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Identifying logical fallacies worksheet middle school

Students often have a feel for whether an argument is valid, but they can't rely on gut sense alone in a culture that takes a no-holds-barred approach to argument. Get Relevant Teaching Content and Updates Delivered Directly to Your Inbox. Subscribe Today! Advertising, politics and student writing assignments all require rhetorical devices to convince people that their arguments are valid. Ideally, persuaders use facts, reasoning and logic to prove their points, but they're always tempted to take a shortcut and make their case with logical fallacies — assertions that seem plausible but collapse under scrutiny. Understanding logical fallacies can help students evaluate the credibility of marketing messages, activists' appeals and research sources. And they can use this knowledge to strengthen their persuasive writing and earn better grades on their assignments. The basics on logical fallacies Logical fallacies work because they make messages feel more persuasive. But fallacious logic also undermines the academic effectiveness of writing. Naturally, students need to learn to keep logical fallacies out of their writing assignments. Logical fallacies also should send up red flags in students' research because they undermine the author's credibility. Students need to identify the most egregious of fallacies early, and expand their understanding of logical fallacies over time. Teaching young students the basics of fallacies Even the youngest readers can be taught to see the problems with logical fallacies such as ad-hominem (insulting the man), slippery slope or appeals to emotion. As they develop an intuitive sense of fairness, they can expand their understanding of persuasive writing. Try this: Show student examples of persuasive writing filled with loaded language or deeply emotional appeals like pity or disgust, then ask them about the logical basis for these arguments. I often open discussions of logical fallacies by mentioning "sad puppy" commercials and asking students how they make us feel, versus what information we learn from them. It can be eye-opening for students to see that these persuasive commercials often have little data or content. Instead, they rest their entire argument on our emotional connection with certain music and images. Expanding older students' logical acumen There are many ways to help older students improve their understanding of logical fallacies. The website Yourlogicalfallacys.com is helpful because it has a point-and-click interface to the most common logical errors. By associating traditional logical fallacy concepts with images and easy explanations, the website helps students learn more complex fallacies like the straw man or hasty generalization. Mike Rugnetta of PBS Idea Channel has a series of YouTube videos that identify logical fallacies. Rugnetta points out the most common fallacies and draws explanations to illustrate how they are committed, why they might seem acceptable, and why they are logical errors. However students learn about fallacies, it is essential to get them past the theoretical and draw them into exercises identifying fallacies. One of my favorite exercises is called "Fallacy in the wild." I challenge students to search for these errors in logic before our next class meeting. I encourage them to bring these examples to class, where we discuss their findings — from the news to television to commercials. As students begin to apply their theoretical knowledge, they develop a deeper sense of logical errors and their importance in argument building. Digging deeper into flaws in reasoning Having students examine a piece of writing that contains logical fallacies is particularly helpful. Assigning the reading before they study logical fallacies can be an excellent way to illustrate how authors can manipulate a reader's thoughts and emotions. Gauging student response to the argument before and after learning about logical fallacies illustrates student learning. Students may have identified with a piece before they saw its weaknesses, but have an entirely different response later. If you don't have time for a longer reading, focus on a set of phrases or short paragraphs that commit fallacies, and ask student teams to identify the errors. Having students read through "letters to the editor" or internet comment sections can be especially helpful — as arguers revert to their baser selves in anger, they often lash out using fallacies rather than logic. Political debates are another great resource because politicians are fans of either/or, strawman, red herring and ad-hominem arguments. Showing students short clips of political interviews or debates from a variety of politicians can help them see that logical fallacies are human and common. Finding the nuance in logical fallacies Ultimately, students need to understand that the presence of a fallacy does not necessarily negate an argument. While arguers should strive for fallacy-free persuasion, sometimes logical fallacies rear their ugly heads anyway. When it happens, readers should be able to identify and understand the fallacy, but they should also know it may be one flaw in an otherwise well-constructed argument. Learning to identify these fallacies can help them ensure that their own persuasive pieces use the best possible evidence with as few flaws as possible. Monica Fuglei is a graduate of the University of Nebraska in Omaha and a current faculty member of Arapahoe Community College in Colorado, where she teaches composition and creative writing. Learn More: Click to view related resources. Subscribe To Our Newsletter To Get Content Delivered To Your Inbox. Click or Tap the Button Below. Subscribe To Our Newsletter To Get Content Delivered To Your