

Fallacy Practice

Directions: From the fallacies we studied in class, determine which one best reflects the error in each of the following exercises. You should explain your answer.

1. Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack's sermons.
2. A member of Congress is asked by a reporter if she is in favor of the President's new missile defense system, and she responds, "I'm in favor of a missile defense system that effectively defends America.
3. Everyone knows that a civil society is one that obeys its laws. So it follows that the Germans were right to obey Nazi laws.
4. Joe told his worst enemy, Sam, that he was a swine. Joe must have had a lot of character to admit *that* to his own worst enemy.
5. "You know what happens to people who lie? They get sick and they get cancer. If they keep lying, they get it again." (Rosie O'Donnell, purportedly to a former employee who, it turned out, had survived breast cancer.)
6. In 1972, there was a widely printed advertisement printed by the Foulke Fur Co., which was in reaction to the frequent protests against the killing of Alaskan seals for the making of fancy furs. According to the advertisement, clubbing the seals was one of the great conservation stories of our history, a mere exercise in wildlife management, because "biologists believe a healthier colony is a controlled colony."
7. We talked to a random sample of the management in our corporation and all their subsidiaries, including the companies that supply us with products, and they say they are voting Republican. We predict a Republican landslide in the national election.
8. After many years of writing philosophy, the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche went stark raving mad. This fact shows the extremely dangerous nature of the subject of philosophy.
9. The 1960's were the heyday of permissive childrearing in the United States. Today in this country we have the highest crime rate in history, with most of the convicted criminals being in their early and mid-twenties. It follows that if we want to prevent the crime rate from going even higher, we must put a stop to the permissive raising of children.
10. "God just wanted him to have it back." (Longview, Texas, Big Lots employee Dee Osborn, on finding a wallet in the store's parking lot just yards from where the owner had lost it seven years before.)
11. Just look at all this luxurious hair. My hair used to be straggly and limp, but when I started using *BigHair Shampoo* my whole life changed. Now complete strangers come up to me and compliment me on my gorgeous locks. I practically have to fight off all the advances I get from adoring men. Don't you think you need to have *BigHair*?
12. Ms. Volmer has argued that we reduce the speed limit on our freeways to 55 mph. Using her logic, we should go a bit further and reduce it to 35. then we'll just be crawling along. Think of the massive gridlock. Bad idea. We can all see her proposal is a bad idea.
13. Hugh Hefner, founder of *Playboy* magazine, has argued against censorship of pornography. But what does he know about censorship? He runs a nudie magazine! There's no reason, therefore, to listen to what he has to say on the topic of censorship.
14. All the cool kids are wearing *Brava* jeans. I've got to convince my parents to buy me a pair, too!

