

Concepts

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Description:

Concepts are considered to be the essential elements or building blocks of thought. In this course, we will read primary sources articulating various theories of concepts from philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience. We will review the strengths and weaknesses of views that concepts are definitions, prototypes, exemplars, stereotypes, or words in a language of thought. We also study various constraints that have been suggested for any theory of concepts, such as that they must compose or whether they are holistic or atomistic and critically assess those constraints. We conclude by considering how the human brain is structured to facilitate the acquisition of concepts.