

CS103
WINTER 2025



Lecture 04: **First-Order Logic**

Part 1 of 2

Recap from Last Time

Recap So Far

- A ***propositional variable*** is a variable that is either true or false.
- The ***propositional connectives*** are as follows:

Recap So Far

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- The ***propositional connectives*** are as follows:

 \wedge \top \neg \vee \perp \leftrightarrow

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implication (“if P , then Q ”)

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\rightarrow Λ T \neg V \perp \leftrightarrow

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conjunction (“P and Q”)

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truth

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negation (“not P ”)

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disjunction (“P or Q”)

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falsity

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biconditional (“P if and only if Q”)

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p	q	$p \rightarrow q$
F	F	—
F	T	—
T	F	—
T	T	—

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F	T	T	
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Answer at
<https://cs103.stanford.edu/pollev>

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Negation of
 $p \rightarrow q$

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F	F	T	F
F	T	T	F
T	F	F	T
T	T	T	F

Negation of
 $p \rightarrow q$

Operator Precedence

- How do we parse this statement?

$$\neg x \rightarrow y \vee z \rightarrow x \vee y \wedge z$$

- Operator precedence for propositional logic:

¬
Λ
∨
→
↔

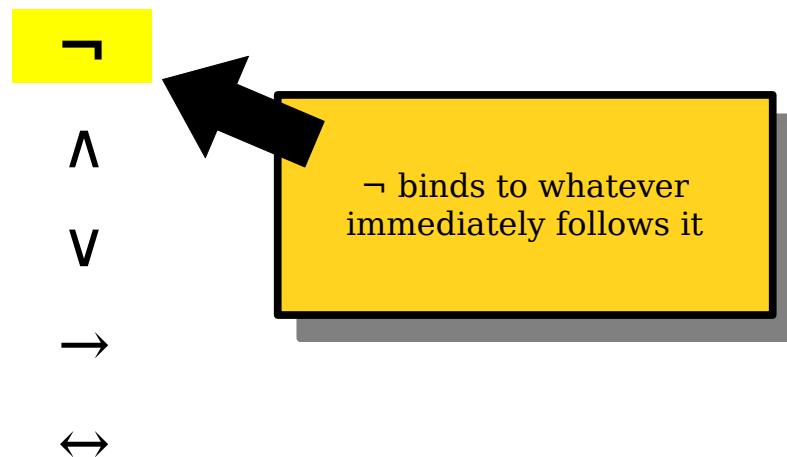
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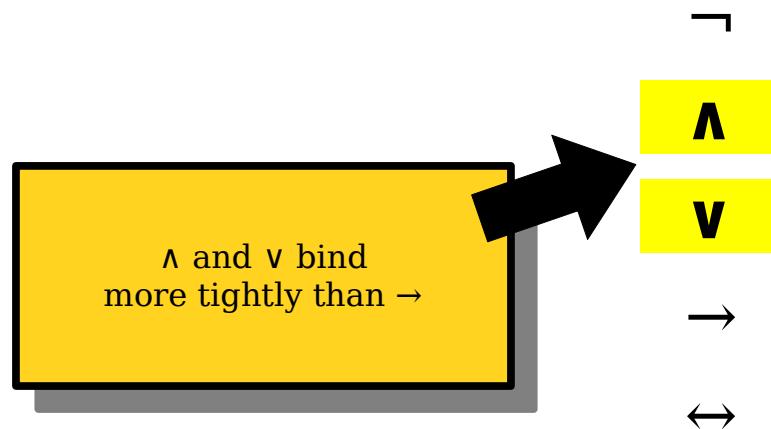
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“If $x < 8$ and $y < 8$, then $x + y \neq 16$ ”

Theorem: If $x + y = 16$, then $x \geq 8$ or $y \geq 8$.

Proof: We will prove the contrapositive, namely, that if $x < 8$ and $y < 8$, then $x + y \neq 16$.

Pick x and y where $x < 8$ and $y < 8$. We want to show that $x + y \neq 16$. To see this, note that

$$\begin{aligned}x + y &< 8 + y \\&< 8 + 8 \\&= 16.\end{aligned}$$

This means that $x + y < 16$, so $x + y \neq 16$, which is what we needed to show. ■

Why All This Matters

(See end previous lecture's slides for additional examples and practice.)

New Stuff!

First-Order Logic

What is First-Order Logic?

- ***First-order logic*** is a logical system for reasoning about properties of objects.
- Augments the logical connectives from propositional logic with
 - ***predicates*** that describe properties of objects,
 - ***functions*** that map objects to one another, and
 - ***quantifiers*** that allow us to reason about multiple objects.

Some Examples

$$\text{Likes}(\text{You}, \text{Eggs}) \wedge \text{Likes}(\text{You}, \text{Tomato}) \rightarrow \text{Likes}(\text{You}, \text{Shakshuka})$$


Likes(You, Eggs) \wedge Likes(You, Tomato) \rightarrow Likes(You, Shakshuka)

Learns(You, History) \vee ForeverRepeats(You, History)

In(MyHeart, Havana) \wedge TookBackTo(Him, Me, EastAtlanta)

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These blue terms are called *constant symbols*. Unlike propositional variables, they refer to objects, not propositions.

Likes(You, Eggs) \wedge Likes(You, Tomato) \rightarrow Likes(You, Shakshuka)

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The red things that look like function calls are called ***predicates***. Predicates take objects as arguments and evaluate to true or false.

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What remains are traditional propositional connectives. Because each predicate evaluates to true or false, we can connect the truth values of predicates using normal propositional connectives.

Reasoning about Objects

- To reason about objects, first-order logic uses ***predicates***.
- Examples:

Cute(??)



Reasoning about Objects

- To reason about objects, first-order logic uses ***predicates***.
- Examples:

Cute(Quokka)

ArgueIncessantly(Democrats, Republicans)

- Applying a predicate to arguments produces a proposition, which is either true or false.
- Typically, when you're working in FOL, you'll have a list of predicates, what they stand for, and how many arguments they take. It'll be given separately than the formulas you write.

First-Order Formulas

- Formulas in first-order logic can be constructed from predicates applied to objects:

Cute(a) → Quokka(a) ∨ Kitty(a) ∨ Puppy(a)

Succeeds(You) ↔ Practices(You)

$$x < 8 \rightarrow x < 137$$

The less-than sign is just another predicate. Binary predicates are sometimes written in *infix notation* this way.

Numbers are not “built in” to first-order logic. They’re constant symbols just like “You” and “a” above.

Equality

- First-order logic is equipped with a special predicate $=$ that says whether two objects are equal to one another.
- Equality is a part of first-order logic, just as \rightarrow and \neg are.
- Examples:

TomMarvoloRiddle = LordVoldemort

MorningStar = EveningStar

- Equality can only be applied to **objects**; to state that two **propositions** are equal, use \leftrightarrow .

Let's see some more examples.

$$\begin{aligned} & \textit{FavoriteMovieOf}(You) \neq \textit{FavoriteMovieOf}(Date) \wedge \\ & \textit{StarOf}(\textit{FavoriteMovieOf}(You)) = \textit{StarOf}(\textit{FavoriteMovieOf}(Date)) \end{aligned}$$

*FavoriteMovieOf(You) ≠ FavoriteMovieOf(Date) ∧
StarOf(FavoriteMovieOf(You)) = StarOf(FavoriteMovieOf(Date))*

$$\text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{You}) \neq \text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{Date}) \wedge \\ \text{StarOf}(\text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{You})) = \text{StarOf}(\text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{Date}))$$

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These purple terms are **functions**. Functions take objects as input and produce objects as output.

$$\text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{You}) \neq \text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{Date}) \wedge \\ \text{StarOf}(\text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{You})) = \text{StarOf}(\text{FavoriteMovieOf}(\text{Date}))$$

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Functions

- First-order logic allows ***functions*** that return objects associated with other objects.
- Examples:

ColorOf(Money)

MedianOf(x, y, z)

$x + y$

- As with predicates, functions can take in any number of arguments, but always return a single value.
- Functions evaluate to ***objects***, not ***propositions***.

Objects and Propositions

- When working in first-order logic, be careful to keep objects (actual things) and propositions (true or false) separate.
- You cannot apply connectives to objects:

Venus → TheSun

- You cannot apply functions to propositions:

StarOf(IsRed(Sun) ∧ IsGreen(Mars))

- Ever get confused? *Just ask!*

The Type-Checking Table

	... operate on and produce
Connectives $(\leftrightarrow, \wedge, \text{etc.}) \dots$	propositions	a proposition
Predicates $(=, \text{etc.}) \dots$	objects	a proposition
Functions ...	objects	an object

One last (and major) change

Some bear is curious.

Some bear is curious.

$\exists b. (Bear(b) \wedge Curious(b))$

Some bear is curious.

$$\exists b. (Bear(b) \wedge Curious(b))$$

\exists is the **existential quantifier**
and says “there is a choice of
b where the following is
true.”

The Existential Quantifier

- A statement of the form

$\exists x. \text{some-formula}$

is true when there exists a choice object where ***some-formula*** is true when that object is plugged in for x .

- Examples:

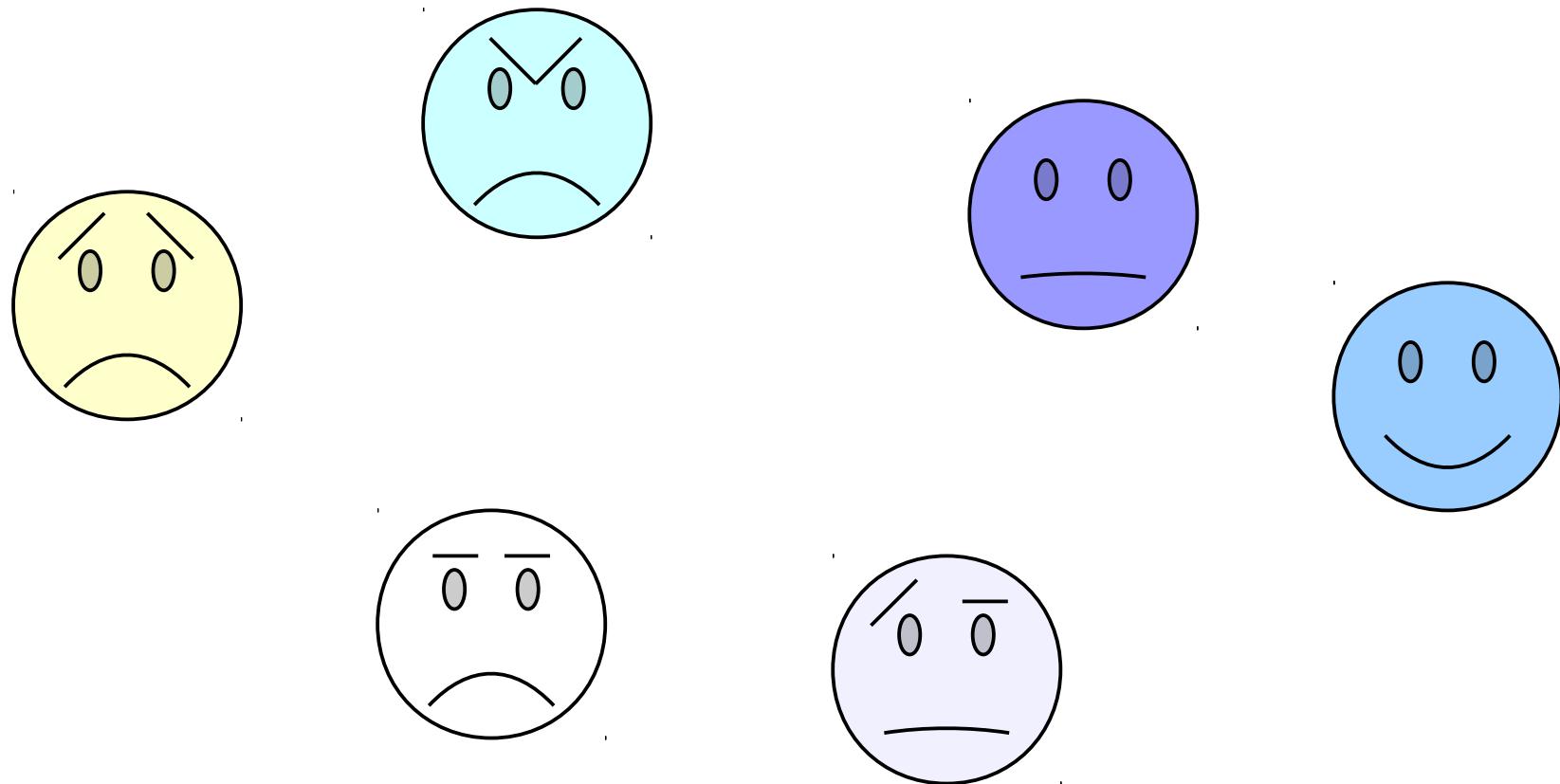
$\exists x. (\text{Even}(x) \wedge \text{Prime}(x))$

$\exists x. (\text{TallerThan}(x, me) \wedge \text{WeighsLessThan}(x, me))$

$(\exists w. \text{Will}(w)) \rightarrow (\exists x. \text{Way}(x))$

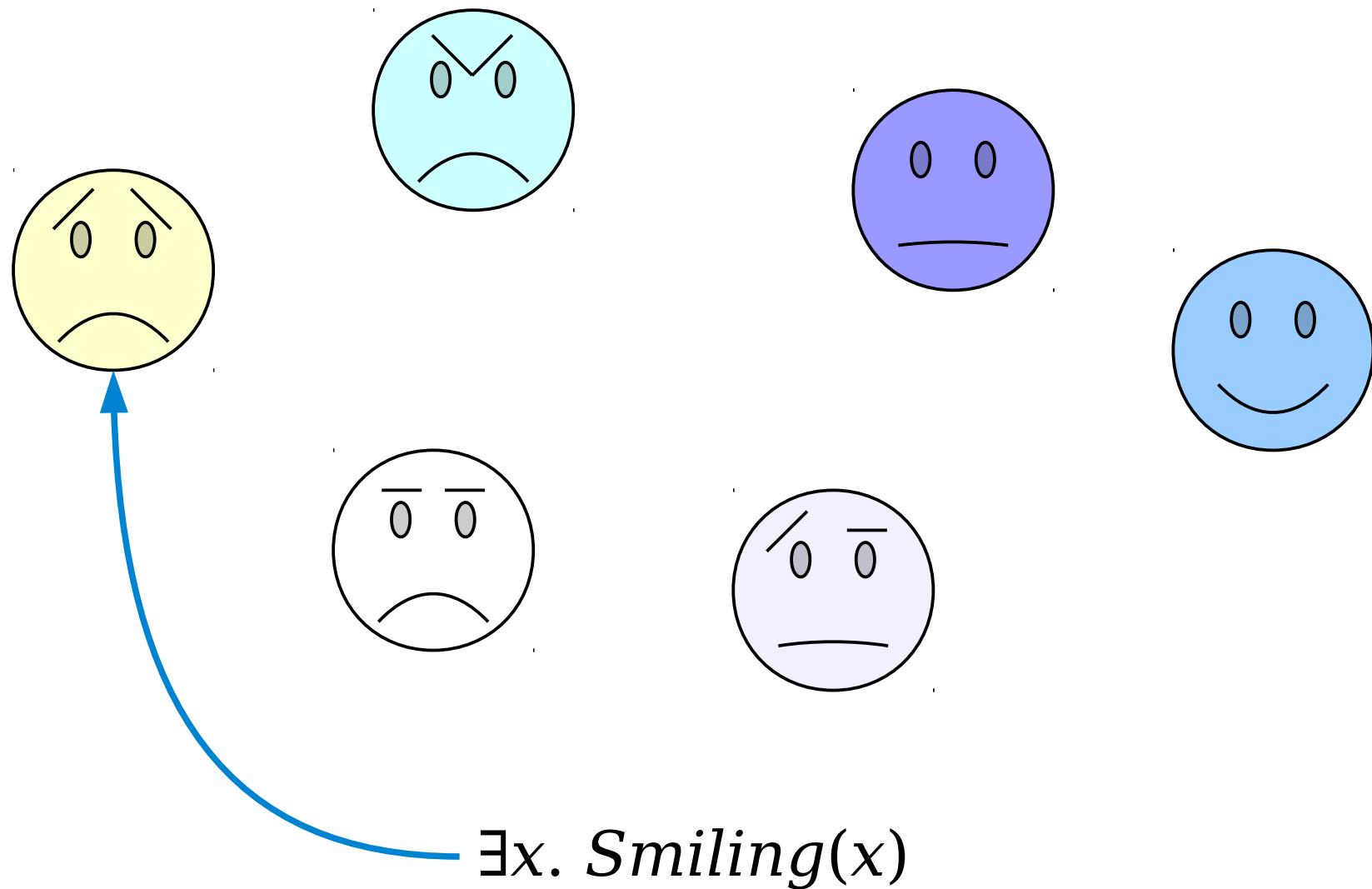
- Note the two ways of applying the $\exists!$

