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## Training Exercises PT1 (Getting Started with Arguments) with Example Solutions

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### Issue 1: *Identifying Premises and Conclusions*

(This exercise is taken from *Bowell and Camp (2015)* with considerable alterations.)

Decide whether each of the following cases contains an argument. If it does not, note that down. If it does, identify the different premises and the conclusion. Just look for *explicit* premises and conclusions. If there are multiple sensible ways in which the phrases can be understood, then decide on one of them.

**Example:**  $\underbrace{\text{Benji is a dog}}_{P_1}$  and  $\underbrace{\text{all dogs are black}}_{P_2}$ . So  $\underbrace{\text{Benji is black}}_C$ .

1. You should provide documentation with your code since nobody will like be able to understand it otherwise.
2. It is messy in here because Sarah was in here earlier and she is a messy person.
3. Is Android not secure?
4. Isn't it obvious that Android is not secure?
5. Isn't it obvious that Android is not secure? I don't think so.
6. Jenny thinks that Android is not secure.
7. Jenny thinks that Android it not secure, so Android is not secure.
8. Jonny thinks that Android is secure, so Android is not secure.
9. Eat your greens!
10. Students should not pay anything for tertiary education. A well educated populations benefits a society, and societies should be prepared to pay for bringing these benefits about!
11. In order to find a good argument you need to have enough knowledge about a subject.
12. In order to find a good argument you need to have enough knowledge about a subject. So you should look for deficiencies in your beliefs.
13. I'm late because I was stuck in traffic.
14. Shoot, I'm stuck in traffic again. I'm going to be late.
15. He's wearing this ring since his wedding.

16. He's wearing this ring, since he is married and it's his wedding ring.
17. The biscuit tin is empty because the children ate all the biscuits.
18. I saw the children near the cookie jar earlier. They looked very suspicious to me. I bet the biscuit tin is empty because the children ate all the biscuits.
19. This is not the last sentence, as there is one sentence after this.
20. This is the last sentence.

### Sketch of a Solution 1:

Sentences with no underbrace do not contain arguments are in grey.

1.  $\underbrace{\text{You should provide documentation with your code since nobody will like be able to understand it otherwise.}}_P$
2.  $\underbrace{\text{It is messy in here}}_C$  because  $\underbrace{\text{Sarah was in here earlier}}_P$  and  $\underbrace{\text{she is a messy person.}}_P$
3. Is Android not secure?
4. Isn't it obvious that Android is not secure?
5. Isn't it obvious that Android is not secure? I don't think so.
6. Jenny thinks that Android is not secure.
7.  $\underbrace{\text{Jenny thinks that Android it not secure, so}}_P$   $\underbrace{\text{Android is not secure.}}_C$
8.  $\underbrace{\text{Jonny thinks that Android is secure, so}}_P$   $\underbrace{\text{Android is not secure.}}_C$
9. Eat your greens!
10.  $\underbrace{\text{Students should not pay anything for tertiary education.}}_C$   
 $\underbrace{\text{A well educated populations benefits a society,}}_P$   
and  $\underbrace{\text{societies should be prepared to pay for bringing these benefits about!}}_P$
11. In order to find a good argument you need to have enough knowledge about a subject.
12.  $\underbrace{\text{In order to find a good argument you need to have enough knowledge about a subject. So}}_P$   
 $\underbrace{\text{you should look for deficiencies in your beliefs.}}_C$
13.  $\underbrace{\text{I'm late}}_C$  because  $\underbrace{\text{I was stuck in traffic.}}_P$

14. Shoot,  $\underbrace{\text{I'm stuck in traffic again.}}_P$   $\underbrace{\text{I'm going to be late.}}_C$
15. He's wearing this ring since his wedding.
16.  $\underbrace{\text{He's wearing this ring}}_C$  since  $\underbrace{\text{he is not yet divorced}}_P$  and  $\underbrace{\text{it's his wedding ring.}}_P$
17.  $\underbrace{\text{The biscuit tin is empty}}_C$  because  $\underbrace{\text{the children ate all the biscuits.}}_P$
18.  $\underbrace{\text{I saw the children near the cookie jar earlier.}}_P$   $\underbrace{\text{They looked very suspicious to me.}}_P$   
 I bet  $\underbrace{\text{the biscuit tin is empty because the children ate all the biscuits.}}_C$
19.  $\underbrace{\text{This is not the last sentence,}}_C$  as  $\underbrace{\text{there is one sentence after this.}}_P$
20. This is the last sentence.

