

Chapter 8 – Generalization, analogy, and causation

Getting familiar with . . . inductive generalization

A. Complete each of the following inductive generalizations by supplying the conclusion.

1.

1. Almost all politicians lie.

2. Blake is a politician.

3. Hence, . . .

2.

1. We surveyed 80% of the school, and all of them agreed with the class president.

2. John goes to our school.

3. Therefore, . . .

3.

1. You haven't liked anything you've tried at that restaurant.

2. Therefore, this time . . .

4.

1. Most of the philosophers we met at the conference were arrogant.

2. And those two we met at the bar weren't any better.

3. Oh no, here comes another. I bet . . .

5.

1. In the first experiment, sugar turned black when heated.

2. In experiments two through fifty, sugar turned black when heated.

3. Therefore, probably . . .

6.

1. We surveyed 90 % of the city, and only 35 % approve of the mayor's proposal.

2. Thus, most people probably . . .

7.

1. Every time you have pulled the lever on the slot machine, you've lost.

2. So, . . .

8.

1. 65% of citizens get married.

2. Terri is a citizen.

3. Hence, . . .

9.

1. Every girl I met at the bar last night snubbed me.

2. Every girl I met at the bar so far tonight has snubbed me.

3. Therefore, . . .

10.

1. All the politicians at the convention last year were jerks.
2. All the politicians we've met at the convention this year were jerks.
3. Hence, probably, . . .

B. For each of the following examples, explain a way the method of data collecting could undermine the strength of an inductive generalization. There is more than one problem with some examples.

1. Marvin county schools offered any child who is interested the opportunity to change schools to a school with a new curriculum in order to test the effectiveness of the new curriculum.
2. Interested in the eighth-grade pop culture, surveyors interviewed eighth-graders from twelve girls' schools and three co-ed schools.
3. To find out what typical Americans think of the current political client, 785 college students were polled from a variety of campuses all over the United States.
4. To determine how many students at the University of California were engaged in unsafe sex, researchers interviewed every student in Professor Grant's economics class.
5. To find out how well Georgians think the Georgia governor is doing in office, researchers polled 90% of the population of the largely Republican Rabun County.
6. Interviewers set up a booth outside the local Walmart to ask anyone who approached them whether they thought Walmart's hiring policies are discriminatory.
7. Tameeka says, "I've known two people who have visited Europe, and they both say that Europeans hate Americans. It seems that people outside the U.S. do not like us."
8. In order to determine the attitudes of college students to the government's foreign policy on terrorism, researchers asked college students the following question: "Are you in favor of the imperialist policy of treating all foreigners as terror suspects?"
9. A survey question asks, "Given the numerous gun-related accidents and homicides, and the recent horrifying school shootings, are you in favor of more gun regulation?"
10. Veronica says, "I've had three employees who claim to be Christian, and work for me, and none was a team player. I just won't hire someone if they claim to be Christian because I need team players."