The Existential Quantifier

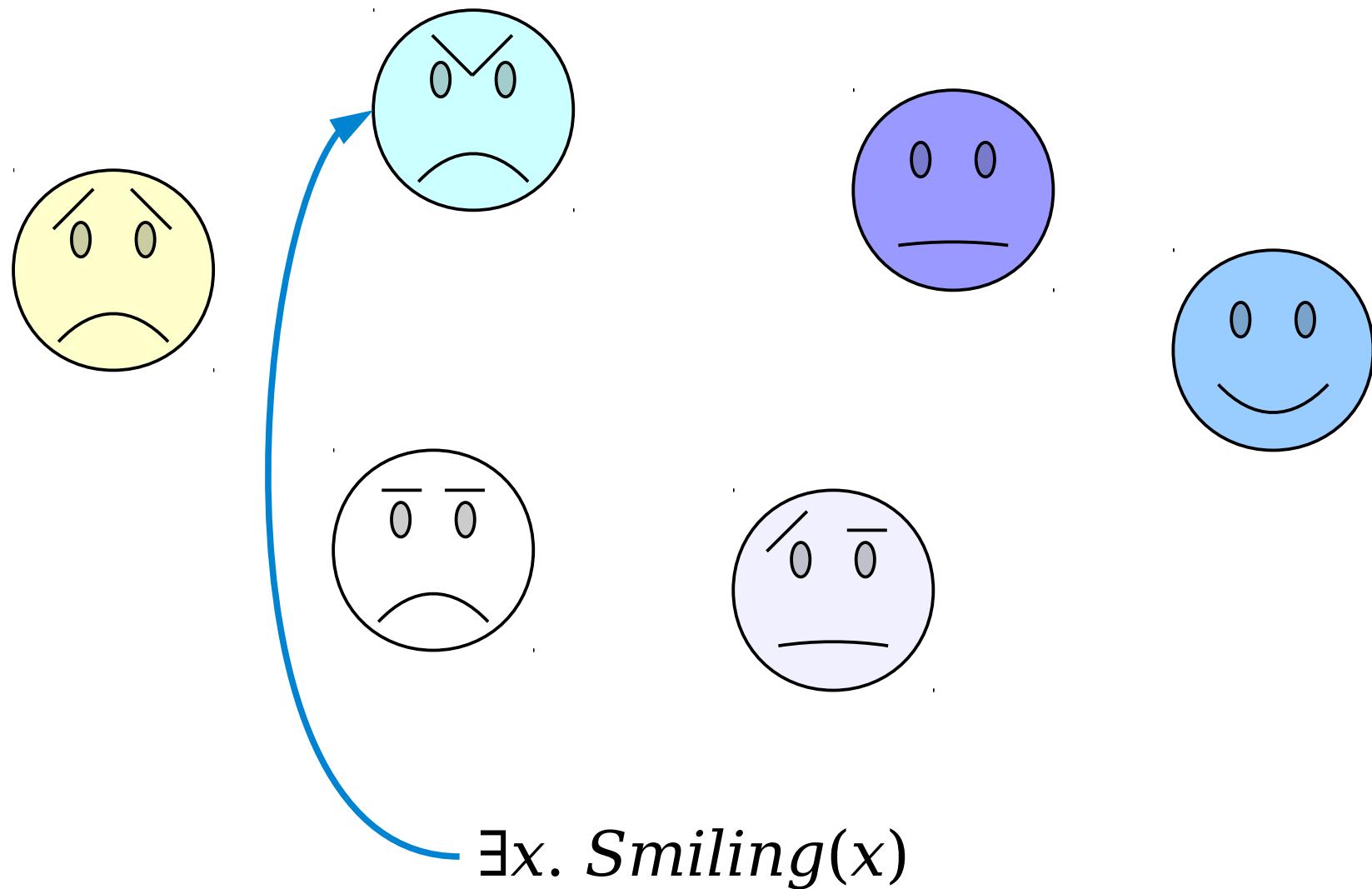


$\exists x. Smiling(x)$

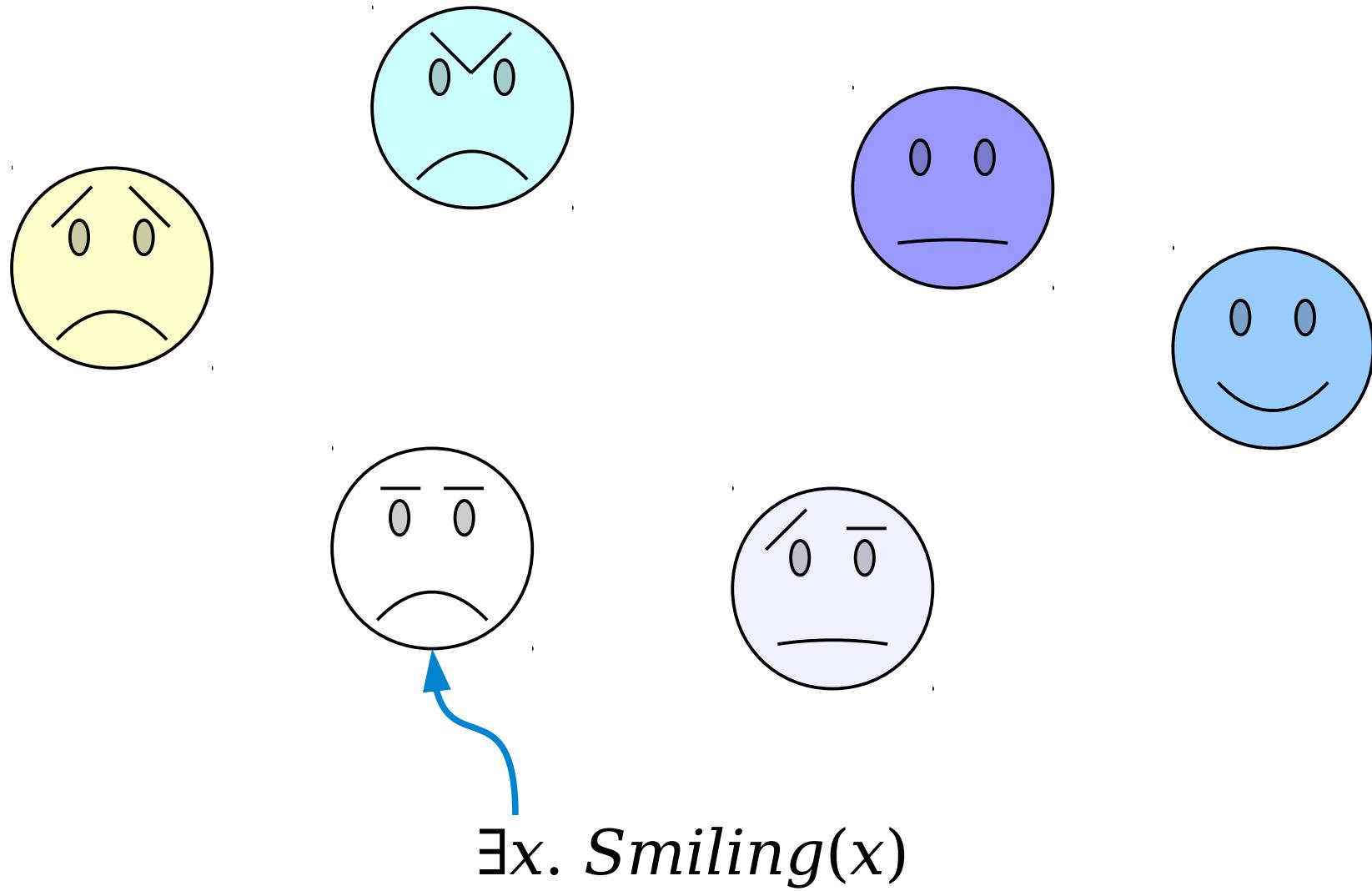
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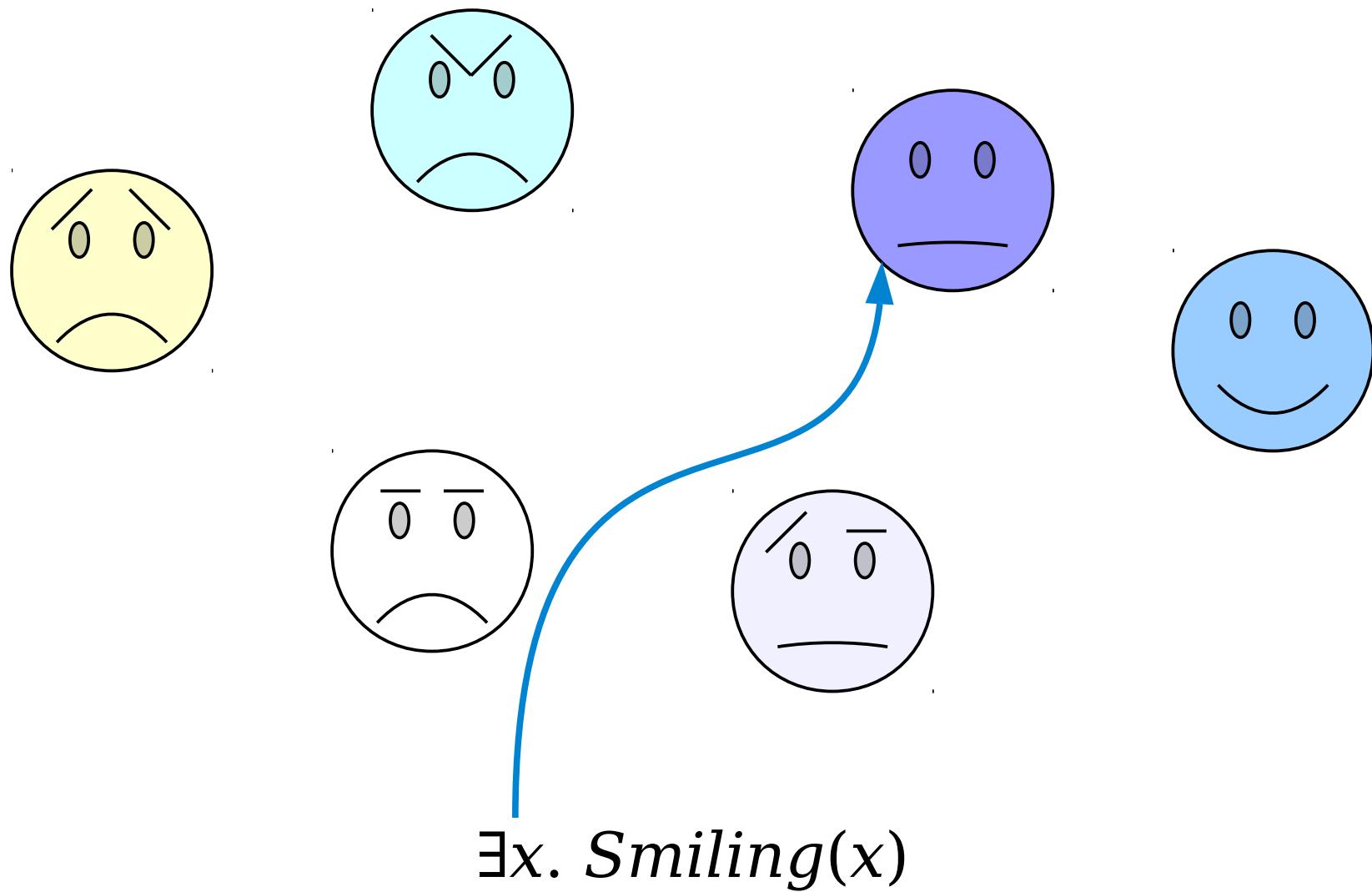
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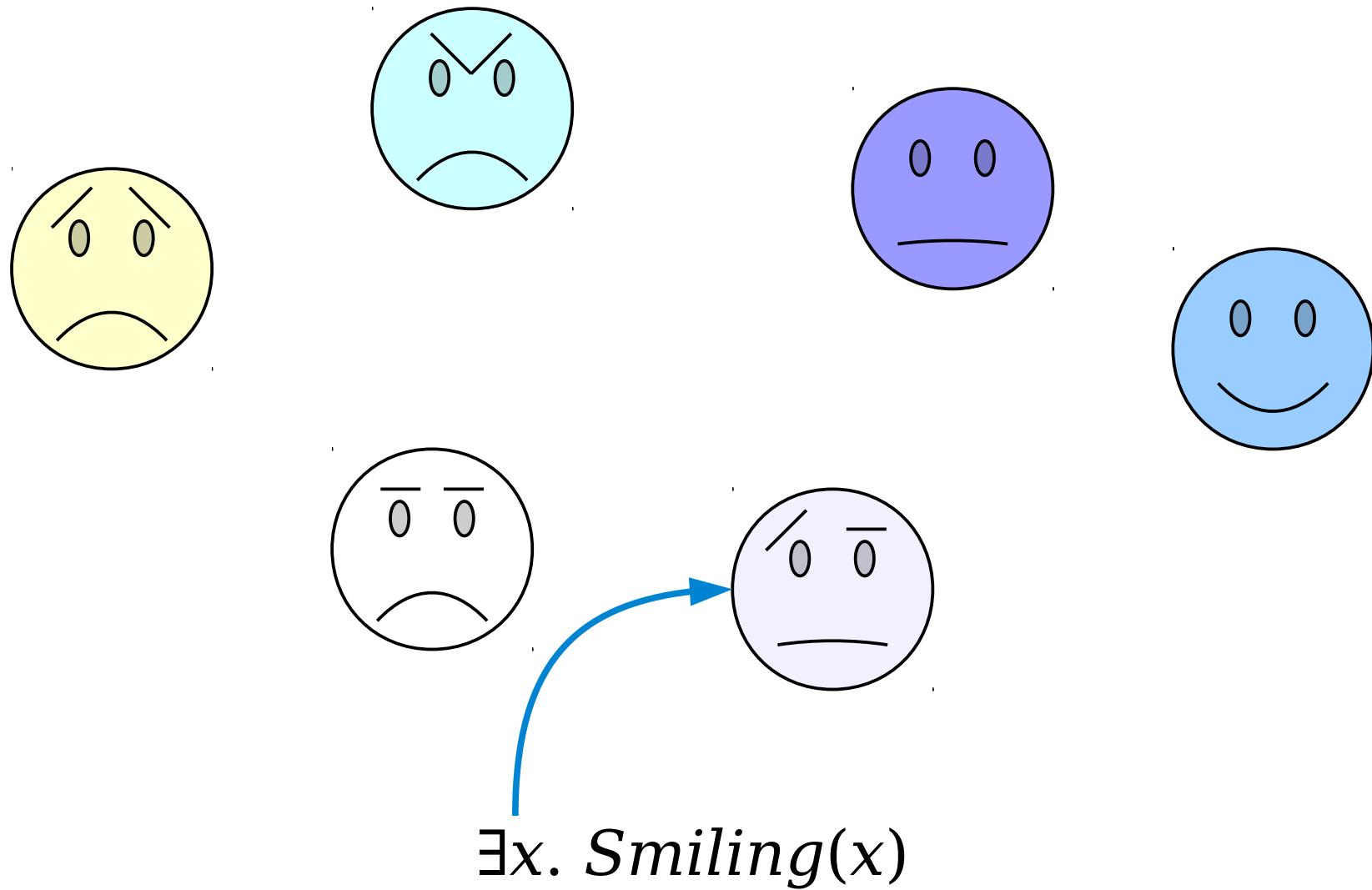
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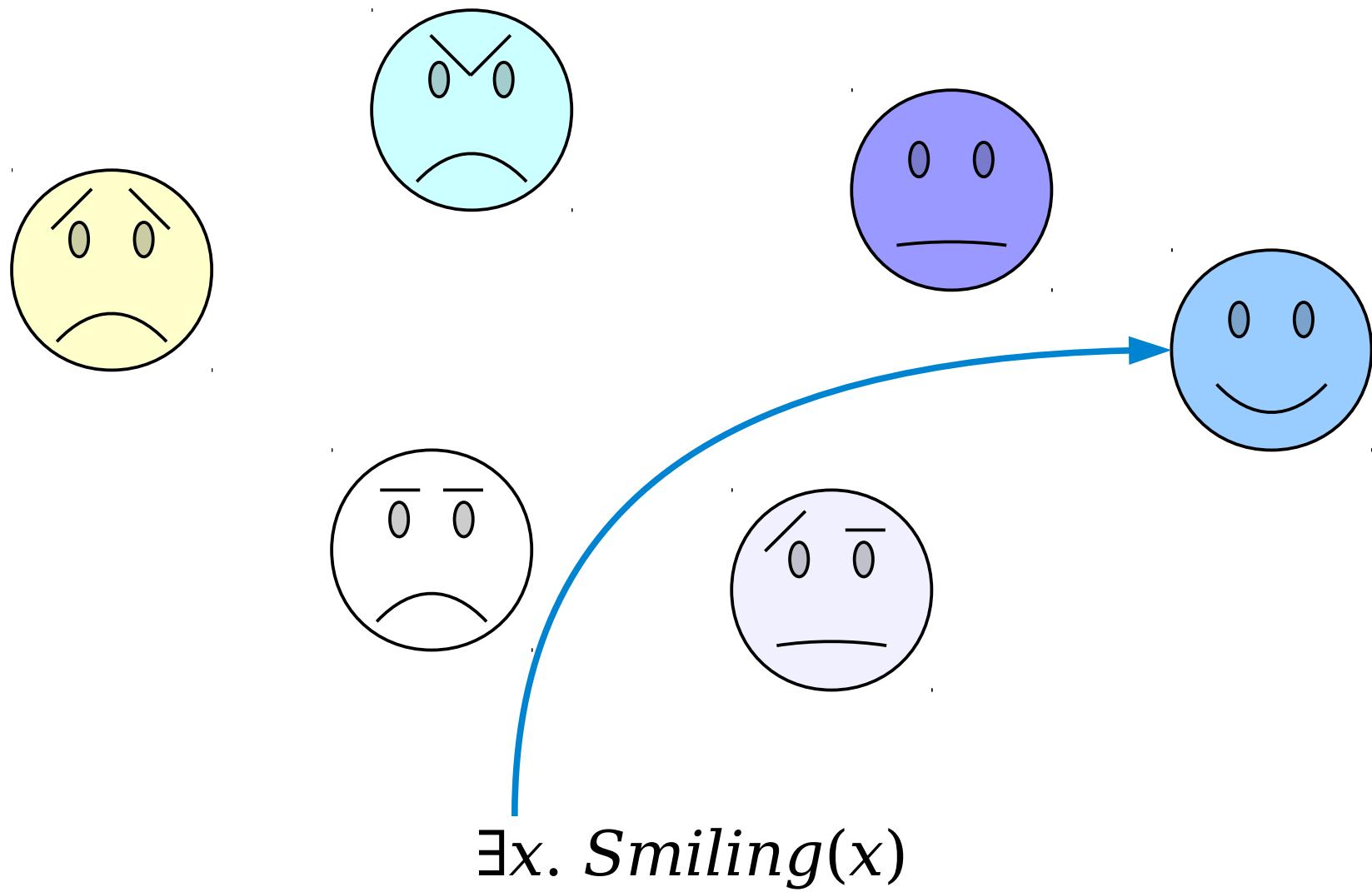
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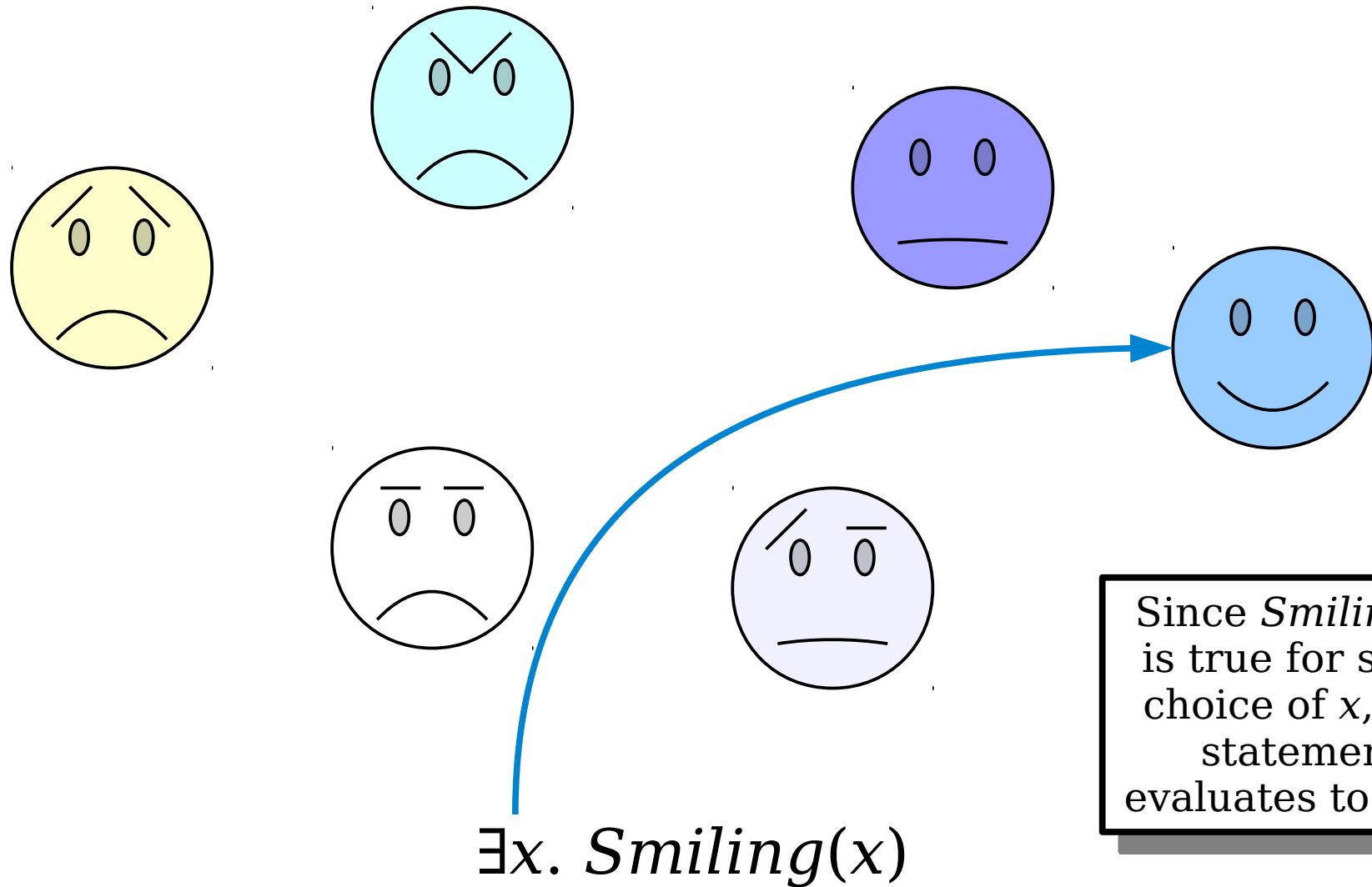
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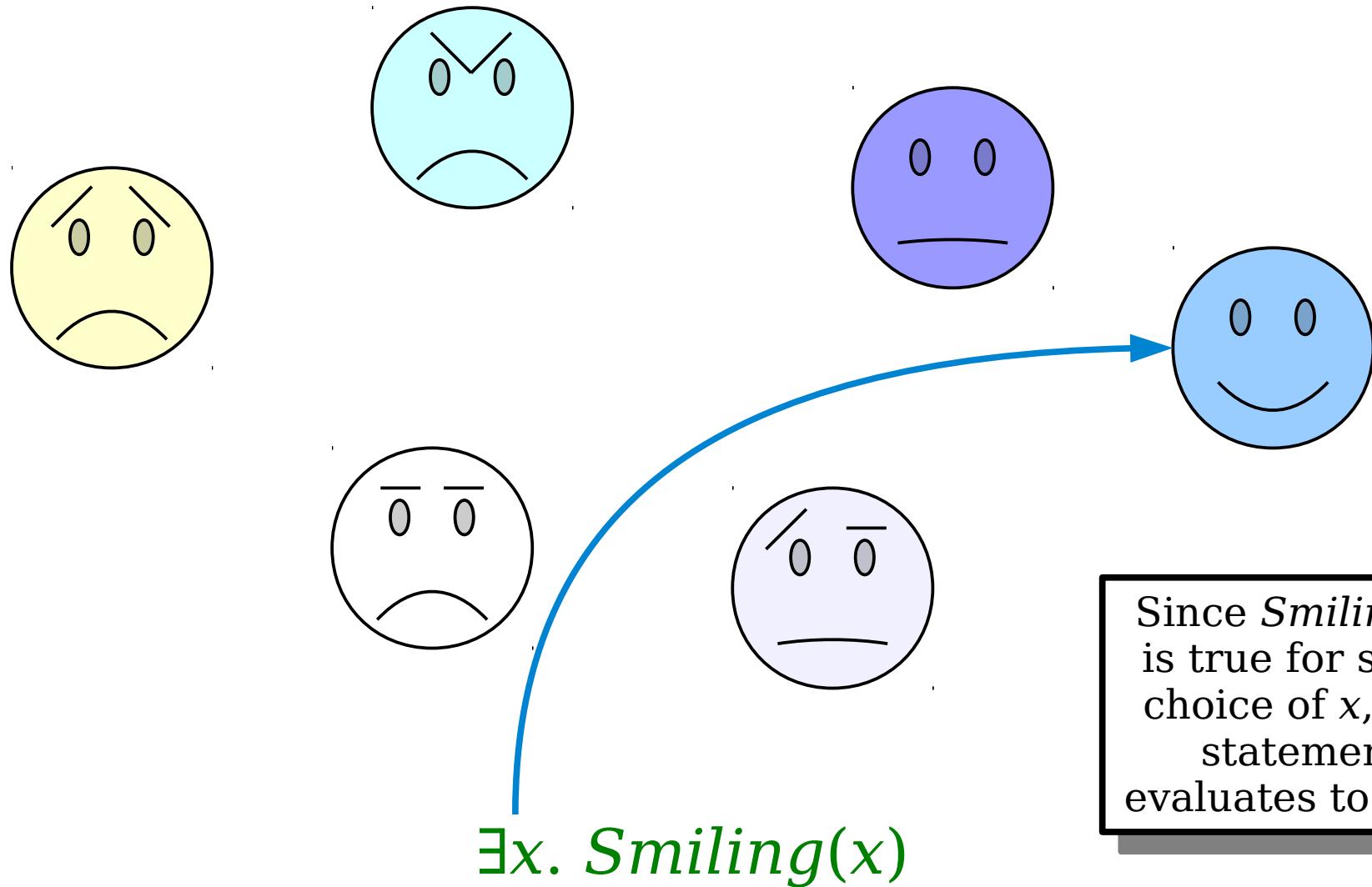
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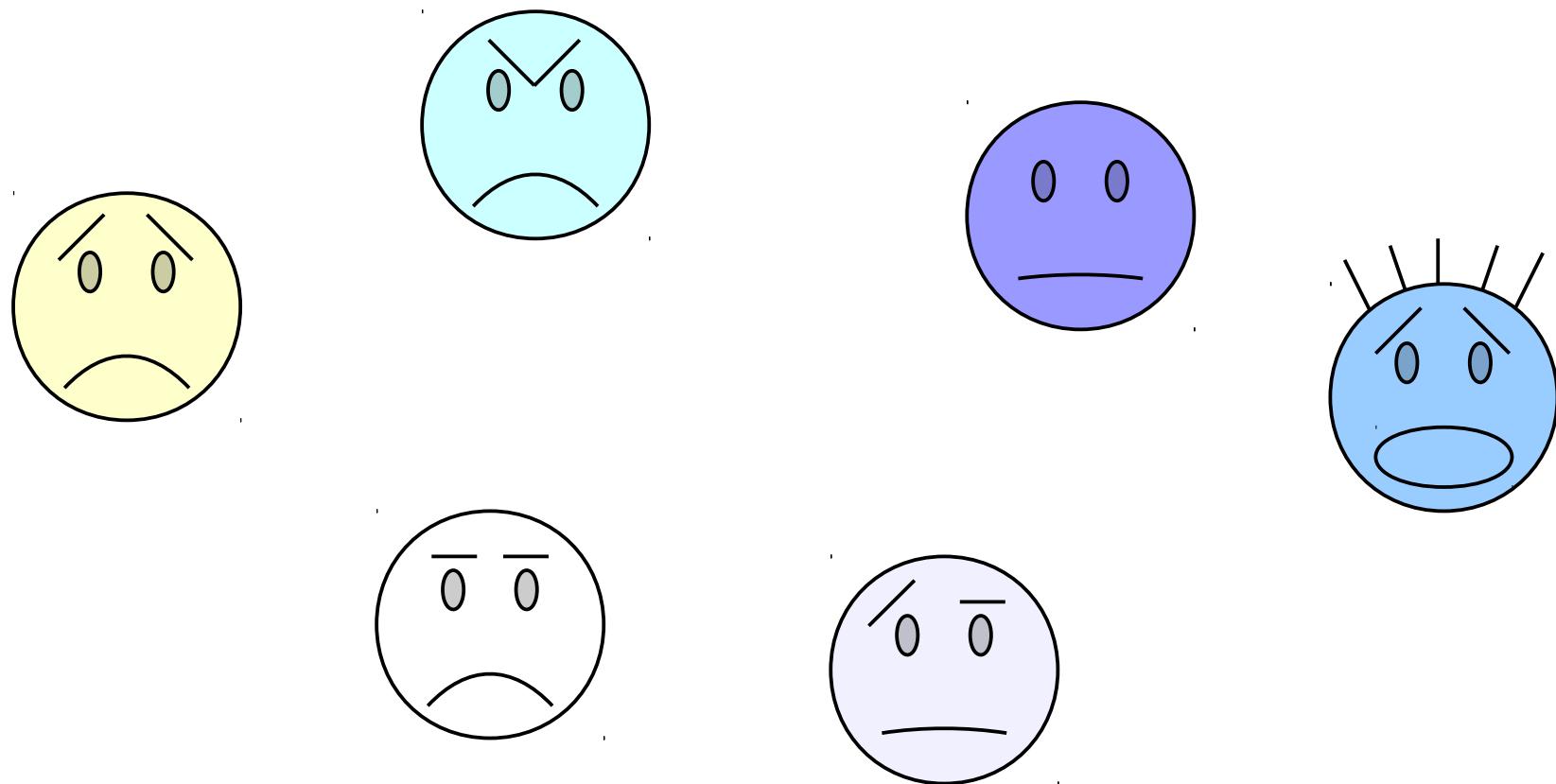
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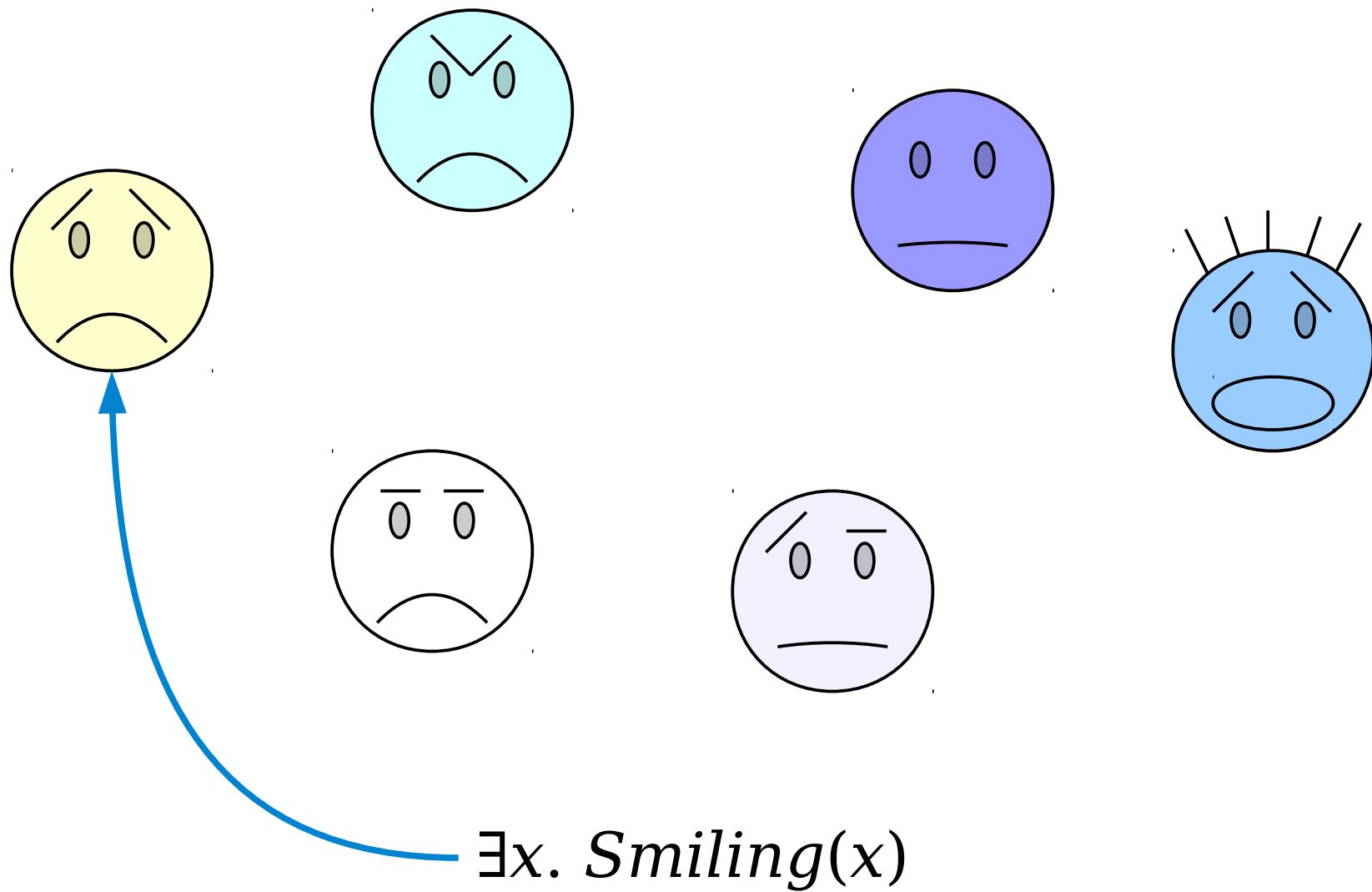


