

Non Sequitur Practice Examples

In each case, answer No Technique, Non Sequitur, or Faulty Analogy.

1. If San Francisco is in California, then San Francisco is in Russia.
San Francisco is not in Russia.
Therefore, San Francisco is not in California.
Answer: No Technique (Law of Contrapositive)
2. An even number bigger than two can't be a prime number.
Since 38 is even, it's not prime.
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
3. An even number bigger than two can't be a prime number.
37 is an odd number.
So 37 is prime.
Answer: Non Sequitur [The conclusion is a true statement but it does not follow from the premises. Hence, the reasoning is false.]
4. She's either beautiful or dumb.
She's not dumb.
Therefore, she's beautiful.
Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)
5. I knew going into the history final that if I aced it, I'd make an A for the course.
And an A for the course meant I graduate with honors.
Well, I aced the history final. Give me that honors diploma!
Answer: No Technique (Hypothetical Syllogism)
6. Jenny to her friend Susan: "My mother promised me a new smart phone if I made an A in math tomorrow."
Two days later, Susan sees Jenny. "Did you get the new phone?"
Jenny: "No, I didn't."
Susan: "Jenny, I can't believe you didn't make that A. You studied so hard."
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Contrapositive)
7. Everyone who understands the art of diplomacy is a great statesman.
Caesar understood the art of diplomacy.
Therefore, Caesar was a great statesman.
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
8. All birds fly.
All eagles fly.
Therefore, all eagles are birds.
Answer: Faulty Analogy
9. One student to another after a test: "The second question asked whether Riga was in Poland or Estonia. I knew it wasn't in Poland; so I put that it was in Estonia."
Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)

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10. Joey's mom said he could go to the game only if he cut the grass first.
He's here at the game.
Hey, Joey, how long did it take you to cut the grass?
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
11. If the president's diplomacy succeeds, war will be avoided.
War has been avoided.
Therefore, the president's diplomacy has succeeded.
Answer: Non Sequitur
12. If Sylvester is innocent, then his alibi will stand up.
But his alibi does not stand up.
Therefore, Sylvester is guilty.
Answer: No Technique (Law of Contrapositive)
13. Either she really loves me or she lied to me.
I know she loves me.
So there's no way she lied to me.
Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)
14. If the sun comes out, we'll go on a picnic.
We went on the picnic.
So the sun must have come out.
Answer: Non Sequitur
15. Majoring in chemistry or math in college guarantees you a good income.
And a good income will allow you to retire early.
So study chemistry or math and shorten your working life!
Answer: No Technique (Hypothetical Syllogism)
16. Ted: "Joey's mom said he could come to the game only if he cut the grass."
Billy: "But Joey's not at the game. I looked everywhere for him."
Ted: "I said he was going to cut the grass. His mom must have changed her mind."
Answer: Non Sequitur
17. Birthday party host: "You can have cake or ice cream."
Guest: "I'll take cake."
Host: "You're one of the few people I know who doesn't like ice cream."
Answer: Non Sequitur
18. Teacher to class: "If you want to get on my good side, be on time to class, go right to your place, and do what I tell you."
At the first Parents Club meeting, the teacher tells Mrs. Smith: "So far, your son has done everything I've asked of him. I have no complaints."
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
19. Teacher to parent: "A student who's failing is either unintelligent or inattentive. Your son, who's failing, is intelligent. So he's not paying attention."

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20. Jim: "Harvey's devastated."

Marilyn: "He must have lost his girlfriend because if he and Susie broke up, he'd be devastated."

Answer: Non Sequitur

21. If the maid did not have a key, then she should not be considered a suspect.
Since she in fact did not have a key, she is not a suspect.

Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)

22. Either you completed the last assignment or you failed the course.
You failed the course.

So you must not have completed the last assignment.

Answer: Non Sequitur

23. All Communists are Russians.
All radicals are Communists.
Therefore, all radicals are Russians.

Answer: No Technique (Hypothetical Syllogism)

24. I have enough money to go to the movies or the ballgame but not both.
I think I'll go to the movies.
So I'll call Jimmy and tell him I won't go to the ball game with him.

Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)

25. Anyone who is good is likeable, so you are likeable because you are good.

Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)

26. No prizefighters are amateurs.
But all college athletes are amateurs.
Therefore, no college athletes are prizefighters.

Answer: No Technique (Law of Contrapositive)

27. To run for President, you must be at least 35 years old and a natural born citizen.
Hillary Trump is 37 years old.
So Hillary can run for President.

Answer: Non Sequitur

28. All men are mortal.
Hence, Socrates must be mortal, for he is a man.

Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)

29. President to vice-president: "If my diplomacy succeeds, war will be avoided."
The next day, the president calls the vice-president. "We have to get ready for war."
Vice-president: "Mr. President, I'm so sorry your diplomacy didn't work."

Answer: No Technique (Law of Contrapositive)

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In each case, answer No Technique, Non Sequitur, or Faulty Analogy.

