

Chapter 02 Identifying Arguments

Multiple Choice Questions

1. In "While some scientists may disagree, it is generally accepted that homosexuality is a genetic trait," the statement "some scientists may disagree" is a
- A. hedge.
 - B. discount.**
 - C. assurance.
 - D. premise.

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

2. The Principle of Charity requires that we
- A. put an ambiguous or unclear argument in the best possible light when rewriting it as a well-crafted argument.**
 - B. ignore mistakes in reasoning when we agree with an argument's conclusion.
 - C. not distort an argument's meaning when rewriting it as a well-crafted one.
 - D. correct any mistakes in reasoning in an argument we are analyzing.

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

3. Which of the following is an example of a report?
- A. A mammal is a warm-blooded animal that nurses its young. So, for example, whales, cats and humans are mammals but turtles, birds, and insects are not.
 - B. If Germany had invented the atomic bomb first, they would have won World War II.
 - C. 73 percent of all Americans are opposed to the death penalty.**
 - D. Skunks get hit by cars more than other animals because they tend to stand their ground rather than flee.

Subject area: 2.1 Arguments and Nonarguments

4. Which of the following is an example of an explanation?

- A. A mammal is a warm-blooded animal that nurses its young. So, for example, whales, cats and humans are mammals but turtles, birds, and insects are not.
- B. If Germany had invented the atomic bomb first, they would have won World War II.
- C. 73 percent of all Americans are opposed to the death penalty.
- D.** Skunks get hit by cars more than other animals because they tend to stand their ground rather than flee.

5. Which of the following is an example of an illustration?

- A.** A mammal is a warm-blooded animal that nurses its young. So, for example, whales, cats and humans are mammals but turtles, birds, and insects are not.
- B. If Germany had invented the atomic bomb first, they would have won World War II.
- C. 73 percent of all Americans are opposed to the death penalty.
- D. Skunks get hit by cars more than other animals because they tend to stand their ground rather than flee.

6. The Principle of Fairness requires that we

- A. consider an individual to be innocent until proven guilty.
- B. not eliminate anything—including repetitions, assurances, and so on—when rewriting an argument as a well-crafted one.
- C. place the burden of proof on the person whose view is contrary to the majority opinion.
- D.** be loyal to the original argument and not distort its meaning when rewriting it as a well-crafted argument.

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

7. Which of the following is not a principle for rewriting arguments as well-crafted ones?

- A. Be fair and charitable in interpreting the argument.
- B. Employ uniform language.
- C. Eliminate excess verbiage (e.g., discounts, assurances, hedges, repetition).
- D.** Place all conclusions and subconclusions after all premises.

Subject area: Appendix: Argument Diagrams

True / False Questions

8. Some *arguments* are false.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.1 Arguments and Nonarguments

9. If a passage contains a *conditional statement*, then it does not contain an argument.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.1 Arguments and Nonarguments

10. Words like "because" and "since" are always followed by a premise.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

11. *Commands* are never statements.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

12. Well-crafted arguments should retain any *repetition* found in an argument because it emphasizes a point or makes it more understandable.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

13. The *Principle of Fairness* requires that we be loyal to the original argument and not distort its meaning when rewriting it as a well-crafted argument.

TRUE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

14. A *subconclusion* is a statement that serves both as a conclusion and as a premise.

TRUE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

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15. An argument *diagram* should include *all* statements from the passage.

FALSE

Subject area: Appendix: Argument Diagrams

16. An *argument* is a set of statements intended to provide information about a situation, topic, or event.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.1 Arguments and Nonarguments

17. In a *well-crafted* version of an argument, the conclusion is stated last.

TRUE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

18. *Rhetorical questions* are statements.

TRUE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

19. A *discount* is when you get something for less than the normal price.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

20. A *hedge* is a row of bushes planted to provide privacy.

FALSE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

21. The *Principle of Charity* requires that we put an ambiguous or unclear argument in the best possible light when rewriting it as a well-crafted argument.

TRUE

Subject area: 2.2 Well-Crafted Arguments

22. Two or more premises provide *interdependent* support for a conclusion when the removal of any one of the premises decreases the support provided by the others.

