

Simple Argument Maps Without Solutions 1-10

1. "I never had any doubt about it [The Bible] being of divine origin. And to those who... doubt it, I would like to have them point out to me any similar collection of writings that have lasted for as many thousands of years and is still the best seller worldwide. It had to be of divine origin." From: Ronald Regan.
2. Three people have died in Germany after being "shot" by starting pistols that fired blank cartridges. In each case, the pistol was placed against the neck and the pressure from the resulting discharge ruptured major blood vessels. "These cases impressively demonstrate the error of the belief that blank cartridges are harmless", says a report cited in Australian Doctor. From: "The Bulletin" magazine, August 3, 1999.
3. "With Rivers as the new dominant face of management, the Celtics are in a better position than when Ainge and a reluctant Jim O'Brien tried their oil and water routine last year. The key will be whether Rivers' coaching can back up his smooth words. In a realigned Eastern Conference with the Nets losing more than they gained over this summer, there is a chance for the Celtics to regain some successful footing." From Lindy's "Pro Basketball" 2004-2005.
4. "The philosophical basis of the Bush administration's approach to the twin issues of protecting nature and moving toward energy independence is that environmental progress cannot be achieved without economic prosperity. 'We have made a national commitment to environmental improvement,' says EPA's Michael Leavitt. But, as Mr. Leavitt... also says: 'Nothing promotes pollution like poverty.'" From: "The Christian Science Monitor," Tuesday, September 28, 2004, p. 4.
5. "Research suggests that forgiveness works in at least two ways. One is by reducing the stress of the state of unforgiveness.... The other benefit of forgiveness... relates to research showing that people with strong social networks... tend to be healthier.... Someone who nurses grudges and keeps track of every slight is obviously going to shed some relationships over the course of a lifetime. Forgiveness, says Charlotte van Oyen Witvliet... should be incorporated into one's personality, a way of life, not merely a response to specific insults." From: "Newsweek," September 27, 2004, p. 52 by Jordanna Lewis and Jerry Adler.

6. "The traditional British approach to food safety has been one where local health officials only intervene at the level of food retailing, for instance inspecting premises where food is prepared or sold. However, a much broader approach to the question is needed. Many of the dangers to our health resulting from the food we eat arise from the way it is produced in the first place, that is the modern intensive farming practices involved, rather than small-scale organic farming. A national food safety agency that fails to address the question of food production will therefore be unlikely to protect us effectively from damaging our health through the food we eat." From Critical Thinking by Alec Fisher, Cambridge, 2001, p. 171.
7. "Free trade will be good for this country. The reason is patently clear. Isn't it obvious that unrestricted commercial relations will bestow on all sections of this nation the benefits which result when there is an unimpeded flow of goods between countries?" From: With Good Reason by S. Morris Engel.
8. Once in a great while, something of such magnitude happens that you know immediately that history is being made. Just such a thing happened in Ecuador in the year 2000. That is the year that Ecuador converted its currency to the dollar. After Ecuador converted to the dollar, the country's economy stabilized almost immediately. Suddenly, international banks took Ecuador's government seriously. Investments started to flow from international sources. And the standard of living rose in following months.
9. "The most important challenge facing educators today is to teach students how to write decent prose. By "decent prose" I do not mean elegant writing: I mean simple straightforward writing that conforms to the rules of English grammar and clearly conveys its meaning. The ability to write decent prose important because those who lack it will be unable to understand the great achievements of our cultural heritage—whether Homer or Hemingway—and, perhaps even more important, will be unable to communicate effectively in today's world." From Critical Thinking by William Hughes, p. 90.
10. "Despite all this, Yushchenko continues to hold a single-digit lead in the polls. That's because the former banker and prime minister is responsible for many of the free-market reforms that have allowed the Ukrainian economy to flourish, and because he promises that he will continue to lead an independent and democratic country toward partnership with the West. The Bush administration and other Western governments hope for his success but privately expect that Yanukovich will win or steal the election in a mid-November runoff. Putin, they know, will aid and abet that fraud—and then set about integrating Ukraine into his authoritarian bloc. No one has challenged the Russian president on his aggressive imperialism—which probably means that it will grow." From: "The Christian Science Monitor," October 28, 2004, p. 9.

