

When working with a syllogism, there are three main concerns.

1. Is the first premise true?
2. Is the second premise true?
3. Is the syllogism valid, having the correct conclusion?

For instance, in Example 1, regardless of whether the two premises are true, the syllogism is still valid. The point is, *if* Hawking’s statement is true and *if* aliens visit Earth, then it does follow that things will be bad for humans.

EXAMPLE 2 Writing a Syllogism

Suppose that Daniel Defoe’s premise in *The Education of Women* is true. Also suppose that women are given the advantages of an education. What conclusion can you draw?



Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) was an English writer. He was the author of what some consider the first English-language novel, *Robinson Crusoe*. He wrote more than 500 works, including books, pamphlets, and journals, on various topics including women’s rights.

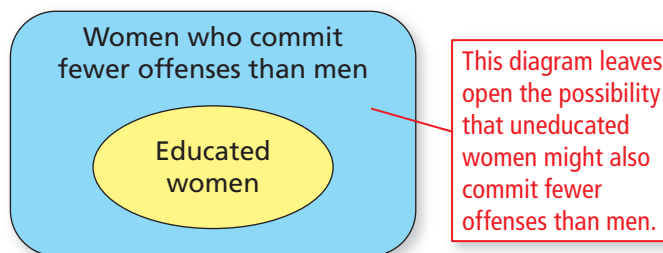
“I have often thought of it as one of the most barbarous customs in the world, considering us as a civilized and a Christian country, that we deny the advantages of learning to women. We reproach the sex every day with folly and impertinence; while I am confident, had they the advantages of education equal to us, they would be guilty of less than ourselves.”

The Education of Women, Daniel Defoe

SOLUTION

Here is one way to write this argument as a syllogism.

- **Premise:** If women had the same opportunity for education as men, then they would be guilty of fewer offenses than men.
- **Premise:** Women have the same opportunity for education as men.
- **Conclusion:** Women are guilty of fewer offenses than men.



✓ Checkpoint

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Write a syllogism that involves the following Daniel Defoe quote. Then draw a set diagram to represent the syllogism.

“But justice is always violence to the party offending, for every man is innocent in his own eyes.”

The Shortest-Way with the Dissenters, Daniel Defoe