

Deductive Argument

Deduction uses an inductive conclusion as part of a strategy to help decide a specific case.

eg. As a teacher, I assign marks to work. Each task is like a premise; Joe Student can consider each task and decide if he feels it, and the mark he got are fair measures of his ability/effort etc. If he accepts that all of the task results are legitimate, he can only accept that the conclusion (his final mark - the specific case) is legitimate.

The classic deductive formulation is built of 2 premises:

- a. the major premise (the inductive rule/conclusion generalization)
 - b. the minor premise (the specific circumstance)
- Therefore: conclusion

eg. a. the major premise: My students loved the Shakespeare unit
 b. the minor premise: Joe is one of my students
 Therefore: (conclusion) Joe must have loved the Shakespeare unit

Note: If you wish to challenge a deductive argument, you can only challenge the premises; the conclusion is beyond dispute because it follows from the logic of the premises. Therefore: If the premises do not lead inevitably to the conclusion, something has gone wrong; If there is a premise that isn't essential to the building of the argument leading to the conclusion, it has no place in the argument.

Deductive Essay Model	
<p>p.1. Students submit work late because they are not afraid to do so.</p> <p>p.2. Joe, a typical student, hands in work late.</p> <p>..... <i>Joe submits work late because he is not afraid to do so.</i></p> <p>→If the conclusion above is accepted as valid, it leads into the next step of the argument</p> <p>p.1. Completion rate would increase if students were afraid to submit work late.</p> <p>p.2. Work submitted late is a problem</p> <p>p.3. Academic consequences would create fear of consequences for incomplete work.</p> <p>..... <i>Academic consequences should be imposed on late submissions of student work</i></p>	<p>p.1 →This premise is easily verified, or disputed by research</p> <p>p.2. →must be accepted “provisionally”: we may need to launch into a whole separate argument just to support the premise.</p> <p>→If each premise is accepted, then the conclusion must be accepted (naturally almost every premise in the argument can be challenged, but so too could they be defended)</p>