The Fallacy Detective
A study guide

To accompany the book by:
Nathaniel Bluedorn & Hans Bluedorn
2009 edition
38 Lessons on How to
Recognize Bad Reasoning

Brought to you by
Amy Shepley
Of SixMoreSummers.com
How To Use This Study Guide

This study guide is for use with: The Fallacy Detective 2009 Edition: Thirty-Eight Lessons on How to Recognize Bad Reasoning, by Nathaniel Bluedorn and Hans Bluedorn

Should you wish to purchase this book, or any of the other books written by Nathaniel Bluedorn and Hans Bluedorn, please visit fallacydetective.com

The lessons in the book are simple, and can probably be done 2 at a time. The answers for the study guide are fairly self-explanatory, or are subjective based on the student completing them. For this reason, there is no answer key specific to the study guide.

The answers to the exercises can be found in the back of The Fallacy Detective book.

Logic is best learned in a group, or at least in pairs, so learn along with your student or students and encourage discussion and respectful debate when answering questions. Not all things are black and white, and so, in some cases, there may be more than one correct answer.

Read the lessons aloud, or have your student read them aloud. This will deepen your student’s understanding of the material.

As a method of keeping track of the many definitions and terms in the book, there are pages at the end of the guide which can be filled in after most lessons. These will be handy for your student to continue to refer to as they attempt to answer the exercise questions.

If you have feedback, concerns, or suggestions, please email Amy@sixmoresummers.com

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Lesson 1: Exercise Your Mind

Chapter Summary: __________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

Do you regularly exercise your mind? Do you do it willingly? __________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

How can you apply what you learned to everyday life? ________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

Exercises

a) doesn't want to exercise his mind   b) has an inquiring mind   c) none of the above

1. ___  2. ___  3. ___  4. ___  
5. ___  6. ___  7. ___  8. ___

Lesson 2: Love To Listen

Chapter Summary: __________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

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Write an example of a specific time when you were a poor listener, like Bob. How could skills learned in this chapter have helped you in this situation?

If you show humility, what aspects of your life, and your relationships could improve?

Exercises

a) showing that they love to listen  b) showing that they don't love to listen

Exercises:

1. __  2. __  3. __  4. __

5. __  6. __  7. __

Lesson 3: Opposing Viewpoints

Chapter Summary: 

In your own words, explain the benefits of gathering many opinions before making a decision.
Listening to other viewpoints, and actually seeking them out, shows that you have an ________________________________.

It's important to seek counsel, but is all counsel equal? What should we take into consideration when we hear other people's opinions? ____________________________

Exercises

1. ____________________________

2. ____________________________

3. ____________________________

4. ____________________________

5. ____________________________

6. ____________________________

7. ____________________________

8. ____________________________

9. ____________________________

10. ____________________________
Lesson 4: Red Herring Fallacy

Chapter Summary: Explain what a red herring is, and how it is used to train dogs. How is it relevant in communication?

Exercises
Write 'yes' if the example is a red herring. Write 'no' if the example is not.
1. ______  2. ______  3. ______  4. ______
5. ______  6. ______  7. ______  8. ______

Chapter 5: Recognizing Red Herrings

Chapter Summary: SixMoreSummers.com
Exercises

First, rephrase the question being asked. Then, write whether or not a red herring is introduced.

1. ____________________________________________  
   
2. ____________________________________________  
   
3. ____________________________________________  
   
4. ____________________________________________  
   
5. ____________________________________________  
   
6. ____________________________________________  
   
7. ____________________________________________  
   
8. ____________________________________________  
   
9. ____________________________________________  
   
10. ____________________________________________  
    
11. ____________________________________________  
    

Lesson 6: Special Pleading  
Chapter Summary: ____________________________________________  
   
   
   
   
   
Have you ever used special pleading, or been the victim of a double standard? 
Give a specific example. ____________________________________________  
   
   
   
   
   
