Science proceeds inductively, in that it seeks general ideas that will fit the empirical facts—and that would be proved false if the empirical facts were other than they are. But in order to test its candidate ideas—a.k.a. "hypotheses"—science also proceeds deductively, by tracing the consequences of its ideas, so as to estimate their truth or falsity by comparing their consequences with the relevant empirical evidence.

Metaphysics proceeds analytically, in that it seeks ideas so general that they will fit general ideas that do not fit the empirical facts as well as those that do. But in order to test its candidate ideas—a.k.a. "hypotheses"—metaphysics also proceeds deductively, by tracing the consequences of its ideas, so as to estimate their truth or falsity by comparing their consequences with the relevant existential evidence.

20 September 1999; rev. 23 March 2001