GESTALT PRINCIPLES

Gestalt psychology
Gestalt psychology was founded in 1910 by three German psychologists, Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka and Wolfgang Köhler. The Gestalt movement really began in 1912 when Wertheimer investigated the phi-phenomenon.

The phi-phenomenon is when we see a row of lights flash in sequence, like on a theater marquis, and instead of seeing a static light going on and off we perceive the light as moving.

We respond to some images very strongly, based on our experiences in the physical world.

Sharp, pointed shapes communicate danger or pain because we've felt the pain of thorns, broken glass, etc.
Gestalt means “Form or Shape.”

**Summary idea**
Gestaltists believe that we don’t see things as individual items but that all the individual items are associated as one whole.

**Why we care**
Visual communications involves crafting the perceptual structure for your message using Gestalt principles.

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Why we bring it up here

- Rules of grammar and composition are foundation for effective writing; this is the foundation of visual grammar & composition
- Need to bear in mind that these are principles—and they apply across all aspects of graphic design.
- I will show you examples of thing you will be designing in this class and little diagrams to clarify specific concepts, but these ideas apply to all design
- More than this: they apply to why you see and understand things the way you do.
We respond to some images very strongly, based on our experiences in the physical world.

Sharp, pointed shapes communicate danger or pain because we've felt the pain of thorns, broken glass, etc.
A picture of a Thanksgiving turkey may stir memories of warm, happy family dinners.
Romney Logo makes us think of Aquafresh.

We're responding to the meaning of the image, associating it with memories we have.
We tend to group things together based on similarity, but there are many kinds of similarity.

Ask What they see as a whole first

- Please note that similarity—and all of these principles—can apply to more than one aspect of a design.

relation, association, link, correlation, correspondence, parallel, alliance, bond, interrelation, interconnection.
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Similarity can work either way:

Ask What stands out first

- When a group of items have similar characteristics, we’ll tend to focus on the difference.

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GESTALT PRINCIPLES: SIMILARITY
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: SIMILARITY

Elephant Men

Tracing its for a mother to raise her young in a land where the elephant population has shrunk. Now, along with the environmental issues of climate change, the human-elephant conflict is taking on new forms of what it means to be an animal.

By Anthony Wun
Photography by Robert Webber
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: SIMILARITY
Inverse at work brings out the copy
Inverse at work brings out the copy
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: SIMILARITY
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: SIMILARITY

How well will your sunscreen protect you? Here's a field guide.

SHEDDING LIGHT ON SPF
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: SIMILARITY

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GESTALT PRINCIPLES: SIMILARITY
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: PROXIMITY

We also group based on proximity

- Things that are relatively close will be understood to be more related than distant objects.

Types of proximity:

- Edge proximity
- Touch
- Overlap

Note that combining principles (size & proximity) can start to build more complicated relationships
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: PROXIMITY
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GESTALT PRINCIPLES: CONTINUATION Guiding the eye

The eye will follow a line or curve and continue moving in the same direction.

We perceive separate objects as related if they follow the same path.

Momentum: your eye tends to keep moving in the same direction until signaled to change directions.

- Method for guiding reader's eye through a composition
- For us, this means that reading should usually follow established direction from upper left to lower right.
- Eye will follow a line or curve
- Where does eye go first? Second?
- Why?

Logos: Color can be used to emphasize continuity for clarity
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: CONTINUATION
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GESTALT PRINCIPLES: CONTINUATION
Healthy Furniture for Healthy Living

Q Collection Sustainable Design Clear the Air

Lynne Davis / Design Interiors / Interior Design
Where does eye start?
Where go from there?
How do you relate elements?

relation, association, link, correlation, correspondence, parallel, alliance, bond, interrelation, interconnection.
Where does eye start?
Where go from there?
How do you relate elements?

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SIMILARITY, PROXIMITY & CONTINUATION

Where does eye start?
Where go from there?
How do you relate elements?

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GESTALT PRINCIPLES: Common Fate

We tend to group similar objects together that share a common motion or destination.

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GESTALT PRINCIPLES: CLOSURE

Familiar shapes are perceptually completed when incomplete; your mind fills in the gaps.
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GESTALT PRINCIPLES: FIGURE/GROUND

The distinction between an object and its surroundings; **positive** and negative space

The eye and mind separate an object (figure) from its surroundings (ground).

Many times the figure/ground relationship is dynamic and ambiguous.

There is more than one solution of what is figure and what is ground.
GESTALT PRINCIPLES: FIGURE/GROUND
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Talk to your doctor about any unusual changes in your breasts. An abnormality could mean breast cancer.
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Similarity
Proximity
Continuation
Closure
Figure/ground
Isomorphic correspondence

relation, association, link, correlation, correspondence, parallel, alliance, bond, interrelation, interconnection.
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Similarity, Proximity, Continuation, Closure, Figure/ground,
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Relation, association, link, correlation, correspondence, parallel, alliance, bond, interrelation, interconnection.
WHEN GESTALT GOES BAD

- Similarity
- Proximity
- Continuation
- Closure
- Common Fate
- Isomorphic Correspondence

Relation, association, link, correlation, correspondence, parallel, alliance, bond, interrelation, interconnection.
WHEN GESTALT GOES BAD

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Continuation
Closure
Figure/ground
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**Proximity**
**Continuation**
**Closure**
**Figure/ground**
**Isomorphic correspondence**

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WHEN \textbf{GESTALT} GOES BAD

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figures/figure.png}
\caption{Illustration of the Gestalt principles applied to images.}
\end{figure}

- Similarity
- Proximity
- Continuation
- Closure
- Figure/ground
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