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The Theory Underlying Concept Maps and How to Construct and Use Them

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Abstract

Concept maps are graphical tools for organizing and representing knowledge. They include concepts, represented in circles or boxes of some type, and relationships between concepts indicated by a connecting line linking concepts. Words on the line, referred to as linking words or linking phrases, specify the relationship between concepts. We define concept as a perceived regularity in events or objects, or records of events or objects, with a label. The label for most concepts is a word, although sometimes we use symbols such as + or %, and more than one word is used. Propositions are statements about some object or event in the universe, either occurring or constructed. Propositions contain two or more concepts connected using linking words or phrases to form a meaningful statement. Sometimes these are called semantic units, or units of meaning. Figure 1 shows a concept map that describes the structure of concept maps and illustrates the above characteristics.

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