

Worksheet Exercise 5.2.

Name _____

Fallacies of Irrelevance

Class _____ Date _____

Identify the fallacies that are committed in the following passages. Some passages may fit more than one fallacy, but just pick one. Write your answer in the blank provided.

1. The alarmists have not been able to show that hormone-enhanced foods are detrimental to our health, so we should take advantage of this new technology to produce large quantities of necessary foods.

2. This guy knows what he is talking about. He received his J.D. degree from Harvard Law School, he has written a dozen books on international law, and makes tons of money on his international lecture tours. I predict his views on the effects of electric shock therapy will be widely accepted.

3. If the Senator will not support my bill, he should be reminded that no other group has opposed my bill except for the Democratic Anarchists Union.

4. We should not listen to music composed by Richard Wagner. After all, Wagner was Adolf Hitler's favorite composer.

5. These poor children have no shoes, have no food, have no roofs over their heads, no one to care for them. Your contribution to our organization can help these needy children. Please open your hearts.

6. Our product is very special, and it has received a lot of attention lately. Many Hollywood celebrities have tried and liked it. Our product cost more than some people can afford, but it is worth every penny.

7. It is in no way important that countries like France and Russia strongly objected to our military action in Iraq. After all, these countries acted only out of their own self-interest in this matter.

8. It is false that capitalism is an unjust institution. It was Lenin who claimed that it was unjust, but he was a Red Communist.

9. You want us to ban billboards on state land along public tollroads. You probably want to eliminate the tolls as well! But road tolls are a proper way for states to collect taxes. States have a constitutional right to collect money, and your proposal is completely wrong.

10. You say this bill illegally favors large, rich corporations and violates federal anti-trust laws, and that we should vote against it. You realize, of course, the implications of what you are saying. If we don't pass this bill, these corporations will move to another state, and we will lose millions of tax dollars; and many proposals, including your own proposal to support local community businesses, will have to be scrapped.

Worksheet Exercise 5.3.

Fallacies of Misconstrual

Name _____

Class _____ Date _____

Identify the fallacies that are committed in the following passages. Some passages may fit more than one fallacy, but just pick one. Write your answer in the blank provided.

1. Everyone, including myself, has a right to speak freely, to express his opinions, without restrictions imposed by governmental rules. So, as presiding judge in this case, I can tell you that what the defendant has done is a great evil and violates God's moral law. I urge you to keep this in mind as you begin your jury deliberations.

2. Studies have shown that students who are philosophy majors score significantly higher on LSAT tests than other majors. You would do well to become a philosophy major.

3. If we had a National Health Insurance in this country, then the overall quality of health care in this country would be lowered. So, it is better not to have a National Health Insurance.

4. Peace negotiations always cause an increase in violence, because we have observed that each time when peace negotiations start, the violence on both sides increases dramatically.

5. You say that these records contain sensitive information, and that they should therefore be kept confidential. But when people are sensitive in their dealings with others they should be commended for those actions; and so, we should make these records public.

6. Three out of four doctors recommend the healing ingredient in Moladilin. Use what most doctors recommend. Use Moladilin.

7. This war must stop. Our boys are getting killed every day. We cannot let such an evil situation continue any longer.

8. This war must continue until we win. Many of our brave soldiers have died for this cause. We must not let their deaths be in vain.

9. We have recently learned an important fact: Most people in this country are strongly opposed to the policies of this administration. We base this conclusion on the fact that almost all the people who answered this question on our political organization's website were opposed to the policies.

10. And we should stop saying that all people are created equal. It just isn't true. Some people are richer than others, some are smarter than others, some are stronger than others, some are more talented than others, some are more successful than others, and on and on. It's a fact: We are definitely not equal.

Worksheet Exercise 5.4.A.

Name _____

Fallacies of Presumption

Class _____ Date _____

Part A. Identify the fallacies that are committed in the following passages. Some passages may fit more than one fallacy, but just pick one. Write your answer in the blank provided.

1. Abundant nuclear energy is not an acceptable goal, because that would require thousands of nuclear facilities all over the country, which in turn would lead to many radiation disasters, and hundreds of thousands of deaths.

2. People necessarily act in accordance with what they desire, and what they desire is necessarily beyond their control. So, this proves that people are never free in their actions.

3. An atheist should believe that there is no distinction between right and wrong. This follows from the fact that either there is a God, and what is right and wrong follows from divine laws, or there is no God, and there is no possibility of a basis for any moral distinction.

4. Many colleges and universities have experienced large increases in student enrollments in recent years. And especially at our own university the increase has been quite dramatic — double the usual number. We were surprised by this increase because we had all been assuming that our admissions office had not been able to make additional efforts due to cutbacks in their staff. But that assumption was clearly wrong given the increased enrollments. We conclude that the admissions staff members must have doubled their efforts, and that they must have secretly worked many hours of overtime. What dedication! They all deserve a big merit raise.

