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newsletter

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MAKING A HYPOTHESIS

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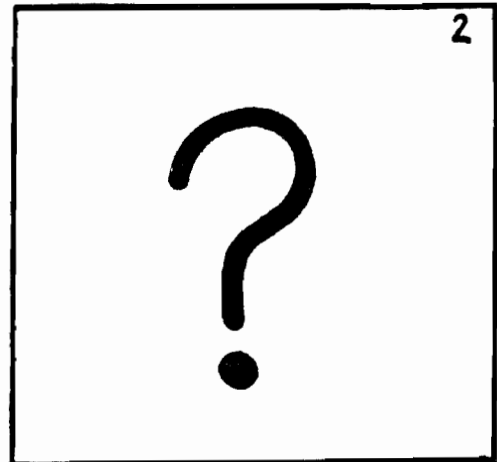
MAKING A HYPOTHESIS

Gregory Grambo

What is a hypothesis? The dictionary defines hypothesis as an educated guess. Is this a guess that went to school or is this a guess that is based on some previous knowledge you already have on something? If you were to guess how many jelly beans are in a jar, knowing something about the size and shape of both the jar and the jelly bean, and by applying some math skills, you would be able to make an educated guess, a hypothesis, about how many jelly beans are in the jar.

Whenever there is a problem there needs to be a solution. How do we arrive at that solution? We come up with ideas based on knowledge and then test those ideas. The ideas are hypotheses.

How can we strengthen a child's ability to make a hypothesis or predict an outcome? One method involves the use of a comic strip from the daily newspaper. Children love to read comics, and at the same time, they love to draw. Take a comic strip from the daily newspaper. Remove one of the frames (the box with the cartoon characters in it). Replace it with an empty box. Have the children predict what picture belongs in that box based on the other frames that are there. Ask the children to draw in the missing frame and then to write a few sentences explaining why they had chosen that drawing. Try to choose a comic strip that is not too recent, because the children may already have seen that strip. Formulating a hypothesis is an important scientific tool and it can be nurtured and strengthened with practice.



What happens in box number two?