

Figure 4.14: Exercises for Practicing Identifying Errors in Reasoning

1. Connor's family has a dog that is almost twenty years old. When his friend's dog dies, Connor asks his mom how it could have happened. "His dog was only twelve," Connor says. "He should have lived a lot longer."
2. Jamie and Lewis are discussing the AIDS epidemic. "Maybe someday they'll find a cure," Jamie says. "There is no cure for AIDS," Lewis says. "They haven't found one yet, have they? And they've tried for a long time. That means there is no cure."
3. James is working on an essay for class, and Jamal asks him why he is writing it out by hand instead of using the computer. James says that the last time he used the computer he got a bad grade, so now he writes everything by hand first and types it on the computer later.
4. Annabelle and Zelda are assigned to debate whether or not Woodrow Wilson was a good president of the United States. Zelda goes first and presents her argument for why Wilson was a good president. When it is Annabelle's turn to speak, she begins by saying, "Since you all know Zelda, you'll understand that she is wrong, because she is always so rude."
5. Taylor asks Gale why she is wearing a jacket with a hole in the elbow. Gale tells him it is the new style. "Look around," she says. "Everyone is doing it."
6. Sasha has written a paper about the presidency of Ronald Reagan. Her teacher notices that most of the people Sasha quotes in the paper said that he was an excellent president. Almost all of them were people who worked very closely with him, and the quotes were recorded when they were still working for him.
7. Lawrence says he wants to get a master's degree in business administration after going to college, and Charlotte says she thinks that's great. "What kind of business do you want to go into?" she asks. Lawrence replies, "I don't want to go into business, I just want to make more money. People with MBAs make more money."

Answers: 1—Accident; 2—Arguing from ignorance; 3—False cause; 4—Arguing against the person; 5—Appealing to the people; 6—Using sources that reflect bias; 7—Misapplying a concept or generalization

Source: Adapted from Marzano Research. (2016). Marzano compendium of instructional strategies. Centennial, CO: Author.