

## Chapter 4:

# Mastery learning and Instructional Design

# How do people learn ?

☒ by exploration, trial and error

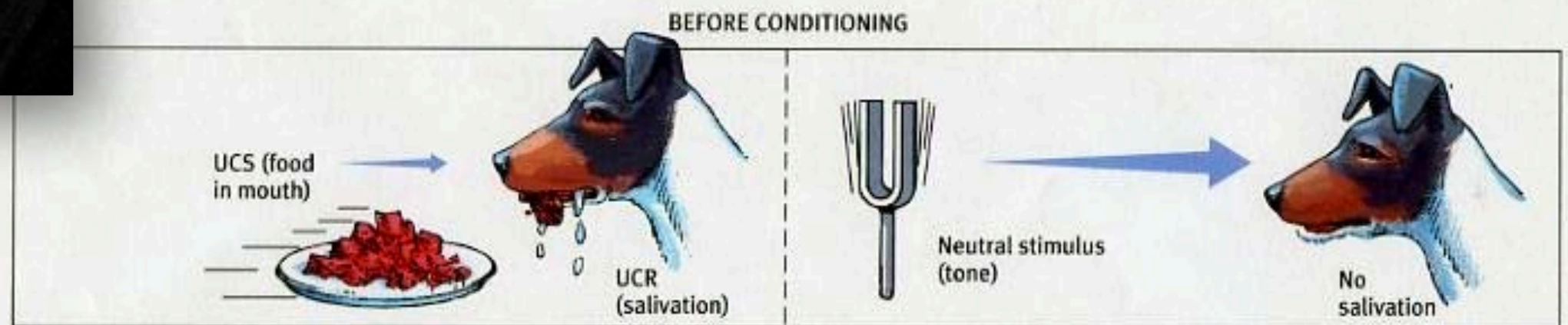
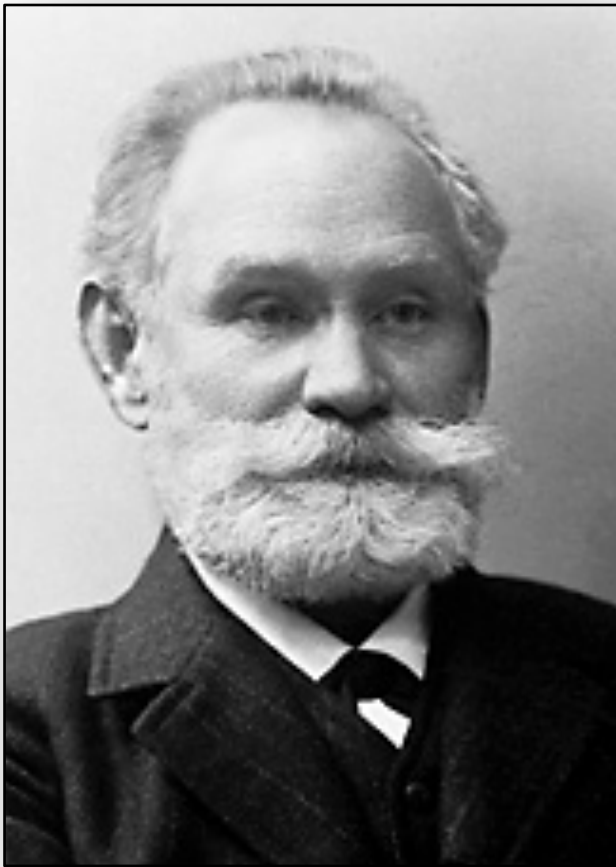
✓ **by incremental mastery**

- by verbal elaboration

dogs  
How do people learn ?

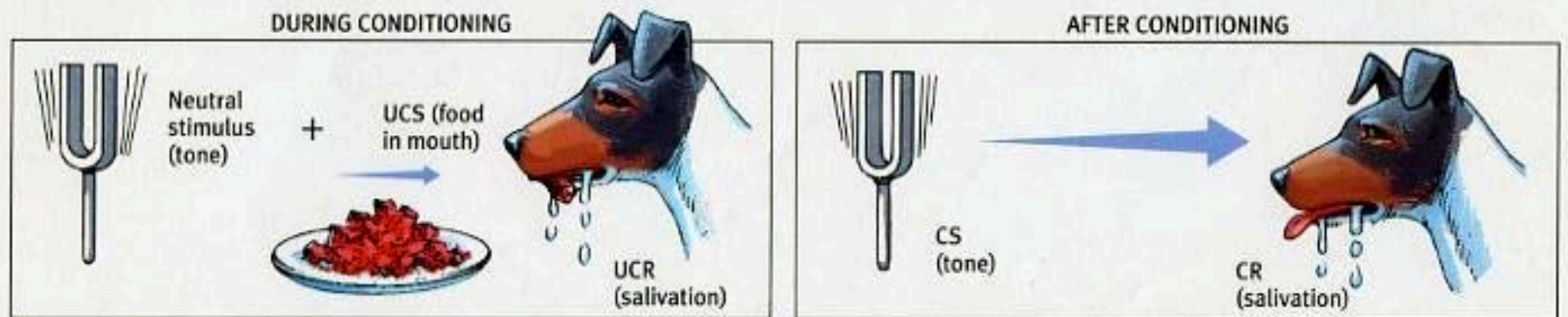
Yvan Pavlov, 1849-1936

## Classical Conditioning



An unconditioned stimulus (UCS) produces an unconditioned response (UCR).

A neutral stimulus produces no salivation response.

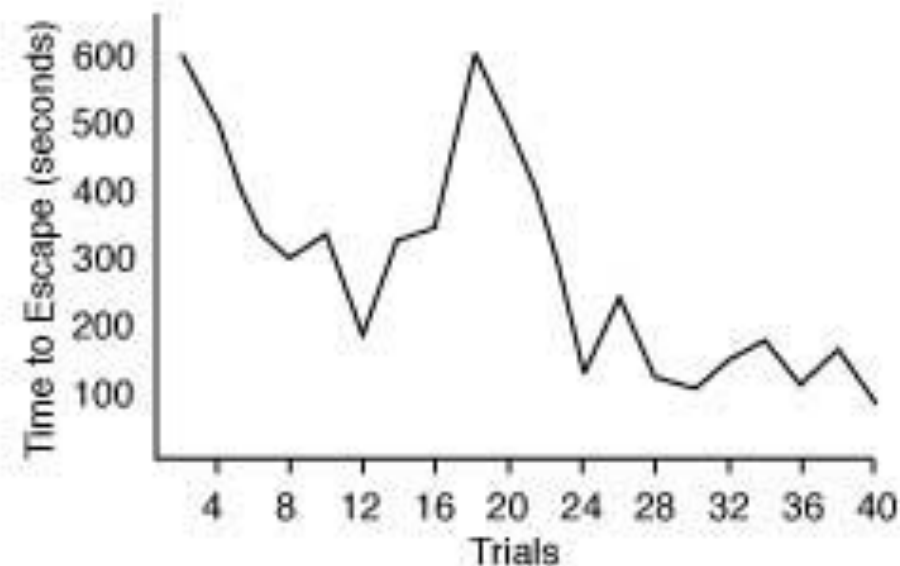
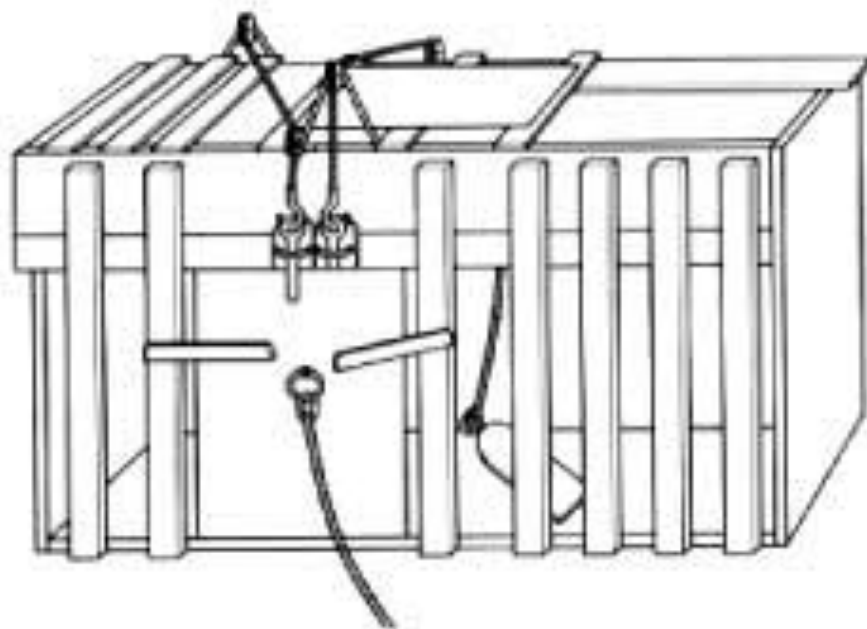


The unconditioned stimulus is repeatedly presented just after the neutral stimulus. The unconditioned stimulus continues to produce an unconditioned response.

The neutral stimulus alone now produces a conditioned response (CR), thereby becoming a conditioned stimulus (CS).



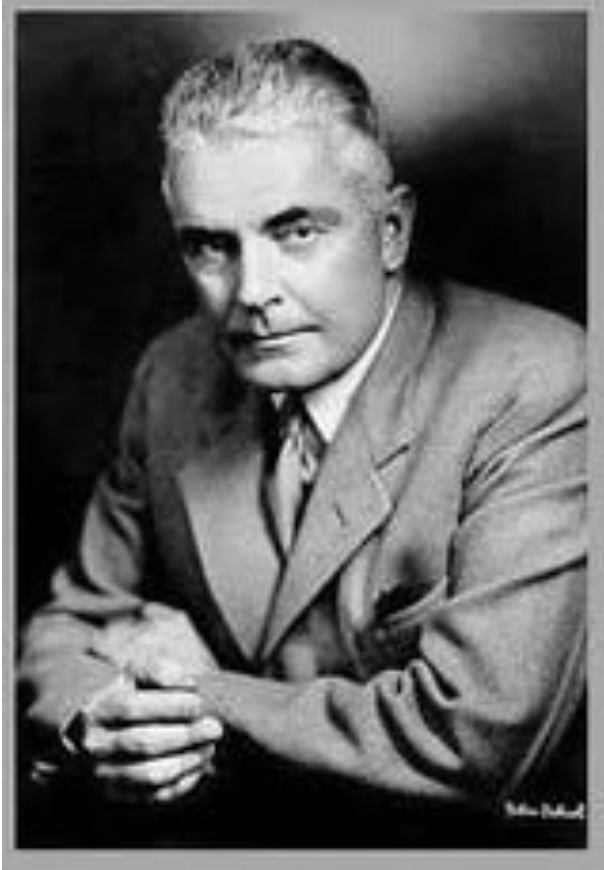
Edward L. Thorndike (1874 – 1949) [The Law of Effect](#) :  
any behavior that is followed by pleasant consequences  
is likely to be repeated, and any behavior followed by  
unpleasant consequences is likely to be stopped.



Adapted from Domjan, 1993 (modified from Thorndike, 1898 [left] and Imada & Imada, 1983 [right])

<http://www.simplypsychology.org/edward-thorndike.html>

Edward L. Thorndike, The Law of Effect, The American Journal of Psychology  
Vol. 39, No. 1/4 (Dec., 1927), pp. 212-222: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1415413>



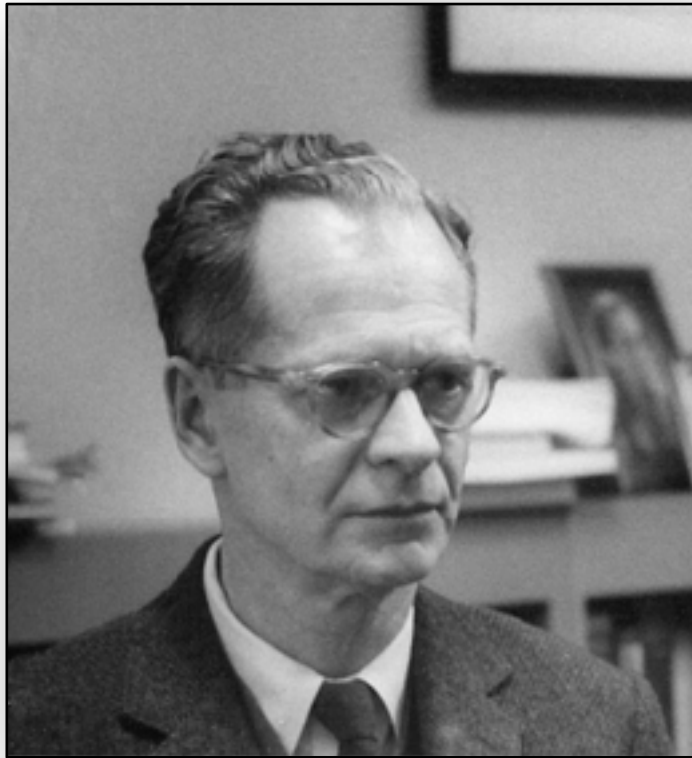
## John Watson (1878- 1958) Behaviourism

"Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select -- doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors."