Inbox. Click or Tap the Button Below. Tags: Engaging Activities, High School (Grades: 9-12), Middle School (Grades: 6-8), Professional Development These materials have been reviewed for their alignment with the Next Generation Science Standards as detailed below. Overview This unit emphasizes logical thinking and identification of types of fallacies based on the correlation of logic and factual information. There are no DCIs addressed but the context of the module is climate change. Science and Engineering Practices Engaging in Argument from Evidence: Evaluate the claims, evidence, and/or reasoning behind currently accepted explanations or solutions to determine the merits of arguments. HS-P7.2-Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions: Apply scientific reasoning, theory, and/or models to link evidence to the claims to assess the extent to which the reasoning and data support the explanation or conclusion. HS-P6.4: Hide This material was developed and reviewed through the InTeGrate curricular materials development process. This rigorous, structured process includes: team-based development to ensure materials are appropriate across multiple educational settings, multiple iterative reviews and feedback cycles through the course of material development with input to the authoring team from both project editors and an external assessment team, real in-class testing of materials in at least 3 institutions with external review of student assessment data, multiple reviews to ensure the materials meet the InTeGrate materials rubric which codifies best practices in curricular development, student assessment and pedagogic techniques, review by external experts for accuracy of the science content. This activity was selected for the On the Cutting Edge Exemplary Teaching Collection Resources in this top level collection a) must have scored Exemplary or Very Good in all five review categories, and must also rate as "Exemplary" in at least three of the five categories. The five categories included in the peer review process are Scientific Accuracy Alignment of Learning Goals, Activities, and Assessments Pedagogic Effectiveness Robustness (usability and dependability of all components) Completeness of the ActivitySheet web page For more information about the peer review process itself, please see: This page first made public: Jul 15, 2016 Students will identify how they, as individuals, think about climate science and explore common perceptions and misconceptions that exist about climate science. The activities within this unit incorporate individual reflection by students, small group work, and larger group/class discussions, and encourage students to learn how to discern true and untrue statements using logic and fact. Students are presented with various statements about climate science and are tasked with determining whether these statements are factually true and whether they are logically valid. We recognize that students may have limited background factual knowledge in climate science before starting these activities, so some exercises are intended more as a way for students to evaluate how they think about climate science and how to create logically valid scientific statements (i.e., how to think and talk like a scientist). By learning how to identify logically and factually true and untrue statements, students will, by the end of this unit, be able to create and evaluate statements about climate science (even with limited factual knowledge) and critique common misconceptions about climate science. Used this activity? Share your experiences and modifications Learning Goals for this unit: Students will be able to identify common types of logical fallacies. Students will be able to identify a logically correct statement. Students will be able to critically evaluate statements about climate change. This unit is designed for use in an introductory-level geoscience or environmental science class. It can be adapted for use in online instruction, individual/independent study courses, and large lecture hall-style classes. The exercises are designed to be completed in a 50-minute course structure, but they can be shortened or lengthened based on the level of detail desired for class discussions. This time estimate does not include any out-of-class extensions to the activities. Students and instructors will need copies of handouts, computer, access to the Internet, and a classroom projector. The activities within this unit encourage students to evaluate how they think about climate science and how to create and evaluate statements about climate science, in terms of factual and logical correctness. The image below represents how one can assess any particular statement. The activities are geared toward first learning how to evaluate statements for logic, and later, how to evaluate statements based on fact. In addition, these activities allow students to reflect on their own background knowledge and bias. The suggested sequence of this unit is: What Are Logical Fallacies: This activity is a brief introduction to the structure of commonly used illogical statements (called logical fallacies). Students will learn the formal names for a variety of common logical fallacies. (20 min) Evaluate Statements About Climate Activity: Instructors use a PowerPoint presentation to present common statements about climate science. Students are asked to reflect on whether they think each statement is factually true or false and to explain their rationale. The results of this activity can help instructors and students identify and evaluate commonly heard false statements about climate science. (20 min) Summative Assessment: This is a short quiz that can be administered during a subsequent class or included as a larger, whole-module assessment. (10 min) 1. What Are Logical Fallacies? The