

# **Intro to Logic**

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## **Week 2**

### **Monday**

Let's begin our study of Logic with one of the informal fallacies most of us have had some experience with. Please turn to a blank page in your Logic notebook and copy the following statements made by Flash, our resident expert in faulty logic:

1. "You should definitely give me an A on this assignment. I've had the flu all week, and I crawled to the computer to submit it. I can hardly make it back to bed."
2. "You should all pitch in and buy me lunch. My poor dog has been lost for a week, and I'm worried sick about him. He can't hear very well, and he's afraid of strangers."
3. "The manager should hire me for this job. If I don't get it, I won't be able to take that trip to Aruba I've been planning on, and my children will go hungry."

Each of these examples uses the same type of bad reasoning. Based on your experience and background knowledge, try to find the deceit or faulty logic in each example. What do you notice about the evidence or justification presented in each example? What just doesn't sound right to you?

Jot down a few notes about the bad reasoning you think these examples have in common. Don't worry if you're not sure! Just study each example and look for reasoning that doesn't make sense to you. It's a great idea to talk this over with others if you'd like. We'll discuss the flaws in Flash's reasoning in the next session. His statements are all based on the same informal fallacy.

## Tuesday

- Read the explanation below of the informal fallacy Flash used in yesterday's examples.

The examples you read yesterday shared a common form of faulty logic. In making each statement, Flash was attempting to persuade someone else to do something for him. Trying to persuade someone is not a form of faulty logic. The fallacy arises when Flash goes on to try to make the other person feel sorry for him instead of giving evidence to support his position.

In each case, Flash claimed that the other person should do something for him because of his sorry circumstances. Instead of giving valid reasons why the person should do something for Flash, he tried to make the person pity him. Flash's statements are examples of the informal fallacy known as *Appeal to Pity*. That's an apt label for this fallacy, wouldn't you say? In Latin, the term for this type of faulty logic is *Ad Misericordiam*. Even if you haven't studied Latin, you could take an educated guess as to the meaning of *misericordiam*. You could also look it up!

- At the top of the notebook page on which you wrote the examples on Monday, please write the title *Appeal to Pity*.
- Under the examples you copied yesterday, write the definition of *Appeal to Pity* in your own words.
- Read the following examples. Jot down the letter of each example that you believe contains the informal fallacy *Appeal to Pity*.
  - a. "We should elect Ted Boss. He's been working so hard on this campaign that he hasn't seen his family in four months. They really miss him."
  - b. "I'm going crazy! I haven't had internet access for three days! You should really give me a raise!"
  - c. "We should hire Mr. Right. He has 25 years of experience in this line of work and a proven track record of success."
  - d. "I shouldn't have to contribute to the work around the house. I tripped over the laundry basket and dropped the bowl of salsa I was carrying to the couch. Now my favorite shirt is ruined!"
- Double-check your conclusions with the answers on the next page. Then copy those examples that contain the week's fallacy into your notebook.

## Answers for Tuesday

Tuesday's examples that contain the informal fallacy *Appeal to Pity*: **a,b,d**. Example **c** is not an Appeal to Pity. It cites actual evidence for why Mr. Right should be hired. It does not attempt to create pity for Mr. Right instead of giving valid reasons to support the claim.

## **Wednesday**

It's time to put your knowledge to work in the world around you! Please find two or more examples of the week's fallacy in everyday life and record them in your Logic notebook. Try to use a variety of sources for this activity. You might look for examples in print, radio, or TV advertising one week, and in campaign speeches another week. Textbooks, newspapers, magazines, and internet articles are also ripe with examples of logical fallacies. If you're paying attention, you're likely to find examples in your own conversations! Varying the sources of the examples you record will help increase your awareness of how common the fallacies are in everyday communication, and make you less likely to be fooled into following faulty arguments.

## Thursday

It's quiz day! Put your learning to the test as you spot this week's fallacy in the examples below. The quiz is short and sweet. Some of the examples contain the informal fallacy *Appeal to Pity*, others don't. You can print this page out and circle the numbers for the examples that use *Appeal to Pity*, or just jot down the numbers in your notebook. When you're done, check your answers with those on the next page.

1. "You must buy this certificate giving you ownership of the Brooklyn Bridge! I have a broken arm and need the money to get a cast."
2. "You can't make them pay rent! They had to drive across the state last week to help rescue the animals being pushed out of the forest by the construction company."
3. A flyer requests donations for a food pantry and lists items that are especially needed that month.
4. "Can I please go to the game, Dad? I really want to see it."
5. Sue: "He would be a terrible judge."  
Joe: "But we should appoint him. He really wants the job, and his frail, elderly father would just be heart- broken if he doesn't get it."

Be on the lookout for examples of *Appeal to Pity* as you go about your day. If you hear or read a good one, you might want to record it in your Logic notebook for future reference.

## Answers to Logic Quiz—Week 2

The following examples employ the informal fallacy *Appeal to Pity*: **1, 2, 5**. You may feel sorry for the people involved in examples 3 and 4, but the statements don't attempt to get you to feel pity instead of supplying evidence to support their claims or requests, so they're not examples of *Appeal to Pity*.