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Exercises

Write whether the example is a red herring, special pleading, or neither

1. _______________ 2. _______________ 3. _______________
4. _______________ 5. _______________ 6. _______________
7. _______________ 8. _______________ 9. _______________
10. _______________ 11. _______________ 12. _______________
13. _______________

Lesson 7: Ad Hominem Attack

An ad hominem attack is _______________

It is Latin for _______________

When is an argument not ad hominem, even though it does direct the argument back to the opponent? _______________

Exercises

What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

1. _______________ 2. _______________ 3. _______________
4. _______________ 5. _______________ 6. _______________
7. _______________ 8. _______________ 9. _______________
10. _______________ 11. _______________ 12. _______________
13. _______________
Lesson 8: Genetic Fallacy

In a genetic fallacy, 'genetic' is referring to

Exercises

What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 

Lesson 9: Tu Quoquo

*Tu quoquo* is Latin for

In your own words, what is tu quoquo?

This fallacy is also used when someone claims that

Exercises

What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
Lesson 10: Faulty Appeal To Authority

An authority is ________________________________

What are 3 ways we can make a faulty appeal to authority? ________________________________

______________________________

When a topic is controversial, we are best to use ________________________________ to verify our claims.

Exercises

A. Which of the following appeals to authority are good and which ones are faulty?

1. ________________ 2. ________________ 3. ________________

4. ________________ 5. ________________ 6. ________________

7. ________________ 8. ________________

B. What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

9. ________________ 10. ________________ 11. ________________

12. ________________ 13. ________________ 14. ________________

15. ________________

Lesson 11: Appeal to the People

Committing the appeal to the people fallacy is when ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

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Write your own appeal to the people fallacy. ____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Exercises

What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

1. ____________  2. ____________  3. ____________  
4. ____________  5. ____________  6. ____________  
7. ____________  8. ____________  9. ____________  
10. ____________  11. ____________

Lesson 12: Straw Man

In your own words, what is a straw man argument? ________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

Exercises

What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

1. ____________  2. ____________  3. ____________  
4. ____________  5. ____________  6. ____________  
7. ____________  8. ____________  9. ____________  
10. ____________  11. ____________
Lesson 13: The Story of Aroup Goupta

Exercises

Read the following statements, and indicate whether (a) you think the statement is true, or (b) you don't know if the statement is true. In your answers, stick to what you know was said in the story. As you answer each exercise, check your answer. You can look back at the story if you need to.

1. __________________  2. __________________  3. __________________
4. __________________  5. __________________  6. __________________
7. __________________  8. __________________  9. __________________
10. _________________  11. _________________  12. _________________
13. _________________  14. _________________  15. _________________
16. _________________  17. _________________  18. _________________
19. _________________  20. _________________  21. _________________
22. _________________

Lesson 14: Assumptions

Which letter did you presume to be most different from the others? ________
Why? ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Would you change your mind after reading the rest of this section? ________

What are the 3 ways we can try to be more objective?
1. ________________________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________________________
Exercises

A. Brent: Mom, if you buy that expensive toaster, we won’t be able to go out for ice cream after lunch. It’s my birthday, and I want to have ice cream.

Based on the paragraph above, Brent is probably assuming which of the following: (write yes or no if it is an assumption)

1. ________________  2. ________________  3. ________________  4. ________________  5. ________________  6. ________________

B. Answer the following riddles. See if you can catch the hidden assumptions.

7. _____________________________________________________________

8. _____________________________________________________________

9. Answer each of these riddles:

   A. ________________

   B. ________________

   C. ________________

   D. ________________

   E. ________________

   F. ________________

   G. ________________

   H. ________________

   I. ________________

Lesson 15: Circular Reasoning

Circular reason allows people to switch their words around, and never ______
Write your own example of circular reasoning. ________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Exercises

A. Which of the following examples contain the fallacy of circular reasoning?
1. _____________  2. _____________  3. _____________
4. _____________  5. _____________  6. _____________
7. _____________  8. _____________  9. _____________
10. _____________  11. _____________

B. What fallacy, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.
12. _____________  13. _____________  14. _____________

C. Is there an example of circular reasoning in the following dialogue? If so, what is it? ________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Lesson 16: Equivocation

Equivocation means to ________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Exercises

A. What are the terms which have changed their meanings in these examples?
1. ________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________
3. 

