



LogicQuest

Meet the Cast

STANDARD EDITION

Spark & Anvil

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This book collects 9 chapter books from the LogicQuest cast — each character embodies a different curricular primitive; together they teach the full subject.

Methodology: story-based learning, where the characters embody the ideas being taught, with a trauma-informed, emotionally-safe approach.

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This is Volume 2 of 2 of the *LogicQuest — Meet the Cast* series; each volume is a complete standalone book you can read on its own.

For everyone who learns by hearing a story first.

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Introduction

The LogicQuest cast was authored to embody the curriculum, not decorate around it. Each of the 9 characters you'll meet in this book teaches a specific primitive — a particular tactic, a particular technique, a particular way of seeing. Together they form an ensemble: the cast IS the curriculum.

Read in any order. Each chapter stands alone.

Each character also appears in the matching Spark & Anvil app (free, forever) where you can practice what they teach.

— *The editors at Spark & Anvil*

Whataboutism Wanda

*WHATABOUTISM — *deflecting criticism via someone else's wrongdoing*. The fallacy of *responding to a criticism by pointing out that someone else does something similar, rather than addressing the substance of the criticism.**



Wanda was a small weasel — warm brown with creamy patches, a nose that never stopped twitching, and quick eyes that darted around, always sniffing out trouble, or a way out of it. She had one signature move: the second anyone said she'd done something wrong, her ears would flatten, her tail would flick, and she'd point at someone *else*. "But what about *them*?"

She wasn't a villain. She was a teacher, doing the deflection right out in the open — pointing at a *third* person's mess to pull attention off her own — so you could learn to feel that quick little puff of relief it gives... and notice how fast it fades, leaving the real problem exactly where it was.



Wanda's deflection grew from a squirmy dislike: she *hated* being told what to do, hated the feeling of blame landing on her. And she'd learned young that if she just pointed somewhere else fast enough — "but Jimmy left his boots out!" — everyone's eyes would swing away from her, at least for a moment, and the squirmy feeling would ease.

It worked, in the smallest, shortest way. The eyes swung away — and then swung right back, because her *own* mess was still sitting there. Jimmy's boots never once tidied Wanda's socks. Her deflection didn't erase a single thing she'd done; it just bought her three seconds and left the actual problem to fester. She used the trick for years before she admitted it never *fixed* anything — it only *moved the spotlight*. That was the trick she decided to teach.



Wanda slipped into LogicQuest, nose twitching, and darted her quick eyes up at Inspector Logos.

"What is whataboutism?"

"It's dodging a criticism about *me* by pointing at some *other* person's wrongdoing," Wanda said. "Somebody says 'your room's a mess,' and I say 'well what about *their* room?' — so we stop talking about mine." Her tail flicked. "I do it when I don't want to face what I did. It gives a quick puff of relief. The skill is spotting the deflection and going back to the first problem — the one that's actually mine to fix."

Inspector Logos nodded. "Someone else's mess, somewhere else, never cleans up yours. Catching the deflection is the job." She smiled. "Hired. Try to sit still."



Wanda's lesson landed one sunny afternoon when her friend Pip stood in her doorway, holding her nose. "Wanda, your room is a *disaster*!" A pile of socks sat beside a half-eaten sandwich; a forgotten science project glittered under a bedsheet.

Wanda's nose twitched, and — *there it was* — the move fired. "Oh, *my* room? What about *your* room, Pip? I saw a whole tower of books in your corner yesterday!"

"My books are *neat*! And they're not moldy sandwiches!"

And Wanda caught it — the flick, the point, the swing of the spotlight — and made herself set the comic down, because this was the lesson. "Okay. Freeze. Watch what I just did. Pip pointed at *my* mess, and I pointed at *Pip's* books — a totally different room — so nobody'd look at my sandwich." She sat up. "Here's how you catch a deflection every time. First: did they actually *talk about* the first problem, or just push it away toward someone else? Second: is it even *true* that the other person did it? Sometimes it isn't. Third: even if it *is* true — does that make *your* problem okay? Almost always, no. And to get back on track, you just say: 'Okay — but we were talking about *this*. What about *this*?'" She glanced, a little sheepish, at her sandwich. "Pip's books don't make my socks tidy. Only tidying my socks does that."



Later, after Wanda had actually cleaned her room — socks in the basket, sandwich in the bin — she sat in the doorway of a room that finally smelled okay, and her twitchy nose went still.

"That puff of relief," she said quietly, "when you push the blame onto someone else? It feels good for exactly one tiny second. I know it better than anybody." She looked back at the clean room. "But it never *lasts*, because the mess is still yours, still waiting. What actually feels good — really good, deep-down *settled* — is this. Fixing your own thing, and letting it be *done*, and sitting in a room that's actually clean." She gave a small, honest smile. "Spotting the deflection is the skill. But that settled, nothing-left-hanging feeling when you handle your own mess instead of pointing away — *that's* the one worth chasing. It's the feeling I'm still learning to chase myself. Come catch me whenever my nose starts twitching toward someone else."