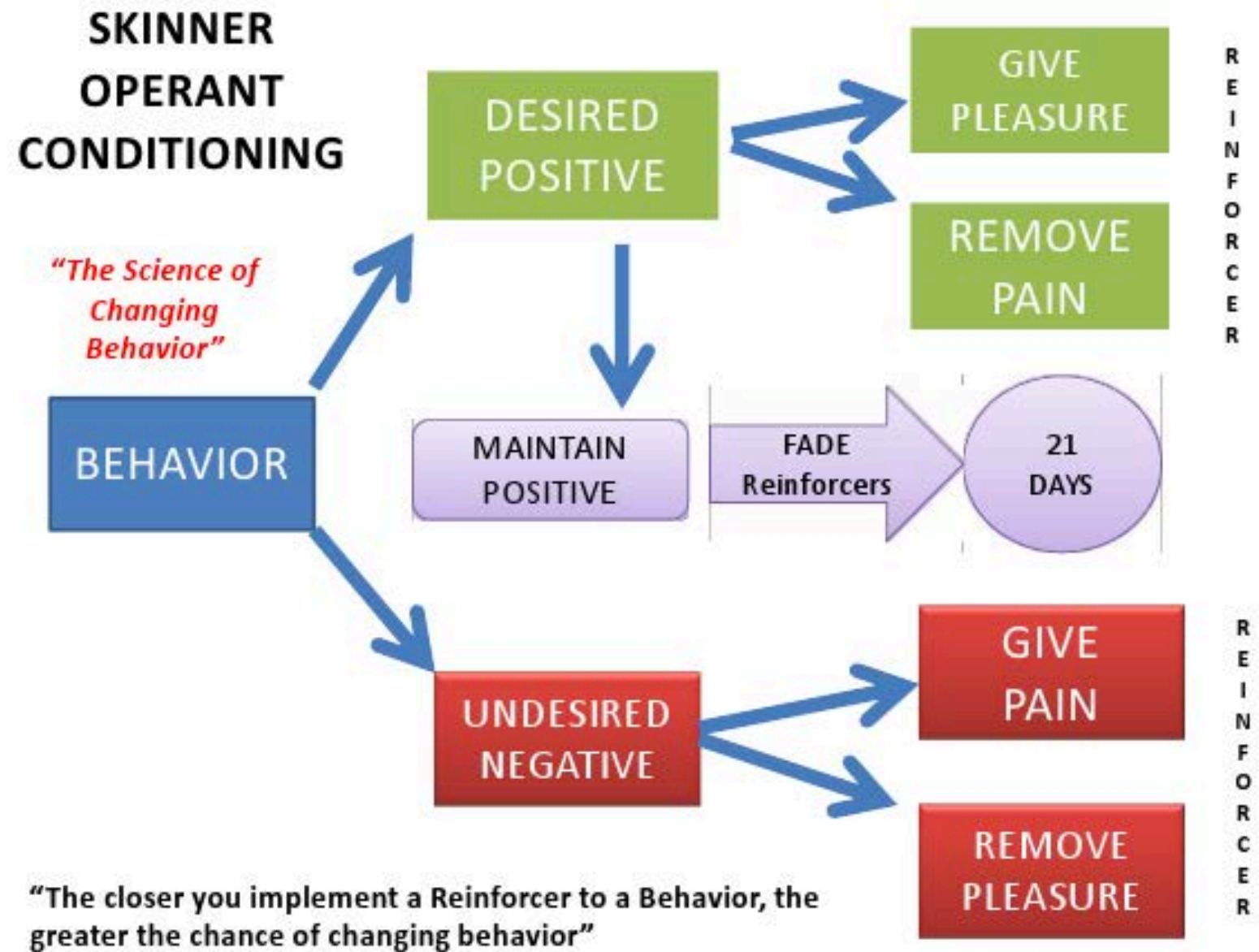
--John Watson, Behaviorism, 1930

*The [Little Albert](#) Experiment*





Burrhus Frederic Skinner (1904-1990), [Operant Conditioning](#)



# Key ideas in behaviorism

- ① Psychology is becoming more scientific
- ② The brain is a black box; the focus is on behaviors
- ③ Learning is « engineered »
- ④ **Association** results from **immediate** feedback
- ⑤ The learner is permanently **active**
- ⑥ **Small steps** increase the probability of positive feedback → Programmed instruction





B. F. Skinner

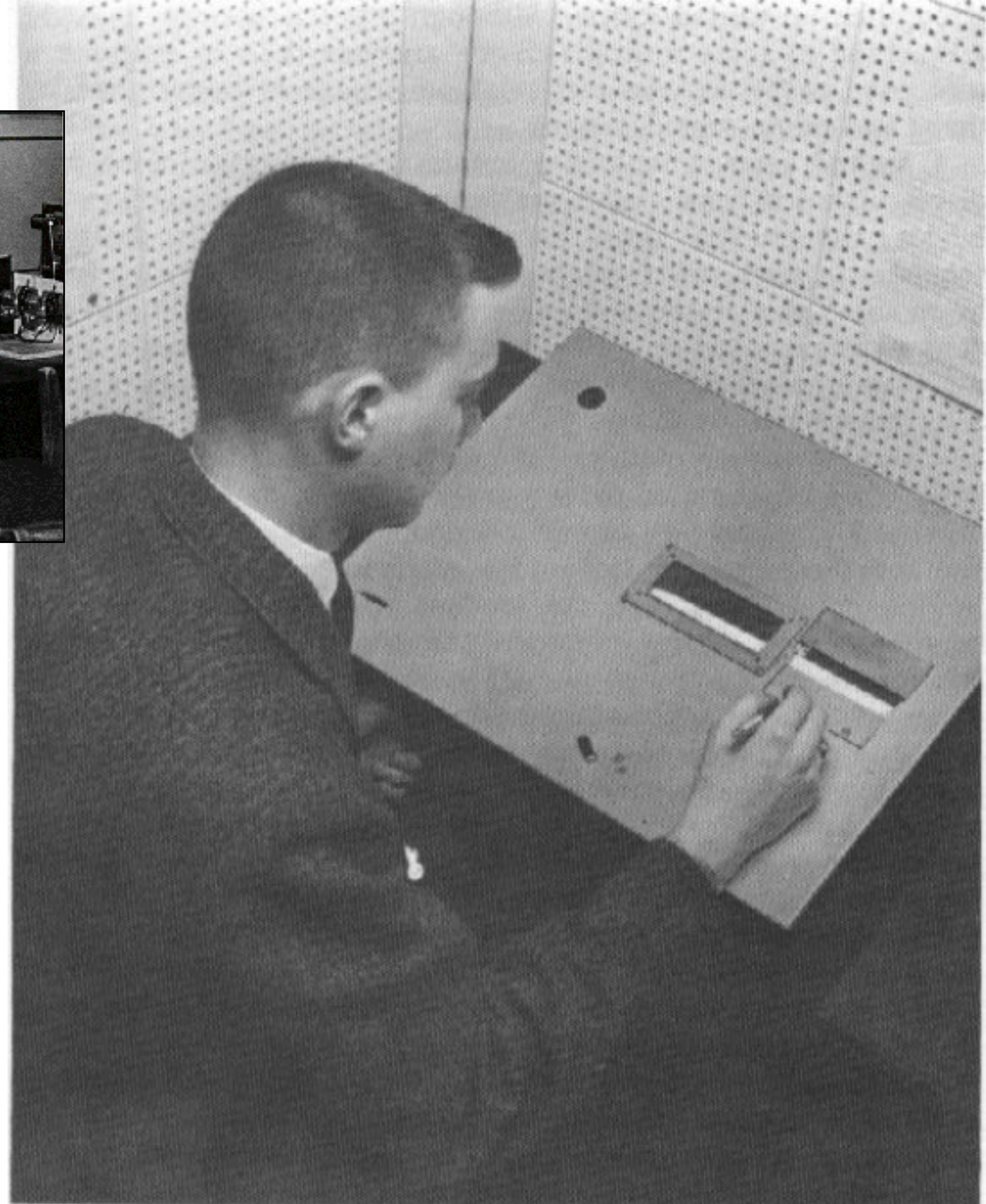
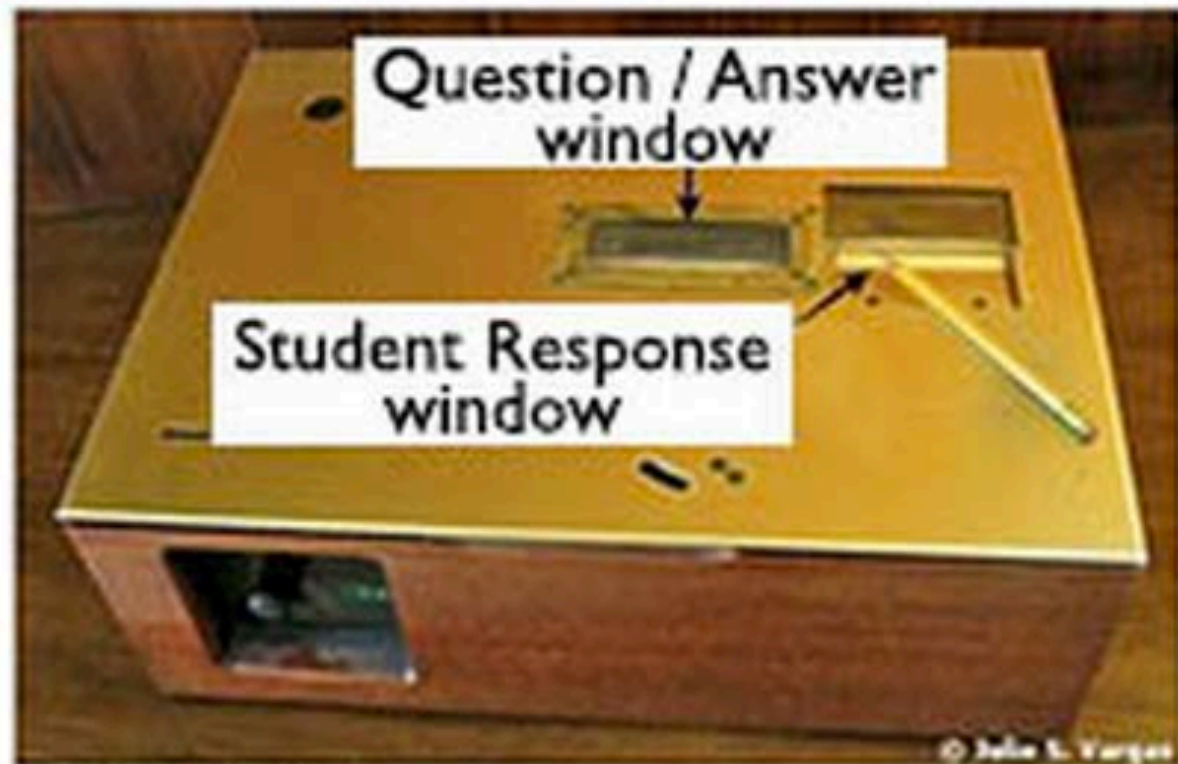
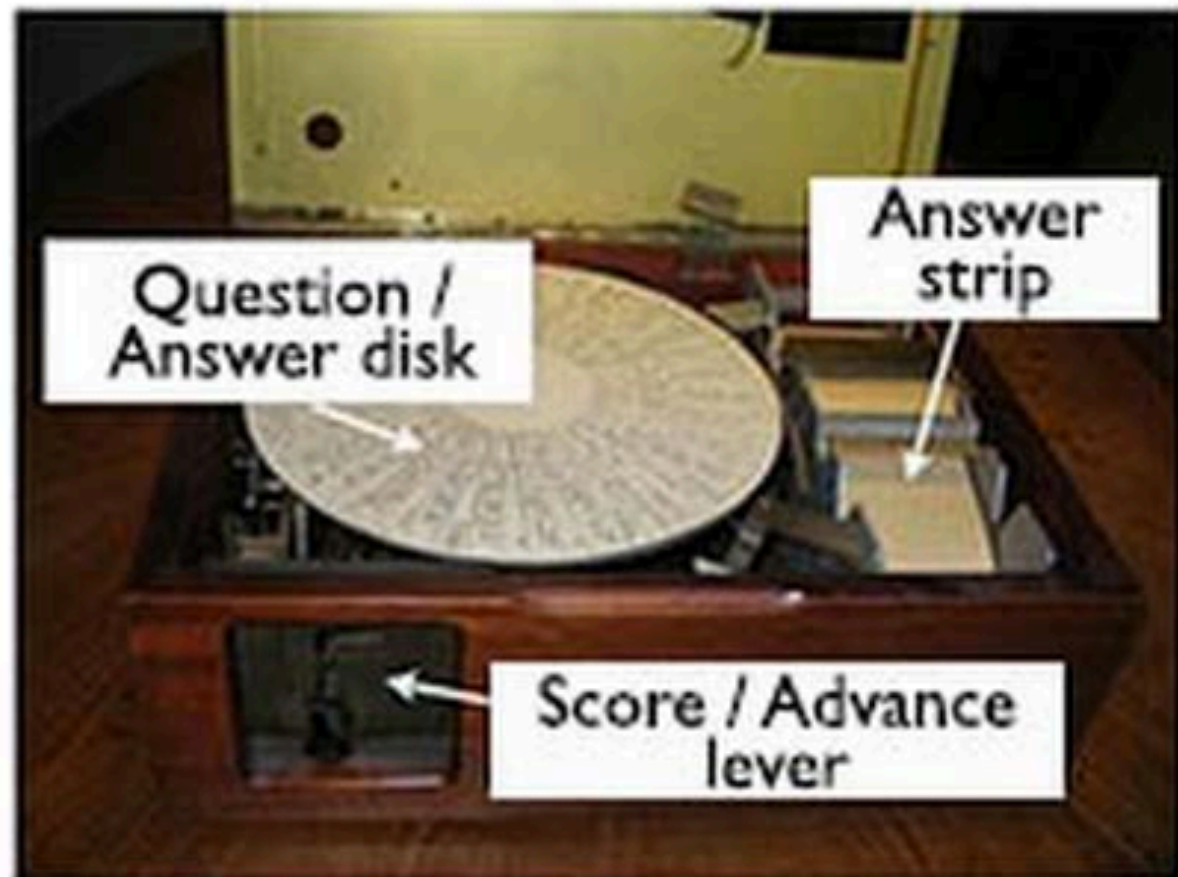


FIG. 11. Student at work in the self-instruction room. Material appears in the left-hand window. The student writes his response on a strip of paper exposed at the right.



