# Steps of the Scientific Method

We shall take a closer look at these steps and the terminology you will need to understand before you start a science lab.

The Scientific Method involves a series of steps that are used to investigate a natural occurrence.

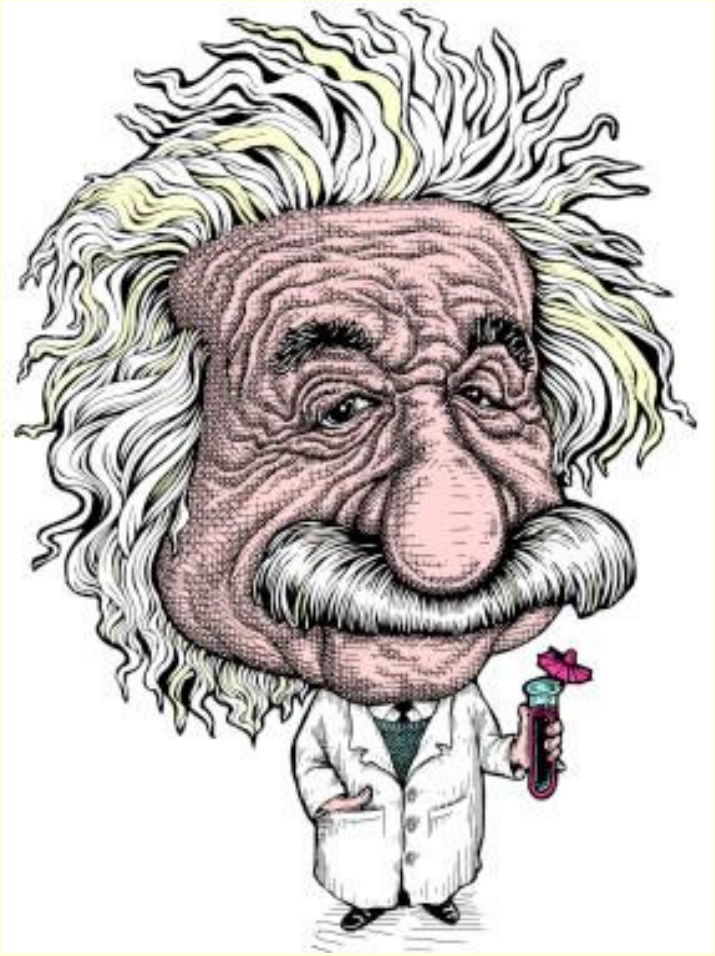
# Steps of the Scientific Method

1. Problem/Question: the question you are trying to answer.

# Steps of the Scientific Method

2. Observation/Research: **GET BACKGROUND INFORMATION-BECOME AN EXPERT.**

# Do you remember the next step?



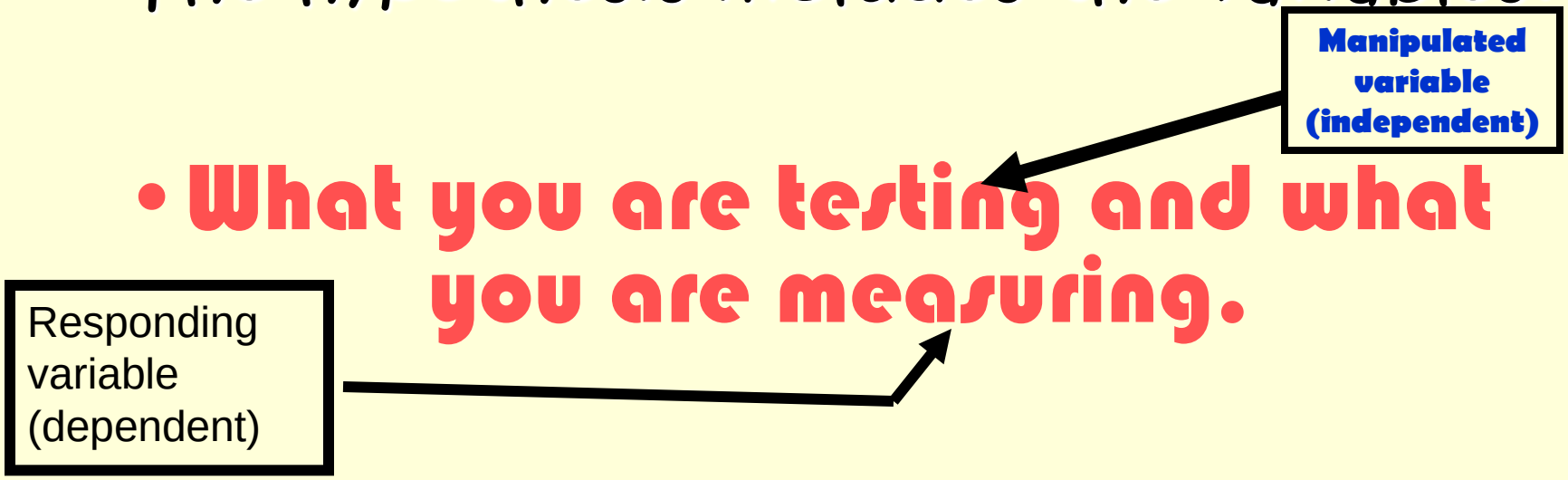
# Steps of the Scientific Method

3. Formulate a Hypothesis: a likely explanation of the problem.

Example: If soil temperatures rise, then plant growth will increase.

# Steps of the Scientific Method

- The hypothesis includes the variables.




- Example: If soil temperatures rise, then plant growth will increase.

# Steps of the Scientific Method

4. Experiment: TEST THE HYPOTHESIS.

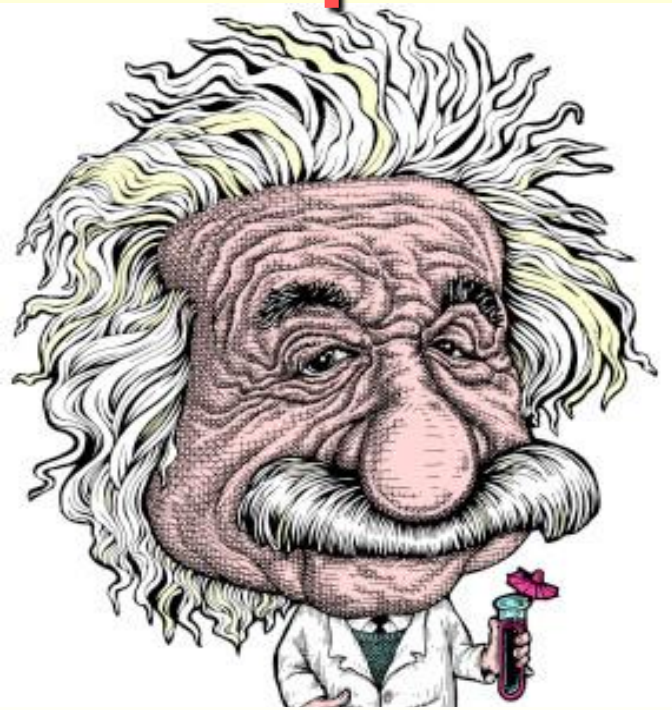
# Steps of the Scientific Method

5. **Collect and Organize Data**: Collect the data and put it in a data table during the experiment. Make a graph of the results.

# Steps of the Scientific Method

6. Conclusion: Tell what you learned during the experiment. State how variables might have influenced the outcome of the experiment. Tell what you would do differently next time.

# Think you can name all 6 steps?



Collect and Organize data

Proble Formu Conclusion iment

# Scientific Method

- Problem/Question
- Observation/Research
- Hypothesis- which includes the variables
- Experiment
- Collect and organize data
- Conclusion

