Spotting informal fallacies: Worksheet

Logic and Philosophy · Worksheet for https://jugami.com/logic-philosophy/fallacies/ · For instant feedback, try the self-guided quiz online.

Name _____ Date _____

Unit: Informal Fallacies: Spotting Bad Reasoning

Directions. These problems are all new: they do not repeat the worked examples or the self-guided quiz on the unit page. Read each passage, then write your answer in the space provided. If a question asks you to repair an argument, give reasons, not only a label.

1. Coach Nguyen is 24. She presents a new sideline play and explains why it should reduce turnovers. A parent says, "She's barely older than the seniors. We shouldn't use her play."

What fallacy, if any, is the parent using? In one or two sentences, say why.

Answer: _____

_____

2. Nadia says, "The parking lot needs better lighting so students can see when they walk to the late bus." Tomas replies, "Nadia wants metal detectors at every door and a security guard on every corner. That's a prison, not a school."

What fallacy is Tomas using? Quote the part of his reply that shows it.

Answer: _____

_____

3. "Either you sign up for AP Chemistry, or you don't care about college."

This is a false dilemma. List two other genuine options the speaker left out.

Answer: _____

_____

4. "If we accept one late homework assignment, students will start turning everything in late, then they will stop studying, and the school's graduation rate will collapse. So we must never accept a late assignment."

What fallacy is this? What is missing from the argument?

Answer: _____

_____

5. A pop singer tells a late-night host, "This herbal supplement reverses aging. I take it every morning." A listener concludes that the supplement works.

Is this a fallacious appeal to authority? Why or why not?

Answer: _____

_____

6. "I know two neighbors who bought electric bikes last month, and both had battery problems. Electric bikes don't work."

What fallacy is this? Rewrite the conclusion so that it fits the evidence.

Answer: _____

_____

7. "Student journalism matters at this school because it is important for students to have a press of their own."

What fallacy is this? Explain the circle in your own words.

Answer: _____

_____

8. Which of the following is **not** a fallacious appeal to authority? Circle one, then give a reason.

A. A radio host says the auditorium rigging looks safe, so the fall concert can go on.

B. The district's licensed rigger, citing the inspection checklist, says the auditorium rigging meets the safety code.

C. A well-known actor says the school's new scheduling app is the most accurate one on the market.

Answer: _____

_____

9. Repair Tomas's reply from question 2. Restate Nadia's actual claim, name the gap in Tomas's response, and ask a fair question about lighting or cost. Do not attack Tomas personally, and do not exaggerate his view.

Answer: _____

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10. Amira argues that the cafeteria should add a clearly labeled allergen shelf and explains how it would help students with food allergies. Ben replies, "You shared cookies without checking the label last week, so we can ignore your idea."

a. This is the "you too" form of ad hominem. What is its name?

b. Write one sentence that answers him fairly.

Answer: _____

_____

11. Compare these two arguments. Which is a fallacious slippery slope, and which can be a fair warning? Give a reason for each.

A. "If you leave the freezer door open, warm air gets in, the freezer warms up, and the food can thaw and spoil. Close the door."

B. "If we let students choose their own lab partners once, they will only work with friends, then they will ignore the lab, and the science program will be shut down. So no chosen partners."

Answer: _____

_____

_____

12. At a student-council meeting, someone says, "Either you vote for the new mascot, or you hate school spirit."

a. Name the fallacy.

b. Give one missing option.

c. Write a short, fair reply that a council member could actually say.

Answer: _____

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