

Logical Fallacies (Persuasive Devices) At a Glance

A logical fallacy is a _____ in reasoning, a _____ argument used just to win a debate, a _____ from the actual argument, or a foundational _____ in reasoning.

Type	Description	Example	Your Commercial/TV/Real Example
	The writer appeals to fear by threatening the audience with negative consequences if his claim is not accepted or believed	<i>If you do not complete all assignments in this class, then you will fail and not graduate.</i>	
	An argument that attacks the character of a person rather than his opinions or arguments	<i>Lady Gaga is not a successful businesswoman because she dresses like a freak.</i>	
	Presents only two choices or solutions to a problem or situation and forces someone to choose from the two choices when in reality there are plenty more options out there.	<i>"Caldwell Hall is in bad shape. Either we tear it down and put up a new building, or we continue to risk students' safety. Obviously we shouldn't risk anyone's safety, so we must tear the building down."</i>	
	Comparison or metaphors to relate ideas or situations that are not really that similar	<i>"Guns are like hammers—they're both tools with metal parts that could be used to kill someone. And yet it would be ridiculous to restrict the purchase of hammers—so restrictions on purchasing guns are equally ridiculous."</i>	
	A conclusion based on the premise that if A happens, then eventually through a series of steps, B,C,D, and eventually Z will happen	<i>: If the school board approves a new alternate block schedule to approve 8 block classes a week, then eventually they will force students to attend school 8 hours a day, 7 days a week!</i>	
	One point or argument does not follow logically from the preceding one, i.e., no logical relationship exists among two or more supposedly connected ideas.	<i>He has my vote for senator, because he has the best run campaign.</i>	

	Presents people as authorities on products or issues; these authorities may be experts in a totally different field, though	<i>Tiger Woods wears Ralph Lauren's polo brand, and since he is an expert golfer, then he must also be an expert in polo shirts.</i>	
	A cause and effect relationship between two sequential events; often very unreasonable	<i>Using Stetson cologne will make you get all kinds of attention from girls.</i>	
	misrepresents the context from which a quotation is taken; putting words or ideas in people's mouth/head; creating a "dummy" or fake or falsified argument or situation so you can attack it	<i>Child: "Can we get a dog?" Parent: "No." Child: "It would protect us." Parent: "Still, no." Child: "Why do you want to leave us and our house unprotected?"</i>	

Word Bank: post hoc, appeal to fear, non sequitur, false authority, false dilemma, slippery slope, false analogy, straw man, personal attack (ad hominem)

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Answers for this worksheet are in the PPT. It follows directly along with this worksheet.

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