activities in the handout and presentation below are designed to introduce students to the structure of commonly used logical fallacies. We envision that the instructor introduces the concept, construction, and examples of logical fallacies with the class using the presentation and the first and second page of the handouts. The final page of the handout provides students with logically invalid claims about climate science; their goal is to identify which illogical structure is used for each statement. The statements range from the subtle to the outrageous. This activity can be completed individually or within small groups. Requiring students to provide justification for their answers may help facilitate further class discussions. A final, formative assessment to use at the conclusion of these activities is a YouTube video in which students hear ridiculous statements and must identify which logical fallacy is used. Presentation PowerPoint format : HideMisconceptions And Fallacies Presentation This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. PDF format: HideMisconceptions And Fallacies Presentation (PDF) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. Handouts Word format: What Are Logical Fallacies? (Microsoft Word 2007 (.docx) 45kB Aug10 16) PDF format: What Are Logical Fallacies? (PDF) (Acrobat (PDF) 117kB Aug10 16) Instructor Key to handouts: Word format: HideInstructor's answer key to What Are Logical Fallacies handout This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. Formative assessment: a) Watch the YouTube video, which presents a few bombastic statements, and identify any misconceptions and illogical errors. Explain your reasoning. Carbon and Climate Change Formative Assessment: Logical Fallacies video Instructor Key to video: Word Version: HideUnit 1 Formative Assessment Video Key (Word) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. PDF Version: HideUnit 1 Formative Assessment Video Key (PDF) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. Handouts Word format: What Are Logical Fallacies? (Microsoft Word 2007 (.docx) 45kB Aug10 16) PDF format: What Are Logical Fallacies? (PDF) (Acrobat (PDF) 117kB Aug10 16) Instructor Key to handouts: Word format: HideInstructor's answer key to What Are Logical Fallacies handout This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. Presentation PowerPoint format : HideMisconceptions And Fallacies Presentation (PDF) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. Presenter Notes (same notes as used in Part 1): Word format: HidePresenter Notes for Evaluate Statements About Climate (Word Format) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. PDF format: HidePresenter Notes for Evaluate Statements About Climate (PDF Format) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. Handout of Statements: Word format: Evaluate Statements About Climate Handout (Microsoft Word 2007 (.docx) 37kB Aug10 16) PDF format: Evaluate Statements About Climate Handout (PDF Format) (Acrobat (PDF) 58KB Aug10 16) What Are Logical Fallacies: After completing these activities, instructors may have students create their own logical fallacies (related to climate change/science or not) as an in-class or homework assignment. This extension will provide students with more opportunities to understand the construction of logical fallacies and help instructors better assess students' mastery of identifying specific logical fallacies. This activity has the potential to bring up examples or topics that are controversial and/or uncomfortable for some students. Instructors may want to review the following approaches to handling these types of dilemmas in the classroom: Evaluate Statements About Climate: The wording of each statement in the presentation is intentional, and instructors should encourage students to evaluate each statement explicitly as written. The activity can be used for a variety of purposes. Some possible uses are for students to become more aware of their preconceived notions of climate change and how they evaluate the validity of statements (i.e., to further develop students' metacognitive abilities). Instructors may also use this activity as a pre-assessment tool, helping to quickly identify gaps or strengths in their students' understanding of climate change. We do not recommend assigning a point value to this activity, except perhaps as a participation grade and/or for the thoroughness of a student's supporting reasoning for each statement. The summative assessment for this unit is a brief quiz that requires students to determine whether a statement about climate science is true or false and provide reasonable justification for their answer. Additionally, students must identify the correct logical fallacy based on the definition of each fallacy's typical construction. This quiz can be deployed at the end of this unit or at the completion of this module. (Time estimate: 15 min) Quiz: Word format: HideUnit 1 Quiz This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. PDF format: HideUnit 1 Quiz (PDF) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. Instructor Answer Key: Word format: HideKey for Unit 1 Quiz This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. PDF format: HideKey for Unit 1 Quiz (PDF) This file is only accessible to verified educators. If you are a teacher or faculty member and would like access to this file please enter your email address to be verified as belonging to an educator. To read more about common misconceptions with climate change and for data-rich and articulate answers to many common misconceptions, visit: Skeptical Science website For additional explanations of common logical fallacies, try: Your Logical Fallacy Is website Logically Fallacious « Previous Page Next Page »

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