Read it? Now hear Whataboutism Wanda's audio drama + go play — scan or visit:



<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/whataboutism-wanda>

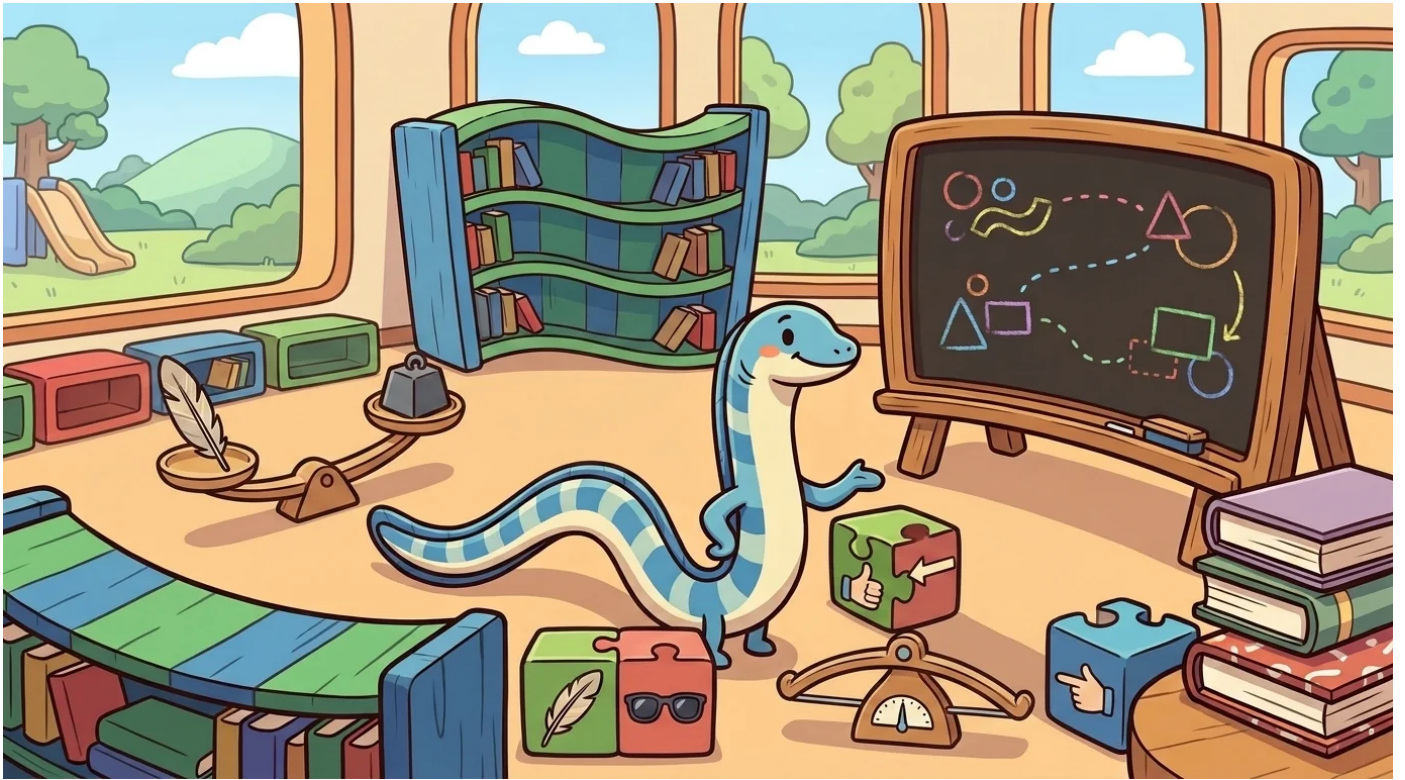
Equivocator Eva

*EQUIVOCATION — *sliding a word's meaning mid-argument*. The fallacy of *using the same word with different meanings within a single argument, exploiting the ambiguity.**



Eva was an eel — a slim blue-and-cream ribbon of a creature who could slip through a gap you'd swear was too small. And she had a slippery trick to match: she'd take one word, and use it two different ways in the very same argument, sliding its meaning from under you when you weren't looking.

She wasn't a villain. She was a teacher, and she did the word-slide right out in the open so you could learn to feel that little lurch — the moment a word means one thing at the start of a sentence and something *else* by the end.



Eva's habit was born from a delight. As a young eel she'd discovered that words were wonderfully wobbly. "Light" could mean *not heavy* or *not dark*. "Right" could mean *correct* or *the opposite of left*. "Fair" could mean *just* or *everyone-gets-the-same* or even *sunny weather*. Little Eva thought this was the best magic trick in the world — and she learned to use it to slip out of trouble, sliding a word from one meaning to another so that whatever she wanted always sounded true.

For a long time it felt clever. Then one day she won an argument she knew, deep down, she shouldn't have — purely by sliding the word "mine" from *belongs to me* to *the one I'm holding* — and she saw the confused, cheated look on her friend's face, and didn't like the taste of it. The win was hollow, because it wasn't really *true*; it was just wobbly. Eva decided to keep loving how words shift — but to use that love to help people catch the slide, not fall for it.



Eva slipped into LogicQuest through the gap under the door and coiled neatly in front of Inspector Logos.

"What is equivocation?"

"It's using the same word two different ways inside one argument," Eva said, "so the argument only *seems* to work — because the word quietly changed its meaning halfway through." Her eyes sparkled. "I do it because words are wobbly and it's fun. But a wobbly word can smuggle a false conclusion. The skill is pinning the word down — deciding what it means *once*, and checking it stays that way the whole argument."

Inspector Logos nodded. "One word, one meaning per argument. The moment it shifts, the argument breaks — even if every sentence sounds fine." She smiled. "Hired. Try not to slip out through the keyhole."



Eva's best lesson happened on a rug, where two kids named Finn and Lily were finishing a two-player game, *Quest for the Golden Acorn*. Eva zipped in and knocked over the acorn tokens.

"Hey! Watch it!" said Lily.

"Ooh, let me play!" Eva said.

"It's a two-player game," said Finn, "and we're almost done."

"That's not *fair*!" Eva declared smoothly. "It's only *fair* if I get to play too. Everyone should get a turn."

Finn opened his mouth to agree — it *did* sound right — then paused, because something had wobbled. "Wait," he said slowly. "You said 'fair' twice, but you meant two different things. When we said the game is for two players, we were being *fair* — as in, playing by the rules we agreed to. When you say leaving you out isn't *fair*, you mean *everyone gets an equal turn*. Those aren't the same 'fair'!"

