Assessment 3
Induction

Guide to Responding

*Describing how a kind of inductive reasoning works* involves specifying, in an abstract way, the kinds of claims that the reasoning uses as inputs (premises or beginning points) and the kind of claim that the reasoning yields as output (conclusion or end point); and then, after this abstract description, giving examples of this reasoning, explicitly identifying both the inputs and outputs of these examples, and explaining why the example is an instance of the reasoning being described.

For example, here is a sample description of a kind of reasoning known as “disjunctive syllogism”:

A disjunctive syllogism is an argument that takes as input an alternative between one of two claims as well as a denial of one of those claims, and yields as output an assertion of the other claim. Consider, for example, this argument: “The candidate is either a liar or misunderstood; but the candidate is not a liar; therefore, the candidate is misunderstood.” The premises of this argument are “the candidate is either a liar or misunderstood” and “the candidate is not a liar.” The conclusion is “the candidate is misunderstood.” The argument is a disjunctive syllogism because it contains two premises, one of the premises offers an alternative between two claims (liar or misunderstood), the other premise contains a denial of one alternative (not a liar), and the conclusion asserts the other alternative.

To *provide an exposition of the problem* involves three elements: first, a statement of the problem; second, statements of the main claims given as reason to accept that problem; and third, examples that illustrate those claims.

Hume’s problem of induction is, roughly, that inductive reasoning does not provide us with knowledge of the natural world. Your task, accordingly, is to state the main claims Hume provides as reason to accept that inductive reasoning does not provide us with knowledge of the natural world, and to provide examples that illustrate these claims. Use the reading materials in Subunit 3.1.4 for help with your exposition.

To *assess whether something solves or succumbs to a problem* is to provide an argument regarding whether the something in question shows that the problem is false.
If it does, the problem is solved; if it does not, the thing in question *succumbs* to the problem.

Your task is to determine whether the kind of inductive reasoning you have chosen to discuss shows that one of Hume’s claims is false. If it does, that kind of reasoning solves Hume’s problem; if it does not, it succumbs to Hume’s problem.