15. Professor Smith supports preserving academic tenure, even as the practice has come under increasing scrutiny. It's no wonder Smith takes this position; he wants to make sure he doesn't lose tenure.
16. My cousin thinks that the Dodgers are not the best ball team in America. But they have a terrific line-up this season, and ended last season with good stats. My cousin obviously wouldn't know a bad baseball team if one fell on him.
17. It's illegal to smoke grass. Kentucky is famous for its bluegrass. Therefore, it's illegal to smoke Kentucky bluegrass.
18. Former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson got these really rad tattoos all over his head and face. You should get some of those tattoos, too!
19. Lucy stands to gain a large inheritance when her great grandfather dies. It's no wonder, then, that she favors abolishing the so-called "death tax," a.k.a., estate tax, which taxes the estate of any wealthy person who dies.
20. Prisoners who claim that their rights are violated during incarceration need to just shut up. After all, weren't they violating people's rights when they committed their heinous crimes?
21. Parent: You shouldn't miss anymore school this year. You might have to repeat a grade if you do!
Child: Why should I listen to you? You missed a lot of school when you were my age, and you had to repeat 8th grade!
22. Pierce College is a better school than Pasadena City College. That's because Pierce's students are better than PCC's students. Pierce has better students because its faculty is better than PCC's faculty, and that's because Pierce pays its faculty better than PCC. Pierce is able to pay its faculty better because it has a larger endowment than PCC, and its endowment is larger because its alumni is more generous. Pierce's alumni are more generous because Pierce is a better school.
23. If we don't elect a Democrat to the presidency in 2008, America is going to fall into chaos and democracy as we know it will end.
24. The elementary school superintendent supports schools offering a voluntary moment of silence at the beginning of each school day. Such religious indoctrination of children by teachers is, however, wrong, and so we should object to the superintendent's support.
25. If we don't elect a Democrat to the presidency in 2008, America is going to fall into chaos and democracy as we know it will end. With the fall of our republic, it won't be long before the terrorists will take over the White House, Congress, and all the governmental seats of each of our glorious states. Then totalitarianism will reign, everyone will either be killed or turned into slaves. It won't be long after that that the world will end in nuclear holocaust.
26. My yoga teacher tells us that we shouldn't be materialistic at the expense of our spiritual health. But just the other day, I saw her getting into a Jaguar! And even worse, she just raised her rates for yoga classes. I guess her spirit's health requires a lot of comfort and wealth.
27. You know, people say neo-Nazis are not nice people. I disagree. They *are* nice. Just the other day, I met a guy who, it turns out, is a member of a really prominent white supremacist movement. He was *so* nice and smart and gentle. He took me to a couple of meetings, and the folks I met were just as nice and down to earth as could be. We should really re-think our position on Neo-Nazis. They're actually terrific people.
28. Headline: Scientists reveal that souls really do exist!
29. Since no one has proven there is intelligent life in the universe apart from life here on Earth, it's clearly the case that Earth is the sole planet on which intelligent life exists.

30. The Surgeon General advocates use of the so-called 'morning after pill.' She might as well run around encouraging sexual promiscuity and unprotected sexual relations.
31. Lola, Ray, and Monica are all Pierce College students. They're also all Political Science majors and good friends who plan to transfer to CSUN for the Fall, 2007 semester. Since Lola and Ray are both Democrats, Monica is one, too.
32. Reincarnation hasn't been proven by anyone, so we can safely conclude it's just a superstition.
33. Past-life memories of children prove that past lives exist because the children could have no other source for their memories besides having lived in the past.
34. I love my pet rabbit. He's fluffy and hops around all over the place. Kangaroos hop around, too. I'll bet they make great pets!
35. Wendy ended the semester with a score of 89.5, which, according to the standard 100 pt. scale, is a B+. She did a really terrific job in class, but on one exam, she was sick as a dog, and in her feverish stupor, she missed a section of the exam. So she sort of bombed the test. If I were to curve her score up to 90, thereby bringing her course grade to an A, then I might as well just curve up from an 89. Why stop there? Why not curve anyone up from an 88, or an 87? Heck, before you know it, curving up to an A from a 65 won't be unreasonable. Please, spare me! If I curve Wendy's grade, the whole point of assigning grades goes right out the window.
36. People who live in California are political liberals. I was at Barbara Streisand's house for dinner the other night, and all everyone talked about was how they hate President Bush.
37. An eminent pediatrician has proclaimed that abortion is immoral. Therefore, I am now opposed to the practice of abortion.
38. Freedom is a beautiful thing. Therefore, we should open the gates of our nation's prisons.
39. We must stop the censorship of pornography. Before you know it, all sorts of literature will be censored. It won't be long after that when the government will ban the free expression of ideas altogether.
40. Paranormal phenomena exist because I have had experiences that can only be described as paranormal.
41. Evolution is false! How could a mouse evolve into an elephant!? How could a mouse evolve into an elephant? There would have to be billions of changes for that to occur, and nobody has ever seen speciation anyway! So it's silly...who has ever seen a mouse evolve into an elephant? Nobody! Therefore, evolution must be false!
42. Look, the truth of the matter is that either God created everything, or it all happened randomly, through the process of evolution. There's little likelihood that there's any God, so evolution must be the truth.
43. The Nazis supported eugenics, and eugenics is where cloning research is headed. Therefore, cloning research is morally impermissible.
44. Sure, the media claims that Senator Bedfellow was taking kickbacks. But we all know about the media's credibility, don't we.
45. Why should I take your arguments for vegetarianism seriously when you would accept a transfusion of blood that has been tested using animal products, or accept medication that has been tested using animals?