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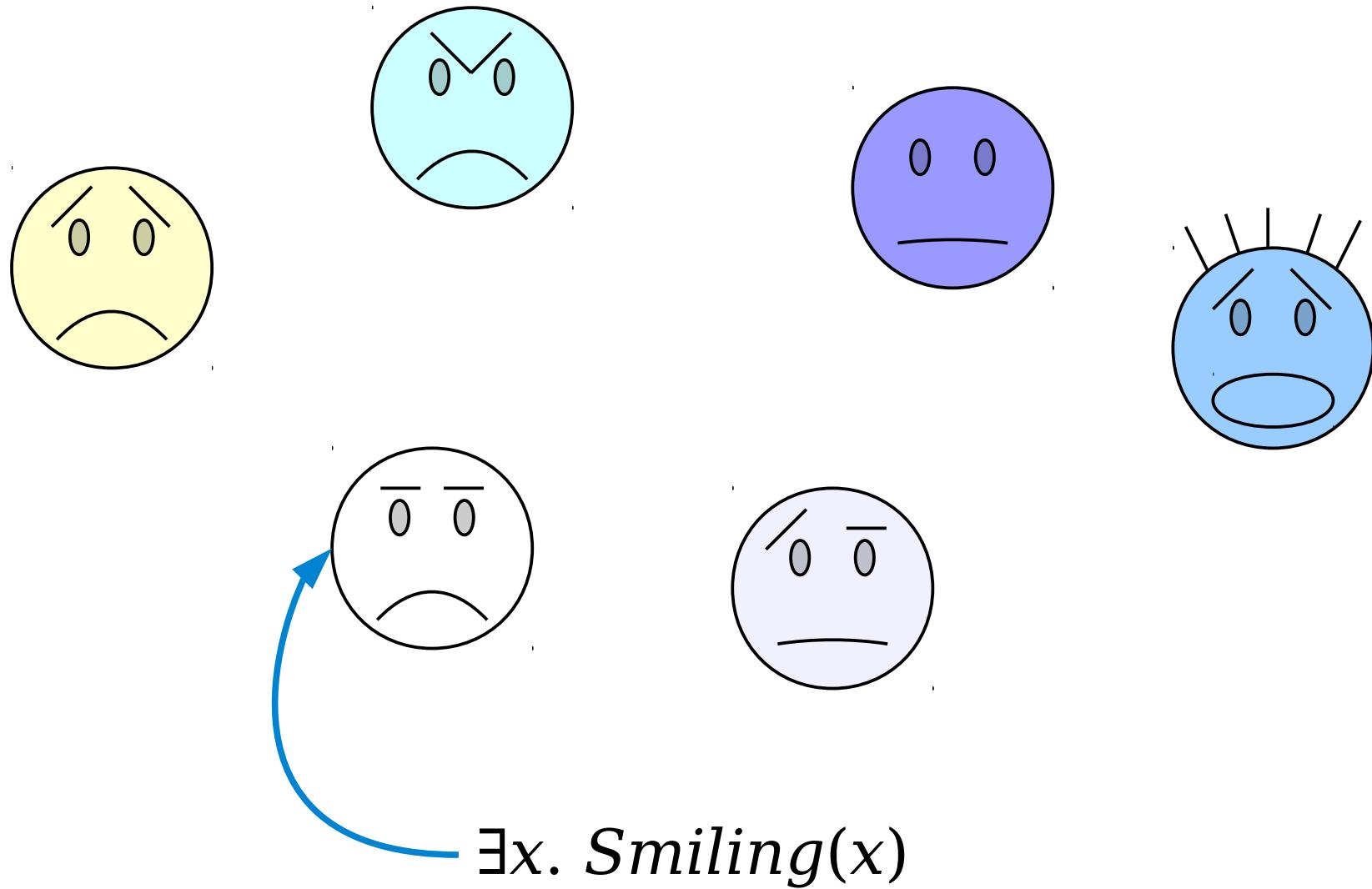


