

Identifying Premises and Conclusions

Identify the premises and conclusions in the following arguments. Underline conclusions and circle any inference indicators. Finally, put brackets around the premises.

1. Writing is revision because excellence emerges only through many cycles of writing and reading, performance and feedback. (Grant Wiggins, *Educative Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance*, 1998)
2. No scientific hypothesis can be conclusively confirmed because the possibility of someday finding evidence to the contrary can't be ruled out. (Theodore Schick, Jr. and Lewis Vaughn, *How to Think about Weird Things: Critical Thinking of New Age*, 2nd ed., 1999)
3. Genuine moral integrity requires intellectual character, for *bona fide* moral decisions require thoughtful discrimination between what is ethically justified and what is merely socially approved. (Rich Paul, *Critical Thinking: What Every Person Needs to Know in a Rapidly Changing World*, 1990)
4. The study of logic increases one's ability of understand, analyze, evaluate and construct arguments. For this reason, logic makes a vital contribution to the curriculum of the modern university. (C. Stephen Layman, *The Power of Logic*, 1999)
5. Future generations of people have much right to live a physically secure and healthy life as those of the present generation. Each of us is therefore under an obligation not to allow the natural environment to deteriorate to such an extent that the survival and well-being of later human inhabitants of the Earth are jeopardized. (Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, 1986)
6. Don't pick Alpine wildflowers—they really do look lovelier on the mountainsides. (Clem Lindenmayer, *Walking in Switzerland*, 1996)
7. I think that the Miss USA contestant should withdraw from the contest being that she's an adulteress. (From a newspaper call-in column)
8. The effect of crime on the quality of life cannot be measured simply in terms of the actual incidence of crime, as the fear of crime affects far more people than are likely to become victims and forces them to accept limitations on their freedom of action. ("Crime and Punishment," *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed., 1990)
9. It is much to be doubted whether the manifest advantage of changing an established law, be it ever so bad, outweighs the evil involved in the removing of it, in as much as a government is structure of various parts of closely joined together, that is impossible to shake on part without the whole body feeling the concussion. (Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*, 1595)

10. Do not feed honey to infants under the age of one; their systems cannot digest it, and infant botulism may result. (Lisa Tracy, *The Gradual Vegetarian*, 1985)
11. Let us try to teach generosity and altruism, because we are born selfish. (Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 2nd ed., 1989)
12. A glance at the nutrition charts will show that the various legumes differ slightly in their nutritional profile. It's a good idea, for that reason, to eat a wide variety of beans and peas. (Laurel Robertson, Carol Flinders, and Brownwen Godfrey, *Laurel's Kitchen*, 1976)
13. The idea that something that is artificial is necessarily bad and something natural is necessarily good is false. After all, tobacco, poison ivy, and the prickly cactus are natural, while chemical fertilizers account for a large proportion of the food growth in the world. (Eldon D. Enger and Bradley f. Smith, *Environmental Science*, 6th ed., 1998)
14. Get physical, People do better if they are touched and hugged regularly. (Edward M. Hollowell, "When Worries Go Haywire," *Reader's Digest*, February 2000)
15. Arguments from authority carry little weight—"authorities" have made mistakes in the past. They will do so again in the future. (Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World*, 1995)
16. Awareness of God is natural, widespread, and not easy to forget, ignore, or destroy. Seventy years of determined but unsuccessful Marxist efforts to uproot Christianity in the former Soviet Union tend to confirm this claim. (Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 2000)
17. People of different religions see different religious figures during [near-death experiences], an indication that the phenomenon occurs within the mind, not without. (Michael Shermer, *Why People Believe Weird Things*, 1997)
18. Pain is pain wherever it occurs. If your neighbour's causing pain is wrong because of the pain that is caused, we cannot rationally ignore or dismiss the moral relevance of the pain your dog feels. (Tom Regan, "The Case for Animal Rights," 1985)
19. To be of no church is dangerous. Religion, of which the rewards are distant, and which is animated only by faith and hope, will glide by degrees out of the mind unless it be invigorated and reimpresed by external ordinances, by stated calls to worship, and the salutary influence of example. (Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets*, 1781)
20. There should be confusion as to the right or wrong of capital punishment. We can not have government-mandated violence and at the same time expect that young people, people of all ages, will be nonviolent. (Dorothy Hostler, Letter to the Editor, *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, January 5, 2000)