4. 

What fallacy, if any, is committed in the following examples?

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

9. 

10. 

11. 

12. 

13. 

14. 

Lesson 17: Loaded Question

Loaded questions contain ____________________________

What is the purpose of a loaded question? ____________________________

How can you combat a loaded question? ____________________________

A. Which of the following arguments contain a loaded question? If an argument contains a loaded question, explain what the unstated question is.

1. ____________________________

2. ____________________________

3. ____________________________

4. ____________________________

5. ____________________________
Lesson 18: Slippery Slope

Why should we resist the slippery slope fallacy? ________________________________

Exercises

What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

1. ______________  2. ______________  3. ______________

4. ______________  5. ______________  6. ______________

7. ______________  8. ______________  9. ______________

10. ______________  11. ______________  12. ______________

13. ______________
Lesson 19: Part-to-Whole

In your own words, explain the part-to-whole fallacy.

Exercises

A. Which of the following arguments contain a part-to-whole fallacy?
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

B. What form of bad reasoning, if any, do you find in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

Lesson 20: Whole-to-Part

In your own words, explain the whole-to-part fallacy.

How can you tell the difference between a whole-to-part, and a part-to-whole fallacy?

Exercises

A. Which of the following examples contain a part-to-whole fallacy, a whole-to-part fallacy, or neither?
1. 2. 3.
4. _______________ 5. _______________ 6. _______________
7. _______________ 8. _______________

B. What fallacy, if any, is committed in the following examples? Use all the examples of bad reasoning you have learned so far.

9. _______________ 10. _______________ 11. _______________
12. _______________ 13. _______________ 14. _______________
15. _______________ 16. _______________ 17. _______________
18. _______________

Lesson 21: Either-Or

What is the definition of manipulative? _____________________________

A. Identify which of the following arguments use either-or reasoning and which do not.

1. _______________ 2. _______________ 3. _______________
4. _______________ 5. _______________ 6. _______________
7. _______________ 8. _______________ 9. _______________
10. _______________ 11. _______________

B. What fallacies, if any, are committed in the following examples?

12. _______________ 13. _______________ 14. _______________
15. _______________ 16. _______________ 17. _______________
18. _______________ 19. _______________ 20. _______________
21. _______________ 22. _______________

C. Which of the following is correct to say: _____________________________
Lesson 22: What Is a Generalization?

Why can generalization be useful?

A class is

If the class is all the players on the New York Yankees, what would a sample be?

Write a generalization about the New York Yankees

What would you have to do to make absolutely certain that your generalization is truthful?

Exercises

A. Decide whether the following examples are generalizations. Assume the speaker is telling the truth about his findings.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12. 
13. 
14.

B. Bonus: Find an example of a generalization in the newspaper or on television.
Lesson 23: Hasty Generalization

What makes a statement a 'hasty generalization?'

Explain in your own words the 2 ways we can make a hasty generalization.

1. 

2. 

Exercises

A. In the following exercises, answer these questions: (a) Is it a generalization? (b) If so, how large is the sample which is being taken? (c) In your opinion, is the generalization strong or hasty? Why? Assume the speaker is telling the truth about his findings.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

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B. Evaluate these conclusions. Based upon your own knowledge of the subject, decide whether the conclusion is probably true or probably false. If you don't know enough about the subject to decide, then determine what you would need to know before you could draw a conclusion.

10. 

11. 

12. 

13. 

14. 

15. 

16. 

17. 

18. 

19. 

C. Find an example of a hasty generalization in the newspaper or television. Look for broad statements and see how well these statements are supported.
Lesson 24: What Is an Analogy?