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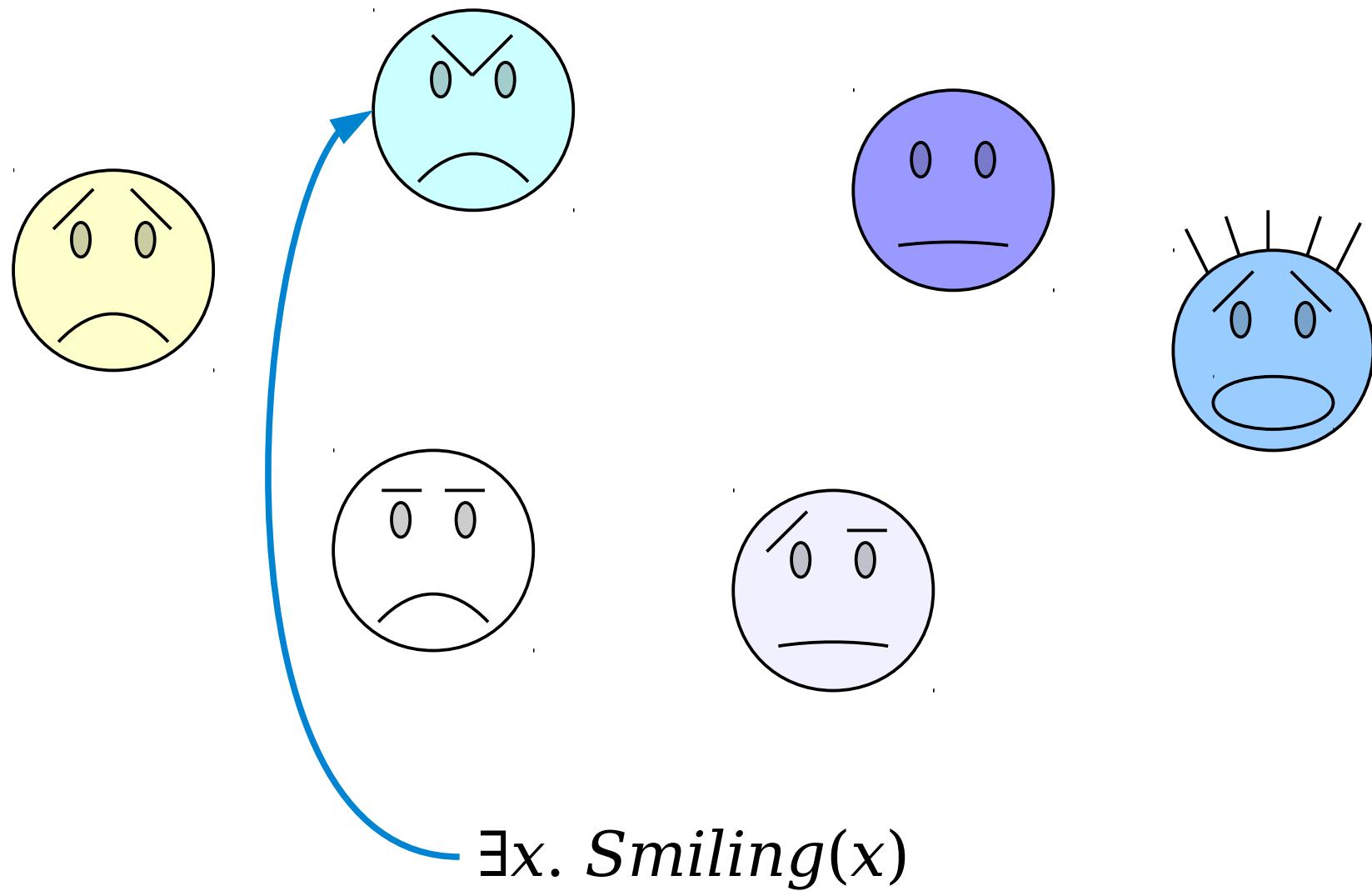
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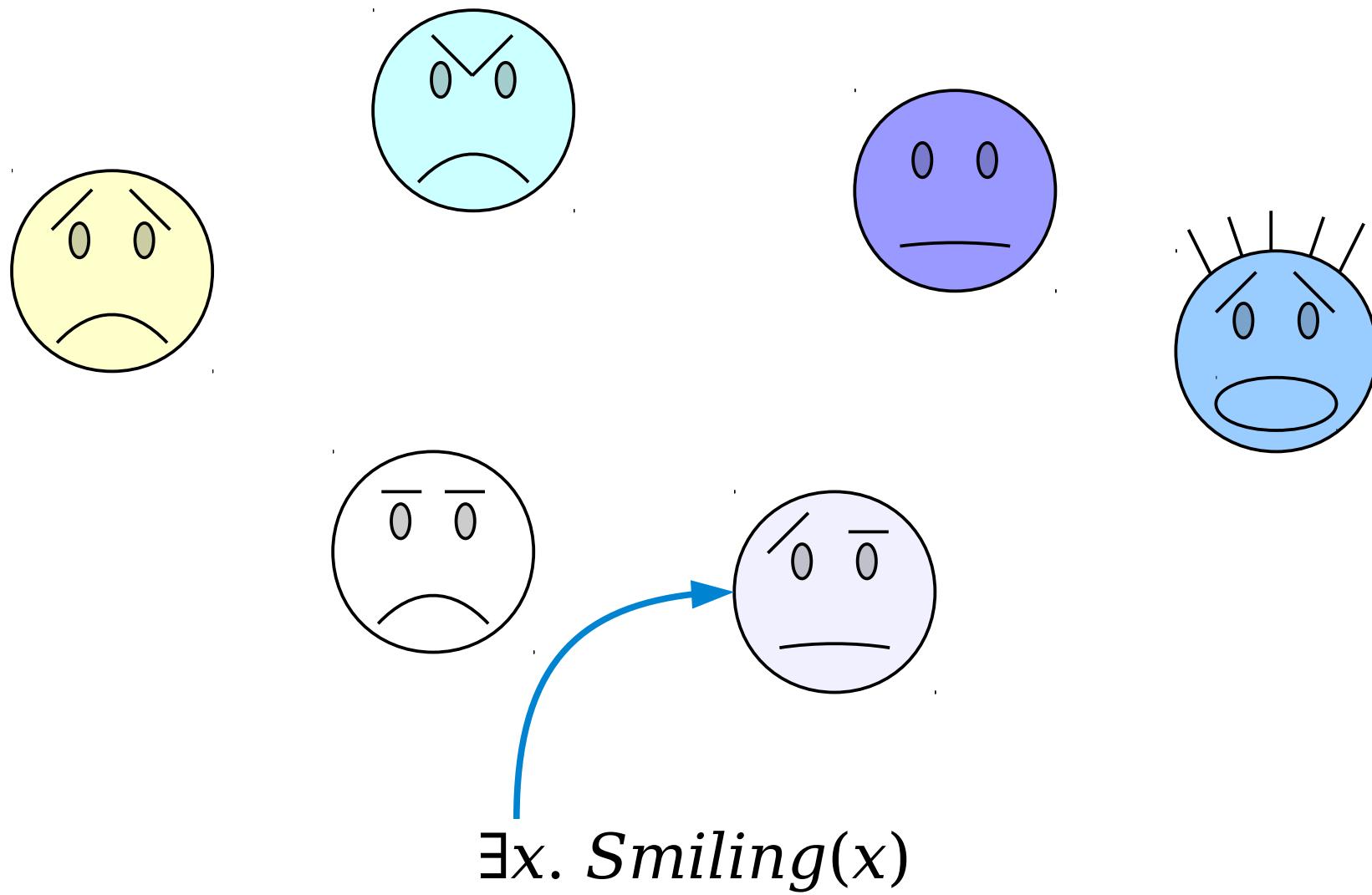
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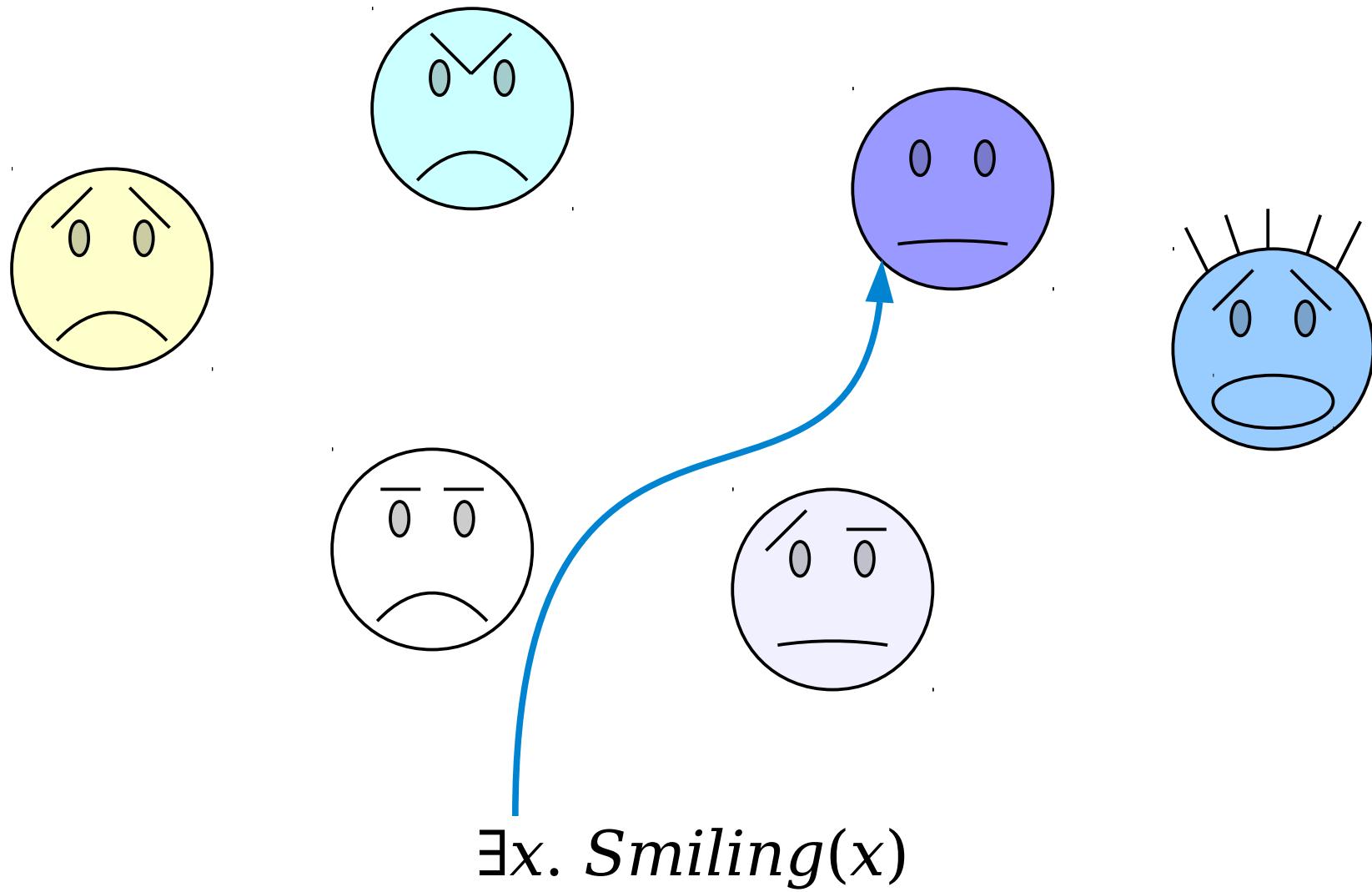
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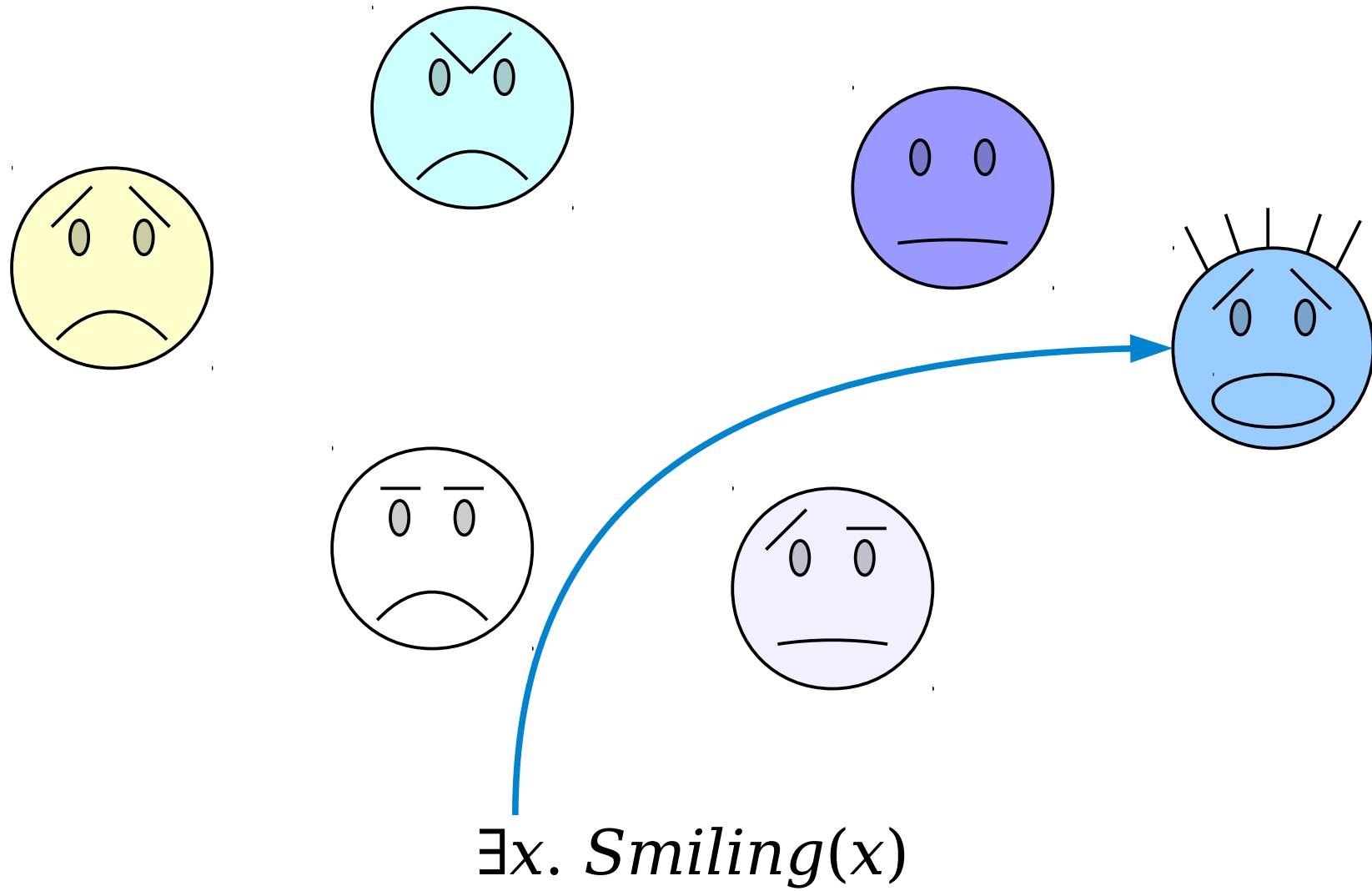
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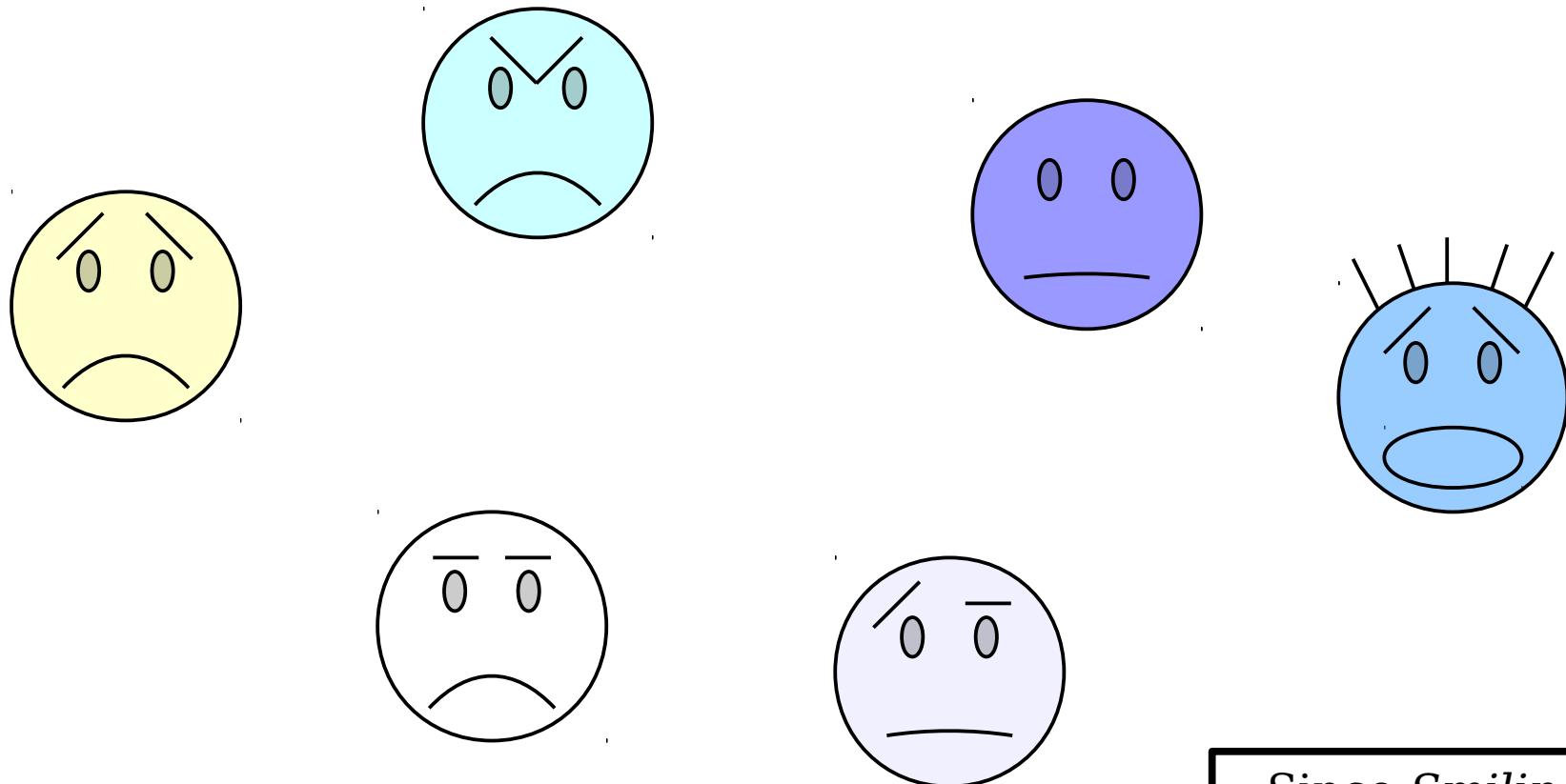
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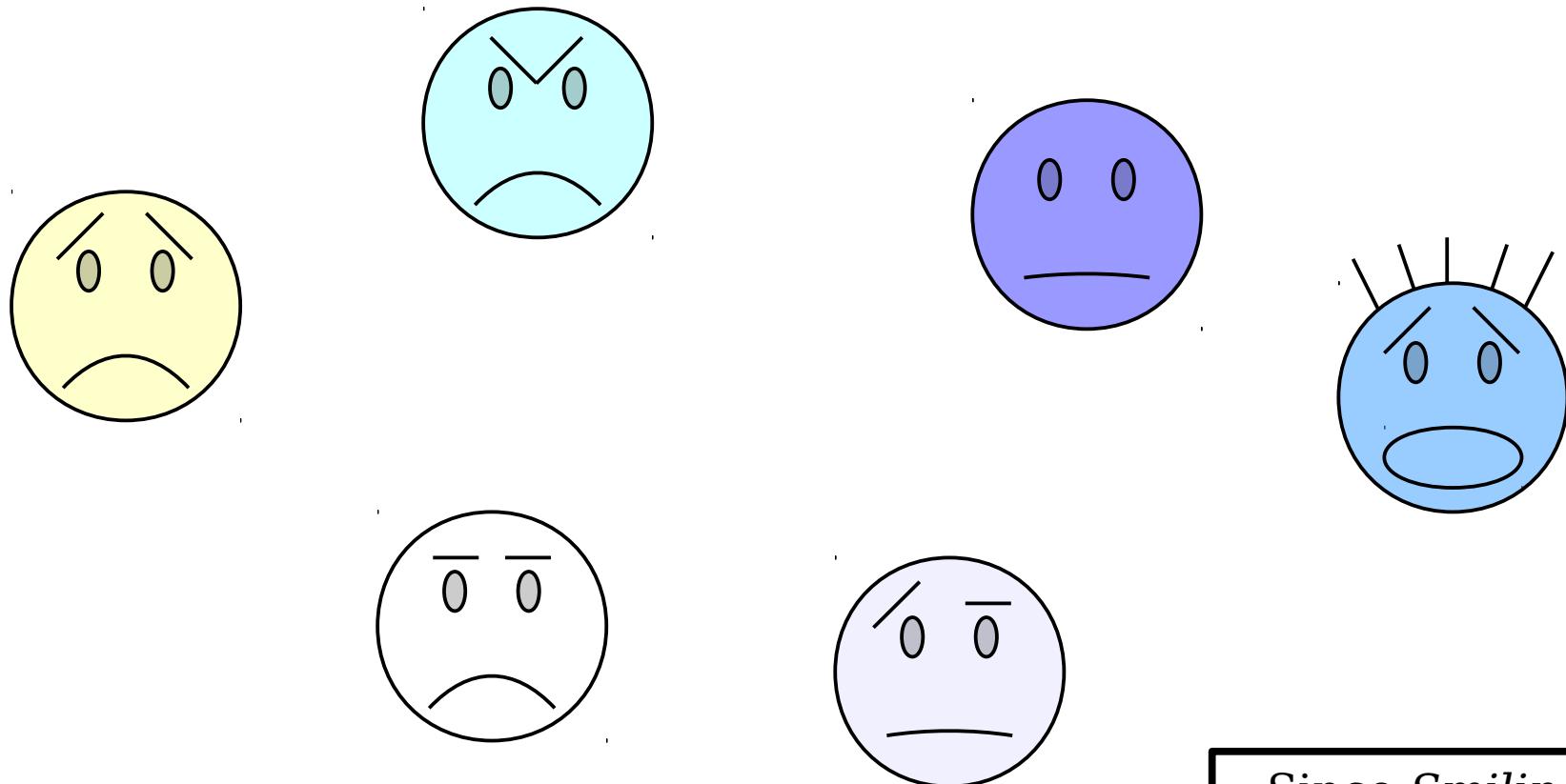
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$\exists x. Smiling(x)$

Since $Smiling(x)$ is not true for any choice of x , this statement evaluates to false.

