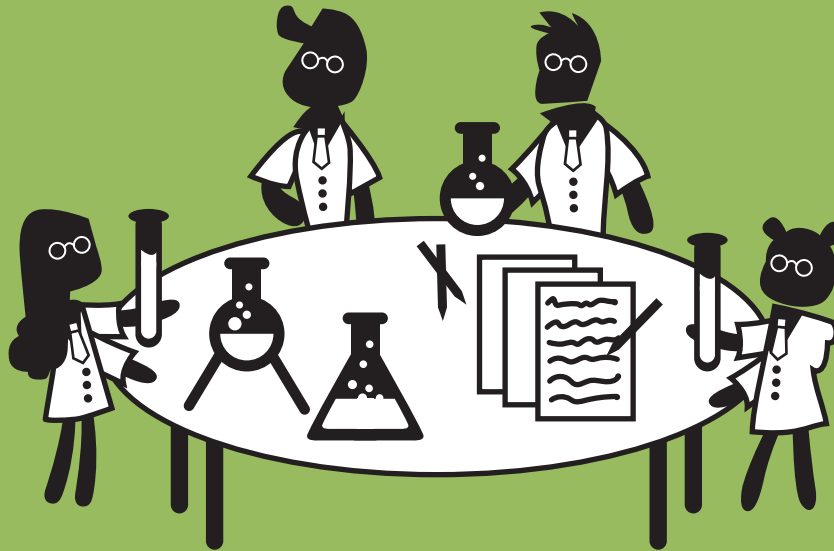


## RESEARCH METHOD: 24. THE EXPERIMENT



### 24. THE EXPERIMENT

*Sometimes it is impossible to learn about things by observing or talking because people are not aware of their own actions or habits. You need to do what scientists do: experiment! They start by having a hunch or forming a hypothesis about something and then they do experiments to learn whether they are right or wrong*

**Materials needed:** This depends very much on what it is you want to test, how much and where.

**Time required:** 1.5 hours to 1 day.

#### How?

**1)** Start by formulating the central question or hypothesis you want to experiment with: School toilets are filthy because the children don't feel responsible for them.

**2)** Brainstorm different ways you could find out if this is true: Make children clean the toilets they are using for one day and record their thoughts.

**3)** Record the data carefully by interviewing the children after they have either cleaned or used the bathroom. Repeat the experiment with older or younger children or other groups.

**4)** After doing the experiment, be as objective and critical as possible in analysing the results: was your hypothesis validated by all groups or was it disproved because the relationship between maintenance and considerate use of toilets was not clear or applicable across all groups? Did you conduct the experiment properly in order to discover the relationship between being responsible and cleanliness?

**5)** Can you now refute or validate your hypothesis?