

SYLLOGISMS

& Logical Deductive Reasoning

General to Specific

A syllogism is a three-part logical argument. It begins with an irrefutable major premise, then it proceeds to narrow down the information until a logical conclusion is reached. To be considered a true syllogism, the major premise must be accepted by the audience.

Major Premise: *irrefutable general statement*
All humans are mortal.

Minor Premise: *specific example of the major premise*
Socrates is human.

Conclusion: *logical conclusion that follows*
Socrates is mortal.

If the major premise is not accepted by the audience, then it is an ENTHYMEME. In order to prove an enthymeme, the rhetor must then prove the statement of that enthymeme. Some enthymemes are accepted by like-minded audiences without questioning their provability.

SYLLOGISM? ENTHYMEME? OTHER? WHY?

All women are kind.
Ms. White is a woman.
Ms. White is kind.

All animals deserve their natural habitat.
Chickens are animals.
Chickens deserve their natural habitat.

No philosophers are evil.
All Greeks are philosophers.
No Greeks are evil.

All humans are selfish.
Melinda Gates is a human.
Melinda Gates is selfish.

Necessities make us happy.
Jobs are necessities.
Jobs makes us happy.

My best friend is priceless.
A Rembrandt painting is priceless.
My best friend is a Rembrandt painting.