## B.F. Skinner's Teaching Machine



(c) Julie S. Vargas

Instructional "disks" are placed inside the machine along with a strip or roll of paper. When the machine is closed, the student reads a question through a window and writes their response on the strip of paper. The student then compares their answer with the answer on the disk and presses the lever one way if their answer is correct or the other way if incorrect (the machine keeps score and advances).

Skinner proposed the machine improves learning by "taking into account the rate of learning for each individual learner." With this, Skinner formalizes "self-paced instruction" as part of programmed instruction.



# Linear Instruction

**Table 2. PART OF A PROGRAM IN HIGH-SCHOOL PHYSICS**

The machine presents one item at a time. The student completes the item and then uncovers the corresponding word or phrase shown at the right.

SENTENCE TO BE COMPLETED	WORD TO BE SUPPLIED
1. The important parts of a flashlight are the battery and the bulb. When we "turn on" a flashlight, we close a switch which connects the battery with the _____.	bulb
2. When we turn on a flashlight, an electric current flows through the fine wire in the _____ and causes it to grow hot.	bulb
3. When the hot wire glows brightly, we say that it gives off or sends out heat and _____.	light
4. The fine wire in the bulb is called a filament. The bulb "lights up" when the filament is heated by the passage of a(n) _____ current.	electric
5. When a weak battery produces little current, the fine wire, or _____, does not get very hot.	filament
6. A filament which is less hot sends out or gives off _____ light.	less
7. "Emit" means "send out." The amount of light sent out, or "emitted," by a filament depends on how _____ the filament is.	hot

# Frame-Based Models / e-learning

1. **Decomposition**: Segmenting complex contents into a sequence of learning steps that contains an elementary piece of information
2. Keep the student **active** all the time, ask the student to process any new piece of information
3. Provide **immediate feedback**
4. Let the student move on at his or her own speed



1. Information  
2. Question  
3. Feedback

1. Information  
2. Question  
3. Feedback

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2. Question  
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2. Question  
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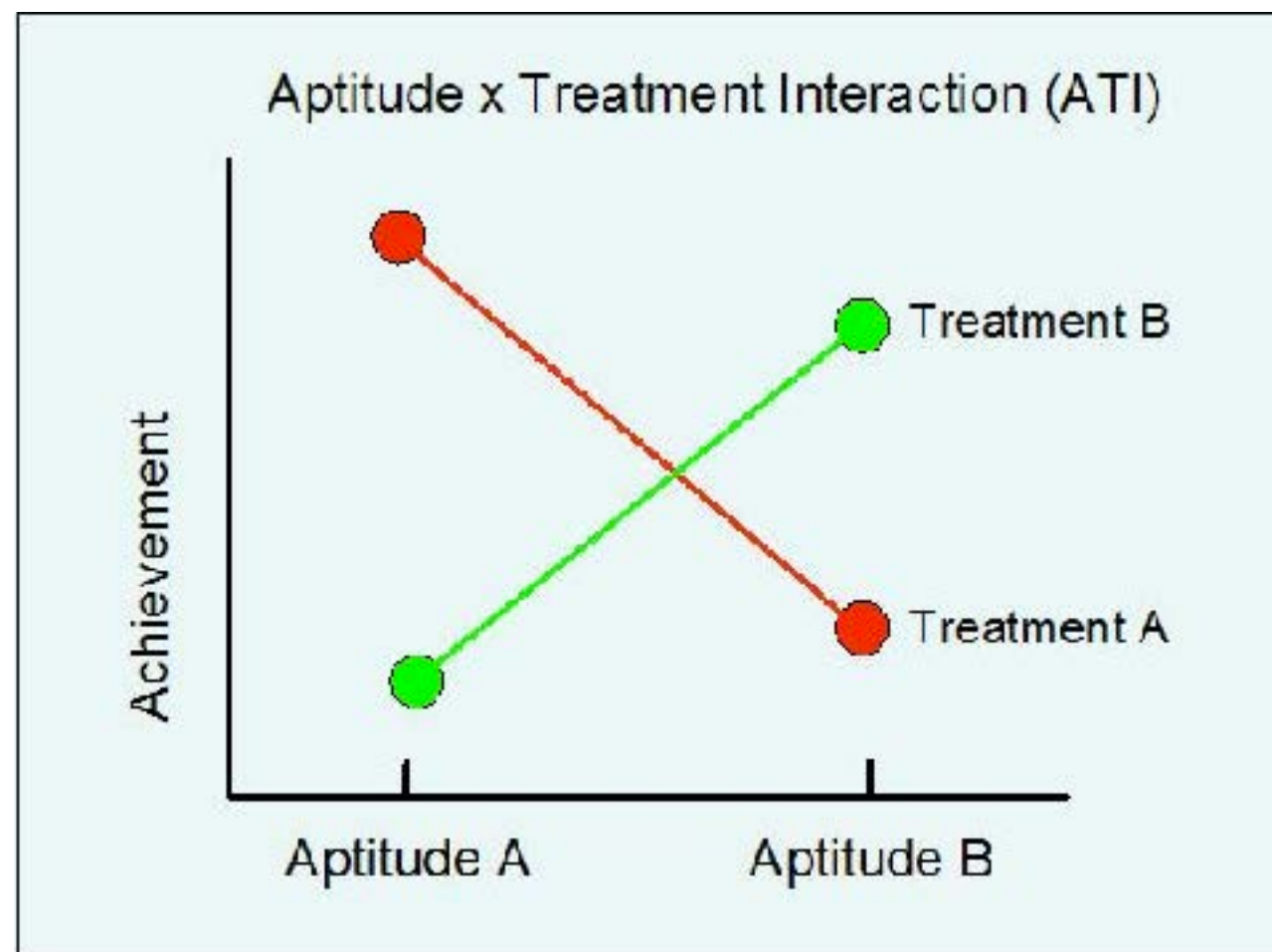
1. Information  
2. Question  
3. Feedback

# Feedback

is the 1st principle

for pedagogical effectiveness





### Aptitude- Treatment Interactions:

The effect of a pedagogical **method** varies for different learners **profiles**

The effect of a pedagogical **method**  
varies for different learners **profiles**

- Personalized Instruction
- Individual instruction
- Adaptive instruction
- ...
- *Optimization in learning environments*

# Evaluations of Intelligent Tutoring Systems

- Study with 17,000 students showed that Cognitive Tutor Algebra (a curriculum + ITS) doubled students' algebra learning  
(Pane et al., 2013)
- Meta-review indicates that ITSs are “nearly as effective as human tutoring” (VanLehn, 2011)
- Four meta-analyses show ITSs are often more effective than other forms of instruction

(Kulik & Fletcher, 2015; Ma, Adesope, Nesbit, & Liu, 2014; Steenbergen-Hu & Cooper, 2013; 2014)

Instructional design starts with :

~~What should learners know at the end ?  
(which they did not know at the beginning)~~

What should learners be able to do at the end ?  
(which they could not do at the beginning)

How will I know they are able to do it ?

*What would be the exam questions or tasks ?*

What should learners be able to do at the end ?

Pedagogical Objectives

Learning Goals

Learning Outcomes

Reproduction

Conceptualisation

Application

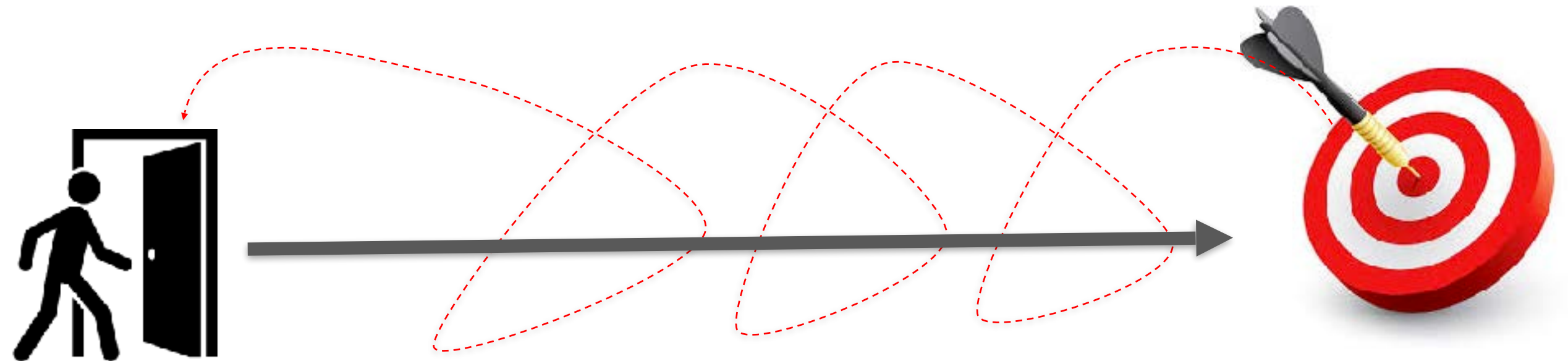
Exploration

Mobilisation

Problem solving



# Instructional design works backwards :



What are they able to  
do at the beginning

Pre-Requisites

What should learners be  
able to do at the end ?

(which they could not do  
at the beginning)

Objectives

Skill1 is pre-requisite to Skill2  
if  $p(\text{Skill2} \mid \sim \text{Skill1}) \ll p(\text{Skill2} \mid \text{Skill1})$

Skill1 : « 6 + 9 »

Skill2: « 26 + 39 »

