

# The Scientific Method

## Exploring Experimental Design

### *Scientific Method Practice 1*

***DIRECTIONS:*** Read the following paragraphs and then answer the questions that follow on a separate sheet of paper. Use complete sentences to answer all questions. Be sure to restate the question in your answer.

Science differs from other subject areas in the way it seeks to answer questions. This approach to problem solving is called the scientific method. The scientific method is a systematic approach to problem solving. Listed below are the basic steps of the scientific method, in one possible order:

- Stating the problem
- Gathering information on the problem
- Forming a hypothesis
- Performing an experiment to test the hypothesis
- Recording and analyzing data
- Stating a conclusion
- Repeating the work

Erika baked a cake for her mother's birthday. When the cake was taken from the oven, Erika noticed that the cake had not risen. She guessed that the oven had not heated to the correct temperature. She set up the following experiment to test her hypothesis.

First, Erika put a thermometer in the oven. She then turned the oven dial to 375 °F. She noticed that the preheating light came on when she turned the oven on. She waited until the preheating light went out, indicating that the oven was up to the specified temperature. Erika then read the thermometer she had placed inside the oven. It read 375 °F. Erika concluded that the oven was heating properly.

## **CONCLUSION QUESTIONS**

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1. What was Erika's problem? [The problem should be stated as a question.]
2. What was Erika's hypothesis? [This is an if/then answer to your problem question.]
3. What was Erika's conclusion? [This states whether your hypothesis was supported or refuted.]
4. Which step in the scientific method do you think Erika should do next? Explain your reasoning.
5. List two other hypotheses which might explain why the cake did not rise.