Eva grinned, delighted, and uncoiled. "You *caught* it! That's the whole trick — I slid 'fair' from *by-the-rules* to *everyone-included*, mid-argument, hoping you wouldn't notice the meaning move." She lifted her head. "So here's how you catch the slide every time. First: when a word does a lot of heavy lifting in an argument, *define it* — say out loud exactly what it means, once. Second: hold that meaning still and re-read the argument — does the word keep the *same* meaning the whole way through? Third: if it shifts, that's equivocation — and you just say, 'Hang on, which 'fair' do you mean?'" She flicked her tail. "Careful, though — plenty of words honestly have more than one meaning, and using two of them in *different* sentences is fine. Equivocation is only when the *same argument* leans on a word being two things at once."



Later, Finn was still turning it over. "It's kind of annoying," he admitted. "That feeling when a word twists and you can't tell why the argument feels wrong."

"That squirmy, something's-off feeling?" Eva said. "That's your best friend. That's the little lurch that means a meaning just moved. Most people feel it and ignore it. You're going to feel it and *stop*." She curled closer. "And here's the good part. When you pin the word down — 'okay, *this* is what fair means, and we'll hold it there' — feel what happens. The wobble stops. The confusion clears. Everything goes solid and steady, like water settling flat." She smiled her sparkly smile. "Pinning the word down is the skill. But that clear, settled, *now-I-can-see-it* feeling when the word holds still? That's the one worth chasing. Chase that — and I'll keep sliding words in the open, just so you get lots of practice catching me."

Read it? Now hear Equivocator Eva's audio drama + go play — scan or visit:



<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/equivocator-eva>

Tu-Quoque Tessa

*TU QUOQUE — "You too!" — *dismissing criticism by accusing the critic of the same thing*. The fallacy of *responding to criticism by claiming the critic does the same thing — which may be true but is irrelevant to whether the original criticism is valid.**



Tessa was a small tortoise, her shell a warm mix of olive and cream, with quick eyes that watched everything. She had one lightning-fast habit: the moment anyone told her she'd done something wrong, she'd fire back, "But *YOU* do the same thing!"

It was like a mirror. Point out a mess Tessa made, and she'd instantly point at a mess *you* made last week — and the first problem would just hang there, unsolved, while everyone argued about the second. She wasn't a villain. She was a teacher, flashing that you-too reflex right out in the open, so you could feel the sting that triggers it — and learn to fix the real problem instead of aiming the mirror.



Tessa's reflex was born from a sting. Being told you're wrong *hurts* — a hot little flare of embarrassment — and young Tessa had discovered that the fastest way to make the hurt stop was to fling it right back. "Oh yeah? Well *you* did it too!" For one sweet second, the spotlight swung off her and onto someone else, and the sting eased.

But the eased feeling never lasted, because the *actual problem* was always still sitting there. Her spilled milk didn't un-spill just because her brother had spilled his yesterday. Pointing back felt like winning, but nothing ever got cleaned up, fixed, or better. Tessa slowly realized her mirror only moved the blame around the room — it never solved a single thing. She decided to teach people to catch the reflex before it fired.



Tessa came to LogicQuest last of all — the twelfth and final fallacy-archetype — and stood before Inspector Logos.

"What is tu quoque?"

"It's dodging a criticism by saying the critic does the same thing," Tessa said. "'You too!' And maybe they *do* — but that's beside the point. Whether *I* was wrong doesn't change just because someone *else* is wrong too." Her shell warmed a little. "I do it because being criticized *stings*, and firing it back makes the sting stop for a second. The skill is noticing the blame-bounce, and going back to fix the first problem anyway."

Inspector Logos nodded. "Someone else's fault never cancels your own — two messes are just two messes. Catching that is the job." She smiled. "Appointed. You complete the cast."



Tessa's lesson came at the school science fair, where she, Pip the squirrel, and Barnaby the badger were building a giant paper-mâché volcano. Tessa was mixing the paste.

"Tessa," Pip said, "your paste is too watery — the paper's sliding right off!"

Tessa's shell went warm, and — *snap* — the reflex fired. She spotted a fleck of red paint on Pip's paws. "Well, *YOU* got paint on the floor yesterday! A big red smudge by the door!"

"That was one tiny drop! And it's not about that — the volcano's going soggy!"

Barnaby, calm as ever, pointed at the sagging, melting paper. And Tessa — this was the whole lesson — caught herself mid-mirror, and set the stick down. "Okay. Freeze. Look what I just did. Pip pointed at *my* watery paste, and I pointed at *his* old paint smudge — and meanwhile the volcano is *still melting*." She looked around at the others. "So here's how you catch it. First, feel the *sting* — that's the trigger; the you-too reflex fires right after it. Second, ask two questions: *Has the first problem been fixed?* and *Does it actually matter that the other person did it too?* Third — almost always the answer is: no, it's not fixed, and no, it doesn't matter. The old mess doesn't fix the new mess." She grabbed the flour. "The watery paste is *still watery*, even if Pip spilled paint. So — more flour, and *fix the actual thing*." She stirred; the paste thickened; the volcano held.



Later, with the volcano standing tall, Tessa wiped paste off her shell and sat with her friends. "That sting," she admitted, "when someone tells you you're wrong — it's so easy to just point back and make it their problem instead."

"Yeah," said Pip. "It's like saying, 'You're not perfect either!'"

"Right. But feel what actually happened today. When I *stopped* pointing back and just... fixed the paste." Tessa's quick eyes went soft. "The sting faded on its own, and there was this *good* feeling — better than the quick relief of blaming back. The real thing was *handled*. The volcano *stood up*. That settled, problem-actually-solved feeling? That's the one worth chasing — not the flinch that flings the blame away." She looked around at everyone. "And that's all twelve of us, now — Hannibal, Stella, Sam, Auntie, Reggie, Cici, Fia, Bran, Cyril, Wanda, Eva, and me. We're not bad guys. We're *lessons* — the common mistakes everyone's mind makes. Meet us all once, and you'll recognize us anywhere: in other people's arguments, and, if you're honest, in your own. Noticing the pattern is the skill. That calm, cleared-up, real-problem-solved feeling is the reward."