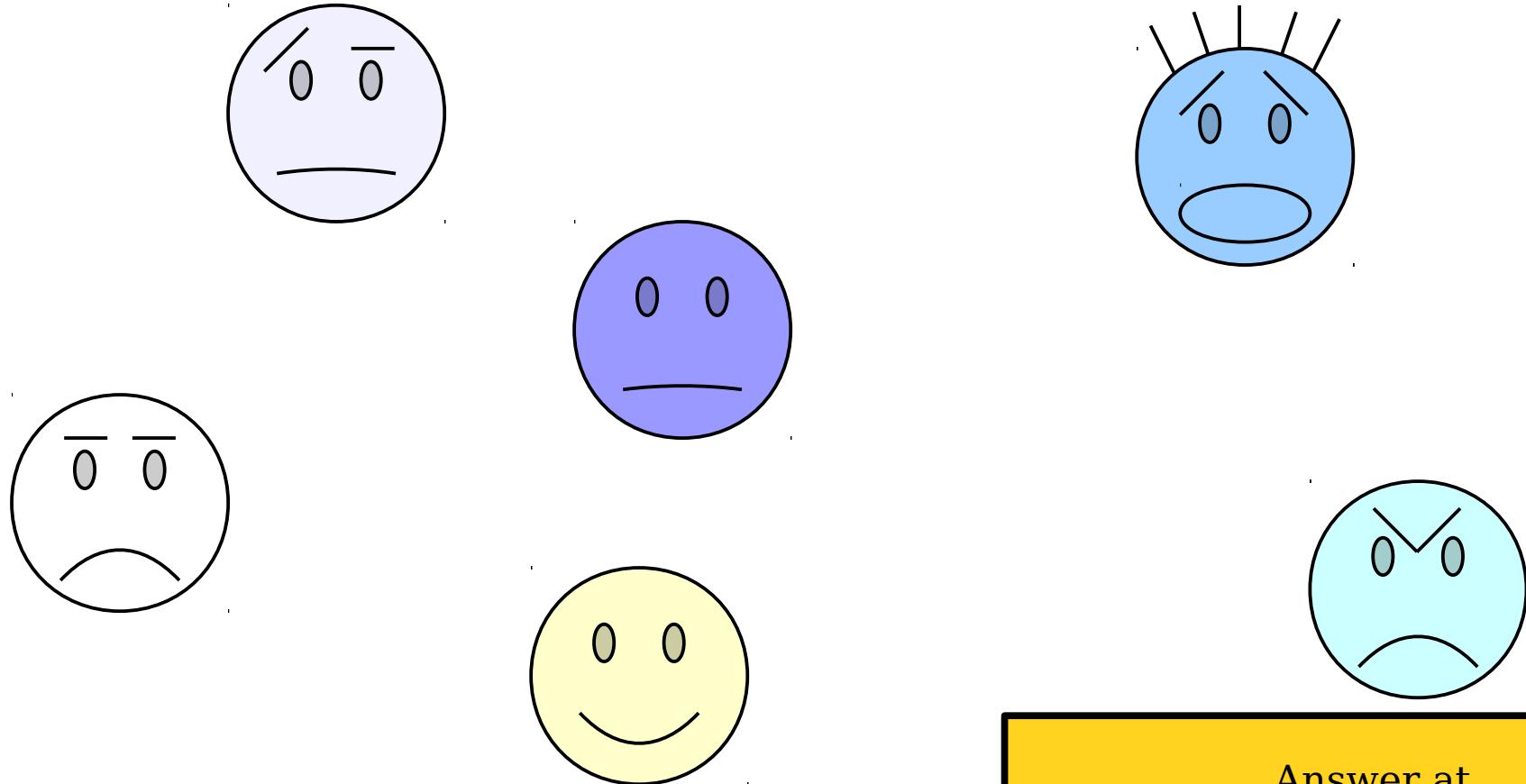
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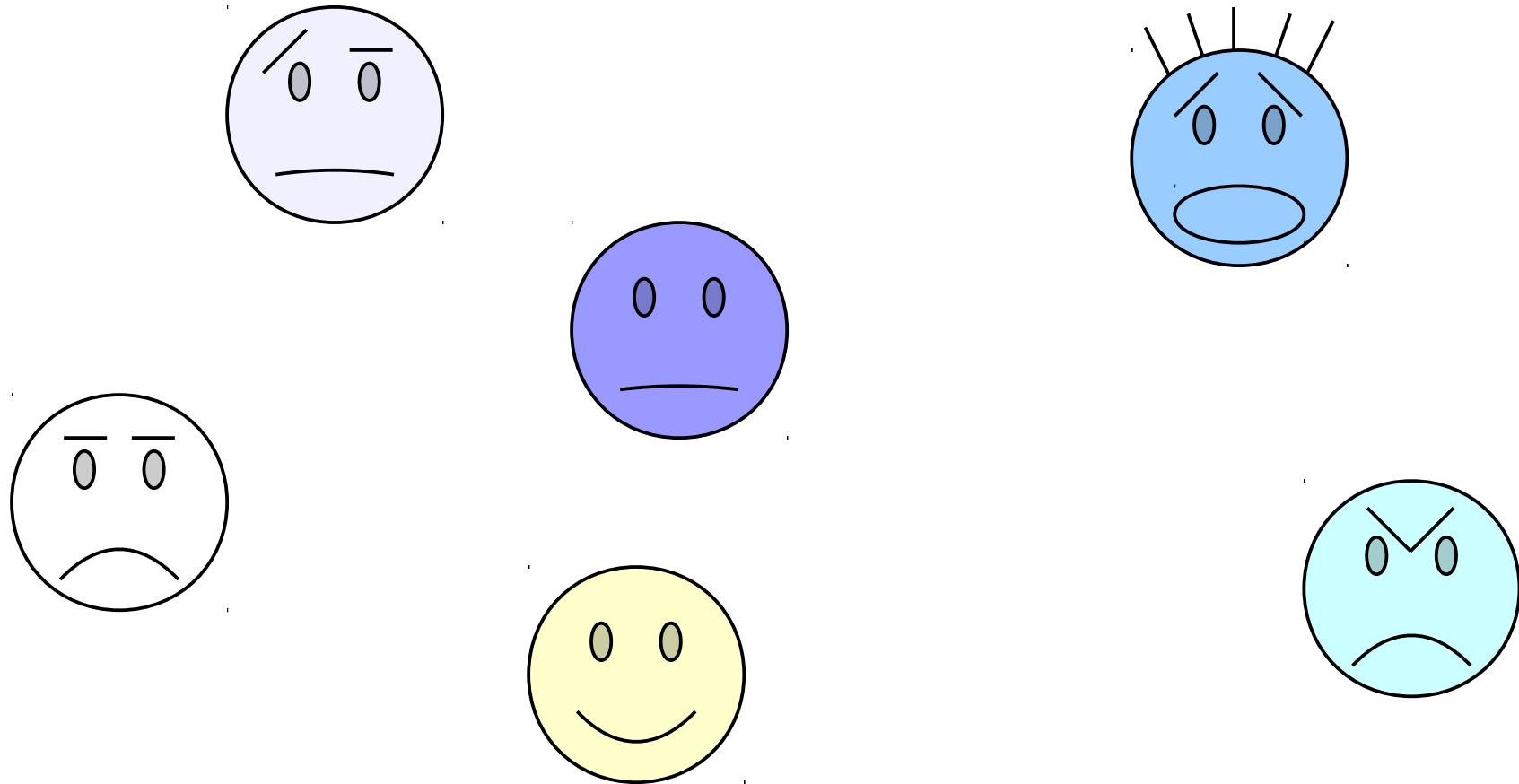
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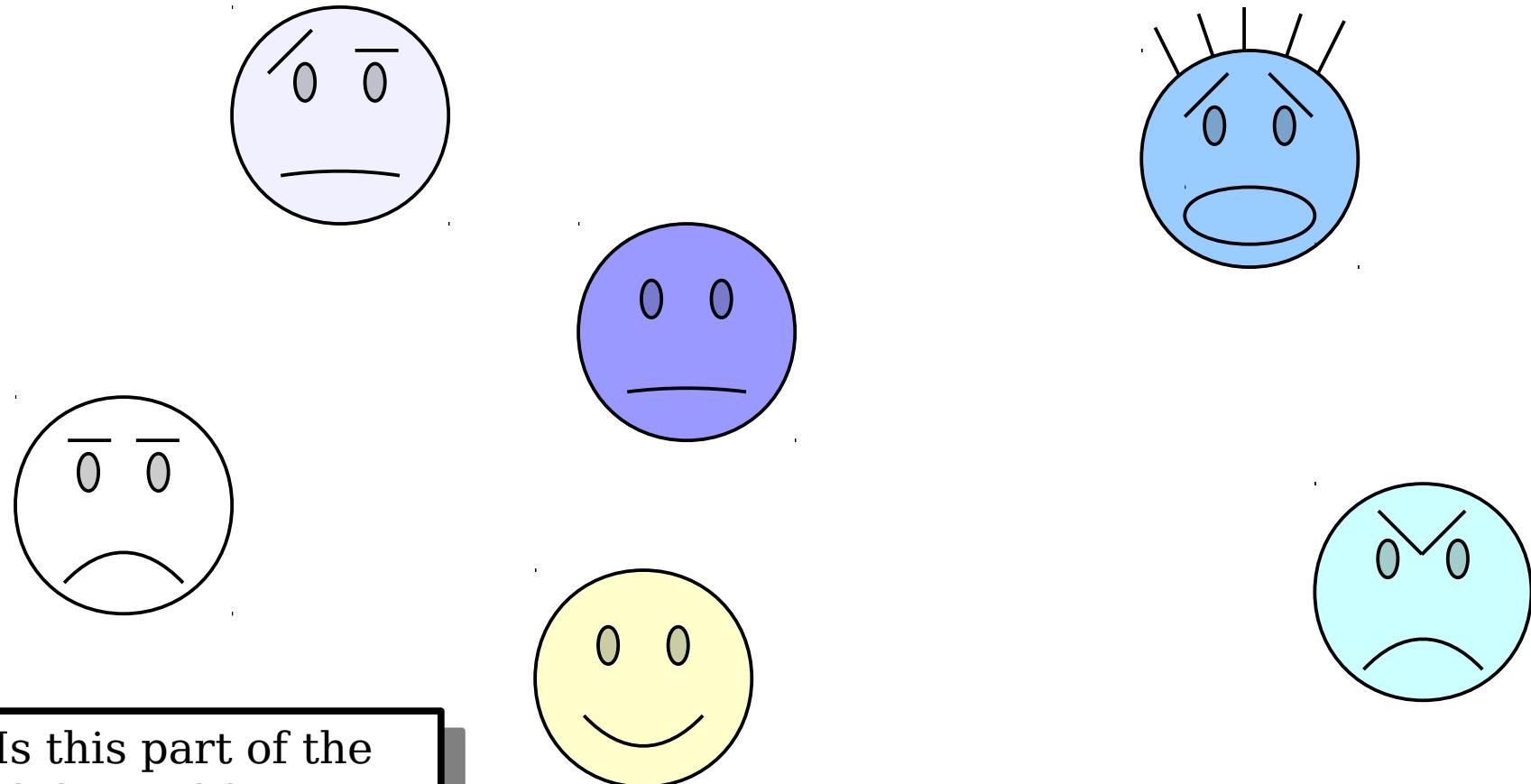
Answer at
<https://cs103.stanford.edu/pollev>

$(\exists x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\exists y. WearingHat(y))$

The Existential Quantifier


$$(\exists x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\exists y. WearingHat(y))$$

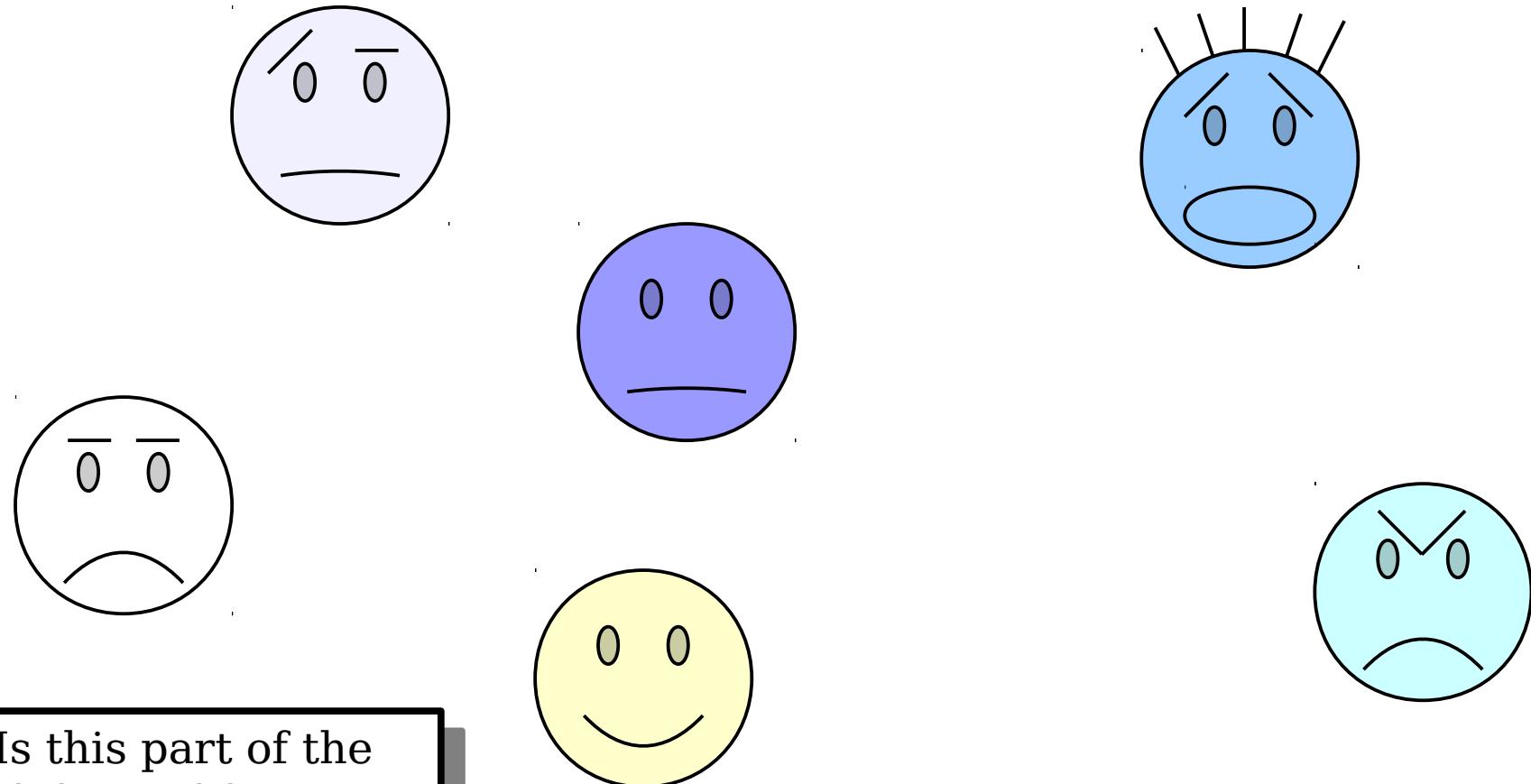
The Existential Quantifier



Is this part of the statement true or false?

$$(\exists x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\exists y. WearingHat(y))$$

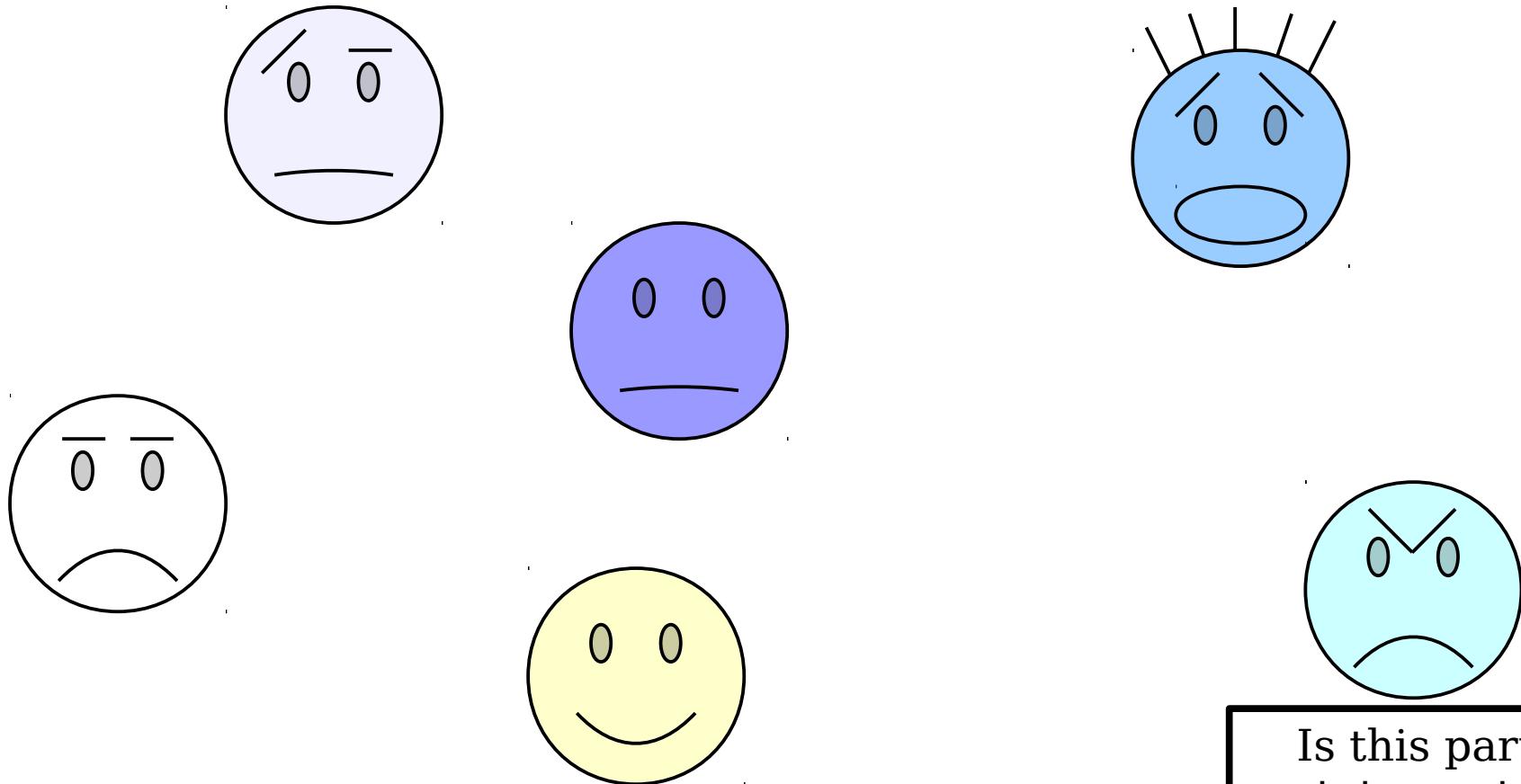
The Existential Quantifier



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$$(\exists x. \text{Smiling}(x)) \rightarrow (\exists y. \text{WearingHat}(y))$$

