

Gestalt Psychology

Using the laws of Gestalt in educational design.

What is Gestalt Psychology?

Visual Design for
Education

Visual Design vs.
Verbal Design

**What is Gestalt
Psychology?**

Why is design so
important?

Laws of Gestalt

Principles of
Visual Design

Applying Gestalt
to design

References

- Gestalt, loosely translated into English, means “shape” or “form”
- Gestalt psychologists are interested in the way that, within a world of ongoing change and endless variety, people can make sense of so much visual stimuli (Schamber, 1986)
- Gestalt theories have implications for education – focussing more on meaningful learning and true understanding of principles, over the traditional structured approaches based on memory and recall (King, Wertheimer, Keller & Crochetiere, 1994)

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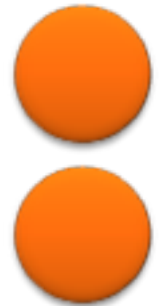
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■ Law of Proximity

- The closer objects are to each other, the more likely they are to be perceived as a group (Ehrenstein, 2004)



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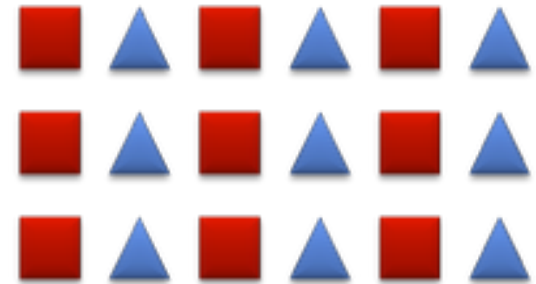
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■ Law of Similarity

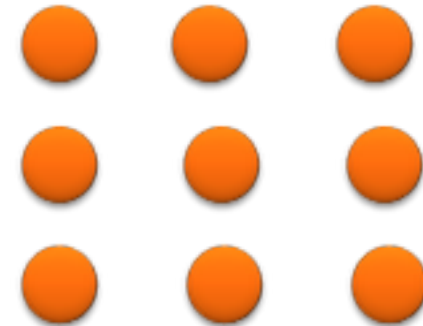
- Objects that are similar, with like components or attributes are more likely to be organised together (Schamber, 1986).



Objects are viewed in vertical rows because of their similar attributes.

■ Law of Common Fate

- Objects with a common movement, that move in the same direction, at the same pace, at the same time are organised as a group (Ehrenstein, 2004).



Gestalt Laws

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■ Law of Continuation

- Objects will be grouped as a whole if they are co-linear, or follow a direction (Chang, 2002; Lyons, 2001).



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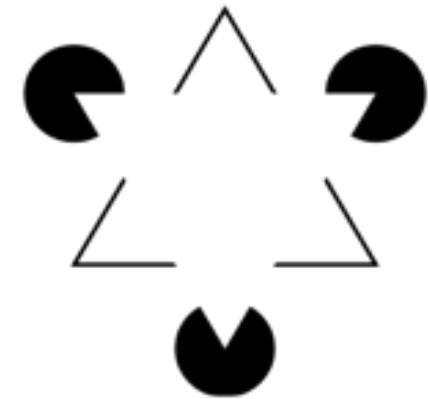
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■ Law of Closure

- In perception there is the tendency to complete unfinished or partially obscured objects (Ehrenstein, 2004). Kanizsa's triangle (*right*) is one of the most recognisable examples of this (Wikipedia, 2008).



(Wikipedia, 2008)

■ Law of Figure - Ground

- Viewers will perceive an object (figure) and a surface (ground) even in shapes are grouped together (Ehrenstein, 2004). This law also defines use of contrast (Schamber, 1986).



(Chang, 2002)

Gestalt Laws

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