Look up the definition of analogy in a dictionary, then rewrite the definition in your own words.

In order to reason with an analogy, our items must be ____________________

An analogy cannot be proven truthful, only __________ or ________

A strong analogy is one which is likely to be ____________________

When we use, or someone else uses an analogy in an argument, we must think about not only how the objects are similar, but ____________________

Exercises

A. Are these examples analogies, generalization, or neither?

1. ________ 2. ________ 3. ________

4. ________ 5. ________ 6. ________

7. ________ 8. ________ 9. ________

10. ________ 11. ________ 12. ________

B. Turn these analogies into generalizations.

13. ____________________

14. ____________________

15. ____________________

Lesson 25: Weak Analogy

In your own words, how can you tell if an analogy is strong or weak? ________

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Exercises

A. Here are some analogies with relevant or irrelevant evidence below each analogy. Does the added evidence strengthen, weaken, or do nothing for the analogy?

1. _____________  2. _____________  3. _____________
4. _____________  5. _____________  6. _____________
7. _____________  8. _____________  9. _____________
10. _____________ 11. _____________ 12. _____________
13. _____________ 14. _____________ 15. _____________
16. _____________

B. Decide whether the following analogies are, in your opinion, strong or weak.

17. _____________  18. _____________  19. _____________
20. _____________  21. _____________  22. _____________
23. _____________  24. _____________  25. _____________

C. Read the following examples and answer the questions listed below it.

26. ________________________________________________________________

27. ________________________________________________________________

28. ________________________________________________________________

29. ________________________________________________________________

30. ________________________________________________________________

31. ________________________________________________________________
Lesson 26: Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc

Post hoc ergo propter hoc translates to ____________________________
__________________________________________ which means ____________

Can a post hoc ergo propter hoc argument ever be true? ________________

Exercises

A. For these examples of post hoc ergo propter hoc, give some other, possibly overlooked, causes for the events in question.

1. _______________________________________________________________________

2. _______________________________________________________________________

B. Name the faulty reasoning, if any, in the following examples.

3. _______________________________________________________________________

4. _______________________________________________________________________

5. _______________________________________________________________________

6. _______________________________________________________________________

7. _______________________________________________________________________
Lesson 27: Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc is Statistics

What could be the real reason Stonehenge grads make more money? __________
Exercises

A. What form of faulty reasoning, if any, is being used in the following examples?

1. ________________  2. ________________  3. ________________
4. ________________  5. ________________  6. ________________
7. ________________  8. ________________  9. ________________
10. ________________ 11. ________________ 12. ________________
13. ________________ 14. ________________ 15. ________________

Lesson 28: Proof by Lack of Evidence

Evidence is _____________________________

The burden of proof (the responsibility of acquiring proof) should be placed on __________________ and not on __________________

How does our juridical system protect citizens from 'proof by lack of evidence'?

Exercises

A. Which attorney is committing the proof by lack of evidence fallacy?

1. _____________________________

B. What form of faulty reasoning, if any, is used in the following examples?

2. ________________  3. ________________  4. ________________
5. ________________  6. ________________  7. ________________
8. ________________  9. ________________ 10. ________________
11. ________________ 12. ________________ 13. ________________
14. ________________ 15. ________________ 16. ________________
17. ________________ 18. ________________ 19. ________________
Lesson 29: What is Propaganda?

Propaganda is

Why do people or companies use propaganda?

What is manipulative propaganda?

Exercises

A. Answer the following questions:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.
B. Which of the following advertisements are using manipulative and emotional propaganda techniques? Answer yes or no.

11. ________________  12. ________________  13. ________________  
14. ________________  15. ________________  16. ________________  

Lesson 30: Appeal to Fear

Appeal to fear is a ________________ technique used to ________________

The problem with an appeal to fear technique is that ________________

Not an Appeal to Fear is different because ________________

Exercises

Which of the following examples are an appeal to fear? Answer yes or no.

