

Extraction 1.

This first argument may not be intended by the editors to be a rigorous deductive argument, but it does provide a good example for one! So, let's give it a try!

The key is to look at the conclusion. As stated, the conclusion has two main ideas, it concerns one who hopes to understand the best of philosophy and it guides that person to look for both fundamental issues (FI) and contemporary achievements (CA). When there are two main ideas, it is best to link them in a conditional:

6. If you wish to find the best of philosophy, then you will look for both FI and CA. (There will be five premises.)

This gives a pattern for the premises: hypothetical syllogism. We need to look for something that will link "the best of philosophy" with x and then something else to link x with FI and CA. If you look at the form of hypothetical syllogism, you will see why we need to look for these "linking" conditionals. The first sentence of the quote helps us to understand the first linking conditional. "The best of philosophy" concerns FI because FI are "of such broad relevance to us ... that they are ... perennially present." This gives us two linking premises as follows:

1. If you wish to find the best of philosophy, then you will look for issues that are of such broad relevance to us that they are perennially present.
2. If you will look for issues that are of such broad relevance to us that they are perennially present, then you will look for FI.

This yields a valid HS for half of our conclusion. The conclusion and the first premise are taken from the first and fourth sentences in the text. The second premise here is implicit in the text. The editors may defend it as defining what is a fundamental issue.

Now we need to look for the second part of the conclusion. It is discussed in the second and third sentences of the text. We need to spell out why "the best of philosophy" concerns CA. The answer is a bit more complex because two sentences spell out the answer. In reading these two sentences, there is an inference between them: the second supports the first (but this is a different argument). The second sentence states that FI needs to be rethought and solved by each age. The third sentence offers a reason why this needs to be done: because better solutions may be found!

3. If you wish to find the best of philosophy, then you will look for how FI are rethought and solved for each age.
4. If you will look for how FI are rethought and solved for each age, then you will look for better solutions at each age.
5. If you will look for better solutions at each age, then you are looking for CA.

The third premise comes from the second sentence in the text and the third sentence, yielding premise four, explains why this is so. The fifth premise is implicit in the text. The editors may defend it as defining what is a contemporary achievement.

The result is a five premise hypothetical syllogism which I clearly valid. There are two types of “explanations” of the premises. One, premises five and two are not in the text. They are implicit and can be defended as how the editors define FI and CA. Two, the remaining premises one, three, and four are stated in the text without defense. Perhaps the editors regard them as acceptable without much defense. A good explanation would attempt to give some reason to believe these premises. (Try to imagine a critic of them and what you would say to defend them ... remember that a critic of a conditional must say that the antecedent is true while the consequent is false.)

Extraction 2.

In the long sentence beginning “because.”

1. The main function of this book is to introduce the problem of perception to students with no prior knowledge of the subject.
2. The foundation laid in earlier chapters is more elaborate than otherwise would be necessary.
3. The chapters likely to be of interest to those already familiar with the topic are chapters 7, 10-14.

It is best to make two modus ponens inferences from 1 to 2 and then from 2 to 3. You can construct this by adding implicit conditionals. In each case, the result is a clearly valid argument. The premises which affirm the antecedent (1. and 2. above) can be defended by appealing to the structure of the book. The added conditionals will need further defense, e.g., “Does 1 lead to 2?” and “Does 2 lead to 3?” As an evaluation, if you think about this as a deductive argument, I’m sure you will find ways to counterexample these two conditionals.

Extraction 3.

Quotes from the text which reveal this argument are the following:

1. “One obvious way in which we get to know about our environment is through sense perception... “ (3)

2. "I possess a great deal of knowledge about the past ... [via] the faculty of memory. ... Memory is not, of course, in itself a way of getting to know the world: it is rather a way of retaining knowledge acquired in other ways. (3-4)

3. "Inferences based on past experience are essential if we are to know anything about what will happen in the future, but they also yield important information about what has happened in the past and about what is happening now beyond the range of senses." (4)

4. "The vast majority of our beliefs are not based on first hand evidence at all, but on what we have learned from other people ... [but] it is not an original way of acquiring knowledge about the world. ... there must be someone who has discovered it for himself through sense perception or inference, which are the two original sources of empirical knowledge." (4-5).

5. "Of the two original sources of empirical knowledge, it is sense perception which appears to be fundamental. Empirical inferences always require a basis in sense perception." (5)

6. The conclusion seems to be expressed on p. 6: "Direct observation by means of the senses is the foundation of empirical knowledge."

Now we need to take these quotes and formulate a valid argument. Premises 2 through 5 express the following relationships:

- a. If x is memorial knowledge, then x depends on another type of knowledge.
- b. If x is inferential knowledge, then x depends on memorial knowledge.
- c. If x is testimonial knowledge, then x depends on inferential or sensory knowledge.
- d. If x is inferential knowledge, then x depends on sensory knowledge.

While premise 1 simply asserts the following:

- e. There is sensory knowledge.

The conclusion, I think, is best expressed as follows:

- f. If x is empirical knowledge, then x is or depends on sensory knowledge.

Clearly, a. through f. is not a valid argument, there is nothing to link premise e. with the other premises a. through d. M must begin his argument by circumscribing the types of empirical knowledge. The following can be said to be implicit in his argument:

- g. If x is empirical knowledge, then x is either sensory, inferential, memorial, or testimonial knowledge.

Now, g. and a. through f. are "close" to a valid structure: an extended hypothetical syllogism. However, if you trace through the possibilities of empirical knowledge and

make sure that each type ultimately depends upon sensory knowledge, you can see a “circle” develop between memorial and inferential knowledge. I think M can handle this but it will not be straightforward.

An explanation of each premise needs to involve a defense of each by appeal to examples. M offers such a defense in his text.