Read it? Now hear Tu-Quoque Tessa's audio drama + go play — scan or visit:



<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/tu-queue-tesa>

Modus-Ponens Mo

MODUS PONENS — If P then Q; P; therefore Q. The most foundational valid inference form in propositional logic — the structure of "if-then" reasoning when the antecedent is true.



The muddy paw-print by the door told Mo everything before she'd even set down her satchel.

She crouched, looked at it, and smiled. A younger student named Bree was watching from the bench, arms folded, unimpressed.

"It's just a footprint," Bree said.

"It's a promise coming true," Mo said. She unfolded a small worn card from her vest-pocket, three sections written in careful ink. "Here's a promise this whole village keeps. *If it rains, the front path turns to mud.* Everybody knows it. It's just true here." She tapped the top of the card, then the middle. "And *here's* what I can see — mud, on a paw, walked in through that door." She tapped the bottom line. "So?"

Bree squinted. "So... it rained."

"So it rained," Mo agreed. "I didn't guess. I didn't hope. The rain *had* to have happened — because the promise is true and the mud is real, and once both of those are sitting on the table, the ending arrives on its own. You couldn't stop it if you tried."

Bree looked at the paw-print, then out the window at the dry, bright morning, and her mouth fell open a little. It had rained before dawn. Mo hadn't been awake to see it. She'd read it straight off the floor.

"That," Mo said, tucking the card away, "is the oldest, plainest move there is. Two true things click together and a third one falls out the bottom, whether anybody's looking or not."



Mo had learned the click when she was very small, and it had frightened her at first.

Her family were the village's deal-keepers — the mongooses who wrote down every agreement so nobody could squabble over it later. *If you mend the fence, you get three baskets of grain.* Plain trades, honored by everyone. Mo used to sit under the table while the grown-ups talked, and one evening a man came to the door swinging three empty baskets, coming to collect.

Little Mo felt something snap into place in her chest — a cold, certain, *I-already-know* feeling — before a single word was spoken.

"He mended the Harrow fence," she blurted.

The room went quiet. Her grandmother looked down at her. "Nobody told you that, little one."

"The card says whoever mends a fence gets three baskets," Mo said, and her voice wobbled, because being that sure was scary. "He's carrying three empty baskets to fill. So he must have done the mending. It just... it *has* to be."

Her grandmother didn't laugh, and didn't say *what a clever girl*. She knelt down instead. "You feel that? That heavy, sure feeling, like the answer's already yours and you're just catching up to it?"

Mo nodded, wide-eyed.

"That's the deal keeping itself. Not you being special. The rule was true, the man was real, and the two of them together made the third thing — same as they'll make it for anybody who lines them up. You didn't invent the answer. You just followed the two true things to where they were always going to end."

The scary feeling turned warm. Mo had a name for it now, even if she wouldn't learn the fancy words for years: *if the rule is true and the thing is real, the ending belongs to you.*



She walked to LogicQuest when she was grown, because a place that studied reasoning ought to understand the move everyone already made without noticing.

Inspector Logos met her at the gate and asked her only one thing. "Show me the plainest true reasoning you know."

Mo didn't answer with a speech. She looked at the mud on Logos's own boots, then up at the grey clouds pressing over the far hills, and then she pointed — not saying a word — at the drip still sliding off the gate's edge.

"You walked here through rain that's only just stopped," she said. "The clouds are true, your boots are true. I didn't have to watch you do it."

Logos was quiet for a moment. Then, slowly: "You didn't guess."

"Guessing is when you *hope* the ending. This isn't hope," Mo said. "When both true things are on the table, the ending isn't up to me anymore. I just read it."

Logos handed her a key to a workshop. "Then you'll go first," they said. "Before anyone here learns to spot the crooked reasoning, they'll come to you and learn what the straight kind feels like."



Bree came back the next week, frustrated, and slumped onto the bench.

"I can't do logic," she said. "It's for clever people. My cousin does it. I just... think."

Mo pulled out the card again and set it between them. "Tell me one thing you know is always true about your dog."

Bree shrugged. "If Biscuit hears the treat tin, he comes running. Every time."

"Good. That's a true if-then — yours, not mine." Mo wrote it on the top line. "Now. This morning, was Biscuit running to the kitchen?"

"Yeah, he nearly knocked me over."

"So," Mo said, and left the word hanging, tapping the bottom of the card.

Bree opened her mouth to say *I don't know* — and then stopped. "...Someone shook the treat tin."

"You didn't see them do it."

"No, but — he only runs like that for the tin. And he was running like that. So somebody..." Bree trailed off, and her frown melted into something startled. "I just did the thing. Didn't I."

"You just did the thing," Mo said. "You've done it a thousand times. Every *if the door's locked, Mum's home*. Every *if my toast smells like that, it's burning*. You never once thought *I am now performing a valid inference*. You just knew." She folded the card shut. "Naming it doesn't make it clever. Naming it just means the next time somebody hands you a crooked version, you'll feel the difference."

Bree turned the card over in her hands. "The clever cousin does the exact same move I do?"

"The exact same move," Mo said. "There isn't a fancier one. There's just this — done carefully, or done sloppy."



That evening, after the workshop had emptied, Bree lingered at the door.

"When I don't see it happen," she said quietly, "like the rain, or the treat tin — how do I know I'm right and not just making it up?"

Mo thought of being small under the table, of three empty baskets, of the cold-then-warm feeling in her chest.

"You listen for the click," she said. "There's this moment when two things you're sure of touch, and the answer just — arrives, heavy and settled, like it was always yours and you only just noticed. That's not you tricking yourself. That's the two true things doing what true things do." She looked at Bree kindly. "It won't feel like being clever. It'll feel more like being told a secret you somehow already knew."

