

Module 6: Learning and Memory

Topic 4 Content: Concepts, Prototypes, and Symbols

Introduction

The image shows a digital interface with a dark grey header bar containing the text "Concepts, Prototypes, and Symbols". Below the header, on the left side, are three vertically stacked red rectangular tabs. The top tab is labeled "Concepts", the middle tab is labeled "Prototypes", and the bottom tab is labeled "Symbols". To the right of these tabs is a large light grey rectangular area. At the top of this area is the heading "Introduction". Below the heading is the text: "Click on each of the tabs to examine concepts, prototypes, and symbols."

Click on the tabs to examine concepts, prototypes, and symbols.

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Concepts

Concepts, Prototypes, and Symbols

Concepts

Concepts



Concepts are mental groupings of similar objects, people, or events. What comes to mind when you think about the concept of a bird? Do you think of types of birds and their common features? Do you visualize any images? "Bird" is a mental grouping for all types, sizes, and varieties of an animal with feathers, wings, and a beak. Concepts can also influence and determine behavior. For example, you might assume it is appropriate to pet an animal after

Prototypes

Symbols

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Prototypes


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Concepts

Prototypes

Symbols

Prototypes



Concepts are often formed by developing prototypes. These are mental images, or best examples of a concept. When you think "bird," the prototype that comes to mind might be a robin or a cardinal. Sorting and matching items into categories provides an easy method to thinking quickly.

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Symbols

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Concepts

Prototypes

Symbols

Symbols

Symbols are visual representations of concepts. They can also represent abstract thoughts. For example, written language is made up of symbols consisting of letters and words. Without the symbols, it would be difficult to think about concepts that are not present.



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