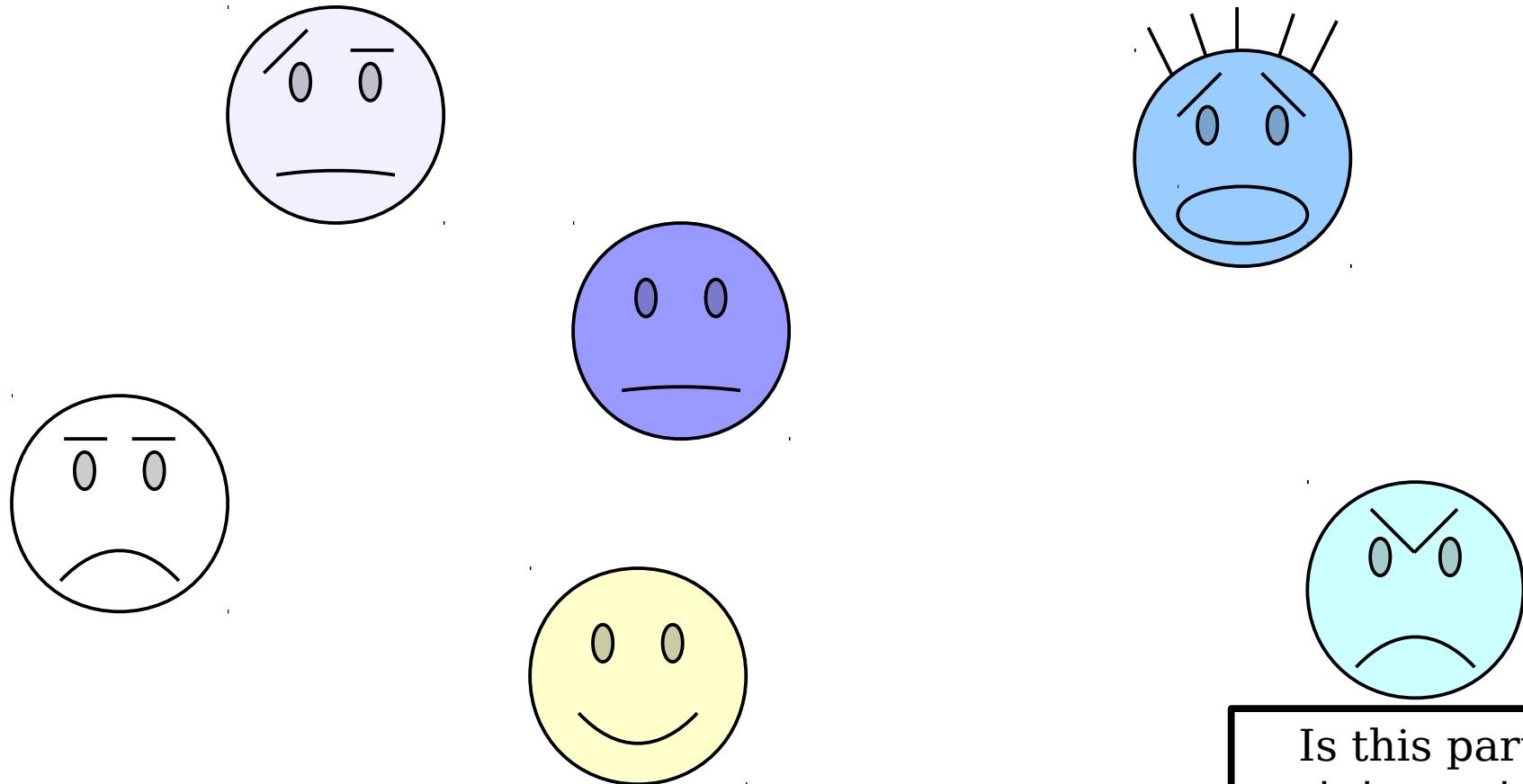
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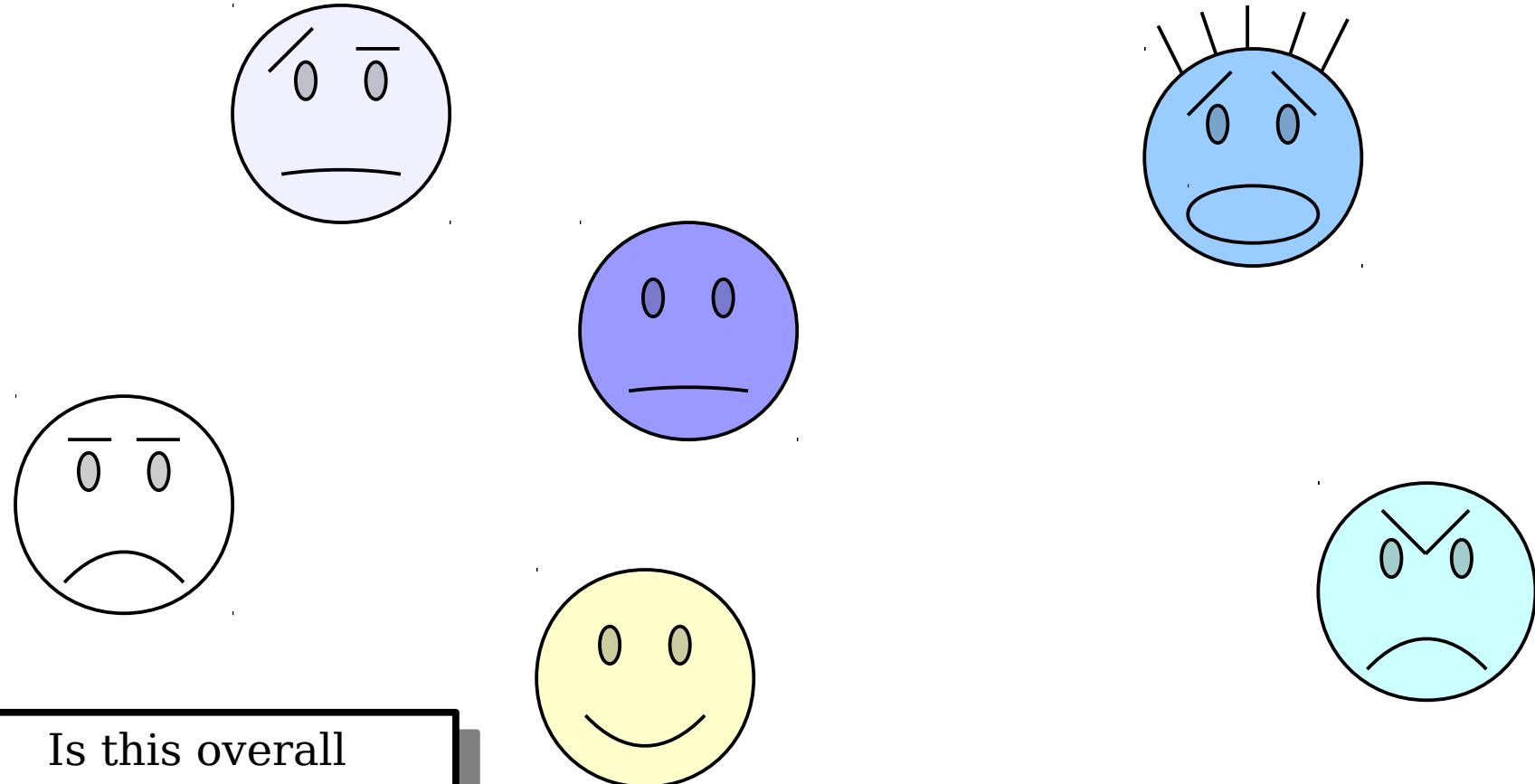
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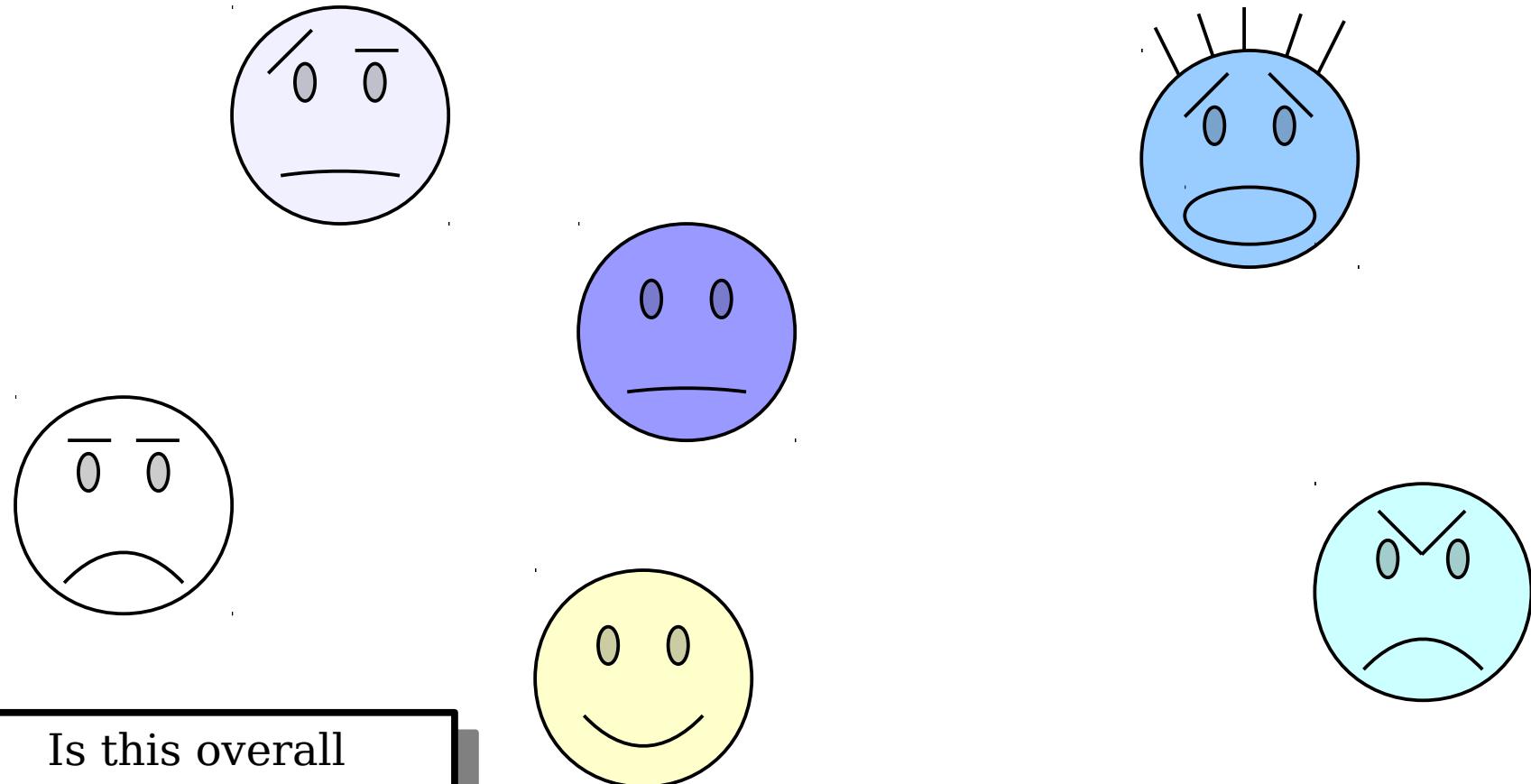
The Existential Quantifier



Is this overall statement true or false?

$(\exists x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\exists y. WearingHat(y))$

The Existential Quantifier



Is this overall statement true or false?

$(\exists x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\exists y. WearingHat(y))$

Fun with Edge Cases

$\exists x. Smiling(x)$

Fun with Edge Cases

Existentially-quantified statements are false in an empty world, since nothing exists, period!

$\exists x. Smiling(x)$

Some Technical Details

Variables and Quantifiers

- Each quantifier has two parts:
 - the variable that is introduced, and
 - the statement that's being quantified.
- The variable introduced is scoped just to the statement being quantified.
 $(\exists x. Loves(You, x)) \wedge (\exists y. Loves(y, You))$

Variables and Quantifiers

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$$(\exists x. Loves(You, x)) \wedge (\exists y. Loves(y, You))$$


The variable x
just lives here.

The variable y
just lives here.

Variables and Quantifiers

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- The variable introduced is scoped just to the statement being quantified.

$$(\exists x. Loves(You, x)) \wedge (\exists x. Loves(x, You))$$

The variable x
just lives here.

A different variable,
also named x , just
lives here.

Operator Precedence (Again)

- When writing out a formula in first-order logic, quantifiers have precedence just below \neg .
- The statement

$$\exists x. P(x) \wedge R(x) \wedge Q(x)$$

is parsed like this:

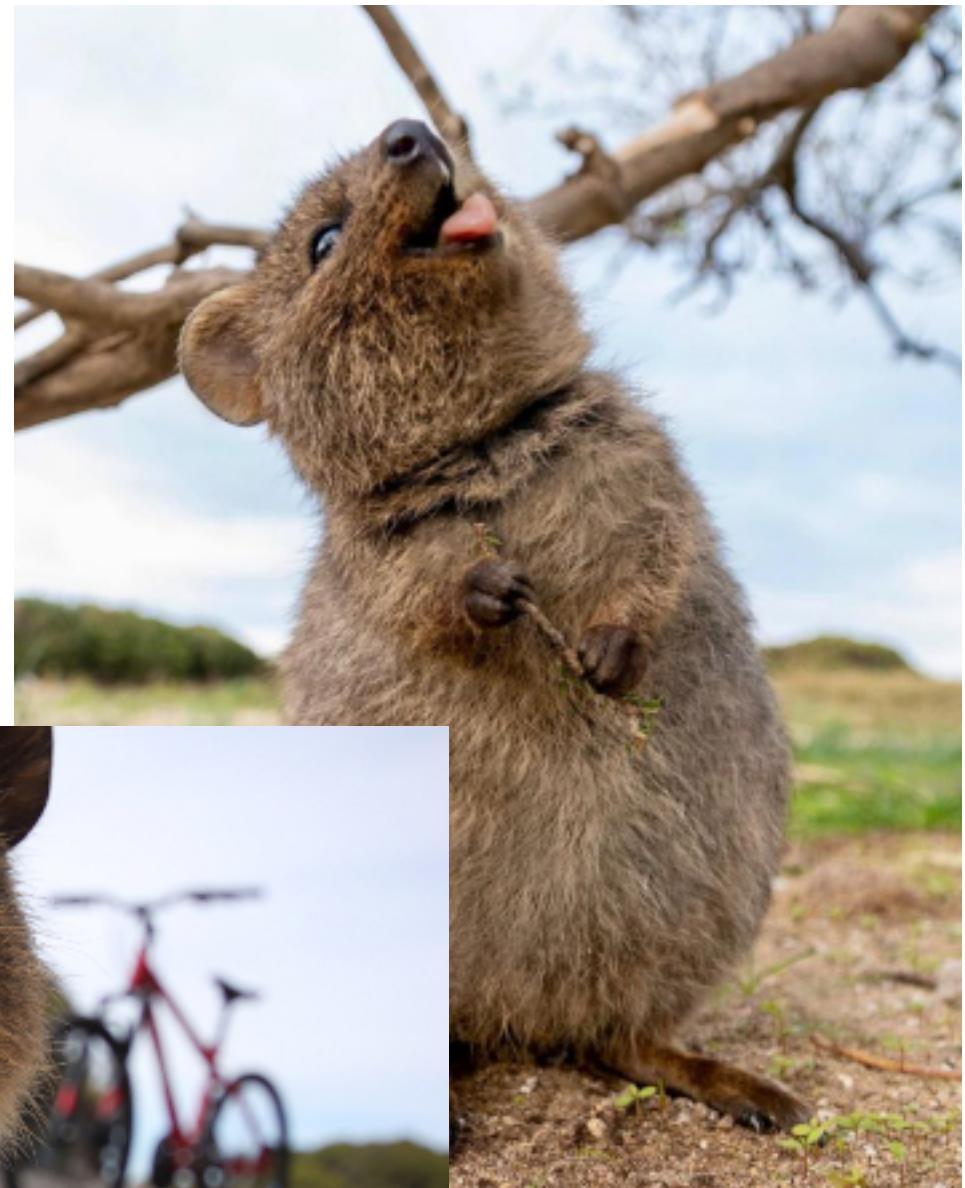
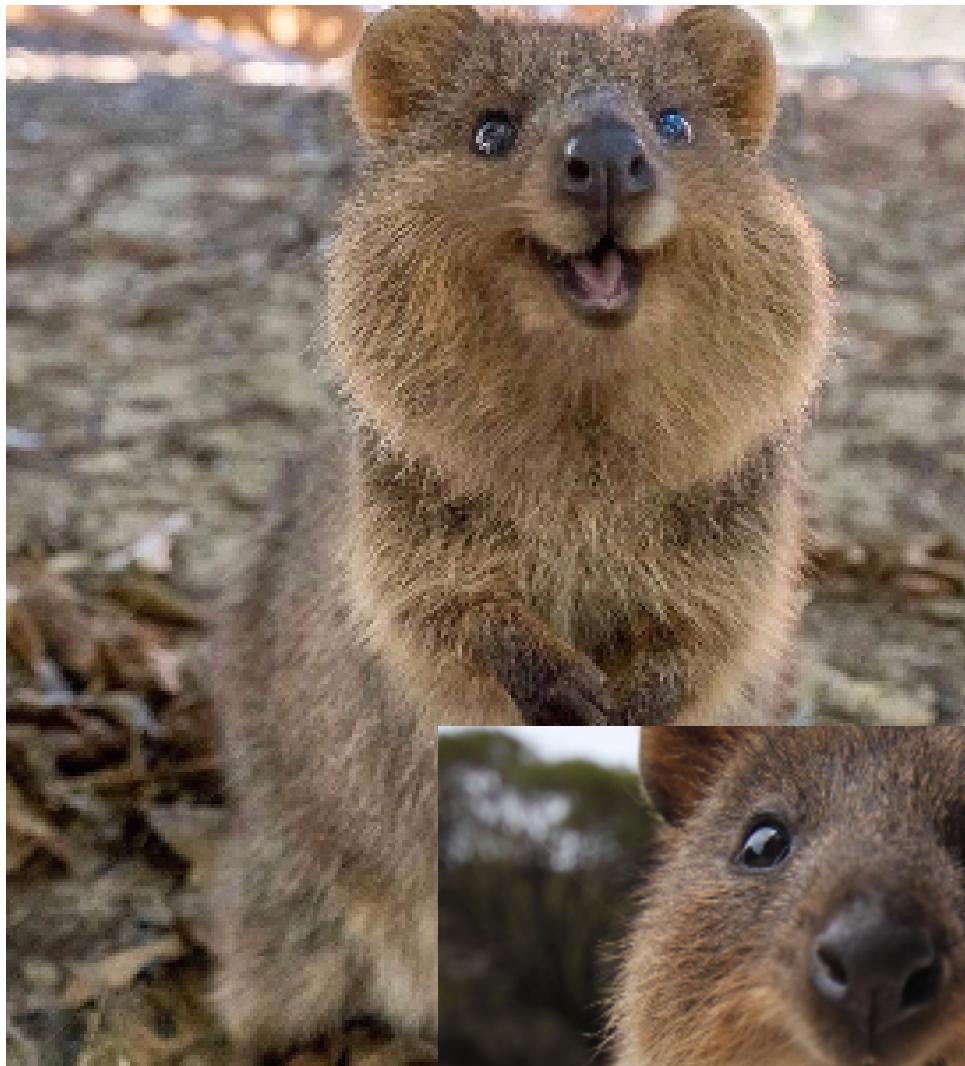
$$(\exists \textcolor{blue}{x}. P(\textcolor{blue}{x})) \wedge (R(\textcolor{red}{x}) \wedge Q(\textcolor{red}{x}))$$

- This is syntactically invalid because the variable x is out of scope in the back half of the formula.
- To ensure that x is properly quantified, explicitly put parentheses around the region you want to quantify:

$$\exists x. (P(x) \wedge R(x) \wedge Q(x))$$

THIS IS A LOT!!

Time out for cuteness overload.



Okay, back to CS103!

“For any natural number n ,
 n is even if and only if n^2 is even”

“For any natural number n ,
 n is even if and only if n^2 is even”

$$\forall n. (n \in \mathbb{N} \rightarrow (Even(n) \leftrightarrow Even(n^2)))$$

“For any natural number n ,
 n is even if and only if n^2 is even”

$$\forall n. (n \in \mathbb{N} \rightarrow (\text{Even}(n) \leftrightarrow \text{Even}(n^2)))$$

\forall is the ***universal quantifier***
and says “for all choices of n ,
the following is true.”