TRUE

Subject area: Appendix: Argument Diagrams

Essay Questions

23. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

What is politically good cannot be morally bad. For what is good for a large number is also good for the individual. (J. S. Mill)

1. What is good for a large number is also good for the individual.

So, 2. What is politically good cannot be morally bad.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

24. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

Israeli intelligence suggests that Iran could develop an atomic bomb as early as the middle of this decade—not, as the CIA has predicted, at the turn of the century. Teheran [Iran] continues to host nuclear-power experts from China, Russia, and South Korea. Additional support for what Iran describes as a peaceful nuclear-energy program is coming from France, Argentina, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan. (Al Hamishmar, Tel Aviv, reprinted in *World Press Review*, Feb. 1993)

1. Teheran [Iran] continues to host nuclear-power experts from China, Russia, and South Korea.
2. Additional support for what Iran describes as a peaceful nuclear-energy program is coming from France, Argentina, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan.
- So, 3. Iran could develop an atomic bomb as early as the middle of this decade.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

25. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

. . . decoration is not given to hide horrible things: but to decorate things already adorable. A mother does not give her child a blue bow because he is so ugly without it. A lover does not give a girl a necklace to hide her neck. (G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*)

1. A mother does not give her child a blue bow because he is so ugly without it.
2. A lover does not give a girl a necklace to hide her neck.
- So, 3. Decoration is given to decorate things already adorable.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

26. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

One should always eat grapes downward—that is, always eat the best grape first; in this way there will be none better left on the bunch, and each grape will seem good down to the last. If you eat the other way, you will not have a good grape in the lot. Besides, you will be tempting providence to kill you before you come to the best. (Samuel Butler)

1. If one eats the best grape first, there will be none better left on the bunch.
2. If one eats the best grape first, each grape will seem good down to the last.
3. If you eat the other way, you will not have a good grape in the lot.
4. If you eat the other way, you will be tempting providence to kill you before you come to the best.
- So, 5. One should always eat the best grape first.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

27. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

One must know how a photograph was made in order to correctly interpret it. In this way, photographs are like dental X rays, seismographs, and other records. Photographs are records, and a necessary part of interpreting a record is knowing the causal chain that produced it. Some photographs made by specialized equipment—like the electron microscope—would be reasonably misinterpreted by a viewer ignorant of the origins.

1. Photographs are records.
2. A necessary part of interpreting a record is knowing the causal chain that produced it.
3. Some photographs made by specialized equipment—like the electron microscope—would be reasonably misinterpreted by a viewer ignorant of the origins.
- So, 4. One must know how a photograph was made in order to correctly interpret it.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

28. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

Since first appearing in 1981, some 1.5 million personal ads have been printed in Chinese newspapers and magazines; more than 370,000 couples have been married as a direct result. ("It Adds Up," *World Press Review*, Feb. 1993)

NA-report

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

29. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

The tiger, whose population is liberally estimated at about 6,000, may become extinct in the next decade, according to some wildlife experts. Increasingly, the beasts are being killed not for their pelts but for their bones, which are used for medicinal purposes in China and Southeast Asia. (*Indian Express*, New Delhi)

NA-explanation

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

30. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

There is a tragic irony in the fact that American troops are not only putting their lives on the line but are also taking additional and unnecessary risks to defend some of the most undemocratic and intolerant regimes in the world. (*Jerusalem Post*, Jerusalem, cited in *World Press Review*, Feb. 1991)

NA-report

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

31. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

Wealth brings us no good of itself. Therefore it is sought for the sake of other things. (Thomas Aquinas)

1. Wealth brings us no good of itself.
- So, 2. Wealth is sought for the sake of other things.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

32. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

Selective harvesting of timber is less damaging to the environment and healthier for local economies than clear-cutting. . . . Selective harvesting uses the natural rhythms of a forest's ecosystem instead of ignoring them. Selection harvesters carefully choose trees for timber, thinning a tree stand by cutting down the slow-growing trees that are likely to die within 15 or 20 years. They leave the healthier, faster-growing trees alone to reseed the forest. Above all, these foresters avoid cutting too many trees for a quick profit, and each decade they take a tree count to ensure that they are not over-cutting. (John Tibbetts, *Utne Reader*, Jan./Feb. 1992)

