

Inductive Reasoning

Inductive reasoning is a branch of logic. In a valid inductive argument, the conclusion is most likely true on the basis of

its premises. For example, when all swans are observed to be white, a student may easily reach the conclusion that all swans are indeed white. A generalization is made based on the evidence gathered. However, when a black swan is observed, the



generalization must be thrown out based upon the new premise. Do you recall that the black swan is native to Australia? Hence, it was never observed in Europe and England, and it remained unknown to westerners until Australia was discovered and explored. That swans could be black would have been a false conclusion before the exploration of the Australian continent!

Hilda Taba believed that students make generalizations only after



information is organized. She believed that students can be led toward making generalizations through concept development and concept attainment strategies. Taba states in her *Handbook to Elementary Social*

Studies that generalizations "...like concepts, are the end products of a process of an individual's abstracting from a group of items of his experience those elements of characteristics the items share, and expressing his recognition of this commonality in a way that is convincing to others."

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