**Let's put our knowledge of the Scientific Method to a realistic example that includes some of the terms you'll be needing to use and understand.**

- Cut out the pieces of the scientific method and put them in order.

- Read the experiment steps to gain an understanding of how to relate each step to a REAL lab.

# Problem/Question

John watches his grandmother bake bread. He ask his grandmother what makes the bread rise.

She explains that yeast releases a gas as it feeds on sugar.

# Problem/Question

John wonders if the amount of sugar used in the recipe will affect the size of the bread loaf?

# Caution!

Be careful how you use effect and affect.

Effect is usually a noun and affect, a verb.

“ The effect of sugar amounts on the rising of bread.”

“How does sugar affect the rising of bread?”

# Observation/Research

John researches the areas of baking and fermentation and tries to come up with a way to test his question.

He keeps all of his information on this topic in a journal.

John talks with his teacher and she gives him a Experimental Design Diagram to help him set up his investigation.

# General Layout for an Experimental Design Diagram

## Title

The Effect of _____ (Independent Variable)

on _____ (Dependent Variables)

## Hypothesis

If _____ (planned change in independent variable),

then _____ (predicted change in dependent variables).

## Independent Variable

_____

## Levels of Independent Variable and Numbers of Repeated Trials

| Level 1 (Control) | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of trials | Number of trials | Number of trials | Number of trials |

## Dependent Variable and How Measured

_____

## Constants

1.

2.

3.

4.

# Formulate a Hypothesis

After talking with his teacher and conducting further research, he comes up with a hypothesis.