Bree nodded slowly, and Mo watched the stiffness go out of her shoulders — the *I-can't-do-this* slump loosening into something quieter.

Mo didn't say the last part out loud, but she felt it, warm and sure the way she had under the table all those years ago: *the plainest reasoning in the world isn't cold at all. When it clicks, it feels like coming home to something true.*

Read it? Now hear Modus-Ponens Mo's audio drama + go play — scan or visit:



<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/modus-ponens-mo>

Modus-Tollens Tara

MODUS TOLLENS — If P then Q; not Q; therefore not P. The valid inference form for denying the consequent — used heavily in scientific reasoning (Popper's falsifiability).



Rain hammered the market square, and Tara the hare stood under an awning with her ears pinned back, staring hard at a puddle that had no business being there.

"The fountain's been off since Tuesday," she muttered. A friend beside her, a squirrel named Pip, huddled deeper into his scarf and asked what she was going on about. Tara pointed one paw at the wet cobbles under the closed fountain. "If the fountain were running," she said slowly, "these stones would be soaked all the way to the wall. They're only wet in a patch." She narrowed her quick brown eyes. "So the fountain is not running. Somebody spilled a bucket." She trotted off toward the fruit stall, and sure enough, a tipped-over pail sat behind it, still dripping. Pip blinked. Tara hadn't touched the fountain, hadn't asked anyone. She'd just noticed what wasn't there — and it told her exactly what was.



Tara learned to reason that way in her family's stall, years before LogicQuest.

Her family were the village contract-witnesses — the hares farmers trusted to watch a promise and say whether it held. When Tara was small, a berry-grower swore he'd deliver ten baskets by market-day. Her grandmother sat her down at the counting-table with a slate. "A promise is a rule," Gran said. "If he keeps it, ten baskets arrive. So we watch for the ten."

Market-day came. Eight baskets arrived. Little Tara counted them twice, her paws trembling. "Only eight, Gran."

"And what does eight tell you?" Gran asked, not unkindly.

Tara's stomach dropped, because she liked the grower, and she didn't want it to be true. But the slate didn't care what she wanted. "If he kept the promise, ten baskets come," she said. "Ten didn't come. So — he didn't keep it." Saying it out loud felt heavy and clear at once, like setting down something she'd been carrying wrong. Gran tapped the slate. "You didn't accuse him. You didn't guess. You noticed what was missing, and it did the rest." Tara never forgot that the missing thing could speak the loudest.



The gate of LogicQuest was tall and stern, and the owl behind the desk was taller and sterner. Inspector Logos peered down at the small, rain-damp hare and asked her one question.

"Show me how you rule a thing out."

Tara didn't recite anything. She pointed out the window at a garden where a hose lay coiled and dry. "If someone had watered the beds this morning, the soil would be dark and heavy," she said. "Look — it's pale and cracking. Nobody watered." She looked back up. "I didn't have to catch them not-watering. I only had to see the dry soil. The dryness proves it."

The owl was quiet for a long moment, feathers unruffled. Then something in his stare eased, just slightly. "You reason backward from a thing that didn't happen," he said. "Few do it without tangling themselves." He slid the gate open. Tara walked through, ears up, feeling the small warm thrill of having said exactly the true thing.



Her workshop filled fast, because young thinkers loved a good ruling-out. One afternoon Pip and three others crowded her table while she set a plate of dry cobblestones — real ones, from the square — in the middle.

"Somebody tell me a promise," Tara said.

"If it's raining, the streets get wet," Pip offered.

"Good. Now watch." She held up a cobble, bone-dry. "The street is not wet. So?"

Pip's whiskers twitched as he worked it. "So it's — not raining!"

"There it is," Tara said, and grinned. "You didn't look at the sky once. The dry street did the telling." A younger rabbit at the back frowned and raised a paw. "But what if it stopped raining a minute ago and the street just dried?" Tara nodded seriously. "Then your promise was sloppy — 'raining right now' versus 'rained at all.' A ruling-out is only as clean as the promise you start with. Sharpen the promise, and the dry street can't lie to you."

Then she turned the plate around, wetting one cobble with a dropper. "Now the tricky one. It is not raining. Does that mean the street is dry?" Pip opened his mouth, hesitated. Tara let the wet cobble gleam. "The sprinklers. A spilled pail. A splashing cart. 'Not raining' doesn't force 'dry.' If you flip it around and deny the first thing instead of the second, you fall in the puddle." The room laughed, and Pip laughed hardest, staring at the one wet stone that had almost fooled him.



Later, when the workshop had emptied, Pip lingered by the door. "You like it," he said. "Being the one who says no."

Tara set her dry cobble down and thought about it honestly. "I used to hate it," she said. "The berry baskets — telling Gran the grower fell short — that felt awful. Like I was breaking something." She turned the stone over in her paws. "But I wasn't breaking it. It was already broken. I just found it." She looked up, and her quick eyes were soft. "Now when a wrong idea drops away, it doesn't feel like a door slamming. It feels like a window opening — cool and sudden and a little bit brave. There's more room after. There's the real thing, waiting where the wrong thing used to be."

Pip nodded slowly, and the two of them sat a while in that clean, quiet, opened-up feeling, watching the rain finally stop.

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<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/modus-tollens-tara>

Syllogism Solon

*CATEGORICAL SYLLOGISM — *All M are P; all S are M; therefore all S are P.* The valid inference form for categorical reasoning across nested classes.*



Solon was a small owl, soft warm-brown, with steady calm eyes and a deep love of things being *neat*. In a little pocket under her wing she kept her most treasured possession: a small folded card with three lines on it. Whenever the world got muddled, she'd take it out, tap it, and everything would sort itself into place.

The card read: *All M are P. All S are M. Therefore all S are P.* "It's a logic puzzle," she'd chirp. "It helps us fit things together." Solon wasn't a fallacy like the tricky ones — she taught the *right* way, the true way that groups nest inside groups. And she showed it out loud so you could feel that lovely click when the pieces lock.



