

Inductive Reasoning

Inductive reasoning begins with specifics and reasons to something more general. Inductive reasoning can establish correlation and predict things that are likely to be true or which are possibly true, but the conclusions of inductive reasoning are often not correct.

We use inductive reasoning all the time, however; it is the way that we come to understand the world. Inductive reasoning is also the foundation of the scientific method, and scientists regularly make hypotheses about generalities based on the specifics they have observed. Finally, even though inductive reasoning always includes the possibility of error, it is often used in academic arguments.

Example of inductive Reasoning:

Specifics: Every swan I have ever seen is what.

Generality: All swans are white.



In this example, the conclusion that all swans are white is actually wrong because there are some black swans. The conclusion that most swans are white, however, would be correct.

Identify the generalization that follows each observation.

1. I have been in California for a month. In that month, it has not rained one single day.

Generalization: _____

2. Every mother that I know is very strict.

Generalization: _____