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11. "Proposition 200's prescription is impractical on many points. While aiming to reduce the cost of illegal immigrants to the states, it unwisely punishes with fines or jail time state employees who don't report immigration violations, and burdens them with ID verification, among other things. More important, it probably won't stem the flow of illegals. If the possibility of dying in the desert won't stop an alien, a bureaucrat or piece of paper certainly won't. Congress responded to a similar 1996 ballot initiative in California by restricting access to certain federal help. That, too, has not stemmed the flow. The cry for better border control as heard from Arizona (and other states), as well as keeping out terrorists, requires more substantial immigration reform." From "The Christian Science Monitor," November 3, 2004.
12. "I regard the death penalty as a savage and immoral institution which undermines the moral and legal foundations of a society. A state, in the person of its functionaries, who like all people are inclined to make superficial conclusions, who like all people are subject to influences, connections, prejudices and egocentric motivations for their behavior, takes upon itself the right to the most terrible and irreversible act—the deprivation of life. Such a state cannot expect an improvement of the moral atmosphere in its country. I reject the notion that the death penalty has any essential deterrent effect on potential offenders. I am convinced that the contrary is true—that savagery begets savagery." From Andrei Sakharov in "Matchbox", quoted in An Introduction to Reasoning by Stephen Toulmin, p. 65, 1979.
13. "As stewards of this great state, so rich in natural beauty, we must protect the California forests. Whether we like it or not, our civic responsibility requires the preservation of our natural resources, not only for our enjoyment, but for future generations. In addition, these forests provide clean drinking water to more than 60 million Americans, not to mention sustaining animal and plant life for millions more species. If there are no forests, no roadless vistas in which to hike, snowshoe, camp or merely stare at the stars around a campfire, then we will truly have lost our compass and the respect of both past and future generations." (*Los Angeles Times*, November 28, 2004, letter to the editor).
14. "Dan Quayle served in the National Guard, signing up in a unit that had vacancies at the time and now he is under shrill partisan attack.... True, he didn't go to Vietnam, but his unit wasn't sent. But there's another truth; he did not go to Canada, he did not burn his draft card, and he damned sure didn't burn the American flag!" (Cited in: Asking the Right Questions, Browne, Neil, and Keeley, Stuart, Prentice Hall, fifth edition, 1994, p. 78.)

15. The current candidate for the Presidency of the United States of America, Mr. Jonah Smith, claims that he can lead our great and proud nation in the most terrible battle in which we have ever been engaged: the battle on terrorism. He claims that he is qualified to lead us, to protect us, and to sustain the fight, no matter how long and how difficult. But we are too smart for his subtle tactics. We know what Mr. Smith is made of. If there is anyone who fits the caricature of one who grew up with a silver spoon in his mouth, it is Mr. Smith. Son of a textiles magnate who lived in a 40-room house as a child, Mr. Smith never knew a day of cares in his life. He was driven to school by a chauffer; he attended only the finest private schools; he inherited millions of dollars at the age of 21 and never worked a day in his life. I ask you: is a person who is so out of touch with reality qualified in any way to lead our nation into battle?
16. "On a more concerning note, a bill (or motion, or whatever you call it) has been introduced into Congress to re-institute the draft. Was it introduced by the Republicans?? Uhhhhhhh...no. Two Democrats introduced it (one of them being Congressman Rangel). Were they presenting it to actually bring the draft into being?? Uhhhhhhh...no. The intent was to portray to the American public that the "Bush Administration" wants to have the draft re-instituted. It was their HOPE that their names would not be tied to it, just that word would get out that Congress was looking to re-institute the draft. It was their HOPE that such info would be tied to the "warmongering" Bush-ite Republicans. Oops. What a joke of a party. It's no surprise Kerry is the best they have to offer." (Actual email from a friend. Name withheld for obvious reasons).
17. Today, the city of Smithstown is facing an important choice. The political elite of this fine city want to impose an inordinate debt upon its citizens. They tell us that the bond that they want us to support will bring us a new library, a new recreation center, and a new park. All of these things sound wonderful at first blush. All of these things have a huge cost associated with them—a cost we should not accept. So today, when you vote, choose between the extravagant dreams of selfish politicians and the potential bankruptcy of our noble city.
18. One of the most fundamental rights that citizens of the United States have is the right to bear arms. It is a right that the writers of the Constitution included as an absolutely essential liberty for people to be free. Recently, some opponents of these liberties have tried to ban automatic weapons. If we ban automatic weapons, it will be that much easier to ban weapons of other kinds. Banning our right to bear arms means taking away a fundamental liberty; once the government is allowed to do that, it can more easily restrict other liberties. Once the government has the right to restrict liberties, it moves away from a democratic government toward being a totalitarian government. We all saw what happened with Communism. The citizens of the United States do not want a totalitarian regime. We're not Communists: we're Americans.

19. "A new high school in Philadelphia is more likely to be named after Wal-Mart than Walt Whitman. That's because the public school district wants to sell the school name for a cool \$5 million. Not only is the name for this state-of-the-art school up for sale, but so are names for separate classrooms, the auditorium, and other sections of the building. A school official says those additional naming rights could me upwards of \$15 million for the project. (On the plus side, no alcohol or tobacco companies are allowed to make bids).

"How much is too much when it comes to a commercial presence in public schools—especially when advertising has already pervaded those schools through vending machines, scoreboards, and banners? Many school districts rely on state lotteries to help fund education costs—a less than reliable, or honorable, source of income. If corporations want to help schools, they should also be helping to show students that corporate citizenship doesn't have to involve crass marketing ploys, such as plastering a corporate name on a public building. Microsoft, for instance, is offering considerable expertise in building the new school in Philly, but not attaching its name to it.

"Schools typically are named after Americans of extraordinary achievement—noted leaders, astronauts, athletes—or heroes who served as role models for kids. By selling naming rights to a company, a school unfortunately is sending he message that the heroes of tomorrow are the giant corporations of today, with students seen mostly as just a big marketing opportunity. Schools should be places where learning takes precedence over advertising hype. And their funding should come largely from taxpaying citizens." ("What Shouldn't Be In a Name", The Christian Science Monitor, November 3, 2004, p. 8).

20. I don't think that that company should be allowed to run our concession business for the Little League. There have been a lot of complaints that the food isn't hot enough, and I've heard of people waiting in line for 45 minutes before being served. This kind of thing didn't happen last year. Last year we always had hot food and the lines were a lot shorter.