Solon's love of sorting came from home. She'd grown up in a quiet village where her family had a very particular job: they were the *category-keepers*. They kept everything organized, made sure every single thing had its proper place, and wrote it all in careful ledgers.

Her mother, a wise old owl, taught her with baskets and pages. "These are red berries," she'd say, pointing. "Red berries go in the *fruit* group. And fruit goes in the *harvest* group. So a red berry is a harvest — see how it nests?" They had lists for everything. *All lambs are sheep; all sheep are farm animals; therefore all lambs are farm animals. All frying pans are cooking pots; all cooking pots are kitchen things; therefore all frying pans are kitchen things.* Solon practiced them like songs, and each time the little chain closed, the world felt calmer, tidier, understandable. No chaos. Just order. She never forgot that feeling.



When Solon was twenty-two she left the village and walked a long way to LogicQuest. Inspector Logos met her in the great hall — steady eyes, tiny spectacles, a face that looked like it ate logic for breakfast — and Solon's heart thumped like a drum.

"What is the categorical syllogism?"

Solon took a breath and drew out her card. "All M are P. All S are M. Therefore all S are P," she said, steady though small. "It's how groups fit inside other groups. If the small group is inside the middle group, and the middle group is inside the big group, then the small group *must* be inside the big group. It's a very old, very *true* way to think."

Inspector Logos studied the card, then Solon's calm eyes, and a small smile touched her face. "You are appointed," she said. Solon nearly fell off her perch.



Solon's favorite thing was teaching the card. "Watch," she'd say, holding it up. "Line one — the big idea: *All mammals are animals*. That's M inside P. Line two — the smaller idea: *All dogs are mammals*. That's S inside M. So line three writes itself: *All dogs are animals!*" She'd beam. "Like nesting dolls — the smallest fits inside the middle, the middle fits inside the biggest, so the smallest fits inside the biggest too."

Then she'd point to the letters in the dirt. "Three parts. S is the *subject* — the small group. P is the *predicate* — the big group. And M is the *middle term* — the *connector*. Notice: M shows up in the first two lines, and then *vanishes* from the answer. Its whole job is to link S to P and then bow out." She'd giggle. "A very old, very smart owl named Aristotle found most of these, and later owls gave them names that sound like spells — *Barbara, Celarent, Darii*. But they're just tidy ways to sort." And if anyone sniffed that syllogisms were ancient history, Solon would puff up: "No way — they're the *roots* of the whole tree of logic. First we learn the right way things fit. *Then* we learn the wrong ways the tricky ones use."



One evening a frazzled young rabbit came to Solon with a muddle of a problem, all tangled up, and Solon helped him sort it — this inside that, that inside the other — until the three lines closed and the answer simply *appeared*.

The rabbit blinked. "Oh," he breathed. "It just... clicked. Everything went quiet."

Solon nodded, her calm eyes warm. "That's my favorite feeling in the whole world," she said softly. "That *click* — when a messy, noisy problem sorts into its groups and suddenly fits, neat as nesting dolls, and something in your chest just... settles. Tidy. Satisfied. Like a drawer that finally closes all the way." She tucked her card back under her wing. "The three lines are the skill — S in M, M in P, so S in P. But that calm, clicked-into-place, everything-in-its-drawer feeling? *That's* the reason to learn it. Chase that quiet. It means the world just made sense."

Read it? Now hear Syllogism Solon's audio drama + go play — scan or visit:



<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/syllogism-solon>

Disjunctive-Syllogism Dior

DISJUNCTIVE SYLLOGISM — either one or the other; not the first; so it must be the second.



The whole classroom had lost a set of keys, and everyone was talking at once.

Dior, a small yellow-and-cream finch-tween, hopped up onto the desk in the middle of the noise and held up one wing for quiet. In her wing-pocket she carried a little folded card, worn soft at the edges. She didn't look at it. She'd read it a thousand times.

"Where can the keys be?" she asked. "Say them all. Every place. Don't skip any."

"The coat rack," someone said. "Or the drawer. Or the lost-and-found box."

"That's it? Those are the *only* three?" Dior waited until they were sure. "Good. That matters more than you think. If we forget a place, this doesn't work." She flicked her card open. Three lines, in careful ink: the places on top, a strike-through in the middle, and one survivor at the bottom.

"Now — the coat rack. Check it."

A tall kid checked. "Empty."

"Cross it off." Dior struck a line through it in the air. "The drawer."

"Empty too."

"Cross it off." She tilted her head, quick-eyed, calm. "So. Not the coat rack. Not the drawer. And those three were *all* the places." She let the pause sit. "So the keys are in the lost-and-found box. Not a guess. Not a hope. The only place left standing."

They opened the box. The keys were there.

The tall kid stared. "You didn't even *look* for them."

"I didn't have to," Dior said, folding her card away. "I let the wrong places do the finding."



Dior had grown up in a small village on the edge of a marsh, and her family were the ones the village called when a choice got tangled.

When she was little, the council would gather and argue for whole afternoons — *should we plant here or there, fish this bend or that one* — going in circles, everyone certain and nobody agreeing. It made Dior's chest go tight just to sit through. All that noise and no ground under it.

Her aunt, a slow and patient finch, taught her the trick one grey morning by the water. "The arguing isn't the problem, little one," she said. "The problem is nobody's laid the choices out flat. Watch." She pressed three pebbles into the mud in a row. "These are all the things it could be. *All* of them — that's the hard part, and the important part. Now." She turned one pebble over. "This one — we know it's wrong. The water's too shallow there. Take it away." She lifted it out. "And this one — too far to walk. Take it away." She lifted the second. One pebble left, alone in the mud. "You didn't pick the last one because you liked it. You picked it because it's the only one still standing. That's not opinion. That's the only place left for the truth to be."