## Issue 2: *Principle of Charity*

The below sentences can be read in at least one (prima facie) mean way and in at least one (prima facie) charitable way. Write down an unambiguous version of a mean and a charitable reading, respectively. Depending on the context, it can change what counts as charitable. For the below sentences, assume that the sentence is uttered in a common situation.

**Example:** All cats have four legs.

Mean reading: Each and every cat has four legs without a single exception.

Charitable reading: Typically, cats have four legs.

1. She will probably take forever to complete her task.
2. Don't complain that it is too hard. There are people who successfully did that before you, so you should be able to do it, too.
3. The car just came out of nowhere!
4. Visitors should not leave children or food items unattended unless they want them to be eaten by the animals.
5. User are obliged to make sure that their systems are secure.
6. You are never allowed to drive without a drivers licence.
7. I would die to get a dog!
8. John got the box from the top shelf with the ladder as he was not tall enough to reach it.
9. Think of horses, not zebras, when you hear hoofbeats.
10. Susie has the flu and Julia nurses her. Julia says: "You make me sick, but I will always care for you anyway."

11. John and Kim are an unhappy couple in a heated argument and Kim desperately says:  
“You make me sick, but I will always care for you anyway.”

### Sketch of a Solution 2:

1. **Mean:** She will literally never complete her task.  
**Charitable:** She will take an unusually long time to complete her task.
2. **Mean:** There exists at least one person who successfully did that before you, so you should be able to do it, too.  
**Charitable:** There are reasonably many people who are sufficiently like you who successfully did that before you, so you should be able to do it, too.
3. **Mean:** The car spontaneously materialized!  
**Charitable:** The car was very hard or impossible to see coming from where I was standing.
4. **Mean:** Unsupervised food items and children will be eaten by the animals and thus visitors should not leave them unattended.  
**Charitable:** Visitors should not leave food items unattended unless they want them to be eaten by the animals and they should not leave children unattended.
5. **Mean:** Users are obliged to see to it that their systems are secure without any doubt.  
**Charitable:** Users are obliged to see to it that their systems are reasonably secure.
6. **Mean:** There is absolutely no circumstance under which you are allowed to drive without a driver's licence.  
**Charitable:** Under almost all circumstances, you are not allowed to drive without a driver's licence.
7. **Mean:** I want a dog so bad that I would literally give up my life for getting a dog.  
**Charitable:** I want a dog so bad that I would do a lot of things (that do not include my death) for getting a dog!
8. **Mean:** John was not tall enough, so he got the box from the top shelf, on which the ladder was stored.  
**Charitable:** John was not tall enough, so he used the ladder to get the box from the top shelf.
9. **Mean:** If you even happen to hear hoofbeats, you should assume that they are caused by horses, and not by zebras.  
**Charitable:** You should try to look for the most likely explanation.
10. **Mean:** Julia means: “You upset me, but I will always care for you anyway.”  
**Charitable:** Julia means: “I will fall ill by caring for you, but I will always care for you anyway.”
11. **Mean:** Kim means: “I will fall ill by caring for you, but I will always care for you anyway.”  
**Charitable:** Kim means: “You upset me, but I will always care for you anyway.”

### Issue 3: *Your first argument in standard form*

Write an argument in standard form for or against each of the following claims or reasonable conditionalizations thereof.

- (I) Children under the age of 10 should not have a smartphone.
- (II) Every software should be open-source.
- (III) It should be obligatory for high-school students to learn at least a little bit of programming.

### Issue 4: *Right in the feels...*

Rhetoric can be a tool to manipulate people and to make them believe in things that the speaker wants them to believe. This is often used for bad causes, as done by populist politicians or religious extremists. But it does not *have* to be used for the bad.

Watch the famous speech from *The Great Dictator* by Charlie Chaplin. You can find it, e.g., here <https://youtu.be/w8Hd0Hrc30Q>.

1. What is/are the core message(s) that Chaplin wants to convey in his speech?
2. Does he do this mainly via argument or mainly via rhetoric? Are there arguments in the speech at all?
3. Do you think that the message(s) of Chaplin's speech could have been conveyed equally well or even better if he used more arguments? What is the advantage of rhetoric in the speech?
4. In the light of those advantages, would it still sensible if the audience was capable of precise thinking? Why? Why not?

*Bonus round!* Watch the following speech that is ascribed to Carl Sagan: <https://youtu.be/EWPFm dAWRZ0>. (The video is a little longer than the speech. You can end after timestamp 3:35.)

1. What is/are the core message(s) that this speech conveys?
2. Does it do this mainly via argument or mainly via rhetoric? What is the main argument of the speech, if there is any?
3. Is the use of arguments in this speech different than the use of arguments in Chaplin's speech?