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Gestalt Laws: Form, Continuation, & Common Fate

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The Gestalt psychologists formed the principles of grouping to explain that humans are able to perceive objects as organized ones naturally.

In this article we will continue this topic by discussing the last three laws: good form, good continuation, and common fate.

The banner features the Explorable logo and the text 'Quiz Time!' in a white, handwritten-style font. Below this, there are three quiz cards, each with a small image and a title:

- Card 1: Image of red roller skates on a wooden deck. Title: 'Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2'
- Card 2: Image of a fan of colorful pencils. Title: 'Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2'
- Card 3: Image of a Ferris wheel at sunset. Title: 'Quiz: Flags in Europe'

To the right of the cards is a link that says 'See all quizzes =>'.

Good Form

The Gestalt law of good form describes the tendency of a person to perceive forms of similar shape, form, color, pattern, and other attributes in group. This principle explains why people are able to differentiate varying groups of shapes, patterns, etc. during perception, even when they are clearly overlapped. For example, gifts under the Christmas tree are of different shapes and sizes, wrapped in only three different gift wrapper patterns. The principle of good form enables us to associate gifts in common groups based on the patterns of the gift wrapper used on them. Below is another example showing the principle of good form.

Good Continuity

The principle of good continuity holds that humans tend to perceive each of two or more objects as different, singular, and uninterrupted object even when they intersect. In other

words, individuals tend to group together as well as organize curves, lines and other forms that are found in similar directions. However, those that establish changes in direction may be perceived as different objects. The alignment of the objects or forms plays a major role for this principle to take effect. This principle is well used by educators in teaching young kids on how to write the letters of the alphabet as well as draw images.

Common Fate

The Gestalt law of common fate states that humans perceive visual elements that move in the same speed and/or direction as parts of a single stimulus. A common example of this is a flock of birds. When several birds fly in the same direction, we normally assume that they belong to a single group. Birds that fly in a different direction do not appear to be included in the said group. A marching band is another example that usually exhibits the gestalt law of common fate.

Other Gestalt Laws

Over the years, Gestalt psychologists introduced other principles of grouping ^[1]. These include the following:

1. **Gestalt Law of Past Experience** – elements or objects frequently seen together in the past experience of a person are perceived to be included in one group.
2. **Gestalt Law of Good Gestalt** – elements or objects that present good Gestalt (i.e. they are parts of a pattern as simple, organized, coherent, united as possible) tend to be grouped together.

Source URL: <https://explorable.com/gestalt-laws-form-continuation-common-fate>

Links

[1] http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt_principles