1. ________________  2. ________________  3. ________________ 
4. ________________  5. ________________  6. ________________  
7. ________________  8. ________________  9. ________________ 
10. ________________

Lesson 31: Appeal to Pity

In your own words, explain "appeal to pity" ________________

__________________________________________________________
Write your own appeal to pity as a conversation between you and your mom or dad.

Exercises

What form of propaganda, if any, is being used in the following examples?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12. 

Lesson 32: Bandwagon

A bandwagon technique encourages

What should we consider when we feel bandwagon (peer) pressure?

Exercises

What form of propaganda, if any, is being used in the following examples?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
Lesson 33: Exigency

What is a seller's motive for using exigency?

Exercises

What form of propaganda, if any, is being used in the following examples?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12. 
13.

Lesson 34: Repetition

Why does repetition as a form of advertisement work?

How does a politician use repetition to convince voters to vote for him/her?

Exercises

What form of propaganda, if any, is being used in the following examples?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12. 
13.
Lesson 35: Transfer

How can feelings be transferred?

What kinds of things do politicians do so we transfer negative or positive feelings?

What kinds of things do advertisers do so we transfer negative or positive feelings?

When is an advertisement considered not transfer?

Exercises

What form of propaganda, if any, is being used in the following examples?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12. 
13. 
14.

Lesson 36: Snob Appeal

Snob Appeal is the opposite of ____________ and is used to ____________
Why does snob appeal work at getting people to buy an item or an idea?  

Exercises
What form of propaganda, if any, is being used?
1. __________________  2. __________________  3. __________________
4. __________________  5. __________________  6. __________________
7. __________________  8. __________________  9. __________________
10. ________________  11. ________________  12. ________________
13. ________________  14. ________________  15. ________________
16. ________________  17. ________________

Lesson 37: Appeal to Tradition and Appeal to Hi-Tech

What type of feelings does an appeal to tradition use to get us to buy things?
______________________________________________________________

Write your own slogan for a product using appeal to tradition. ______________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

What type of feelings does an appeal to hi-tech use to get us to buy things? __________
______________________________________________________________

Write your own slogan for a product using appeal to hi-tech. ______________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
Exercises

What form of propaganda, if any, is being used?

1. _______________  2. _______________  3. _______________
4. _______________  5. _______________  6. _______________
7. _______________  8. _______________  9. _______________
10. _______________ 11. _______________ 12. _______________
13. _______________ 14. _______________ 15. _______________
16. _______________ 17. _______________ 18. _______________

Lesson 38: Find Some Propaganda on Your Own

A. Some of the following examples of propaganda use methods not covered in this book. Identify the emotion being appealed to in each.

1. ____________________________
   ____________________________
2. ____________________________
   ____________________________
3. ____________________________
   ____________________________
4. ____________________________
   ____________________________
5. ____________________________
   ____________________________
6. ____________________________
   ____________________________
7. ____________________________
   ____________________________
B. 10. Take a current magazine – like *National Geographic*, *Time*, or *Reader's Digest* – and look through all the advertisements in it. Find as many propaganda techniques as you can in the advertisements. You could do the same thing with television commercials.
List of Fallacies and Definitions

Fallacy

Red Herring Fallacy

Special Pleasing

Ad Hominem Attack

Genetic Fallacy

Tu Quoque

Faulty Appeal to Authority
Appeal to the People

Straw Man

Assumption

Circular Reasoning

Equivocation

Loaded Question

Slippery Slope
Part-to-Whole

Whole-to-Part

Either-Or

Generalization

Hasty Generalization

Reasoning by Analogy

Weak Analogy
Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc

Proof by Lack of Evidence

Propaganda

Manipulative Propaganda

Appeal to Fear

Appeal to Pity

Bandwagon
Exigency

Repetition

Transfer

Snob Appeal

Appeal to Tradition

Appeal to Hi-Tech