

Comparison of Fallacies

1. Questionable Premise versus Hasty Conclusion versus Non Sequitur. In Questionable Premise, the premise of an argument is probably (or in some cases certainly) untrue; or alternatively, the premise is insufficiently supported. The conclusion may follow the premise but the premise is wrong. In Hasty Conclusion, the factual accuracy of the premise is not questioned, and the premise provides *some* support for the conclusion; but by itself, the premise (or premises) is insufficient to justify the conclusion. More evidence is needed in such cases. Finally, in *non sequitur*, there is no relationship at all between the premise and conclusion. The premise provides no significant evidence to justify the conclusion.

2. If you find an argument that contains Hasty Conclusion and another fallacy, choose the other fallacy as the correct answer. Only use Hasty Conclusion if there is no other fallacy present. Note: I will not give you an example that contains both Hasty Conclusion and Questionable Premise.

3. Either-Or versus Strawman. Often Strawman arguments also contain the Either-Or Fallacy as well. It is a classic Strawman to make your opponent look ridiculous by misrepresenting their arguments as being Either-Or when their arguments are not in fact Either-Or. To tell the difference: If the argument contains an explicit claim to restate someone else's argument, but does so falsely, then select Strawman (and not Either-Or). If there is no explicit effort to represent someone else's argument, then Either-Or may be selected.

4. Fallacy of Composition versus Small Sample Size. Both of these fallacies generalize from the parts to the whole, in a fallacious way. The difference: In Composition, it does not matter whether there is a small sample size. Even if the sample size were large (and representative) the generalization would be wrong. Example: Because the large majority of British people are orderly, therefore a demonstration by 100,000 British people will be orderly. The fact that British people are *individually* orderly does not mean they act that way in a group.

5. Small Sample Size versus Unrepresentative Sample Size. Small sample size means that too few people are in the sample; the small sample size means that one cannot generalize about a larger group. The small sample increases the possibility of measurement error. In cases of Unrepresentative Sample, the sample is not randomly selected.

6. Appeal to Authority versus Suppressed Evidence. One type of Fallacy by Appeal to Authority involves a situation where authorities are divided. You cite *some* authorities who happen to agree with your point, and do not mention that there are other authorities who disagree with your point. Technically, this involves both Fallacy of Appeal to Authority and also Fallacy of Suppressed Evidence (Whitewash); you are after all suppressing the authorities who disagree with you. In cases like this, select Fallacy of Appeal to Authority. Only select Fallacy of Suppressed Evidence in cases where there is no use of Appeal to Authority