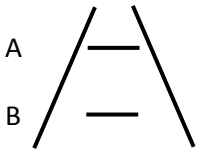
COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: DISTORTION ILLUSIONS AND AMBIGUOUS FIGURES

ILLUSIONS AND **AMBIGUOUS FIGURES** SHOW US HOW PERCEPTION IS AN ACTIVE PROCESS THAT MAY ALTER OR ADD TO SENSORY INFORMATION TO MAKE IT MEANINGFUL.

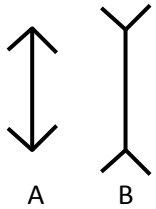
HOW?

DISTORTION ILLUSIONS CAUSE US TO PERCEIVE SOME THINGS INACCURATELY I.E. DIFFERENTLY FROM THE SENSORY IMAGE WE HAVE.

PONZO



MULLER-LYER



WHY?

WE INTERPRET SOME FEATURES AS **DEPTH CUES**. THIS CAUSES US TO PERCEIVE SOME FEATURES AS NEARER THAN OTHERS.

THE CONVERGING LINES ARE **LINEAR PERSPECTIVE** CUES. WE PERCEIVE LINE A AS MORE DISTANT (HENCE BIGGER) THAN LINE B.

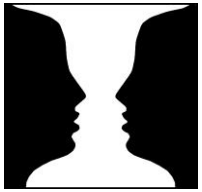
THE ARROWS ARE **LINEAR PERSPECTIVE** CUES. WE PERCEIVE FIGURE A AS FURTHER FROM US (HENCE SMALLER) THAN FIGURE B.

MISAPPLIED SIZE CONSTANCY THEN ALTERS OUR JUDGEMENT OF HOW BIG THESE FEATURES ARE, CAUSING US TO PERCEIVE THEM INACCURATELY.

HOW?

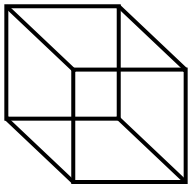
AMBIGUOUS FIGURES CAN BE PERCEIVED IN TWO DIFFERENT WAYS. IF WE LOOK AT THEM FOR LONG ENOUGH WE PERCEIVE THEM TO CHANGE FROM ONE TO THE OTHER, EVEN THOUGH THE SENSORY IMAGE WE HAVE STAYS THE SAME.

RUBIN'S VASE



WE CAN'T HELP **ORGANISING** THE IMAGE INTO A FOREGROUND (FIGURE) AND BACKGROUND.

NECKER'S CUBE



Aidan Sammons psychlotron.org.uk