



A Beginner's Guide to Scientific Method

By Stephen S. Carey



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This concise yet comprehensive guide provides an introduction to the scientific method of inquiry. You will not only learn about the proper conduct of science but also how to recognize and question factors such as pseudoscience, untestable explanations and fallacies. Compact enough to be used as a supplementary book, yet comprehensive enough in its coverage to be used as a core book, this book assists users in using the scientific method to design and assess experiments.



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Editorial Review

Review

Preface. 1. SCIENCE. Just What is Science? Asking Why. Scientific Method. The Consequences of Science. Scientific Method in Daily Life. Things to Come. Exercises 2. OBSERVATION. Making Accurate Observations. Anomalous Phenomena. Observing Anomalies. The Burden of Proof. Concept Quiz. Exercises 3. EXPLANATION. Explanation, Theory and Hypothesis. Causation. Correlation. Causal Mechanisms. Underlying Processes. Laws. Function. The Interdependence of Explanatory Methods. Rival Explanations and Ockham's Razor. Explanation and Description. Ultimate Explanations. Concept Quiz. Exercises. 4. EXPERIMENTATION. The Basic Method. Confirmation and Rejection. Designing a Good Test. Real World Experiments. How Not to Design a Test. Conceptual Vagueness. Testing Extraordinary Claims. Predictive Clarity. Bias and Expectation. Concept Quiz. Exercises. 5. ESTABLISHING CAUSAL LINKS. Causal Studies. Ruling Out Chance. Multiple Causal Factors. Randomized, Prospective and Retrospective Studies. Reading Between the Lines. Concept Quiz. Exercises. 6. FALLACIES IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE. What is a Fallacy? False Anomalies. Questionable Arguments by Elimination. Illicit Causal Inferences. Unsupported Analogies and Similarities. Untestable Explanations and Predictions. Empty Jargon. Ad Hoc Rescues. Exploiting Uncertainty. Science and Pseudoscience. Concept Quiz. Exercises. FURTHER READING INDEX

About the Author

Stephen Carey received his Ph.D. in logical theory and the history of logic from the University of Oregon. In addition to A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SCIENTIFIC METHOD, he has also written THE USES AND ABUSES OF ARGUMENT. He currently teaches logic, philosophy of science, and philosophy of religion at Portland Community College in Portland, Oregon. He is an avid tennis and pickleball player, and runs a marathon every year.

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