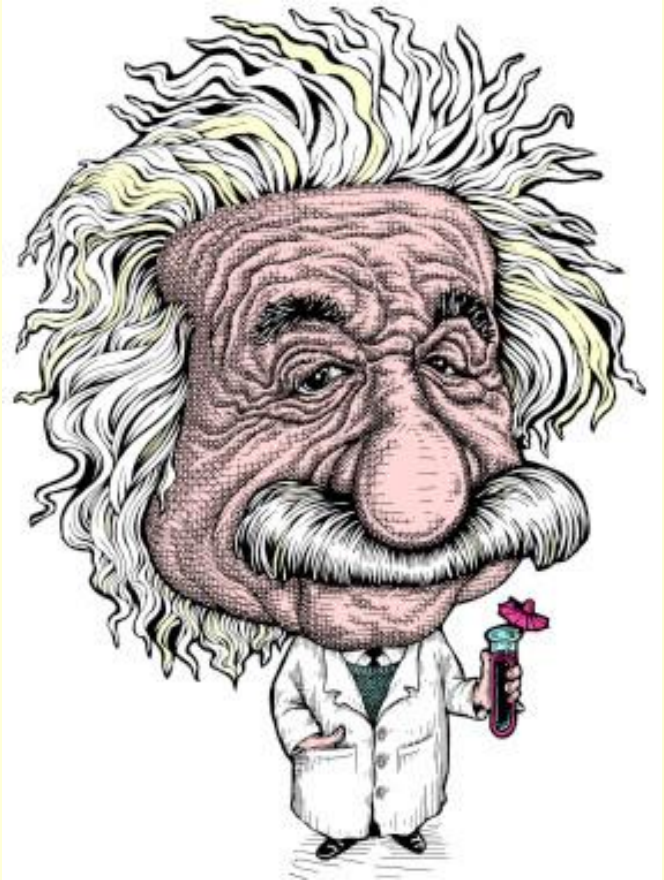
“If more sugar is added, then the bread will rise higher.”

# Hypothesis

The hypothesis is an educated guess about the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Note: These variables will be defined in the next few slides.

# Do you know the difference between the independent and dependent variables?



# Independent Variable

The independent, or manipulated variable, is a factor that's intentionally varied by the experimenter.

John is going to use 25g., 50g., 100g., 250g., 500g. of sugar in his experiment.

# Dependent Variable

The dependent, or responding variable, is the factor that may change as a result of changes made in the independent variable.

In this case, it would be the size of the loaf of bread.

# Experiment

His teacher helps him come up with a procedure and list of needed materials.

She discusses with John how to determine the control group.

# Control Group

In a scientific experiment, the control is the group that serves as the standard of comparison.

The control group may be a “no treatment" or an “experimenter selected” group.

# Control Group

The control group is exposed to the same conditions as the experimental group, except for the variable being tested.

All experiments should have a control group.

# Control Group

Because his grandmother always used 50g. of sugar in her recipe, John is going to use that amount in his control group.

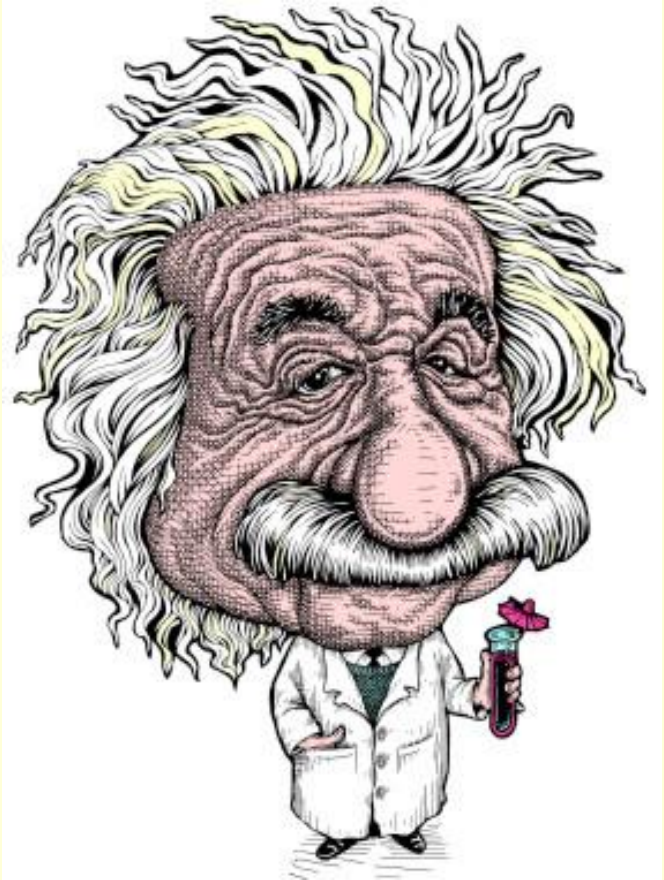
# Constants

John’s teacher reminds him to keep all other factors the same so that any observed changes in the bread can be attributed to the variation in the amount of sugar.

