

## The Scientific Method of Reading



Photo by the author

### Introduction

How do scientists do their work? They use a special method, or way of doing things. Students learn this method, the scientific method, in high school science classes.

How do students do their work? They also use a special method. Good students use a scientific method of studying. This method helps them to learn many things in a short time.

Reading is an important part of studying. This chapter is about a special method for reading, "The Scientific Method of Reading."

### Vocabulary Preparation

This cartoon will help you understand some of the words in "The Scientific Method of Reading."

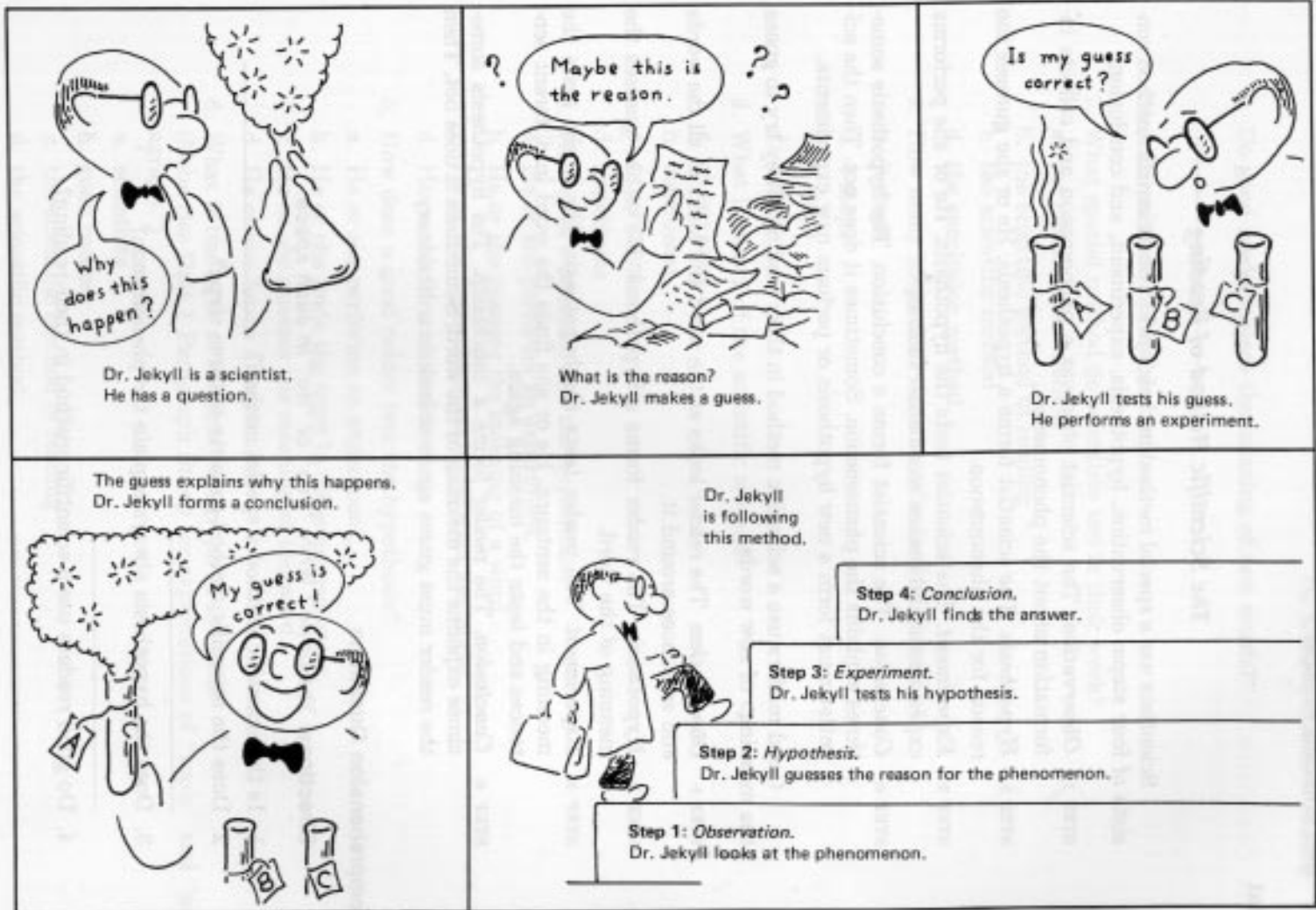


FIGURE 2-1 The Scientific Method

## Text

**The Scientific Method of Reading**

Scientists use a special method in their work. This scientific method consists of four steps: observation, hypothesis, experiment, and conclusion.

STEP 1: **Observation.** The scientist observes a phenomenon and collects information about the phenomenon.

STEP 2: **Hypothesis.** The scientist forms a hypothesis. He or she guesses the reason for the phenomenon.

STEP 3: **Experiment.** The scientist tests the hypothesis. He or she performs experiments and makes more observations.

STEP 4: **Conclusion.** The scientist forms a conclusion. The hypothesis sometimes explains the phenomenon. Sometimes it does not. Then the scientist must form a new hypothesis or perform new experiments.

Good readers use a scientific method in their reading. They try to guess the meanings of new words.

STEP 1: **Observation.** The reader looks at the word and looks at all the words and sentences around it.

STEP 2: **Hypothesis.** The reader forms a hypothesis. He or she guesses the meaning of the word.

STEP 3: **Experiment.** The reader tests the hypothesis. He or she tests the meaning in the sentence. He or she finds the word in different sentences and tests the meaning again.

STEP 4: **Conclusion.** The reader forms a conclusion. The hypothesis sometimes explains the meaning of the word. Sometimes it does not. Then the reader must guess again or look in a dictionary.