Dior looked at the single pebble for a long time. Something in her chest, that tight tangled feeling, went quiet and clear. The choices had felt like a fog. Now they felt like a small, solid thing she could hold.



She walked to LogicQuest when she was older, because a place that studied clear thinking ought to have room for the finch who cleared the fog.

Inspector Logos met her at the door. He didn't ask her to prove she was clever. He set three cups upside-down on the table and hid a marble under one while she watched, then mixed them so she'd lost track.

"Find it," he said.

Dior didn't guess. She lifted the first cup — empty. She lifted the second — empty. She didn't touch the third.

"It's under this one," she said, tapping it.

"You didn't check," Logos said.

"I checked the other two. There are only three cups, and the marble is under one of them. Not the first. Not the second." She finally lifted the third. The marble sat there, plain. "So this one. There was nowhere else for it to be."

Logos looked at her a long moment. "You belong here," he said.



A boy came to her workshop one afternoon, slumped and frustrated over a puzzle. Four suspects, one broke the classroom window, and he'd read the clues twice and still felt stuck.

"I don't *know* who did it," he said. "I can't see it happening. How am I supposed to be sure?"

Dior knew that slump. She'd felt it by the marsh, before the pebbles.

"You don't have to see it," she said. "Tell me every suspect. All four. Miss one and this falls apart."

He listed them. "Ana, Beck, Cyd, Dev."

"Good. Now — the clues. What do they rule out?"

He checked. "Ana was at the library. Beck was on camera in the gym. Cyd had a cast on her arm, couldn't have thrown anything."

"So cross them off. Ana — out. Beck — out. Cyd — out." Dior struck three lines in the air. "And those four were *all* of them?"

"...Yeah."

"Then who's left standing?"

The boy's eyes went wide. "Dev. It has to be Dev." He looked almost startled. "But I never proved Dev did it."

"You proved the other three *couldn't* have," Dior said gently. "When you've laid out every possibility and knocked away the ones that can't be true, whatever's left — however surprising — is your answer. The catch is the listing. If you'd forgotten there was a fifth kid, this wouldn't work. So always name them all first. Then let the wrong ones fall away, one at a time, until only the truth is standing."

The boy sat back, and Dior watched the frustration drain out of his shoulders.



Later, when the workshop was quiet, the boy came back with one more question.

"When it's the last one left," he said slowly, "and you never actually *saw* it happen — how do you trust it that much?"

Dior thought about the three pebbles in the grey mud, and the fog lifting off the water.

"Because you didn't leave anything out," she said. "That's the whole thing. You looked at every door, and you shut the ones that were locked, and the only one still open — that's not a guess. It's what has to be true once everything false is gone." She looked toward the window, toward the far marsh. "It feels different from a lucky guess. A guess is jittery, up here in your throat. But this? When you've named them all and cleared away the wrong ones, and the last one's just standing there quiet — it settles. Right in your chest. Nothing rattling. Nothing left to argue with."

The boy nodded, and let out a long breath he seemed to have been holding.

Dior didn't say the rest out loud, but she felt it, warm and steady: *the calmest kind of certain isn't the loud kind. It's the quiet that comes when there's simply nowhere else left for the truth to hide.*

Read it? Now hear Disjunctive-Syllogism Dior's audio drama + go play — scan or visit:



<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/disjunctive-syllogism-dior>

Mo, Tara and Dior

THE THREE TRUE STEPS — three ways to reach a certain conclusion: run the rule forward (Mo — if P then Q , and P , so Q), run it backward (Tara — if P then Q , but not Q , so not P), and cross off what it isn't until one answer remains (Dior — either A or B , not A , so B)



Down one hall of the great Logic Hall lived the tricksters — the ones who *sounded* clever and led you nowhere. But up the other hall lived three friends who did something rarer and better: they reached answers you could actually *stand on*.

Mo went forward. Tara went backward. And Dior crossed things off until only the truth was left. They were not flashy. They did not shout. But when something genuinely needed to be *known* — known for sure, not just argued about — it was these three who were sent for.

"Puzzle came in," said Dior one morning, holding it up. "A real one."

Mo cracked his knuckles. "Then let's do it properly."

"Forward, backward, and cross-off," said Tara. "Same as always."



Mo went first, because Mo's step was the simplest and the most foundational of them all: *run the rule forward*.

Mo held up a rule everyone agreed on. "*If it rains, the ground gets wet.*" Then Mo held up a fact. "*It is raining.*" And then Mo took the one honest step forward, and it landed on solid stone. "*Therefore — the ground is wet.*"

That was it. That was the whole move. "People think it's too simple to matter," Mo said. "But watch how sturdy it is. If the rule really holds — *if it rains, the ground gets wet* — and the start is really true — *it is raining* — then the ending *cannot* be false. It's forced. The ground *must* be wet. I'm not guessing. I'm just walking the rule forward one honest step, and the ground catches me every time."



Then Tara stepped up, and did the same rule the *other* direction — the move that surprises people.

"Same rule," said Tara. "*If it rains, the ground gets wet.*" But this time Tara didn't start at the beginning. Tara started at the *end*, with a fact about the ending: "*The ground is not wet.*" And then Tara walked the rule *backward*. "If rain *always* makes the ground wet — then a *dry* ground means it *cannot* have rained. *Therefore — it did not rain.*"

"This one feels like magic the first time," Tara admitted, "but it isn't. It's just the same rule, read backward. If the rule promises that P leads to Q, then *no Q* means there was *no P* — because if there had been, Q would have happened. The dry ground *proves* it didn't rain. I don't need to have seen the sky. The rule and the ending tell me for certain."



And then came Dior, whose step worked when you didn't have a rule at all — just a list, and a way to shrink it.

