

Ways of understanding I

Through the course of human history, people have had different ways of understanding their world and things in it. One of the most fundamental improvements of

human thought is to recognize that there are these different ways of understanding, and then to decide which way of understanding is superior to the others.

This page illustrates that concept by presenting different ways of thinking about some question, with different answers to that question designated by capital letters. Almost all scientists would say that one of these ways of understanding is better than the others.

When I was a small child, I was taught *A*,
so I think *A* is true.

Deep in my heart, I know that *G* is true.

I will profit most if *B* is true,
so I say *B* is true.

All of the available evidence – chemical, structural, contextual, and/or other evidence – suggests that *H* is true, so I think *H* is true (at least until new evidence contradicts it).

Insert a person's name here says that *C* is true,
so I think *C* is true.

My ancestors believed that *J* is true,
and therefore I believe that *J* is true.

D is consistent with ideas that I find comforting, so I think *D* is true.

My understanding of the universe is based on a very small number of fundamental principles, and from those principles I deduce *K*, so I think *K* is true.

I have heard a voice or voices that told me *E*, so I think *E* is true.

L is consistent with the idea that my family, ethnic group, species, or planet is special, so I say *L* is true.

The sacred texts of the *Insert the name of some ancient cultural group here* clearly support *F*, so I think *F* is true.

Most people think *M* is true,
so *M* must be true.