

Prototypes

All answers should be clearly identified (i.e. which question you are responding to) and must be typed. If you choose to do this lab, please hand in a paper copy on the day of the first exam, along with your other chosen lab assignment.

Section One

Please answer all of the following questions

1. Try to extend the idea of prototype to an every day concept such as “college or university student.” What might characterize the prototypical college or university student?
2. Look at your data and decide if they are what Posner and Keele would have predicted. There’s one measure not included in the demonstration that Posner and Keele made. What is it and how big should it be in relationship to the measures you did make?
3. What sorts of cognitive work might prototypes be useful for?
4. Look at the group mean reaction times for classification of prototypes and for classification of new variants. Do this by grouping the data for both prototypes together and for all four new variants together. Decide if Posner and Keele’s results were confirmed.

Section Two

Please choose two of the three questions to answer.

1. Prototypes are mental constructions. Suggest how the construction process might take place.
2. If prototypes are used to classify incoming patterns of stimulation some sort of matching process between the prototype and the incoming stimulus must take place. Describe how the matching process might work.
3. Describe the characteristics of a prototype. What makes it a prototype?