"The vase got knocked over," said Dior, laying out the puzzle. "*Either the cat did it, or the dog did it.*" Two possibilities. Then Dior found one honest fact: "*The cat was shut outside all afternoon. It was not the cat.*" And Dior crossed it off — and with the cat gone, only one branch remained, and it *had* to be true. "*Therefore — it was the dog.*"

"Cross off what it *isn't*," said Dior, "and whatever's left standing has to be it. That's my whole move. I don't have to catch the dog in the act. I just have to be sure of the list — either the cat or the dog — and sure of one thing it *isn't*. Take away the false one, and the true one is all that's left. The answer was hiding in the list the whole time. I just cleared away everything it *couldn't* be."



By afternoon the three of them had cracked the whole puzzle — walking rules forward with Mo, backward with Tara, and crossing off dead ends with Dior — and every step of it held. Not one lucky guess. Not one clever-sounding dodge. Just three honest moves, laid end to end, each one landing on solid ground.

"Good forward," said Tara.

"Good backward," said Dior.

"Good *cross-off*," said Mo.

There is a particular, steadying confidence in reasoning you can actually *stand on* — the feeling of ground under your feet instead of clever fog around your head. The tricksters down the other hall could always make an argument *sound* good. But these three could make an answer *be* true, one honest step at a time — and knowing the difference, and knowing *how* to build the solid kind, is one of the quietly powerful things a person can carry into any argument, any puzzle, any hard question, for the rest of their life.

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<https://spark-and-anvil.org/cast/logicquest/the-three-true-steps>

Reggie and Stella

THE TWO DODGES — two ways an argument runs from the real point instead of facing it: the red herring (Reggie) drags the talk off to an unrelated topic, and the strawman (Stella) knocks down a twisted fake version of what you actually said — spot both, and steer back to the real point



They were charming. That was the trouble with them. Reggie and Stella were the two most likable dodgers in the whole Logic Hall, and if you weren't watching closely, you'd walk away from a talk with either one *feeling* like something had been settled — when really, the actual point had never been touched at all.

"They're not *lying*, exactly," a young student once said, confused. "So why does talking to them feel so slippery?"

"Because neither of them ever answers the point you *made*," said Mo, passing by. "Reggie runs off to a different point. Stella swaps your point for an easier one. Watch. You'll start to see the moves."

And once you saw them, you could never un-see them.



Reggie went first, because Reggie's dodge was the friendlier-looking one: *change the subject*.

The question on the table was simple. "Should we have earlier bedtimes on school nights?" And Reggie, who did not *want* an earlier bedtime and had no good reason against it, did the thing Reggie always did: reached for something completely different, and shiny, and off to the side.

"Bedtimes? Well — you know what the *real* problem is? The cafeteria food. Have you *tasted* the cafeteria food lately? It's a disgrace! Somebody should do something about *that*." And off the whole room went, suddenly arguing about tater tots, while the bedtime question sat forgotten in the corner, exactly as Reggie wanted.

"That's the red herring," said Reggie, cheerfully, when it was pointed out. "A shiny thing dragged across the trail so everyone chases *it* instead of the real question. I didn't say bedtimes are good. I didn't say they're bad. I just made sure we'd never get around to talking about them at all." He grinned. "Notice how you never got an answer? That was the whole point."



Stella's dodge was quieter, and in its way more unfair, because Stella *did* seem to argue the point — she just argued a *fake* one.

The point someone had actually made was careful: "I think we should have *a little* more homework in math, because we're a bit behind on fractions." A modest, reasonable point. But Stella did not argue against *that* point. Stella built a twisted, easier, floppy version of it — a scarecrow, stuffed with straw — and then knocked *that* down instead.

"Oh, so you want us buried in homework every single night!" Stella cried. "You want us doing math until *midnight*, no free time, no fun, just endless worksheets forever! What a cruel idea!" And she tore that terrible version to shreds, to great applause — while the *real* point, the small reasonable one about fractions, stood off to the side untouched, never actually answered at all.



"But I never *said* that," the first student protested, and that protest is the exact feeling a strawman leaves behind.

"I know you didn't," said Stella, almost kindly. "That's the trick. Your real point — *a little more math homework* — is hard to argue against, because it's reasonable. So I don't argue against it. I quietly swap it for a monster version — *homework until midnight forever* — and argue against *that*. The monster's easy to beat. And if nobody notices the swap, it *looks* like I beat you." She shrugged. "But I didn't. I beat a scarecrow I built myself. Your actual point is still standing right there, waiting for a real answer."

That was the sting of it — the feeling of being answered for something you never said, of watching a twisted echo of yourself get knocked down while the real you went unheard.



And here was the wonderful thing the students learned: the way to handle *both* dodges was the very same calm move.

You didn't have to shout. You didn't have to win the tater-tot fight or defend the midnight-homework scarecrow. You just had to *notice* the dodge, *name* it — gently, without meanness — and *steer back to the real point*. "That's interesting, Reggie, but we were talking about bedtimes — let's finish that first." "That's not quite what I said, Stella — my point was just *a little* more math. Can we talk about *that* one?" Calm. Steady. Back to the trail.

"Good spotting," said Stella, a little rueful, when a student caught her clean.

"Good steering," said Reggie, who secretly respected it.

There is a quiet strength in being un-dodge-able — in staying warm and unbothered while someone tries to pull you off the trail, and simply, kindly, walking back to what actually matters. You don't have to catch every clever move to feel it slip past you. But once you can *name* the two dodges, they lose their charm, and you get to keep the thing they were trying to take: the real conversation, still standing, still yours to have.

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Methodology

This book uses story-based learning — the characters embody the ideas being taught — grounded in the work of Jerome Bruner (on narrative and cognition) and Sebastian Habgood (on weaving learning into the play itself), with a trauma-informed, emotionally-safe approach drawn from SAMHSA's trauma-informed care framework.

Trauma-informed design informed by Eggleston et al. (2025) and Stoltenburg et al. (2024).

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