30. If a person commits a crime, they shouldn't be allowed to have a gun.
Likewise, a person who commits a crime shouldn't be allowed to vote.
So if a person can't have a gun, they shouldn't vote either.
Answer: Non Sequitur
31. If a balanced Federal budget is necessary, then either Congress must act or the President must use his influence to get the necessary law passed.
Since Congress refuses to act, the President must step in.
Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)
32. Knowing that, if his wife's car broke down, she will be hours late, Tom concludes that her car must have broken down because she should have been home hours ago.
Answer: Non Sequitur
33. Paul was a Jew, because all the Apostles were Jews, and Paul was an Apostle.
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
34. Mary: "If you don't drink or smoke, you'll live to a ripe old age."
Sue: "My grandmother is 90 today."
Mary: "Obviously she has avoided alcohol and cigarettes."
Answer: Non Sequitur
35. Wife to husband: "I'll take the kids on a picnic today only if the sun comes out."
When the husband comes home at the end of the day, he says, "The sun came out.
How did you and the kids enjoy the picnic?"
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
36. All criminals had difficult childhoods.
All orphans had difficult childhoods.
So all orphans are criminals.
Answer: Faulty Analogy
37. Either Bill or Sam left the bathroom in a mess.
It can't be Sam because he's not home yet.
Bill! Get in here and clean up the mess you made!
Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)
38. His future with the company can no longer be assured. If he married the boss's daughter, his future was assured, but he stupidly didn't marry her.
Answer: Non Sequitur
39. If he's as stupid as you say, there's no way he could be elected class president. But he got elected. So he's not as stupid as you think.
Answer: No Technique (Law of Contrapositive)
40. White is a color.
Black is a color.
Therefore, black is white.

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In each case, answer No Technique, Non Sequitur, or Faulty Analogy.

Answer: Faulty Analogy

41. Going by what Tom said, either he eats cannelloni when he goes to Italian restaurants or he eats Moo Shi pork when goes to a Chinese restaurant. Because we found out that he eats cannelloni when he goes to Italian restaurants, that means he doesn't eat Moo Shi pork when he goes to Chinese restaurants.

Answer: Non Sequitur

42. I won't waste my vote on a third party candidate for president.
But I just can't bring myself to vote for the Republican candidate.
So I guess I'll vote for the Democrat.

Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)

43. If you run from the police, you're admitting guilt.
When the police came to question the Haitian suspect, he tried to flee.
So the Haitian is guilty.

Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)

44. Aryans are destined to possess the world.
Chinese are not Aryans.
Hence, Chinese are not destined to possess the world.

Answer: Non Sequitur

45. No athletes make good student council leaders because student council leaders must devote lots of time to the job, and athletes don't have lots of time.

Answer: No Technique (Law of Contrapositive)

46. None but citizens may vote. So you are not a citizen since you are not a voter.

Answer: Non Sequitur

47. If we shorten the sentence for possession of marijuana, we will reduce the number of people in prison.

If we reduce the number of people in prison, we will save money.

Since our state faces a financial crisis, we need to shorten the sentence for possession of marijuana.

Answer: No Technique (Hypothetical Syllogism)

48. People who don't like baseball are not true Americans because baseball is the American Pastime and every true America likes the nation's pastime.

Answer: No Technique (Law of Contrapositive)

49. Jessica and her friend Rebecca are discussing their courses for next year.
Jessica: "We can take either Creative Writing or Computer Science as our one elective."

Rebecca: "I need Computer Science to graduate."

Jessica: "That's too bad. I was looking forward to being in Creative Writing together."

Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)

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In each case, answer No Technique, Non Sequitur, or Faulty Analogy.

- 50.** Everyone who wears a tuxedo is civilized, and since no zombies wear tuxedos, no zombies are civilized.
Answer: Non Sequitur
- 51.** If Caracas is in Venezuela, then it's in South America.
If Caracas is in South America, it's below the Equator.
Caracas is in Venezuela.
So Caracas is below the Equator.
Answer: No Technique (Hypothetical Syllogism)
- 52.** Greg: "Did the Yankees win?"
Sam: "Yes! 6-4"
Greg: "So they won the pennant, right?"
Sam: "You bet. They knew going into the game that a victory would clinch the pennant. So they pulled out every stop."
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
- 53.** London is in either France or Argentina.
London is not in France.
So London is in Argentina.
Answer: No Technique (Disjunctive Syllogism)
- 54.** If it's a rat, it's a mammal.
If it's a horse, it's a mammal.
So if it's a rat, it's a horse.
Answer: Faulty Analogy
- 55.** Since theft is a criminal action and all criminal actions ought to be punished by law, theft should be punished by law.
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
- 56.** We just found out that our son didn't get into Harvard or Yale. If he was going to Harvard or Yale, he would be going to one of the best universities in the country. But now he must abandon his hope of going to one of the best universities in the country.
Answer: Non Sequitur
- 57.** Joe: "Sam, you smoke Majors, and Majors are the thinking man's cigar. So you must be a thinking man."
Answer: No Technique (Rule of Detachment)
- 58.** All uneducated people are shallow.
Students are all educated.
Hence no students are shallow.
Answer: Non Sequitur

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In each case, answer No Technique, Non Sequitur, or Faulty Analogy.

- 59.** We can all agree that theft is a crime.
But theft was encouraged by the laws of Sparta.
Therefore, the laws of Sparta encouraged crime.
Answer: No Technique (Hypothetical Syllogism)
- 60.** If Steve Martin is a candidate for president, he's a U.S. citizen.
But Steve Martin is not a candidate for president.
And here I thought he *was* a U.S. citizen.
Answer: Non Sequitur