# Constants

The constants in an experiment are all the factors that the experimenter attempts to keep the same.

# Can you think of some constants for this experiment?



# Constants

They might include:

Other ingredients to the bread recipe, oven used, rise time, brand of ingredients, cooking time, type of pan used, air temperature and humidity where the bread was rising, oven temperature, age of the yeast…

# Experiment

John writes out his procedure for his experiment along with a materials list in his journal. He has both of these checked by his teacher where she checks for any safety concerns.

# Trials

Trials refer to replicate groups that are exposed to the same conditions in an experiment.

John is going to test each sugar variable 3 times.

# Collect and Analyze Results

John comes up with a table he can use to record his data.

John gets all his materials together and carries out his experiment.

# Size of Baked Bread (LxWxH) $cm^3$

| | Size of Bread Loaf ($cm^3$) Trials | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amt. of Sugar (g.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | **Average Size ($cm^3$)** |
| 25 | 768 | 744 | 761 | 758 |
| 50 Control group | 1296 | 1188 | 1296 | 1260 |
| 100 | 1188 | 1080 | 1080 | 1116 |
| 250 | 672 | 576 | 588 | 612 |
| 500 | 432 | 504 | 360 | 432 |

# Collect and Analyze Results

John examines his data and notices that his control worked the best in this experiment, but not significantly better than 100g. of sugar.

# Conclusion

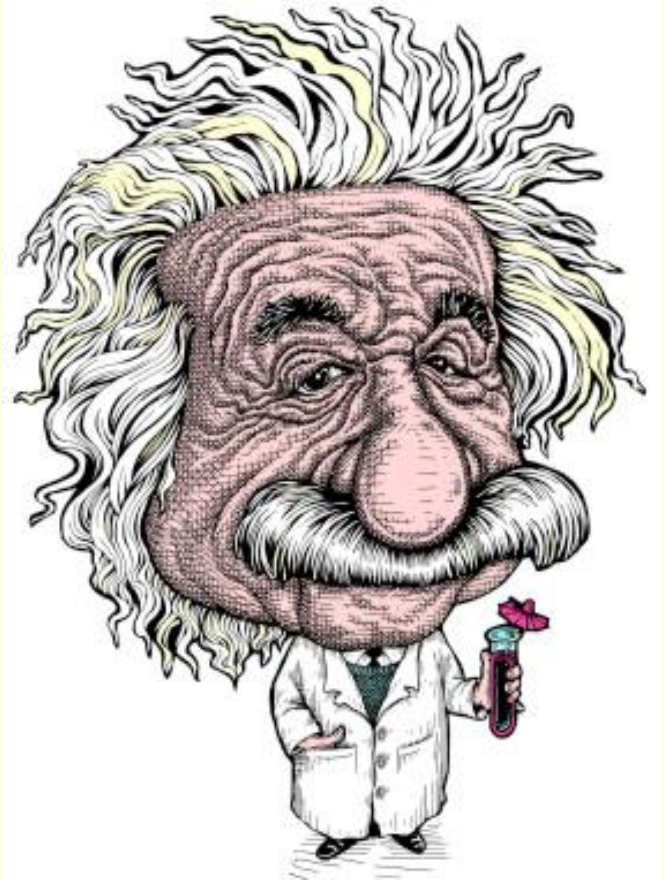
John rejects his hypothesis, but decides to re-test using sugar amounts between 50g. and 100g.

# Experiment

Once again, John gathers his materials and carries out his experiment.

Here are the results.

# Can you tell which group did the best?



# Size of Baked Bread (LxWxH) $cm^3$

| | Size of Bread Loaf ($cm^3$) Trials | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amt. of Sugar (g.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | Average Size ($cm^3$) |
| 50 Control group | 1296 | 1440 | 1296 | 1344 |
| 60 | 1404 | 1296 | 1440 | 1380 |
| 70 | 1638 | 1638 | 1560 | 1612 |
| 80 | 1404 | 1296 | 1296 | 1332 |
| 90 | 1080 | 1200 | 972 | 1084 |

# Conclusion

John finds that 70g. of sugar produces the largest loaf.

His hypothesis is accepted.

# Communicate the Results

John tells his grandmother about his findings and prepares to present his project in Science class.

Observe your world and come up with a question to answer using the Scientific Method!