Skill1: to find the verb

Skill2: to agree it with the subject

Skill1 : angle

Skill2: square

Skill1 : mean

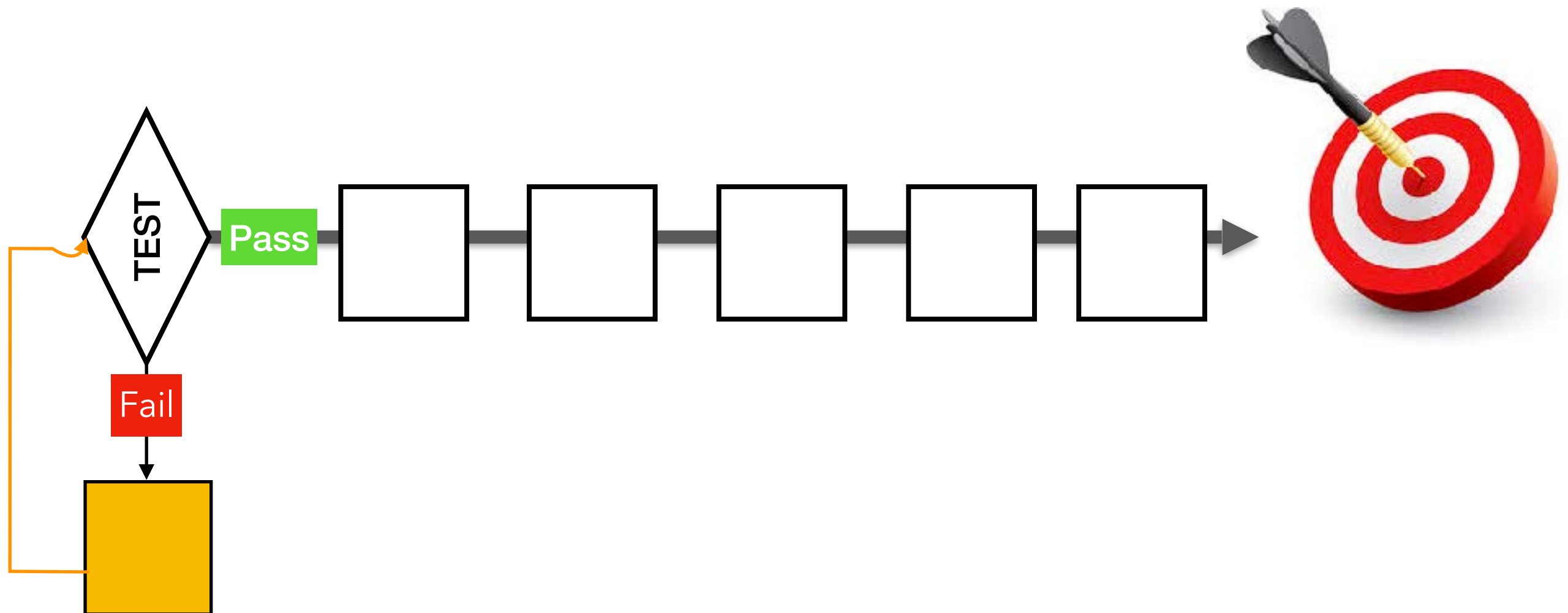
Skill2: standard deviation

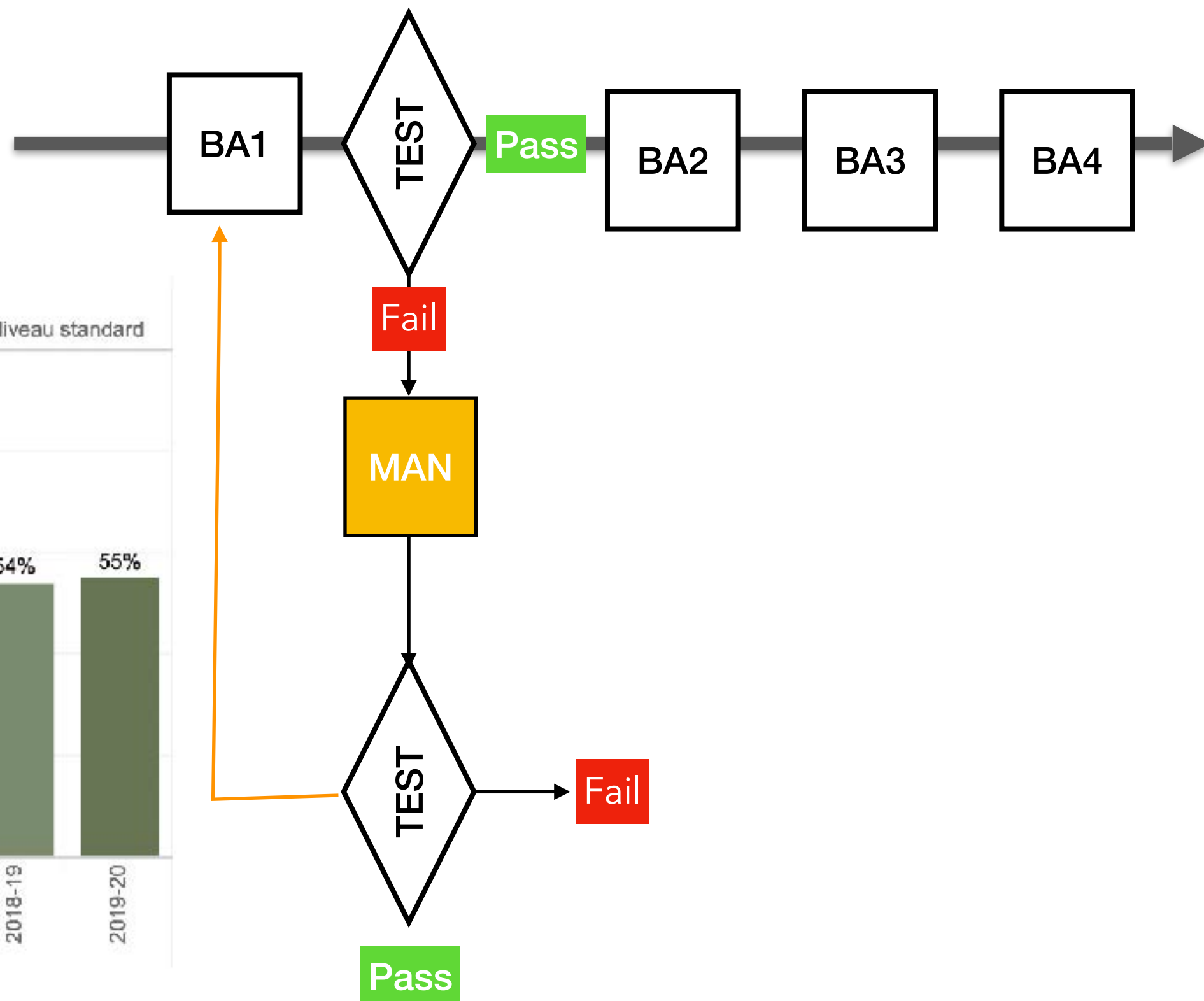
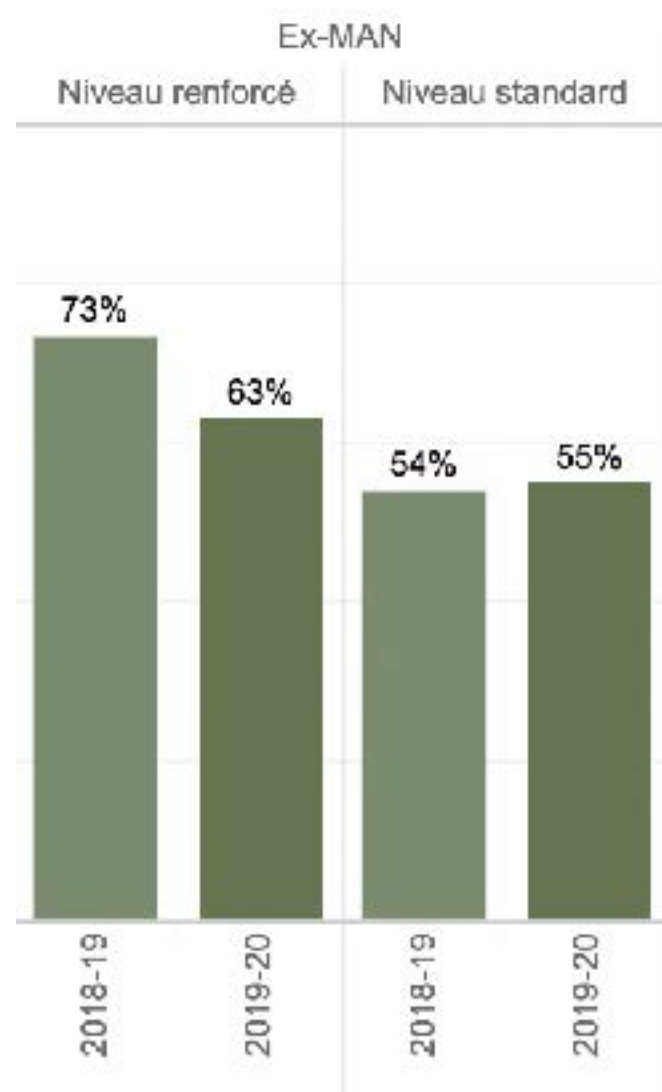
Skill1 : to read

Skill2: to code

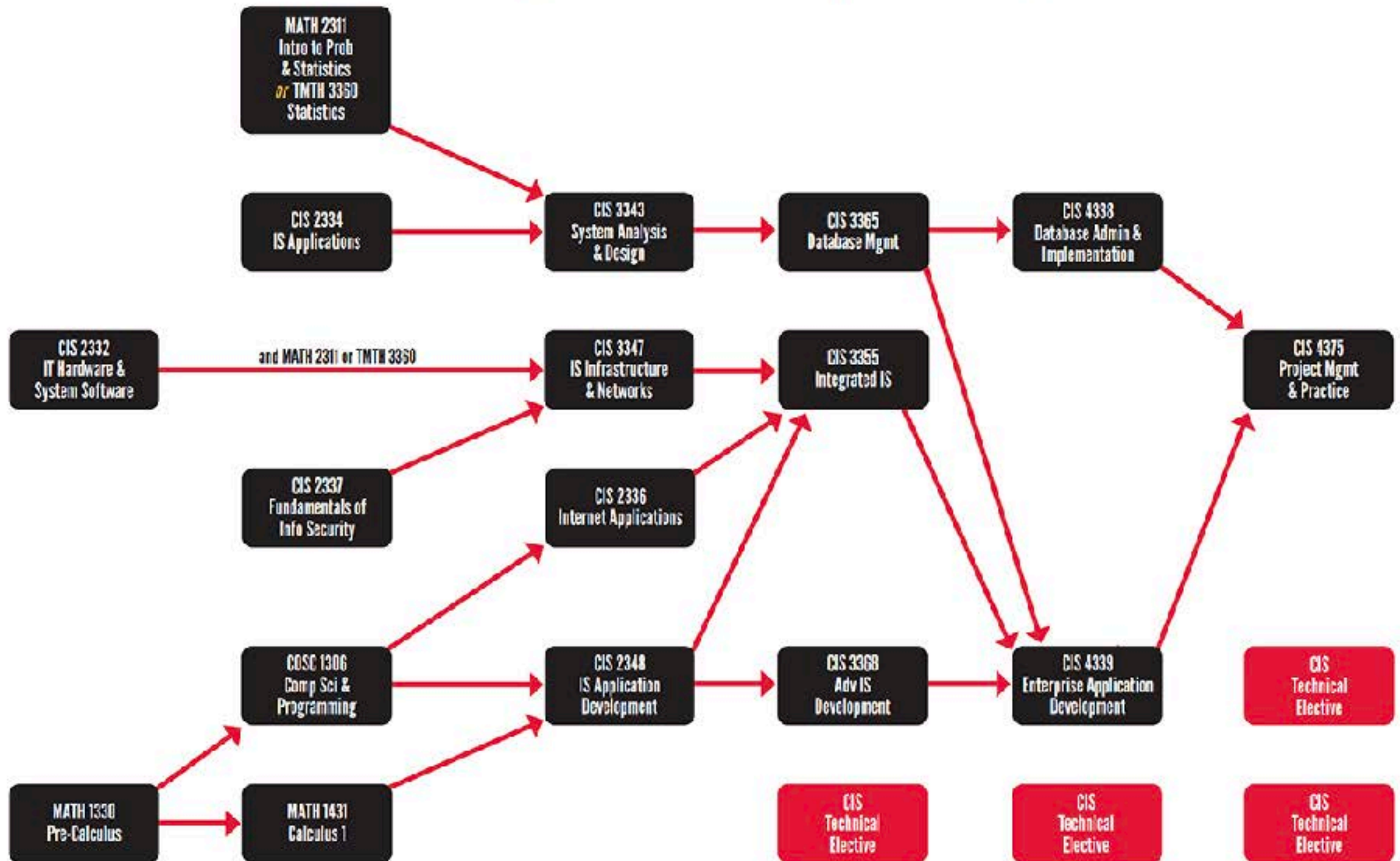
# Mastery learning:

if pre-requisites are missing, remediate them before to go on





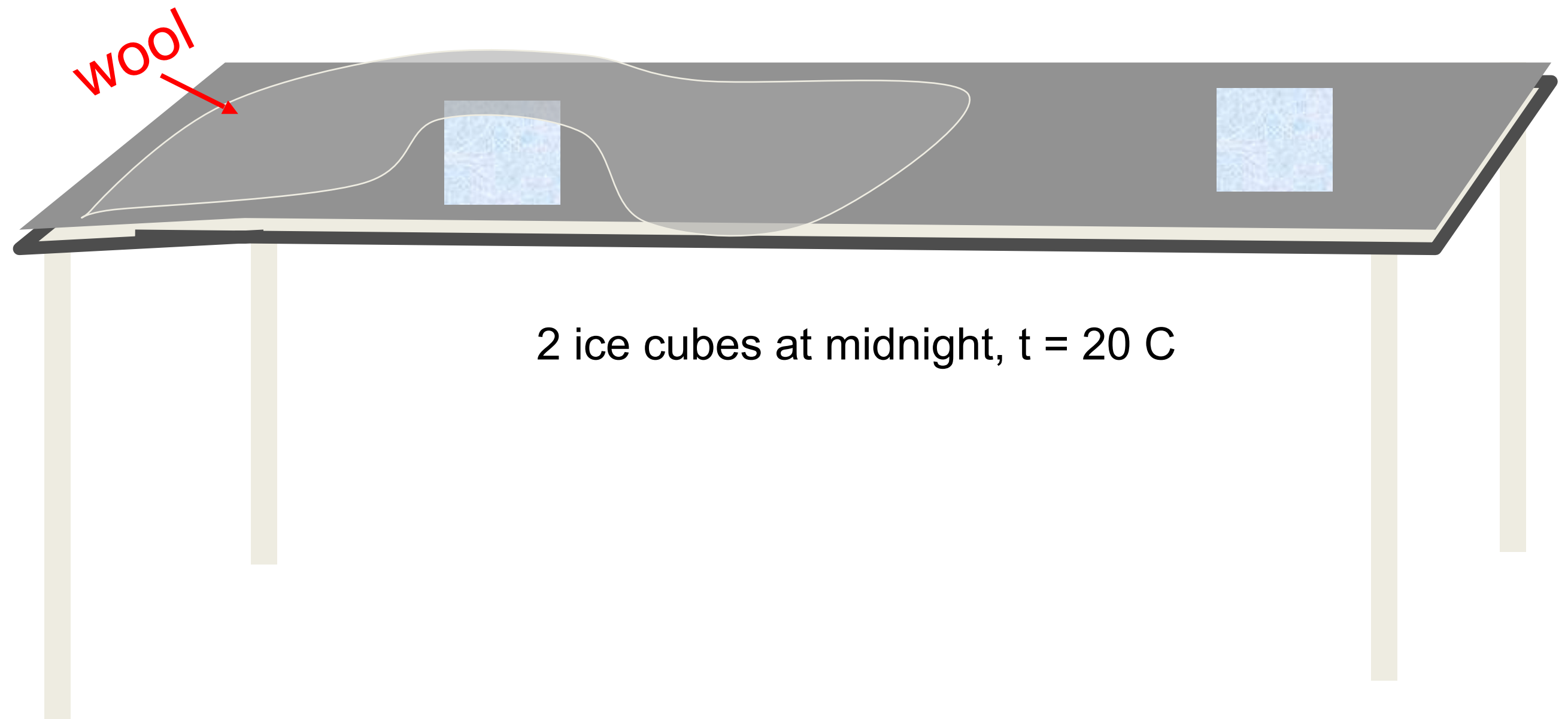
# CIS Prerequisite/Course Sequence Map



Note: For a list of pre-approved Technical Electives, please visit:  
[uh.edu/cot/cis/technical-electives](http://uh.edu/cot/cis/technical-electives)