**Comprehension Questions**

**Directions:** Yes or no? Write "yes" or "no" in each space.

1. Is the scientific method a special method? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the scientific method consists of three steps?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Does the hypothesis always explain the phenomenon?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do good readers use a scientific method in their reading?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do good readers guess the meaning of new words?
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**Directions:** Choose the best answer.

1. What special method do scientists use in their work?
  - a. the phenomenon method
  - b. the scientific method of reading
  - c. the scientific method
  - d. the conclusion method
2. How many steps does the scientific method consist of?
  - a. 2 steps
  - b. 4 steps
  - c. 6 steps
  - d. 8 steps
3. What is step 2 of the scientific method?
  - a. observation
  - b. conclusion
  - c. experiment
  - d. hypothesis
4. How does a scientist test the hypothesis?
  - a. He or she performs an experiment.
  - b. He or she guesses the meaning of a word.
  - c. He or she finds the word in different sentences.
  - d. He or she forms a conclusion.
5. How does a good reader test the hypothesis?
  - a. He or she performs an experiment.
  - b. He or she finds the word in different sentences.
  - c. He or she guesses the meaning of the word.
  - d. He or she forms a conclusion.
6. What is the topic of the first paragraph in the text?  
(Note: See Unit 1 Paragraph Study for explanations of "topic" and "paragraph.")
  - a. scientists
  - b. good readers
  - c. the scientific method of reading
  - d. the scientific method

**Directions:** Find these sentences in the text. Look for the missing words and write them in the spaces.

**EXAMPLE:**

Scientists use a \_\_\_\_\_ *special* \_\_\_\_\_ method in their work.

1. The scientific method \_\_\_\_\_ of four steps.
2. The scientist \_\_\_\_\_ a phenomenon.
3. The scientist \_\_\_\_\_ a conclusion.
4. The reader forms a hypothesis. He or she \_\_\_\_\_ the meaning of the word.
5. The hypothesis \_\_\_\_\_ explains the meaning of the word. Sometimes it does \_\_\_\_\_ explain the meaning of the word.
6. The reader must \_\_\_\_\_ again or look in a \_\_\_\_\_.