

PSYCHOLOGY 2301 STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 5 Sensation and Perception

Know the difference between sensation and perception.

Sensation is the process of our sensory receptors and nervous system receiving and representing stimulus energies from the environment, while perception is the process of our brain organizing and interpreting sensory information that transforms into meaningful objects and events.

What is sensory adaptation?

Sensory adaptation is the reduced sensitivity in response to constant stimulation.

What is the absolute threshold?

Absolute threshold is the absolute minimum stimulus energy needed to detect a particular stimulus fifty percent of the time.

What are the differences between perceptual set and context effect?

Perceptual set is the mental predisposition to perceive one thing and not another, while context effect is the immediate motivation and emotion that we bring to a situation.

What does a light's wavelength and amplitude determine?

A light's wavelength determines the perceived color of light, and the amplitude determines the perceived brightness of colors.

Know the following eye definitions and their location (be able to identify on a picture):

Retina

Pupil

Differences between Rods and Cones

Optic nerve

Blind spot



1. Pupil: the opening through which light enters the eye
2. Lens
3. Retina: the light-sensitive inner surface of the eye; contains rods and cones
4. Fovea
5. Optic Nerve: nerve that carries neural impulses from the eye to the brain
6. Blind Spot: where the optic nerve leaves the eye; no receptor cells present
7. Cornea
8. Iris

Rods: retinal receptors that detect black, white, and gray; necessary for peripheral and twilight vision
Cones: concentrated near the center of the retina and function in daylight or in well-lit conditions, detect fine detail and give rise to color sensations

What is color constancy?

Color constancy is perceiving familiar objects as having consistent color, even if changing illumination alters the wavelengths reflected by the object.

What is the Gestalt principle and how does it influence how we view things?

The Gestalt principle is the emphasis of our tendency to integrate pieces of information into meaningful wholes, and it influences how we view things by being unable to separate from our left and right fields of view.

What is the visual cliff and what have experiments with visual cliffs found with regard to infants and depth perception?

The visual cliff is a model of a cliff with a "drop-off" area that was covered by sturdy glass used to test infant's depth perception. Experiments with visual cliffs found with regard to infants and depth perception that most infants refuse to leave their mother's arms and jump off the cliff, indicating that they could perceive depth.

How do we locate sounds?

We locate sounds by the soundwaves sent to our ears. Because we have two ears, soundwaves either reach the left or the right one first, helping us locate where the sound is coming from.

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