# Prior Knowledge can be wrong

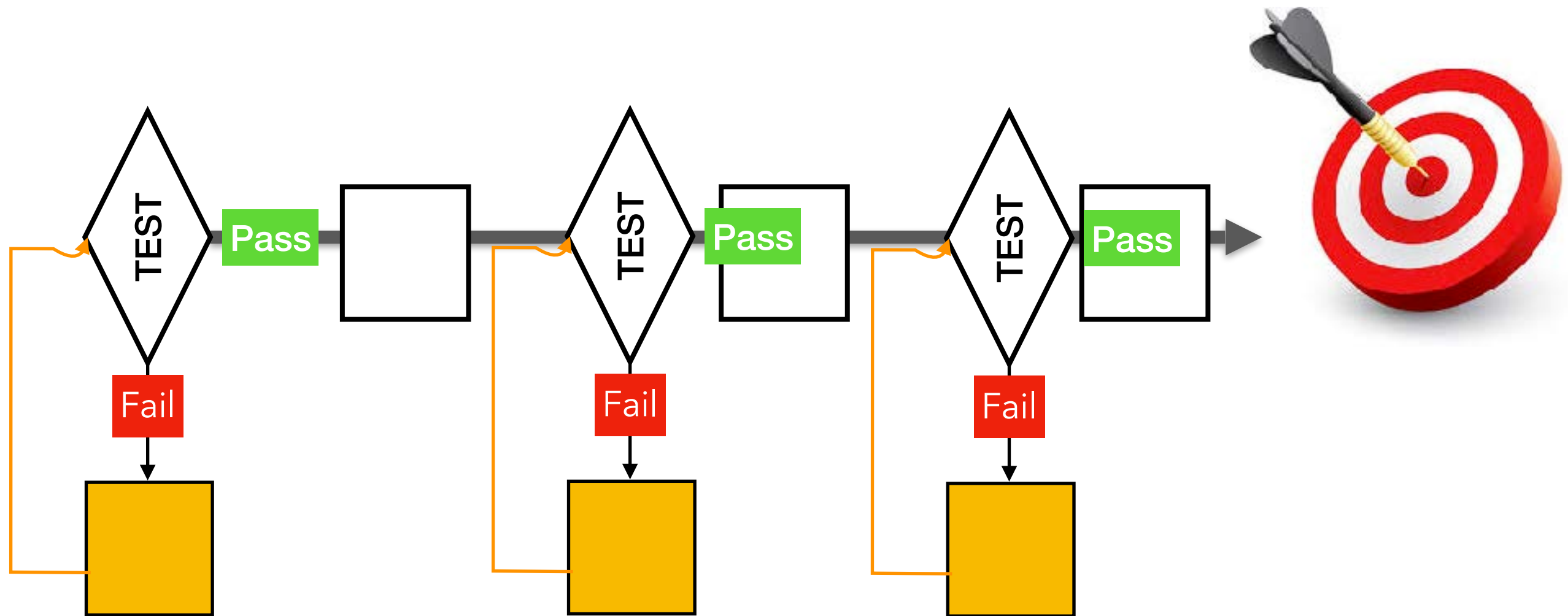


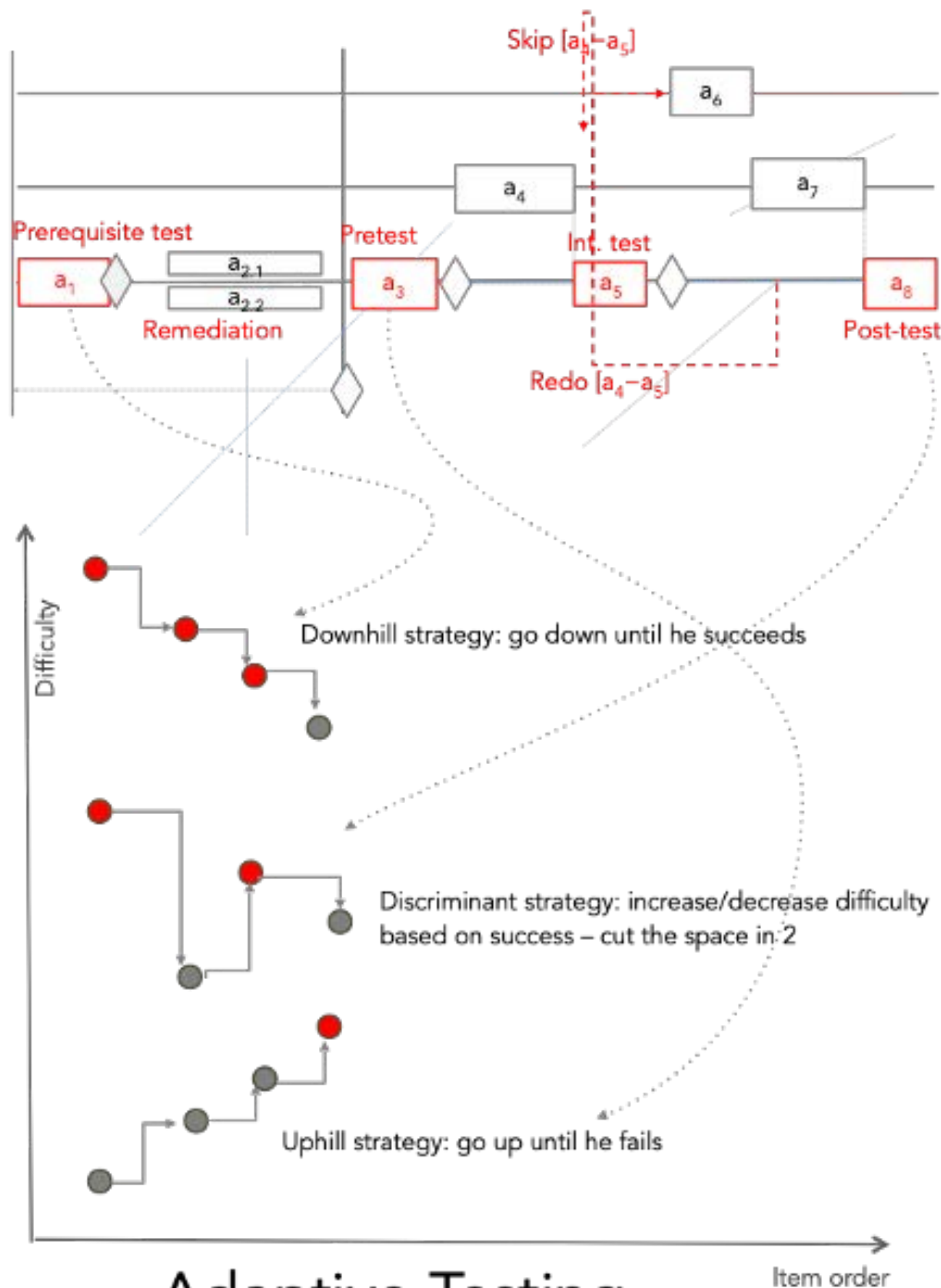
Which ice cube will melt faster ?

Misconceptions must be trapped  
otherwise they survive teaching

# Mastery learning:

Control mastery of skill<sub>i</sub> before to go to skill<sub>i+1</sub>





## Adaptive Testing

### Modular Instruction

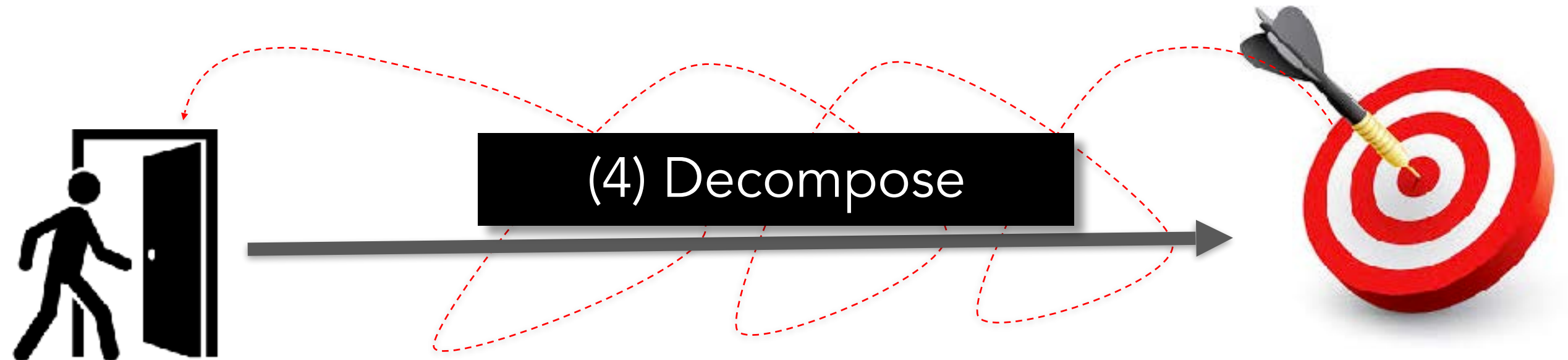
**Pre-requisite test:** Does the learner has the pre-requisite to start the course ?

**Pre-test:** Should the learner skip some modules ?

**Intermediate-test:** Did the learner reach the objectives of this module ?

**Post-test:** Did the learner reach the objectives of this course?

(1) Pick a topic on which one of you is expert



(3) Define target audience

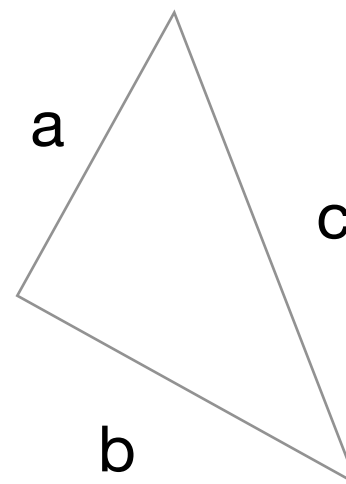
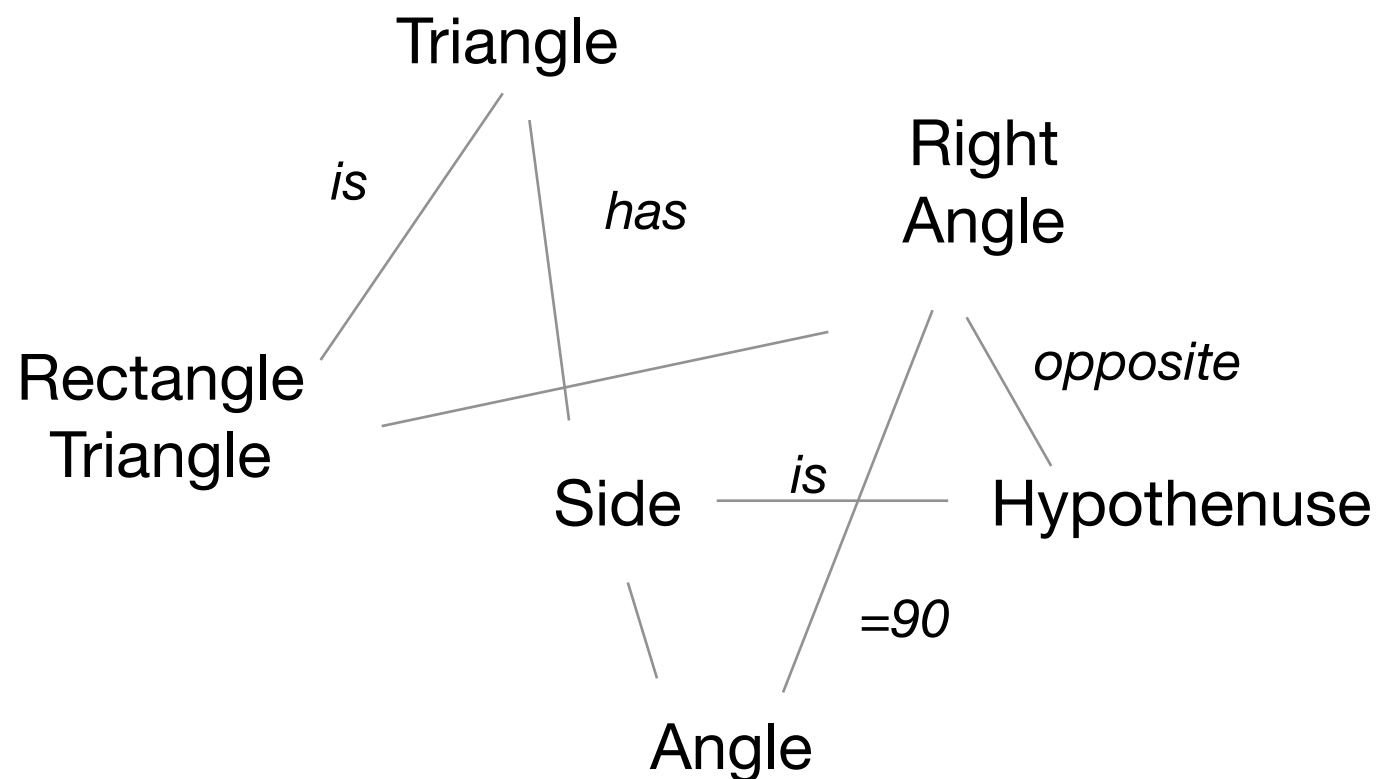
(2) Specify Objectives

PROJECT



## (4) Decompose

### Knowledge Graph



### Algorithm

1. Measure A
2. Compute  $A^2$
3. Measure B
4. Compute  $B^2$
5.  $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$
6.  $C = \text{SQRT}(C^2)$