The Universal Quantifier

- A statement of the form

$\forall x. \text{some-formula}$

is true when, for every choice of x , the statement **some-formula** is true when x is plugged into it.

- Examples:

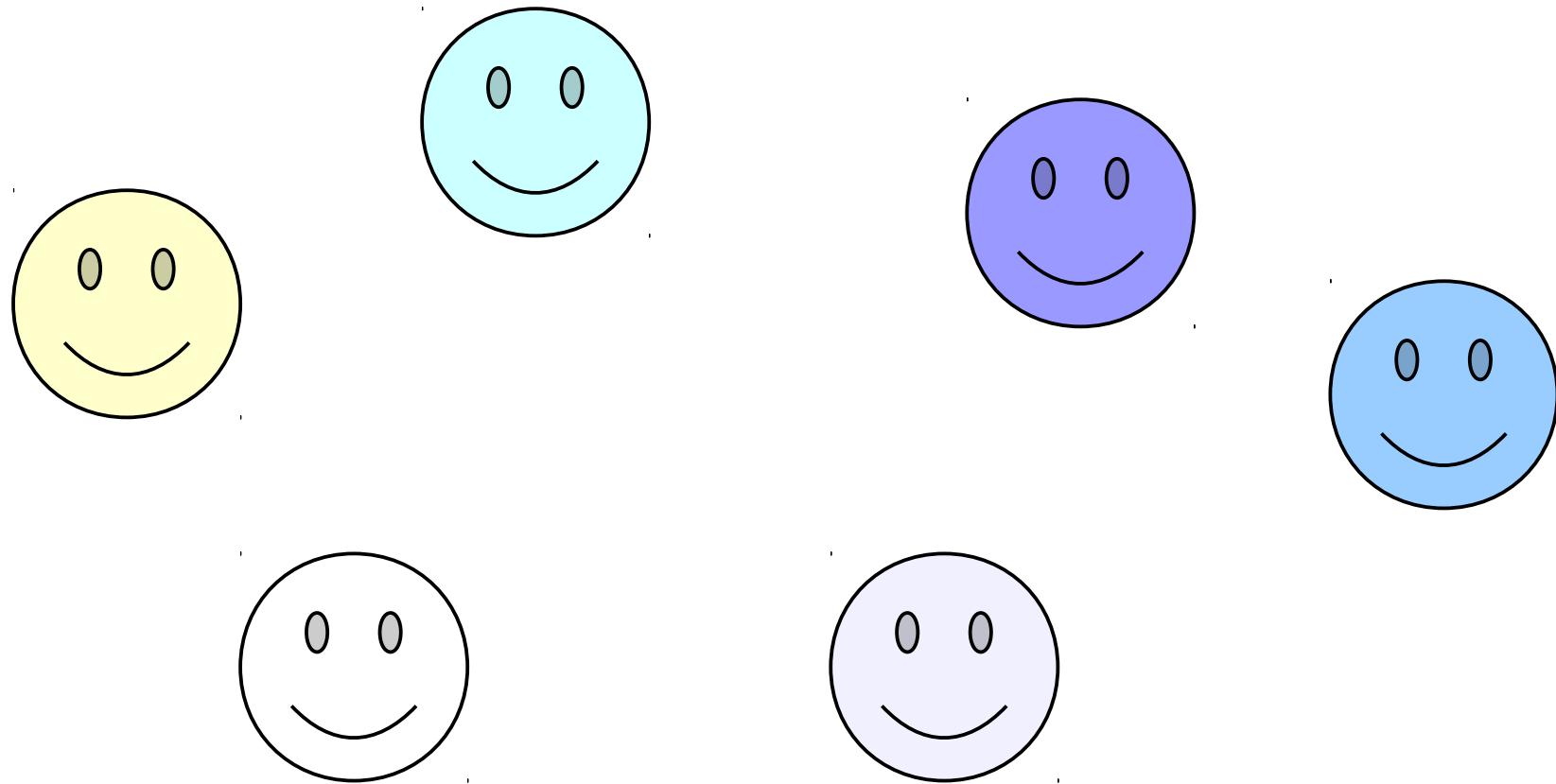
$\forall p. (\text{Puppy}(p) \rightarrow \text{Cute}(p))$

$\forall a. (\text{EatsPlants}(a) \vee \text{EatsAnimals}(a))$

$\text{Tallest}(\text{SultanKösen}) \rightarrow$

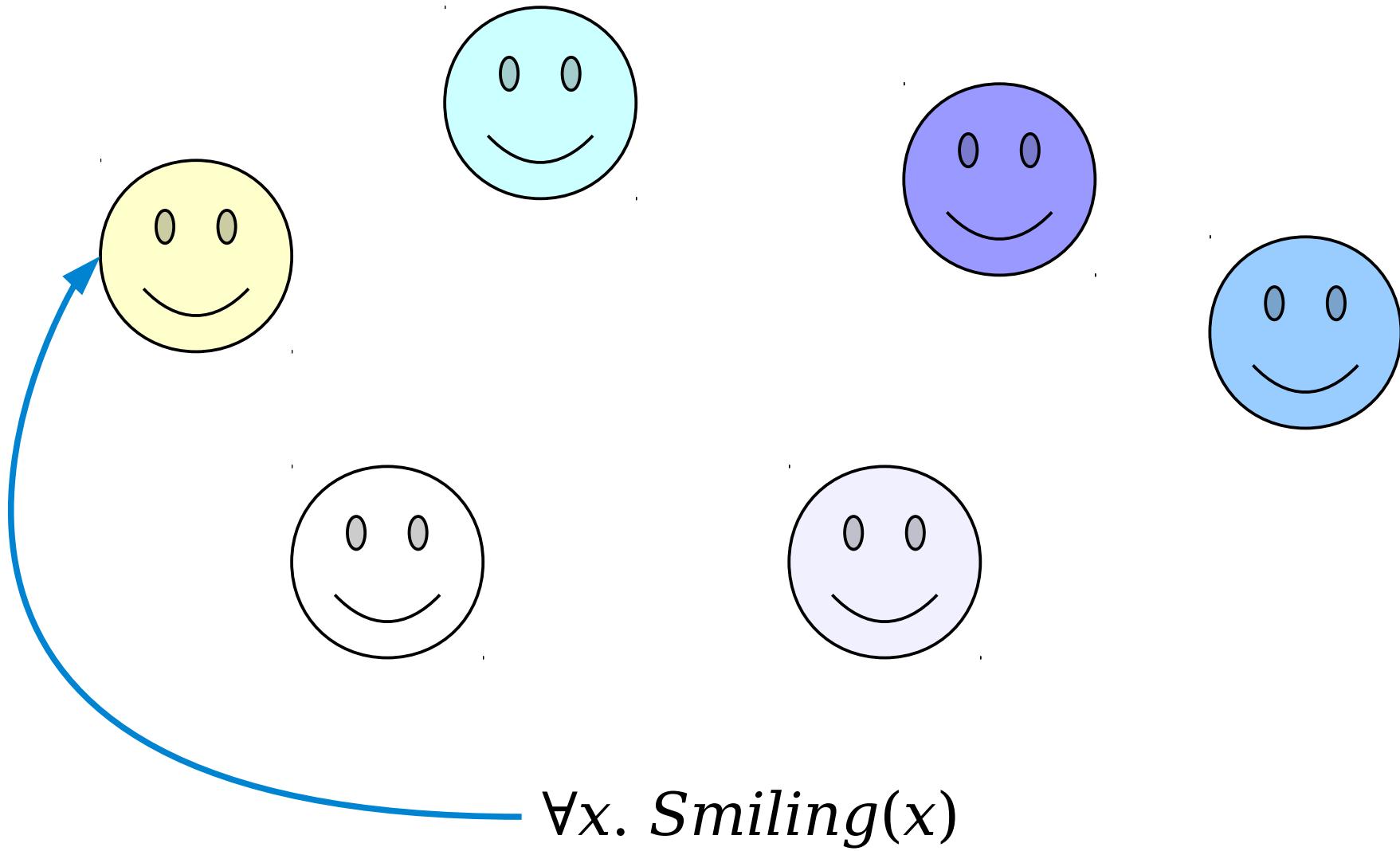
$\forall x. (\text{SultanKösen} \neq x \rightarrow \text{ShorterThan}(x, \text{SultanKösen}))$

