

Do we have to learn
to think scientifically
in order to find the
truth essay



Truth is hard to define. To one, truth could be that the sun will rise tomorrow. But to a scientific mind, the truth may be that the earth will continue to revolve around the sun tomorrow, with the sun remaining stationary.

Which one is the truth? Both individuals present a valid argument, which is a justified true belief. This leads to the argument of whether or not there are universal truths, or a certain method of thinking that needs to be applied to find truth. The scientific method is a means of verifying claims and proving them true. There are also three 'Truth Tests' that can be applied to an idea to test its validity.

But how do these tests work when there is no physical evidence? What does one do when testing belief and faith as truth? When science is taught at school, children are told that there is one method that is used to validate hypotheses. This process involves finding a problem, gathering information, creating a hypothesis, making observations, testing the hypothesis and producing conclusions. This is a road map for students to follow, and creates a 'standard' way of procedures. But in reality, this method does not work in every situation, and cannot be counted as the only way to finding truth.

Scientists use a variety of ways including creativity and imagination to develop theories. Once these theories are developed, empirical evidence is gathered and interpreted. For example, a scientist wants to know if all male cardinals are red. She travels around the world and observes male cardinals, gathering that every bird she finds is red. Therefore, she can claim that all male cardinals are red, and form a law. But, scientific laws are only true until proven false.

Hundreds of years ago, everyone knew that the earth was flat. Now, everyone knows that the earth is round. Who is to say that our scientific ‘truths’ of today will not be proven false tomorrow? How do we test our theories of today? There are three tests we can use to validate statements. First is the correspondence test. With this, one checks an idea with a real event, and see if the idea corresponds.

If someone asks whether it is raining outside or not, all that needs to be done is look out a window and see if rain is falling. If the answer is yes, the claim passes the correspondence test. The weakness in this idea is that we as humans have not experienced everything individually. We cannot validate that ‘Water is on Mars’ since we have not been to Mars.

The second test is the coherence test. According to the coherence test, fact claims are tested against other existing fact claims that are proven true. The statement, “My little brother Jay is fourteen-years old” can be evaluated by this system. I know he was born in 1986, his Birth Certificate proves that fact.

I was born in 1984, which makes him my younger brother. His name is Jay, as also stated on his Birth Certificate. So, by relating the statement to already existing facts, I can logically validate the truth claim that my brother is fourteen. This system is most often used to verify current events and history, and also has faults.

If one fact in the chain is false, then the whole idea is false. The pragmatic test states that the idea that works for you is the one that is true. This is used to test how well our ideas work. For example, your lamp is not working.
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First, you test the light switch to see if the power comes on, and it does not. Then you check to see if the lamp is plugged in, which it is. Then you proceed downstairs to the circuit breaker, and realize that that switch was not on. This gradually develops into the hypothesis that your circuit switch was tripped. This truth claim is the one that works, and is the one that is true. Then there is the argument that truth is subjective.

Subjective proof is particular to the individual. Modified and affected by personal views and experience, this truth is very individual. If truth were only subjective, then science would not be able to prove anything. Sometimes the statement that " Whatever I believe to be true, is true - -for me" is not applicable. I could say, " I am swimming in the Atlantic Ocean right now. " This is clearly an untrue statement, I am typing an essay at my computer, far away from the ocean.

The simple idea that I believe this to be true - so it is - is not valid in this situation. Emotionally, my mind could be ' swimming away' from me. But the rest of the statement is not logical, reasonable, nor is it scientifically proven. But there are some truths that science cannot prove. Science cannot justify ethical, moral, and religious questions.

Laws of Physics and Mathematics have been scientifically proven to be true. Gravity will always be present on earth - pulling things down at a constant rate of 9.8 m/s. Gravity is also present on other planets, but not in space. All these ' truths' have been logically proven by science and math.

These are non-debatable truths. But what happens with morality, ethics and faith? The population is extremely diverse in opinion on these topics. One <https://assignbuster.com/do-we-have-to-learn-to-think-scientifically-in-order-to-find-the-truth-essay/>

can try to apply the 'scientific method' and truth tests to questions of faith. But they will not get very far. Science cannot prove that the earth was created in six days, or that a Supreme Deity exists.

To the Christian, Jesus is Lord, and that is truth as told in the Bible. It is complete truth, and is un-debatable in their minds. But the Hindu and Buddhist do not accept Jesus as Lord, and their faiths are the complete truth to them. People can tell them they are damned to hell, and the Hindu doesn't even bat an eye - because she knows her truth. Which one is the real truth? I do not think that anyone can actually say which faith is the 'only true way', although many will claim his or her own to be 'the truth'. Some will argue that these people have created the Truth of God's existence, since there is no valid proof.

The people who need valid proof often subject ideas to truth tests to determine validity. So, if these truth claims cannot be proven by science, a 'valid' way of finding truth, then why do billions of people believe? Is it just blind faith, or is there something more there that justifies their beliefs? I think that truth is both individual and universal. On faith-based issues, truth is very individual. The concrete scientific evidence that backs up religious beliefs is very slim. I think that is why they are called faith - one has personal faith in the belief, and knows it to be true intuitively. Universal truths are scientifically and mathematically proven, un-debatable facts.

Scientific thinking is not needed to 'prove' every 'Truth'. There is no "one way" to find scientific knowledge. Even when scientists make a new discovery, it is only truth until another newer idea proves it false. Many of

today's scientific 'theories' are just that – theories that have no solid proof, just like faith issues. We may never know or be able to define what the Truth is, we can only hypothesize and speculate, and defining the real meaning of truth is easier said than done.