

How to identify a weak argument

- Attacks the person instead of the argument
- Is based on assumption rather than fact
- Gives the impression that there are only two possibilities when there may be more
- Appeals to emotion, tradition, popularity or patriotism
- Scapegoats or avoids responsibility by placing blame
- Presents a caricature of a person or group
- Relies on an extreme example to justify a position

Brown, N.M. & Keeley, S.M. (2010). Asking the right questions: A guide to critical thinking. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.