind' are archaic and outdated. Neurophysiology is on the verge of finding new physicalistic ways of describing how our mind relates to our bodies. IN the future we will be able to do away with the 'soul'.
30. Our pastor told is that evolution couldn't possibly be true.
31. I will not commit that act because it is unjust. I know it is unjust because my conscience tells me so, and my conscience tells me so because the act is wrong.

32. Leibniz contends that this world is the best of all possible worlds that God could have made. What a ridiculous assertion! Everything in this world is not as good as it could be.
33. Do you believe that the Bible is true when it teaches that women are inferior to men?
34. All of the manuscripts of the Bible have variations, so this one can't be trusted.
35. Telling Christians that salvation is free and that they just need to believe is like signing a contract to buy a house and never making any of the house payments.
36. We should question the Newtonian worldview because he believed that God created the universe and that surely affected his view of things.
37. Most atheists reach a point in their lives where they reject God because of a personal crisis, so their arguments can't be taken seriously.
38. Most people believe in God, and they can't all be wrong.
39. I don't think we should ask people about their private religious beliefs because we might offend them and it's better to be safe than sorry.

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Logical Fallacies Exercises - Part 2

Determine which fallacy is being committed in the following exercises. They may be more than one fallacy present for each example.

1. Faulty Dilemma
2. Appeal to Ignorance
3. Hasty Generalization
4. Category Mistake
5. Ad Populum
6. Special Pleading
7. Genetic Fallacy
8. Appeal to Age
9. Slippery Slope
10. Equivocation
11. Begging the Question
12. Appeal to Authority
13. Faulty Analogy
14. Complex Question
15. Ad Hominem (Abusive)
16. Straw Man
17. Cliche Thinking
18. Fallacy of Composition
19. Appeal to Force
20. Consensus Gentium

21. Faulty Dilemma
22. Appeal to Ignorance
23. Appeal to Pity
24. Begging the Question
25. Category Mistake (jumping is a process not a place)
26. Slippery Slope
27. Hasty Generalization
28. Ad Populum
29. Appeal to Future
30. Appeal to Authority
31. Begging the Question
32. Red Herring
33. Complex Question
34. Fallacy of Division
35. Faulty Analogy
36. Ad Hominem (Circumstantial), Generic
37. Genetic Fallacy
38. Consensus Gentium
39. Cliche Thinking