**Why is an activity  $a_i$  useful for an activity  $a_{i+1}$ ?**

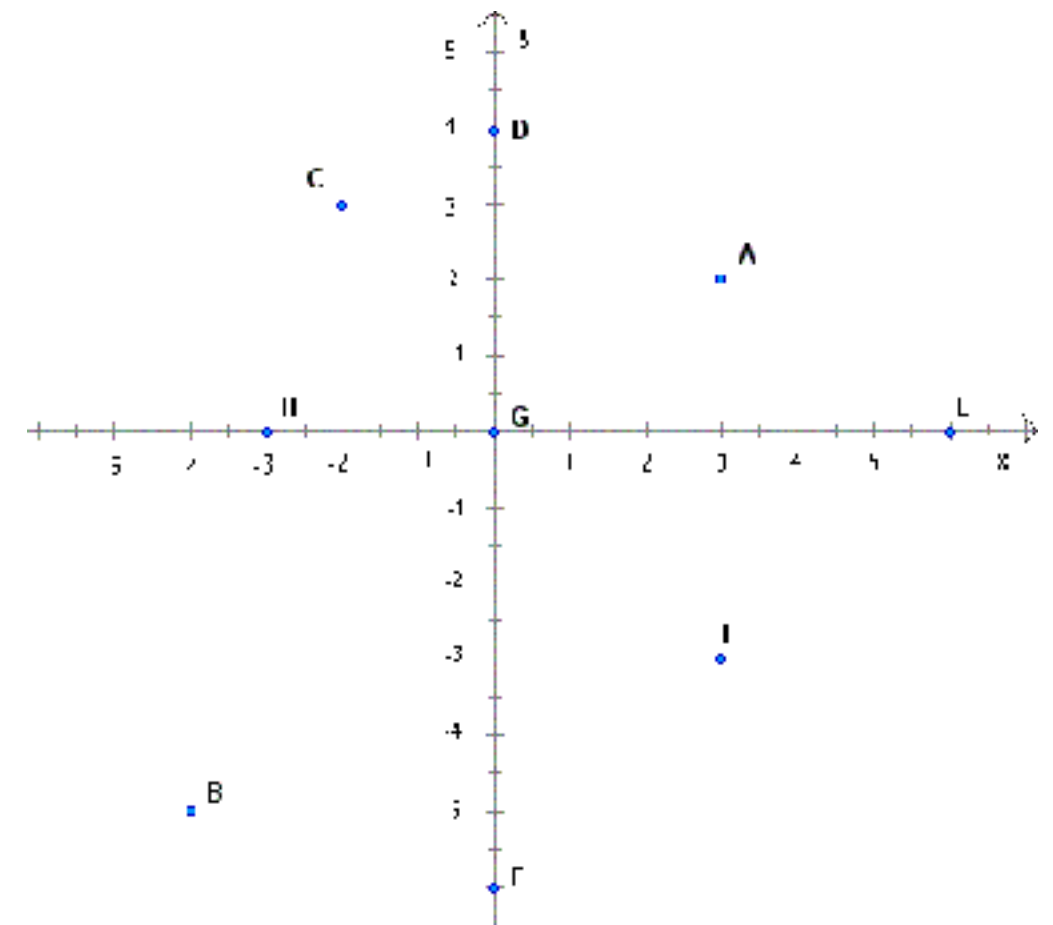
1.  $a_i$  is prerequisite to  $a_{i+1}$
2. ...

Why is an activity  $a_1$  useful for an activity  $a_2$ ?

Advance organizer :

$a_1$  pre-activates structures for  $a_2$

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A										
B										
C										
D										
E										
F										
G										
H										
I										
J										



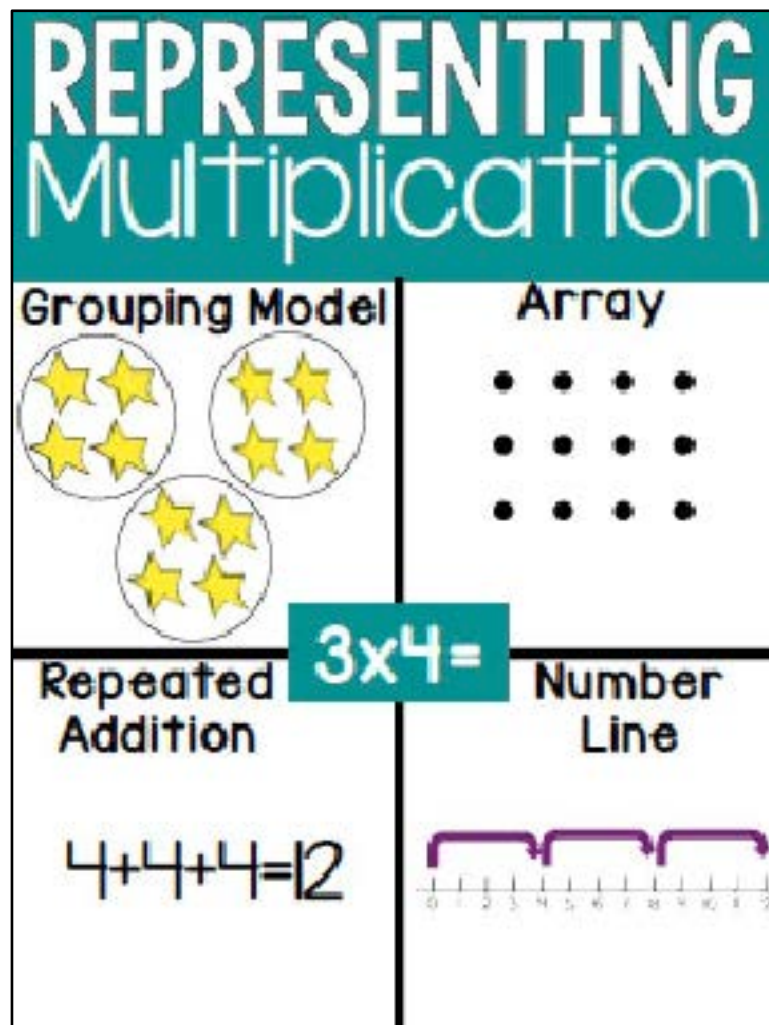
**Why is an activity  $a_i$  useful for an activity  $a_{i+1}$ ?**

1.  $a_i$  is prerequisite to  $a_{i+1}$
2.  $a_i$  is pre-activates cognitive schema for  $a_{i+1}$
3. ...

Why is an activity  $a_1$  useful for an activity  $a_2$ ?

## Shift Representation:

$a_2$  represents contents differently from  $a_1$



There is a large body of empirical studies that show that is beneficial for learners to **switch between multiple representations.**