1. Selective harvesting uses the natural rhythms of a forest's ecosystem instead of ignoring them.
2. Selection harvesters carefully choose trees for timber, thinning a tree stand by cutting down the slow-growing trees that are likely to die within 15 or 20 years.
3. Selection harvesters leave the healthier, faster-growing trees alone to reseed the forest.
4. Selection harvesters avoid cutting too many trees for a quick profit.
5. Each decade, selection harvesters take a tree count to ensure that they are not overcutting.
- So, 6. Selective harvesting of timber is less damaging to the environment and healthier for local economies than clear-cutting.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

33. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

Of all the animals commonly eaten in the Western world, the pig is without doubt the most intelligent. The natural intelligence of a pig is comparable and perhaps even superior to that of a dog; it is possible to rear pigs as companions to human beings and train them to respond to simple commands much as a dog would. (Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*)

1. It is possible to rear pigs as companions to human beings.

2. It is possible to train pigs to respond to simple commands much as a dog would.

So, 3. The natural intelligence of a pig is comparable and perhaps even superior to that of a dog.

So, 4. Of all the animals commonly eaten in the Western world, the pig is without doubt the most intelligent.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

34. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

The most important question is whether or not good farming can be understood as an industry. The answer is that it cannot be so understood. The reasons are complicated, but they may be summed up in two facts: first, farming depends on living creatures and biological processes, whereas the materials of industry are not alive and the processes are mechanical; and, second, a factory is, and is expected to be, temporary, whereas a farm, if well farmed, will last forever—and if poorly farmed, will be destroyed forever. (Wendell Berry, "Stockman and the Plowman," *New York Times*, Op-ed, Feb. 26, 1985)

1. Farming depends on living creatures and biological processes.

2. The materials of industry are not alive and the processes are mechanical.

3. A factory is, and is expected to be, temporary.

4. A farm, if well farmed, will last forever—and if poorly farmed, will be destroyed forever.

So, 5. Good farming cannot be understood as an industry.

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

35. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

If, for one crystal moment, the faithful—particularly the members of the American congregation—allowed themselves to view their church through the cool eye of a potential employee instead of through the opaque veil of programmed inhibition, they would observe a sexist organization that would rather recruit from the dregs of mankind than employ the most educated, dedicated, saintly women or men married to women. (Marjorie Hertelendy, "Letter to the Editor," *World Press Review*, Feb. 1993)

NA-single conditional statement

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

36. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

The Challenger spacecraft exploded after liftoff because an O-ring failed in one of the booster rockets.

NA-explanation

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

37. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

Chemical elements, as well as compounds, can be represented by molecular formulas. Thus, oxygen is represented by "O₂," sodium chloride by "NaCl," and sulfuric acid by "H₂SO₄."

Answers will vary

Subject area: Identifying arguments; well-crafted arguments

38. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

If I cannot definitively prove that the usefulness of religion is in the past, and that its foundational books are transparent fables, and that it is a man-made imposition, and that it has been an enemy of science and inquiry, and that it has subsisted largely on lies and fears, and been the accomplice of ignorance and guilt as well as of slavery, genocide, racism and tyranny, I can most certainly claim that religion is now fully aware of these criticisms." Christopher Hitchens, God is not Great (2007), p. 229.

Answers will vary

39. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

Answers will vary

40. If the following passage contains an argument, write a well-crafted version of it; if the passage is not an argument, classify it as a report, illustration, explanation, or single conditional statement.

The sea holds even more strange and wonderful forms. Plunge into the shallow waters off an Australian coral island and the variety of fish, corals and shelly creatures will literally hit you in the face. Neon colors, bodies of all shapes and sizes, fantastic geometrical designs are everywhere, and occasionally there's a glimpse of a giant sea turtle, an octopus, or a darting shark.

Sean Carroll, Endless Forms Most Beautiful (2005), p. 3.

Answers will vary