5. In this war, you are either with us or against us. Your objections to our strenuous efforts in waging this war show that you are not with us. So, you are against us in this war.

6. You say that a divine being created the universe. That's impossible, because no individual being can create something like the universe.

7. We urge you to agree with our assessment that traditional methods of instruction need a complete overhaul. Pointless accumulation of facts, mind-numbing exercises, and excessive adherence to older views have no place in a correct educational curriculum.

8. We must save the species of Yellowbacked Grand Valley minnows at all costs. Violations of ecological conservation measures such as this one will one day lead to disastrous global ecological consequences. We have to hold the line.

Worksheet Exercise 5.4.B.

Name _____

All Fallacies Considered

Class _____ Date _____

Part B. Identify the fallacies that are committed in the following passages. These fallacies include any of the fallacies of Relevance, of Misconstrual, or Presumption. Some passages may fit more than one fallacy, but just pick one. Write your answer in the blank provided.

1. The project proposed by this scholar promises to be an analytical *tour de force*, a project that analytically defines and substantially inter-relates all the major concepts that comprise this field, which for years people were incapable of doing. This project will establish this field as a science in its own right. In a previous book, the same scholar was very successful in analyzing one of those concepts. So, some of the analysis has already been done, and we can expect success for the overall project.

2. We should definitely contribute money to the senator's campaign. She is, we know, a great Country singer, and the *National Enquirer* said that the senator had almost no money left, and that she had to sell the memorabilia of her dear grandmother, herself a great Hollywood actress, just to keep the campaign alive.

3. My opponent said that we should provide state funds for new treatment programs for mental illness, even if that means that we need to levy new taxes for that. I suppose that means we should create new taxes to fund all sorts of programs, for example, contemporary music appreciation. But a new tax for that is inexcusable. We cannot go down that road. My opponent is wrong.

4. Our candidate is unknown to you all, and that is why we want to introduce him to the people of this state. The first thing to notice is that no one has ever publicly said anything negative about our candidate. That is very important, because he is the only one in this whole primary of whom you can say this. Every one else is being attacked on all sides -- but not our candidate. He is a real winner.

5. I don't know how he does it, but the President obviously controls the entire oil industry. The price per barrel of oil was going through the roof, so he announced that he was lifting the presidential embargo on off-shore oil drilling, and within a few days the price of oil fell 25%. That is amazing.

6. We must not provide public funds to Public Television stations that show programs with sexual content. People don't want their children to see repulsive, degrading, offensive, pornographic depictions on regular TV channels during family hours. So, why should we spend their tax dollars to fund such programs?

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7. Please pay attention to what is happening. This candidate is not who you think he is. Just look at the people that he deals with. All of them are radicals. Those people are against everything that you and I stand for and believe in. If you support this candidate, you are supporting them too. You must reconsider.
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8. All human beings have an absolute, inalienable right to life. But, one cannot have it both ways. One cannot say, on the one hand, that all human beings have an absolute, inalienable right to life, and on the other hand, that elected or appointed officials have the right and obligation to kill people in certain cases. Therefore, the death penalty must be abolished in this country.
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9. Religion should be abolished. One need only consider the many horrors of the wars fought in the name of religion that have occurred throughout history. That is what religion brings about. Humanity can do much better without it.
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10. The following is a sound model regarding the relationship of morality and legal rights. In short, personal moral views cannot infringe on public, legal rights. That is to say, while many people personally believe that abortion is morally wrong, such personal conviction may not infringe on the rights of other people. Therefore, according to law, people have the right to have an abortion. The moral convictions of others may not infringe on this right.
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11. The Mayor is concerned about your disagreement with the rest of the Planning Commission regarding the upcoming proposal. The Mayor has always stressed the importance of being a team player, and it now it looks like you are not a team player. But I think you understand how important it is for you not to look like you're not a team player. Well, I am glad we cleared that up.
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12. Commentators argue that the extreme violence in movies and television has caused a great increase in murders in our society. But that is ridiculous. Movies don't kill people — people kill people.
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13. Well, of course, there is a purpose for our existence. Look around you: there is a purpose for birds to have wings, for pens to have ink, for ships to have sails, for cars to have wheels, for flowers to smell, for the sun to shine. There is a purpose for everything.
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14. The Green movement is irresponsible. Consider the matter of global warming. The Green advocates claim that the increased carbon dioxide emissions produced by our present technology and industry is causing the global temperature to rise. But it is a known fact that the Earth's temperature has risen in past ages through only natural, geological causes, and these advocates cannot prove that the present rise in temperature is not due to such natural geological causes.
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