



Essentials of Formal Logic with Joelle Hodge

Lesson 37: Chapter 9.3

Outline:

Chapter 9, Lesson 9.3

- Definitions and Disagreements
- Rules for Defining Words
- Definitions are the most important part of an argument.
- Everyone needs to establish their academic writing voice.
- If you want to be a better writer you need to start forcing yourself to be a better thinker.
- Points to Remember
 - Definitional disputes are disputes that arise over the meaning of words.
 - There are seven rules for defining words:
 - The **key content rules** are:
 - Rule 1: As much as possible, the definition should contain the essential primary characteristics, not the secondary accidental characteristics, of the term.
 - Rule 2: The definition should not be circular.
 - Rule 3: The definition should not be too broad or too narrow.
 - Rule 4: The definition should prefer positive comparisons to negative ones.
 - The **key language rules** are:
 - Rule 5: The definition should be clear.
 - Rule 6: The definition should avoid unnecessarily emotive language.
 - Rule 7: The definition should define the term as the correct part of speech.
 - Equivocation occurs when a person uses a word in two different ways in an argument but argues as though he is only using one meaning for the word.
- Keep learning good vocabulary.