

## Getting familiar with . . . informal fallacies

### A. Short answer

1. Without looking back at the text, define the term “fallacy.”
2. An informal fallacy is a mistake in the \_\_\_\_\_ of an argument.
3. Denying the antecedent is a distortion of which valid form of inference?
4. A fallacy’s premises all must be false for it to be considered a fallacy in the first place.
5. Is it possible for the conclusion of a fallacious argument to be true? Explain why or why not.

### B. Use the fallacies we have discussed so far to identify the fallacy committed in each of the following arguments.

1. “What an idiot! Mark never reads and he plays video games all day long. He is not qualified to advise the state’s finance committee.”
2. “Did you see that new family that just moved in? Well, there goes the neighborhood . . .”
3. “People who use heavy hallucinogens almost always started with marijuana, so marijuana is a gateway drug to heavy hallucinogens. And that’s the main reason to ban marijuana.”
4. “You should not adopt that conservative economic policy. Only greedy, blue-bloods adopt such policies.”
5. Your English professor says, “Of course God exists. There’s undeniable evidence for His existence.”
6. “Senator McCain’s plan to stimulate the economy cannot possibly benefit the working class because Mr. McCain is a Republican.”
7. “It’s obvious: violence in heavy metal music makes kids want to go out and commit violent acts in the real world.”
8. “MonkeyTears Shampoo—used by more salons than any other all natural shampoo. Shouldn’t you shampoo this way, too?”
9. “Every swan I’ve ever seen has been white—in books, on TV, in the movies, on the Internet—so all swans are white.”
10. “That doctor smokes and drinks. It is unlikely that he can advise you about a healthy lifestyle.”

11. The *National Enquirer* newspaper prints: "Monkey-boy is his own father!"
12. "If I don't get this promotion my wife will leave me!"
13. "You'll support what we're saying here, right? You wouldn't want your windows broken, would you?"
14. "You can't really expect me to believe that stealing is wrong. You steal all the time."
15. "You can't really expect me to believe that stealing is wrong. Everyone does it."