

Maybe you have heard someone say, "Girls like dolls," or "Boys like trucks." What do you think of those statements? They are probably true in general, but they are not true for all girls and boys, or course. Statements like those are called generalizations.

A generalization is a broad, general conclusion drawn from several examples or pieces of evidence. As you read social studies, practice making generalizations about the text. Doing so will help you focus on the main points of your reading.

HOW TO MAKE GENERALIZATIONS

To make generalizations, follow these three basic steps:

- 1. Note details or examples related to a particular topic in the text.** Often an author will provide several examples to make a main point.
- 2. Make a broad statement based on examples or evidence.** Information in the text should lead you to a general conclusion about the topic.
- 3. Check that your generalization is valid.** Your statement should allow for exceptions. Some words you can use to show there may be exceptions to your statement are *most, some, often, and generally*. Watch out for generalizations that try to apply one idea to every person or situation.

Finding Work

Immigrants with skills that were in demand sometimes found work outside factories and sweatshops. For example, some immigrants worked as bakers, carpenters, masons, or skilled machinists. Others saved or borrowed money to open small businesses such as laundries, barbershops, or street vending carts. New immigrants often opened the same types of businesses in which other immigrants from the same country were already succeeding. They worked hard for long hours to become successful themselves.

From *United States History, Immigrants and Urban Life*

Details or examples from the text

- Skilled immigrants found work in many industries.
- Immigrants opened small businesses.
- New immigrants worked hard for long hours.

Generalization

Immigrants contributed to the economy in many ways.

Making Generalizations**Reading Skills****Reading Geography**

As you read about geography you will come across a lot of new information. Making generalizations will help you sort through the details and focus on the main points of the text.

YOU TRY IT!

Read the following passage. Then use the graphic organizer below to make a generalization. Be sure to check that your generalization is valid and applies to different situations.

Greater Mexico City

Greater Mexico City includes the capital and about 50 smaller cities near it. With a population of more than 19 million, Mexico City is the world's second-largest city and one of the most densely populated urban areas. Thousands of people move there every year looking for work.

While this region does provide job and educational opportunities not so easily found in the rest of the country, its huge population causes problems. For example, Mexico City is very polluted. Factories and cars release exhaust and other pollutants into the air. The surrounding mountains trap the resulting smog—a mixture of smoke, chemicals, and fog. Smog can cause health problems like eye irritation and breathing difficulties.

Another problem that comes from crowding is poverty. Wealth and poverty exist side by side in Mexico City. The city has large urban slums. The slums often exist right next to modern office building, apartments, museums, or universities.

From *The Americas, Mexico*

Details or examples from the text	Generalization
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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