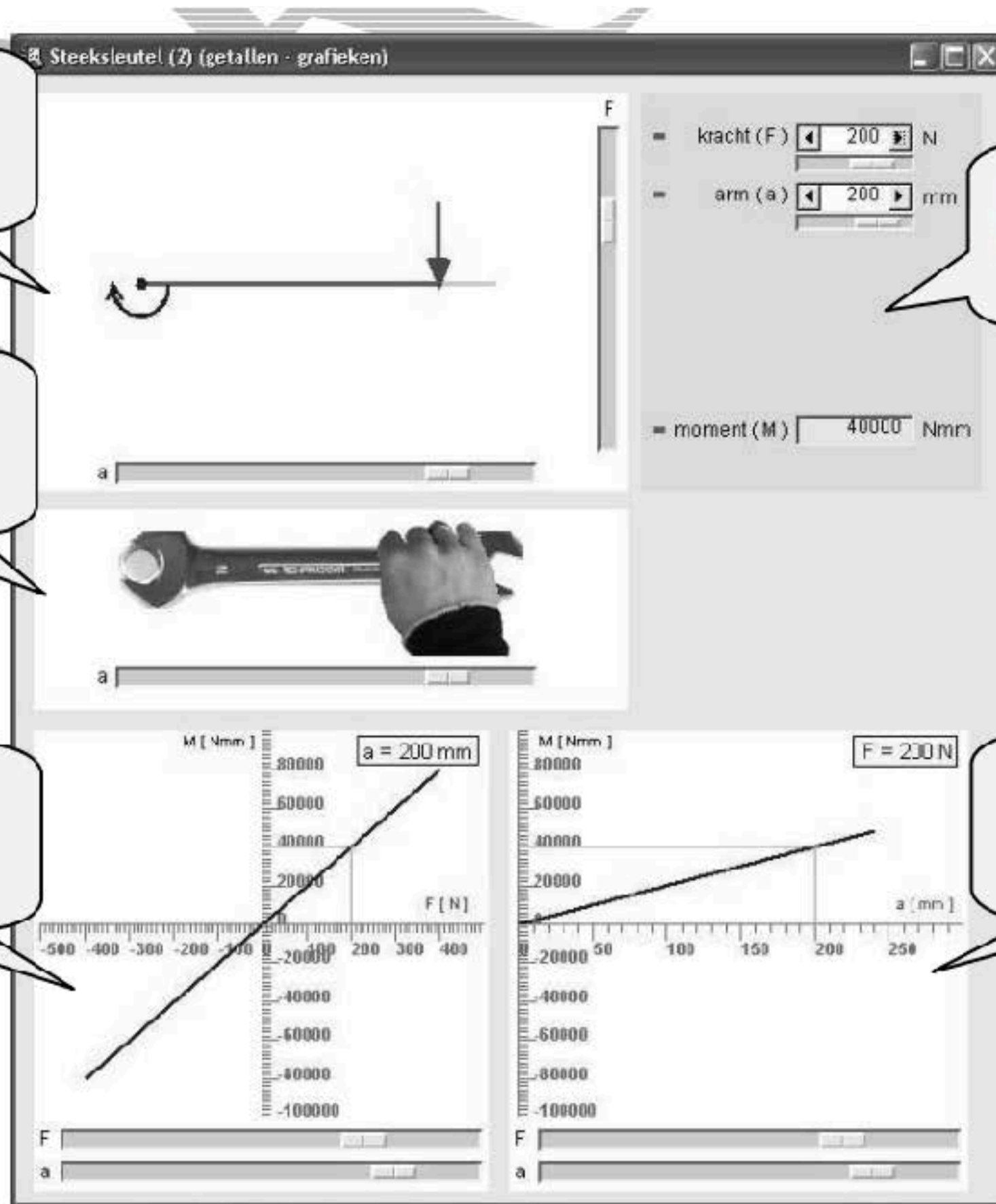
Diagrammatic  
representation

Context  
representation

Graph

Numerical  
representation

Graph

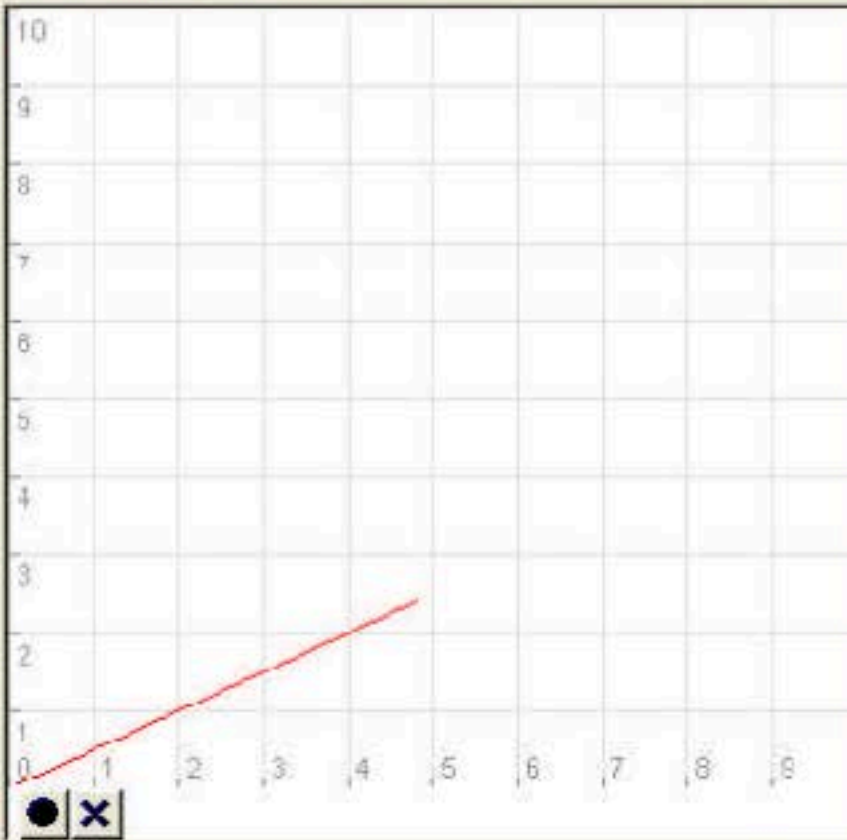




1 Velocity scooter (without controls)

uniform varying motion

$v(t)$   
in  
m/s



t in sec

scooter starting from stand still


initial velocity  
 $v(0)$

0 m/s


acceleration  
 $a$

0.50 m/s<sup>2</sup>

velocity of the scooter




simulation delay



velocity meter  
0 - 15 m/s

Assignment Image



Close

You have 1 attempt left

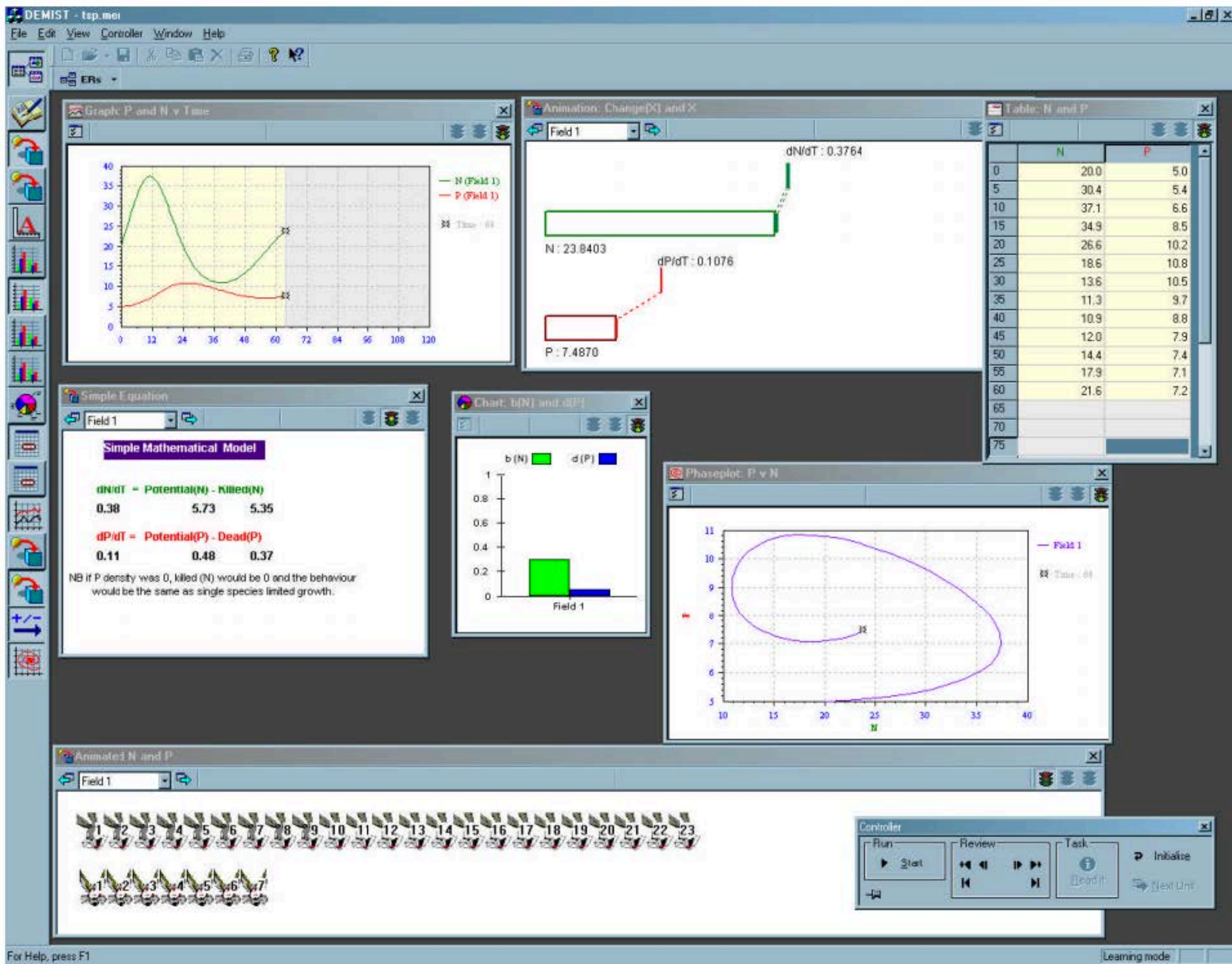
Assignment

Try to make the velocity of the scooter 8 m/s in 4 seconds.

You've to do this by giving the right value to the **acceleration**.

You may try two times.

Start Close

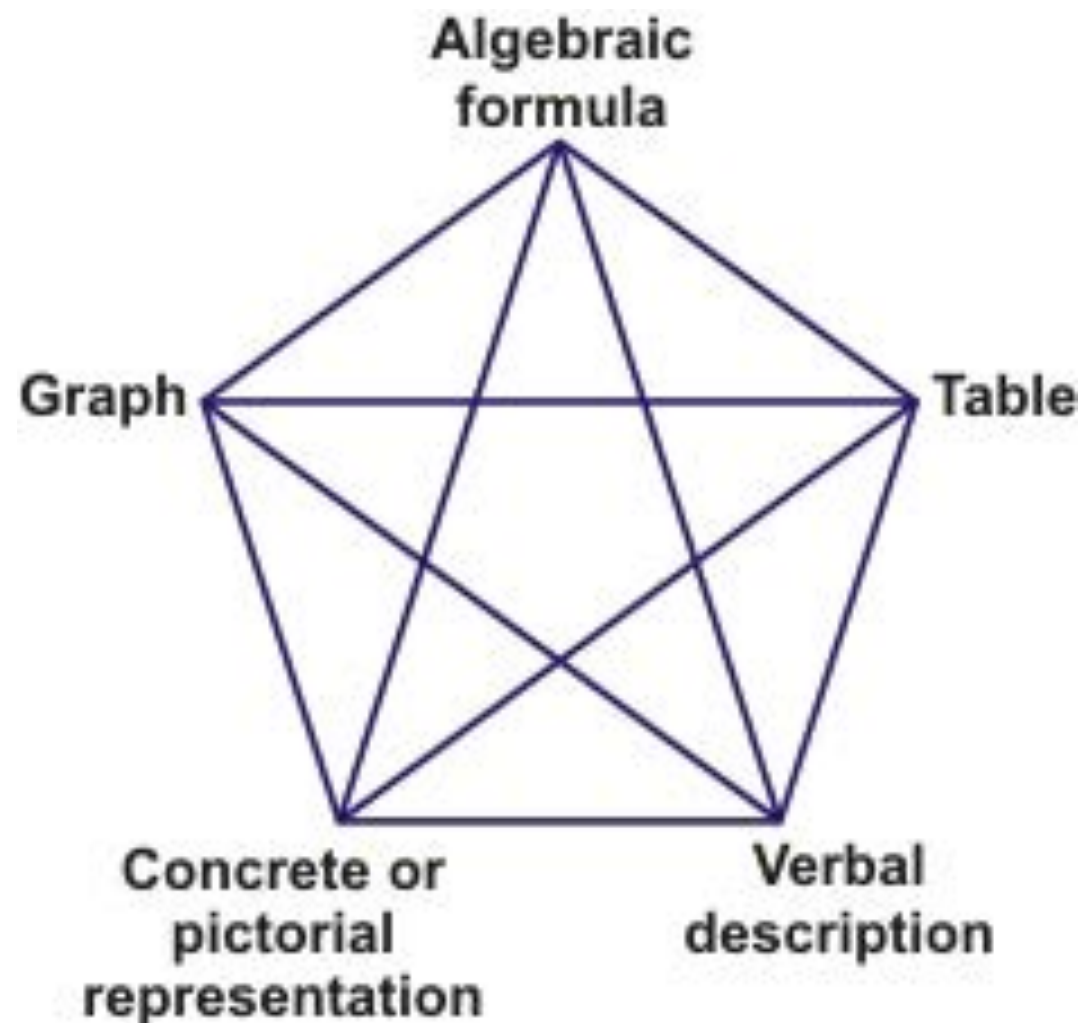




Why is an activity  $a_1$  useful for an activity  $a_2$ ?

**Shift Representation:**

$a_2$  represents contents differently from  $a_1$

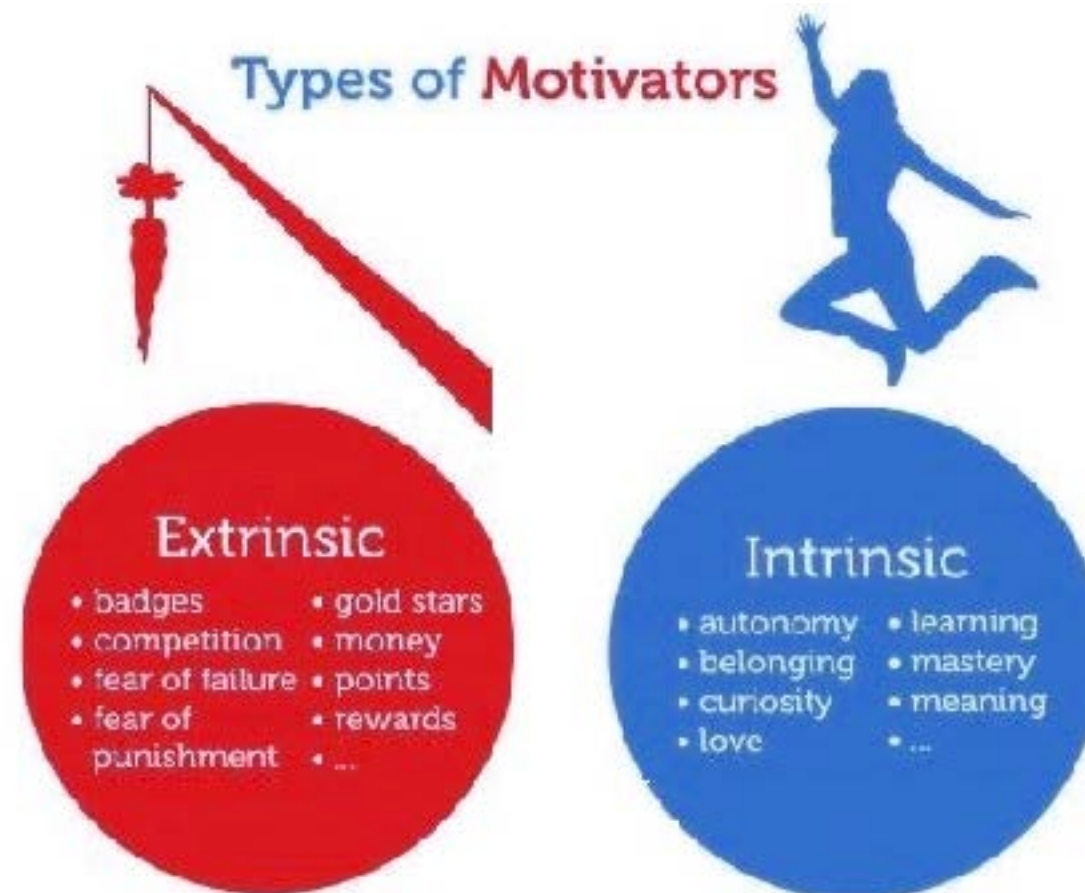


# Why is an activity $a_i$ useful for an activity $a_{i+1}$ ?

1.  $a_i$  is prerequisite to  $a_{i+1}$
2.  $a_i$  pre-activates cognitive schema for  $a_{i+1}$
3.  $a_{i+1}$  varies the representations used in  $a_i$
4. ...

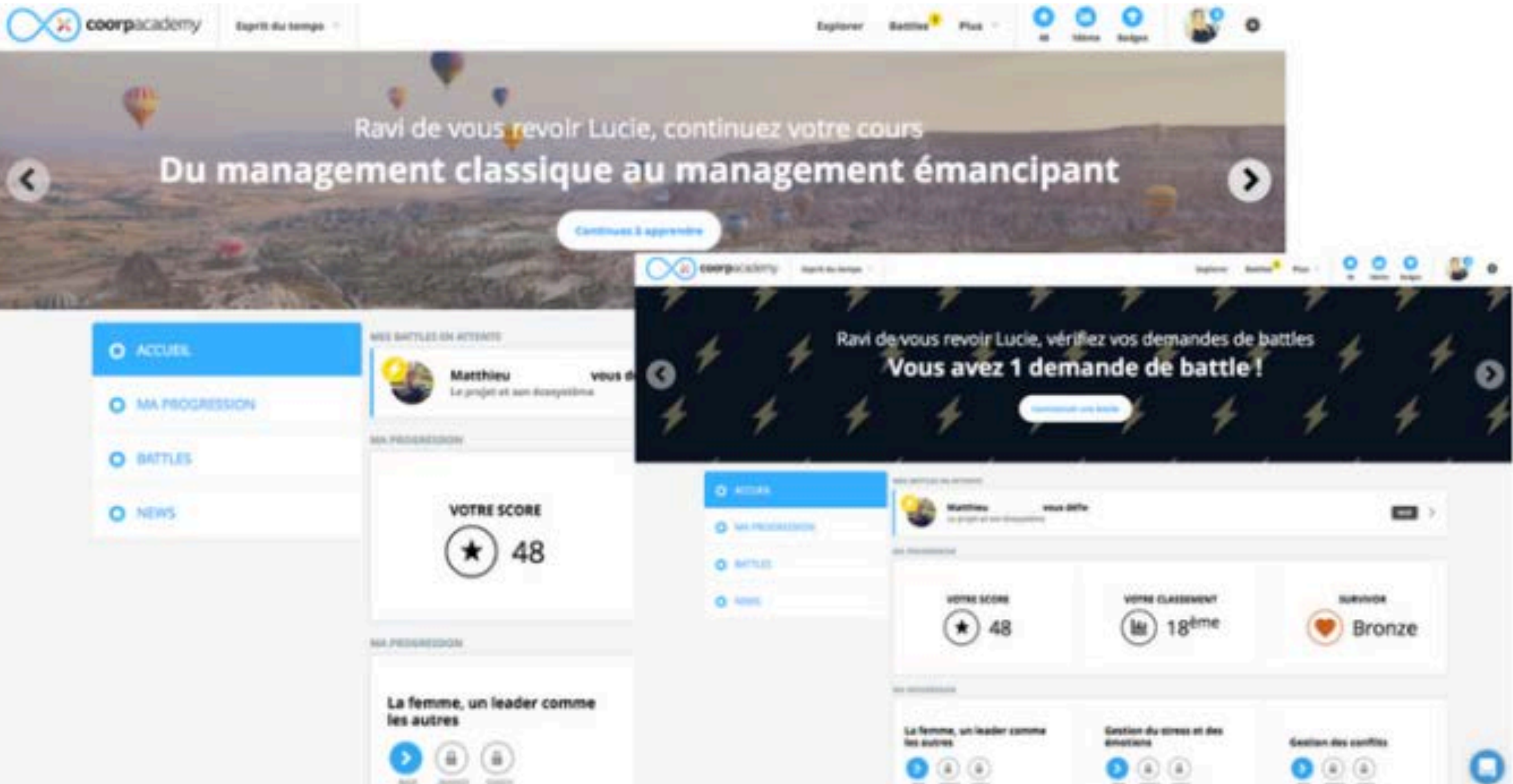
# Why did you take this class ?

