**Critical Thinking in English: Revision Pack 1**

**Argument Exercise 1: Identifying Arguments**

Some of the following sentences contain arguments and some do not. You must (a) say if the sentences express an argument or not and (b) if they do express an argument, identify the premises and conclusion. If it is not an argument then explain why it is not.

Remember: An argument MUST have the structure of premises and a conclusion. In any argument, reasons are being given for thinking that something is true. If there are no reasons being given to support something being true, then there is no argument.

1. If it rains I will get wet
2. This book is in English
3. John will die of cancer because he smokes too much
4. My coat is wet because it is raining
5. I like chocolate, so I must be from England
6. Therefore the weather is getting warmer
7. I want to get a good grade. I can’t get a good grade if I don’t work hard. So I should work hard.
8. Since I became 40 I get tired easily
9. Since I get tired easily I will find walking up the mountain difficult.
10. We must reduce the amount of money we are spending on space exploration. Right now, the enemy is launching a massive military buildup, and we need the additional money to purchase military equipment to match the expected increase in the enemy’s strength.

**Argument Exercise 2: Good and Bad Arguments**

Do you think these arguments are good or bad? Say why (talk about (a) the structure and (b) the truth of the premises)

To do this exercise we need to know if the premises are true or false. Some of the statements are clearly true or false, but some are not. For the purposes of this exercise the following statements are true:

Paul is English and not American

Matthew wears glasses

Most human beings do not like killing people

Brian is human

Most human beings are not evil

1. Paul is English or American. He is not American, so he must be English.
2. Matthew wears glasses and he is from England. So all people from England wear glasses.
3. Nearly all human beings are evil. Brian is human, so we can expect him to be evil.
4. Most human beings do not like killing people. Brian is human. So Brian won’t like killing people.

**Argument Exercise 3: Deduction v Induction**

For each of the following decide whether argument is deductive or inductive:

1. I know Joe is a terrible cook, because I've eaten at his house three times and each time the food has been awful.
2. Francois was French, so like all Frenchmen, we knew he would enjoy fine dining.
3. Having seen three of Jackie Chan's movies, I can testify that he's brilliant.
4. My cat must be angry with me for buying a kitten. He hisses every time I get near him, and he won’t eat his food.
5. The car's battery provides power to the engine, so if the battery is dead, the car won't start.
6. Every time I've eaten oysters I've been sick--I must be allergic to oysters.
7. Sanjay is a mountaineer, and since mountaineers are very fit, Sanjay must be very fit too.
8. The bank won't be open tonight at nine o'clock, because all banks close by six.
9. Margery is a bad carpenter. She built some shelves that fell down, and then she built a bed that collapsed as soon as I sat on it.
10. The sum of the interior angles of any triangle is 180°. In triangle #1, angle A is 30°, angle B is 90°. Therefore, angle C is 60°

**Definitions 1**

It will be important, both for the quiz, and for the remainder of the course that you are familiar with the following terminology. Create your own definitions for the following:

Argument:

Premise:

Conclusion:

Statement:

Proposition:

Truth:

Argument indicator:

Explanation:

The purpose of an argument:

Good argument:

Bad argument:

Inductive argument:

Deductive argument:

**Definitions 2**

Now that you have created your own definitions, see if you can match the following definitions with the terms above. Are they similar to your own definitions? If not, how are they different?

1. Where someone is arguing that if the premises are all true the conclusion is probably (but not definitely) true. An argument where the conclusion is reached by ‘going beyond’ the premises.
2. A word or expression that is being used to connect premises and conclusion. There are two kinds:

Premise indicators. These are used to indicate that what comes next are reasons we are using to try and support something.

Conclusion indicators. These are used to indicate that what comes next is something that we are trying to give reasons to support.

1. Where someone gives some reasons (premises) to try to support some claim (conclusion).
2. A reason that is used to try to support some claim.
3. A statement is true if things are the way the statement says they are. A statement is false if things are not the way the statement says they are.

Strictly speaking, it is what we use statements to say (propositions) that are true or false. When we say that a statement is true, what we really mean is that things are the way the proposition the statement expresses says they are.

1. Where someone is arguing that if the premises are all true the conclusion HAS to be true. An argument where the conclusion is reached by ‘unpacking’ the premises.
2. An argument where the premises really do support the conclusion.
3. An argument where the premises do not really support the conclusion.

There are two ways that premises can fail to support the conclusion:

If the structure of the argument is wrong. If the premises do not lead us to the conclusion. If the premises are true, they do not give us good reasons to think the conclusion is true. If truth will not get us towards truth.

If any of the premises are false.

1. A claim that someone is trying to support by giving reasons.
2. Where someone tries to say why something is true.

Do not confuse these with arguments, where someone is trying to support the claim that something is true by giving reasons.

1. The proper purpose, or goal, is to help human beings believe things that are true, and avoid believing things that are false
2. What we express when we use a statement.
3. A kind of sentence that we use to try and say how things are.