

Group Outer Join

1) I don't get the basic idea of an outer join?

A: An inner join will give you all the rows that match up between the tables. The outer join, includes the rows that don't match up. In the case of person and personality tables, there may be some folks who don't have a personality. There may also be personality types that are not associated with any individuals.

You can use the outer join syntax or the + syntax.

Let's use the + sign which means you don't care

Select * from person p, personality per where p.id=per.id(+)

First it does the inner join. Then for all the rows that it can't match in the person table, it will use the + sign to let it go through. In essence, it is saying that I don't care if I can't find a match for the id in the personality table.

An equivalent form of this syntax using the outer join syntax

Select * from person left outer join personality on person.id=personality.id

In this case, the left is saying that you want to make sure that you see all the rows from the person table. You can also write the equivalent syntax using the right outer join syntax. Notice the placement of the tables

Select * from personality right outer join person on person.id=personality.id