- A. I am passionate about education
- B. I have been told it's an easy one
- C. I had nothing on Tuesday morning
- D. I would like to create an EdTech start-up

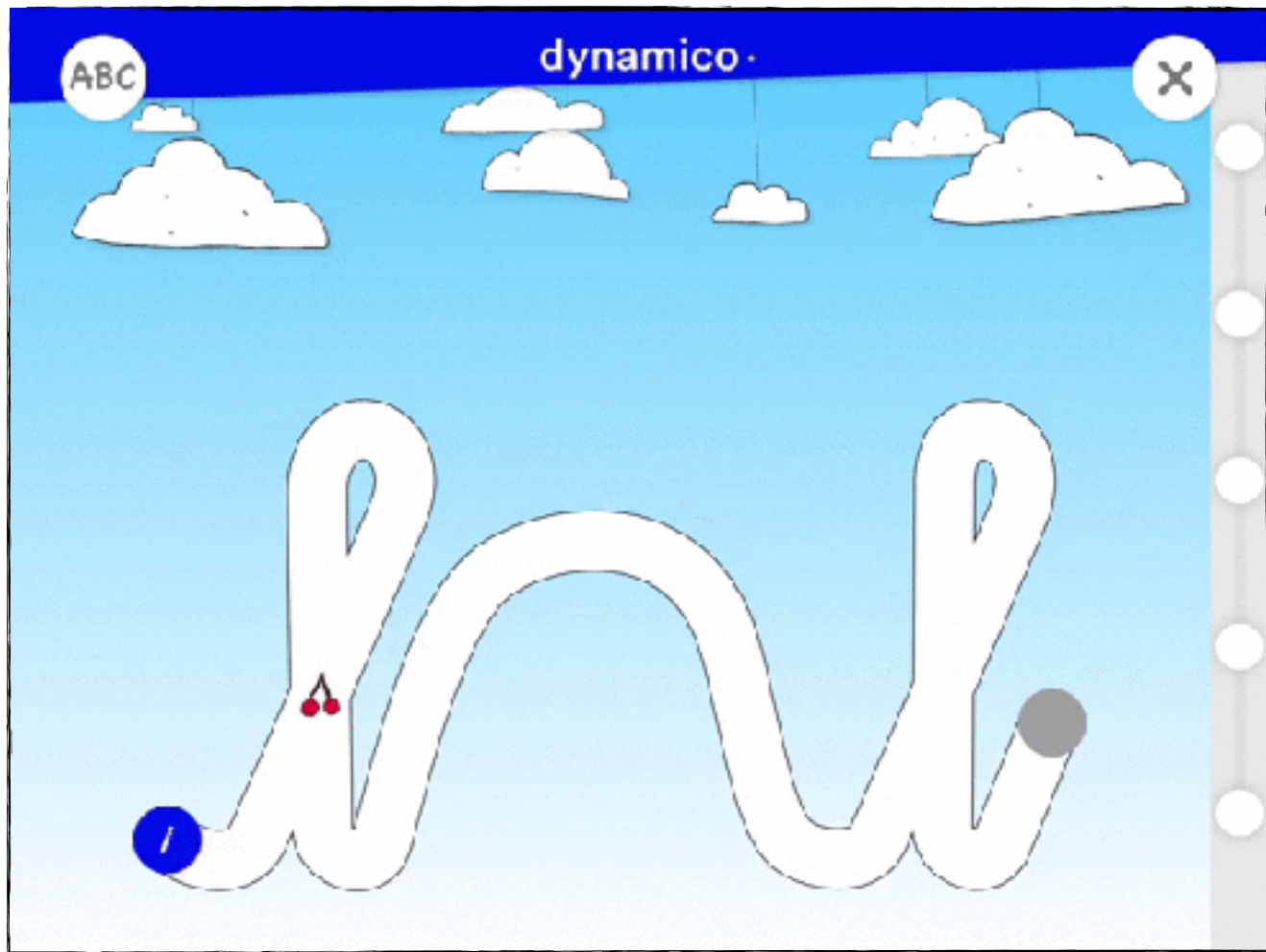


# Gamification

(even in corporate training)

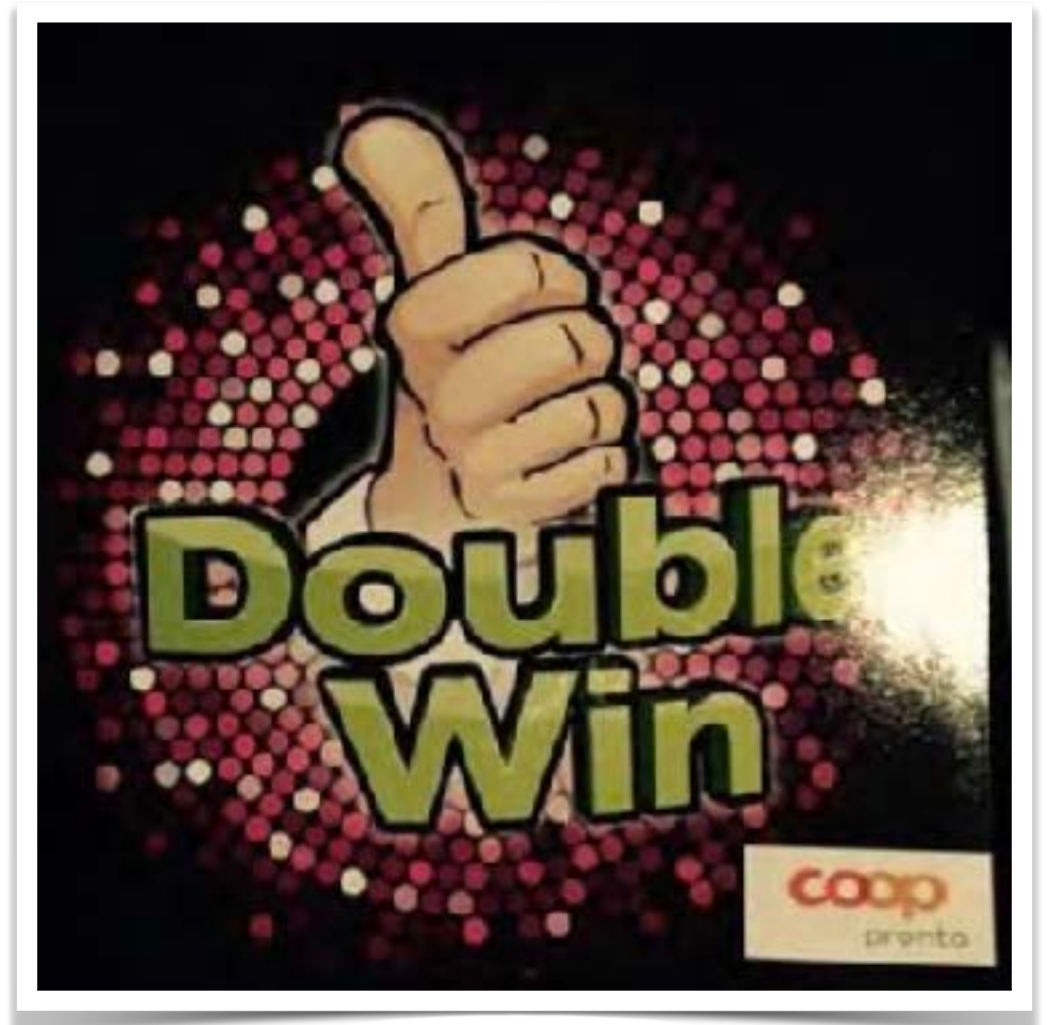






Game

≠

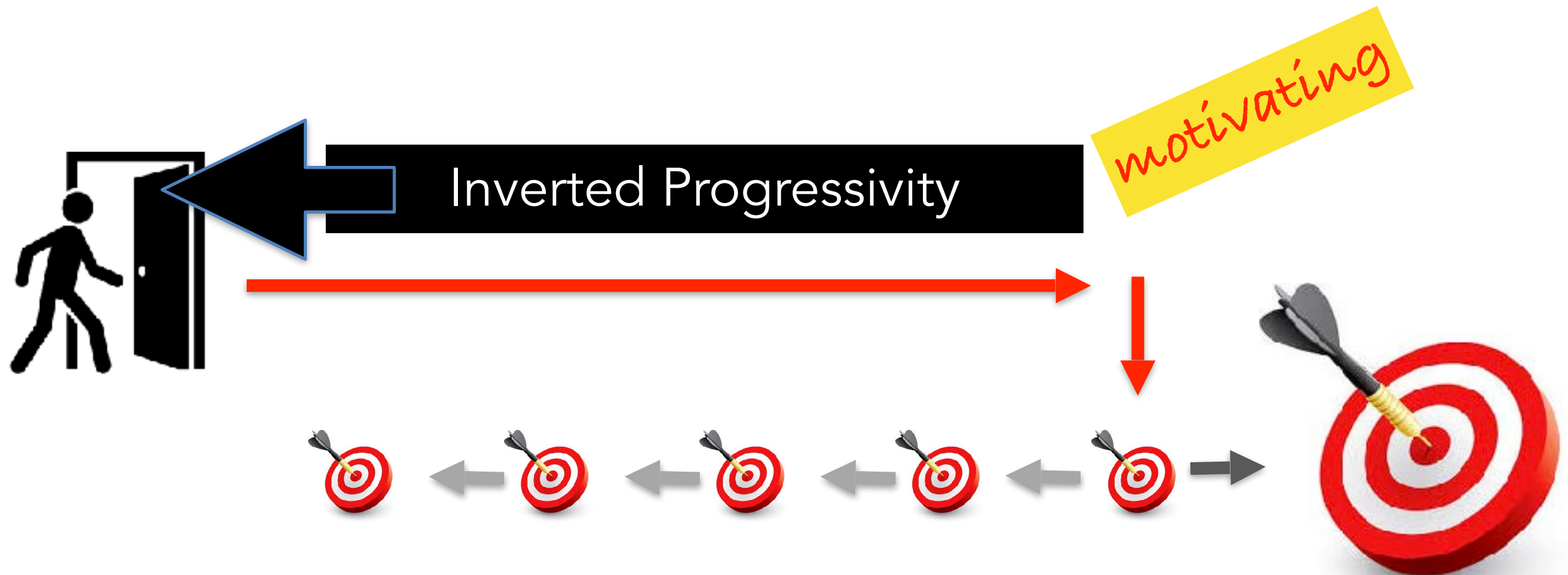
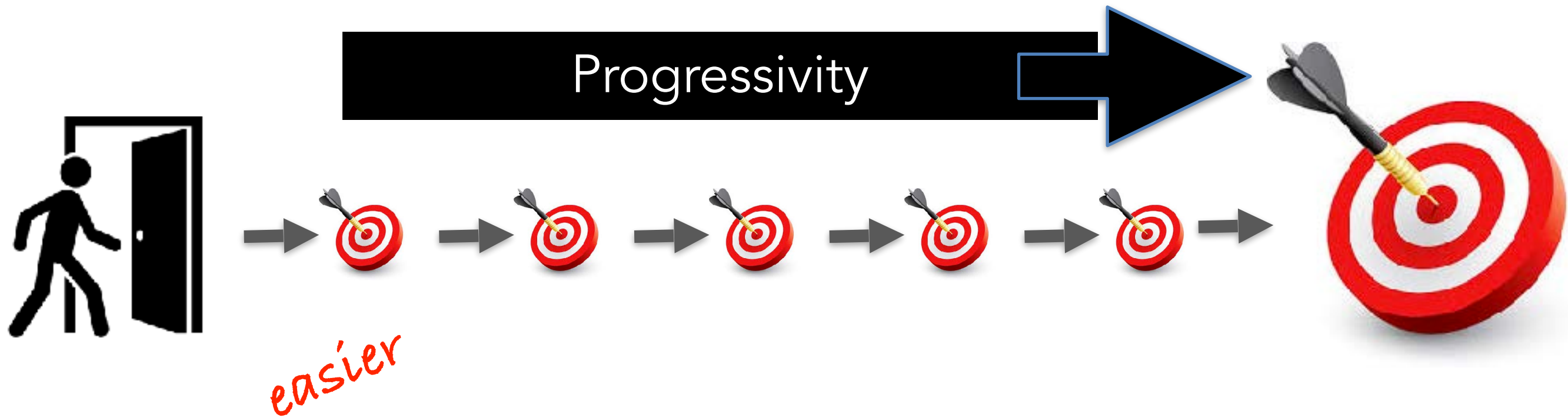


Gamification





Gamification



Why is an activity  $a_1$  useful for an activity  $a_2$ ?

Motivation:

$a_1$  frustrate learners so that they want to do  $a_2$

« what you learned before enabled you to solve problems so far, but here are new problems »

# Why is an activity $a_i$ useful for an activity $a_{i+1}$ ?

1.  $a_i$  is prerequisite to  $a_{i+1}$
2.  $a_i$  pre-activates cognitive schema for  $a_{i+1}$
3.  $a_{i+1}$  varies the representations used in  $a_i$
4.  $a_i$  brings motivation for  $a_{i+1}$
5. ...

Why is an activity  $a_1$  useful for an activity  $a_2$ ?

$$5 \times < 27$$

$a_i$

A chocolate bar costs 5 CHF.  
How many bars can you buy for 27 CHF

$a_i$

A man walks 1 km in 5 min.  
How many km can he walk in 27 min



Transfer



## Why is an activity $a_i$ useful for an activity $a_{i+1}$ ?

1.  $a_i$  is prerequisite to  $a_{i+1}$
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3.  $a_{i+1}$  varies the representations used in  $a_1$
4.  $a_i$  brings motivation for  $a_{i+1}$
5.  $a_{i+1}$  practices the transfer of skills acquired in  $a_1$
- 6.

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3.  $a_{i+1}$  varies the representations used in  $a_1$
4.  $a_i$  brings motivation for  $a_{i+1}$
5.  $a_{i+1}$  practices the transfer of skills acquired in  $a_1$
6.  $a_{j+1}$  summarizes in  $\{a_1, \dots, a_j\}$
7.  $a_{i+2}$  contrasts examples used in  $a_1$  and  $a_2$

# How do people learn ?

☒ by exploration, trial and error

✓ **by incremental mastery**

- by verbal elaboration

**There is no « modern » pedagogy**