The Universal Quantifier

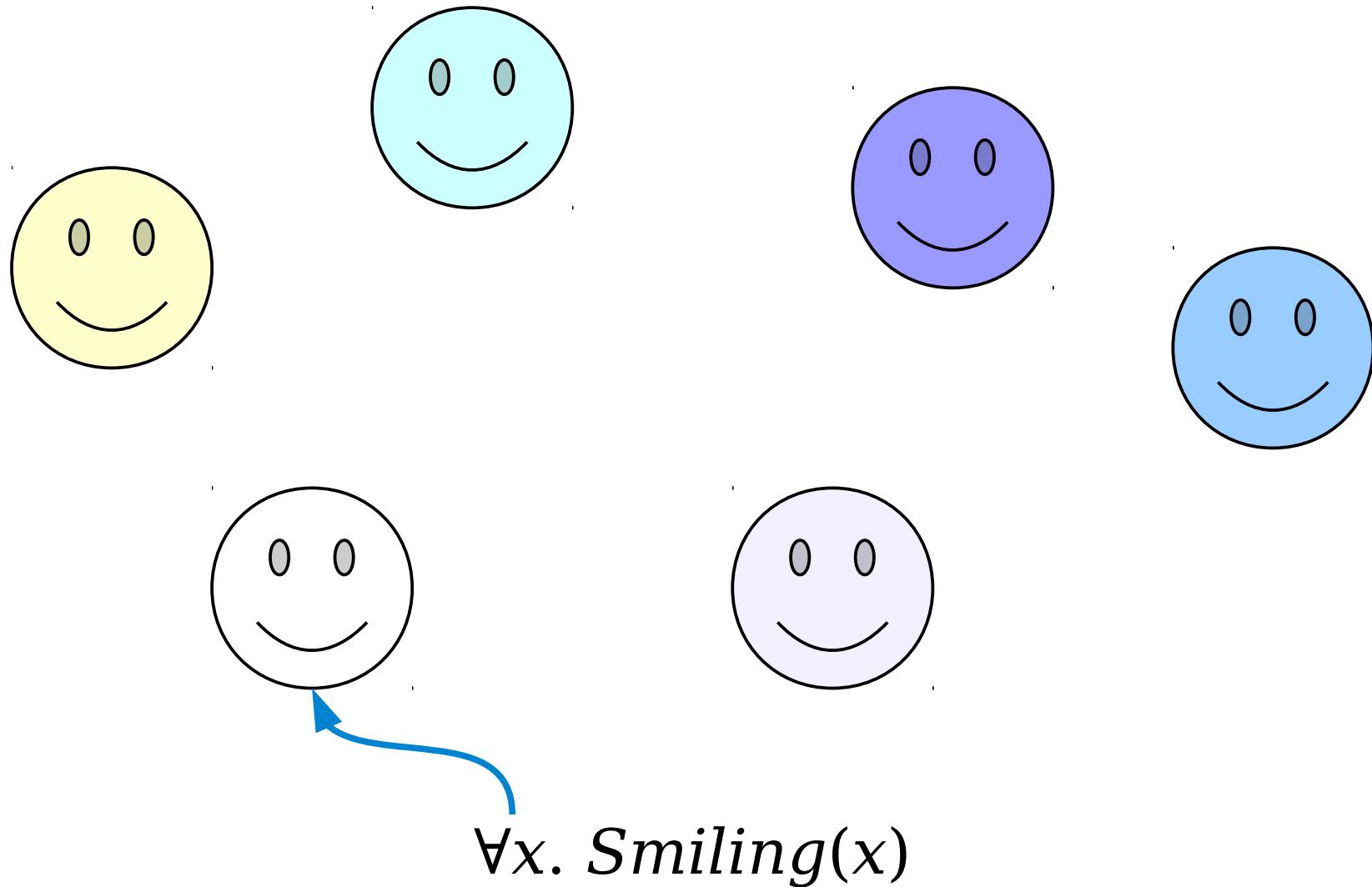


$\forall x. Smiling(x)$

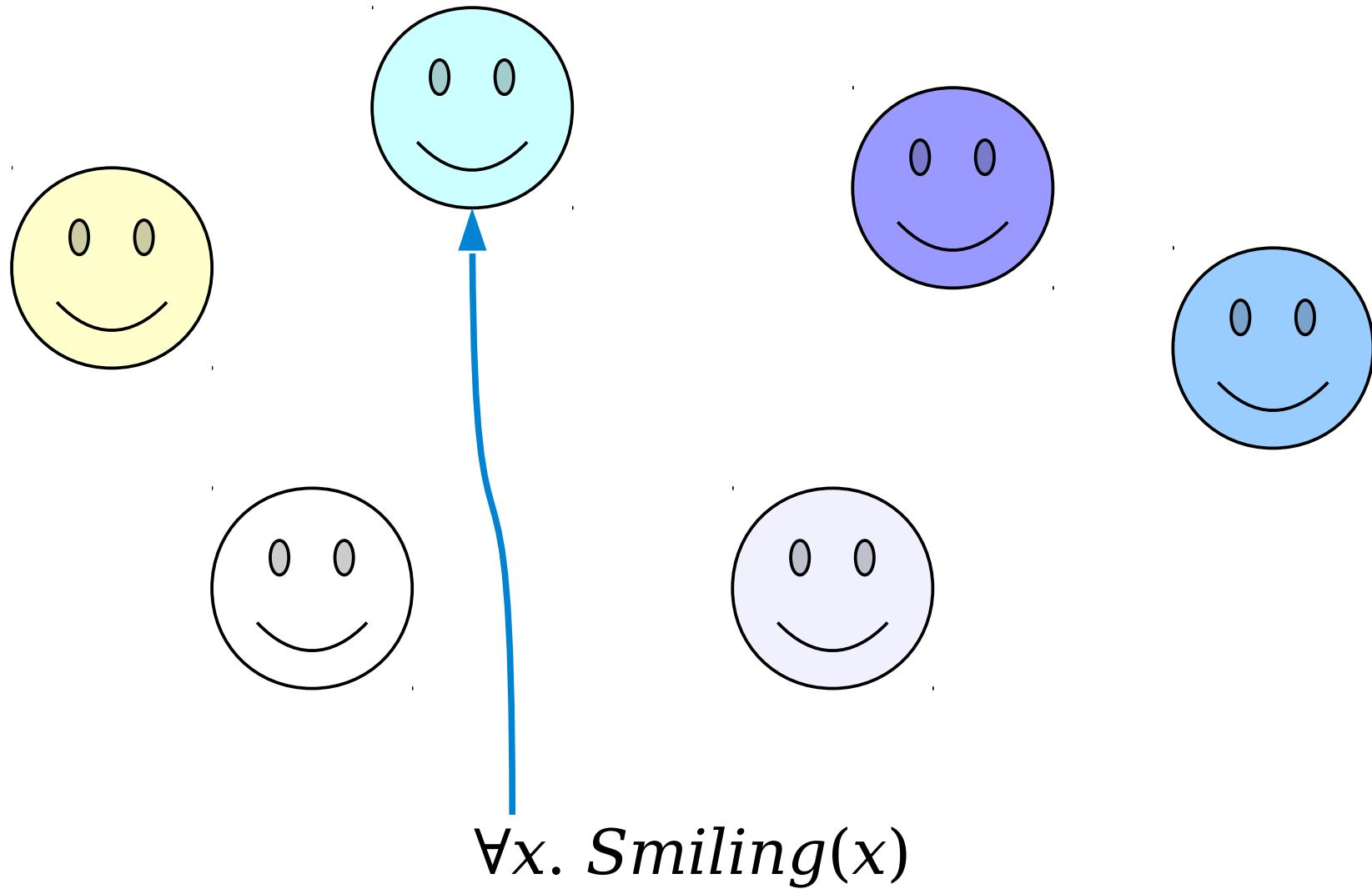
The Universal Quantifier



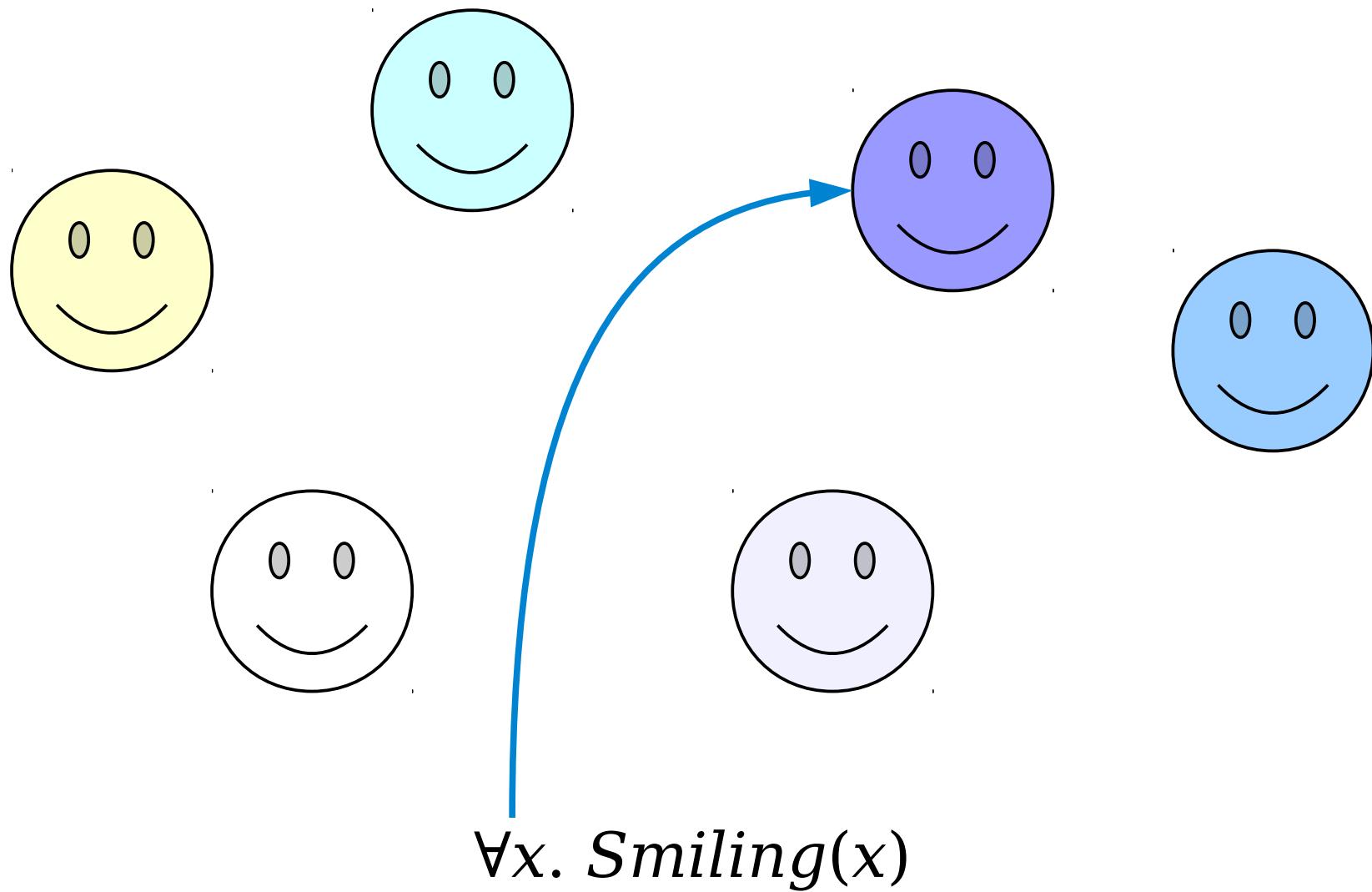
The Universal Quantifier



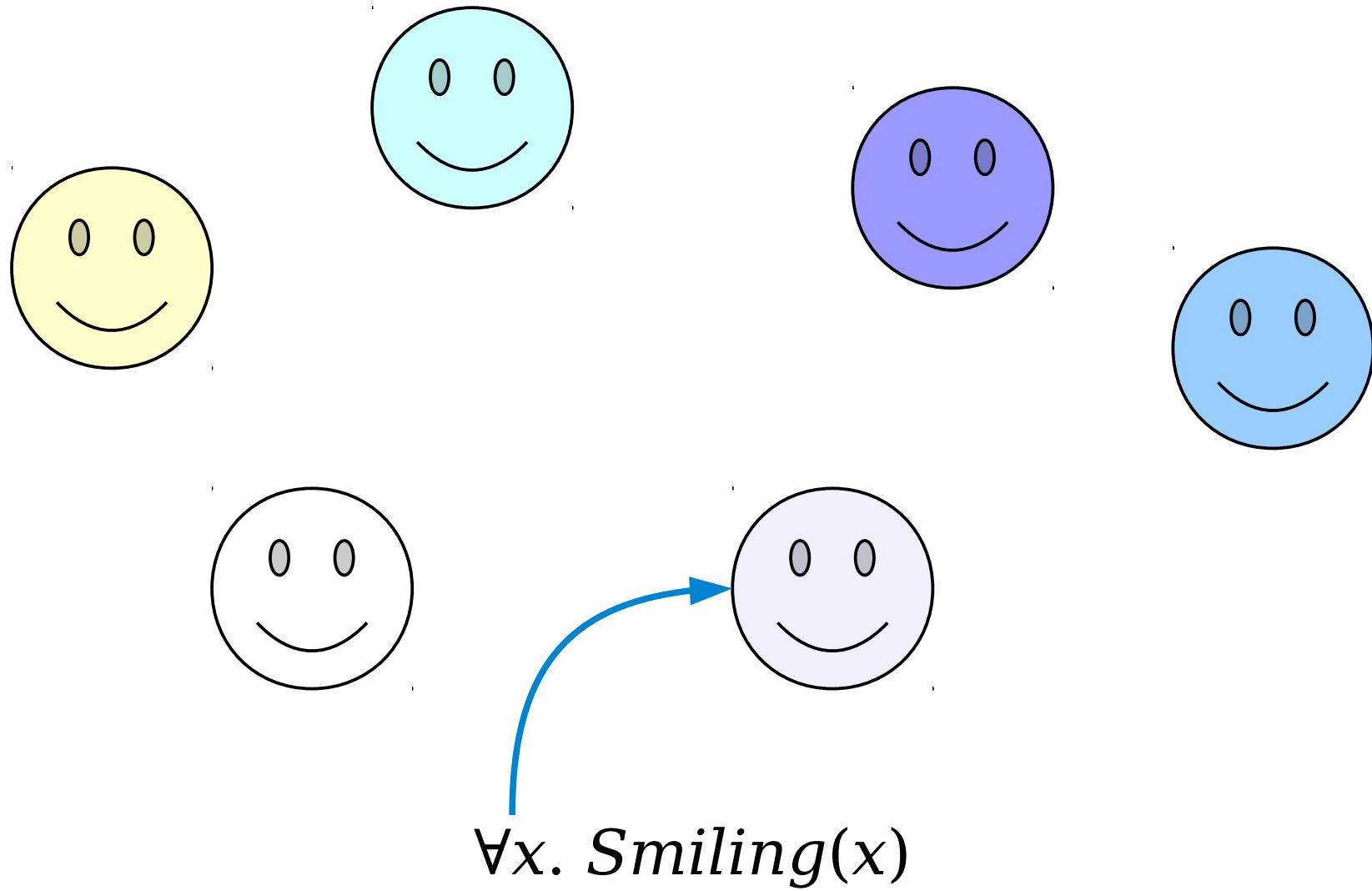
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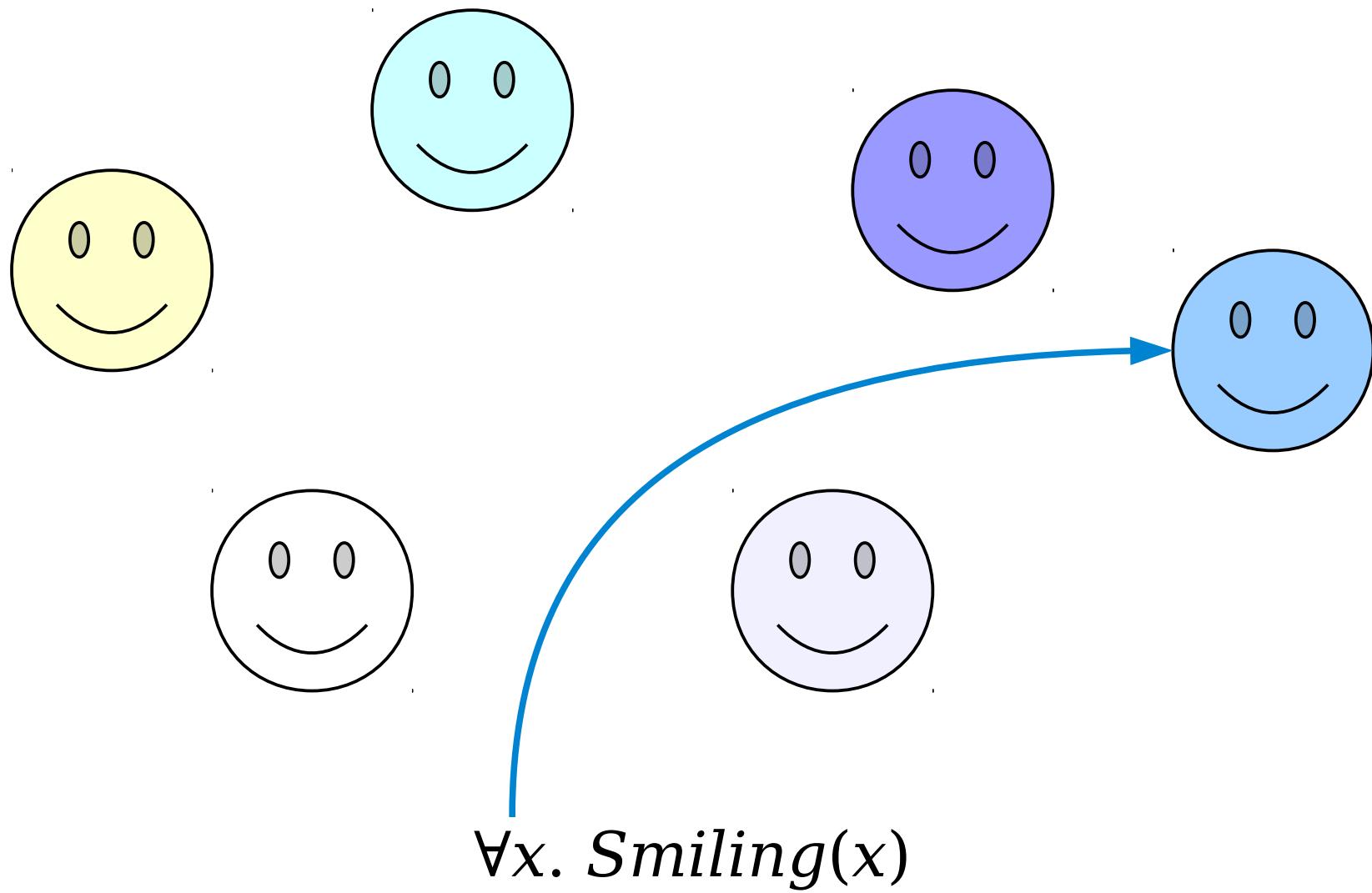
The Universal Quantifier



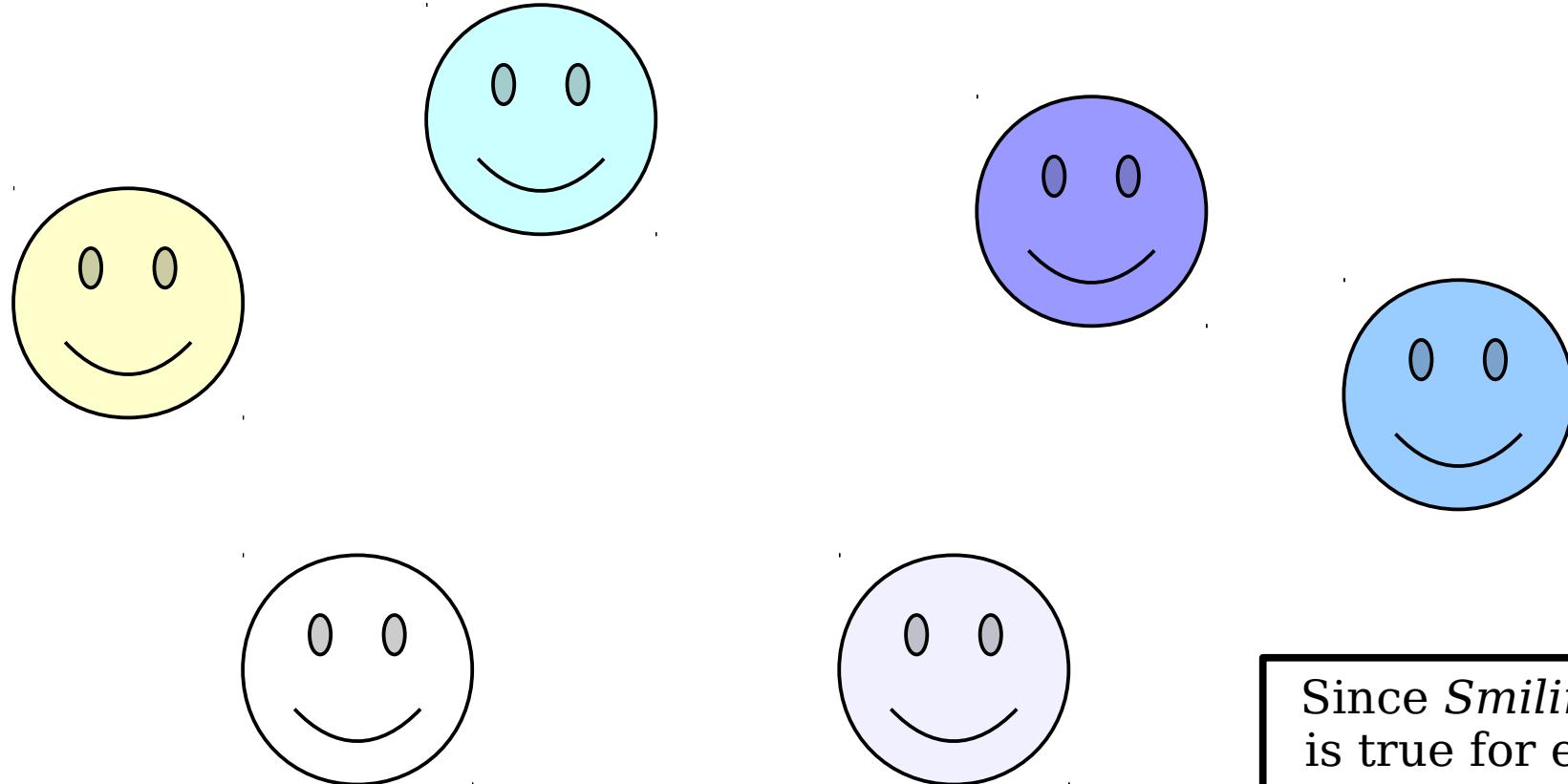
The Universal Quantifier



The Universal Quantifier

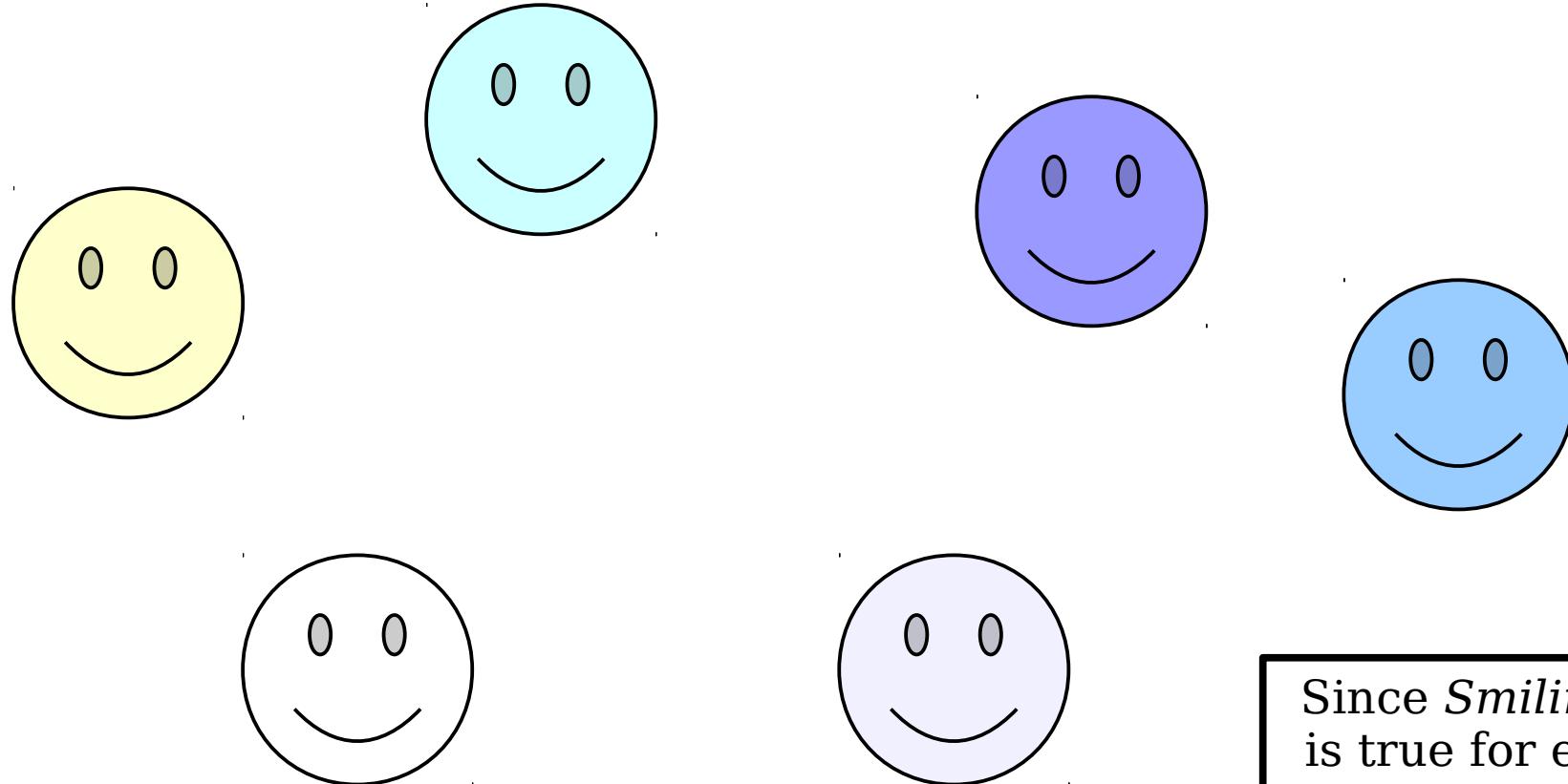


The Universal Quantifier


$$\forall x. \text{Smiling}(x)$$

Since *Smiling(x)* is true for every choice of x , this statement evaluates to true.

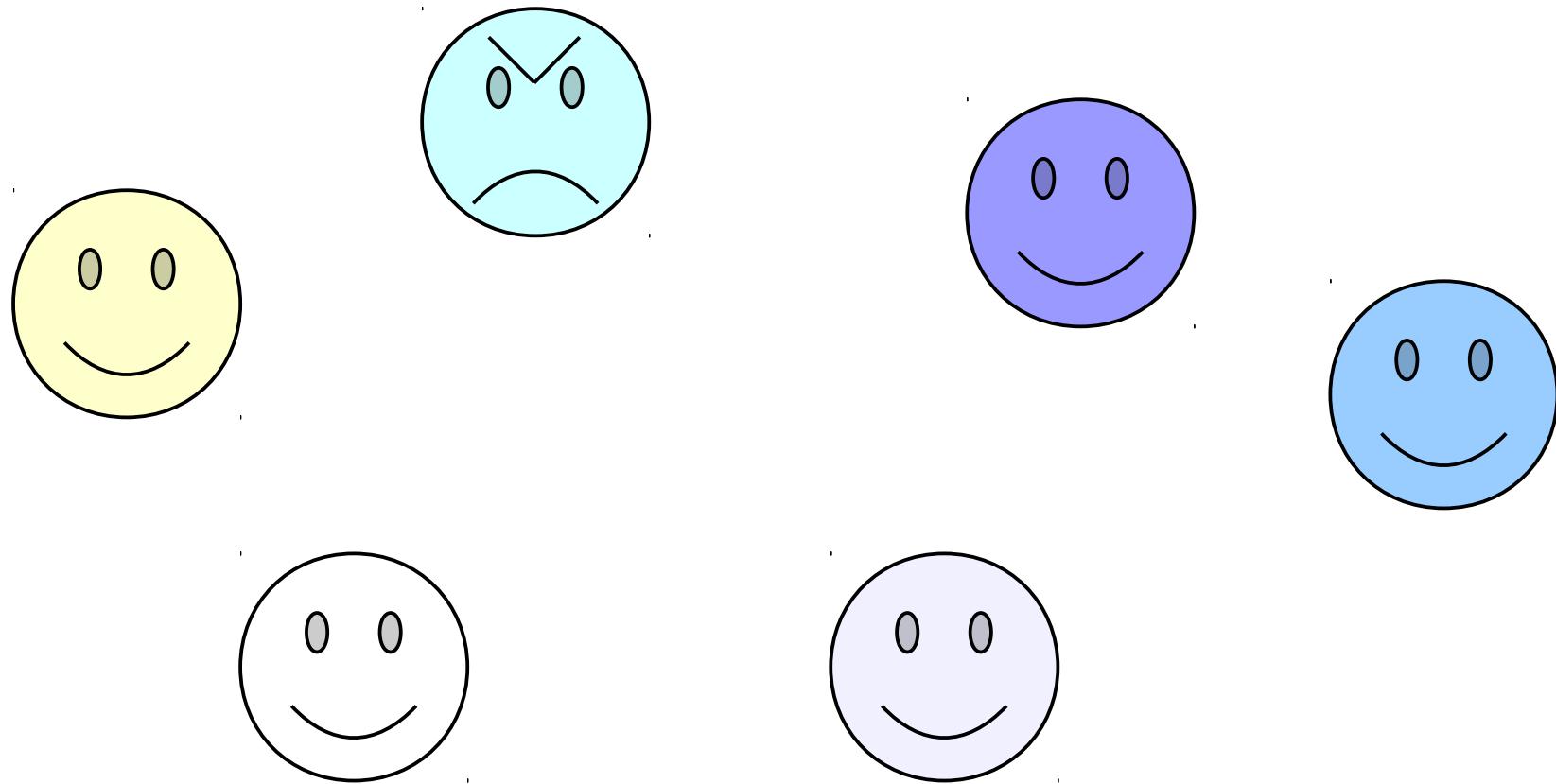
The Universal Quantifier



$\forall x. \text{Smiling}(x)$

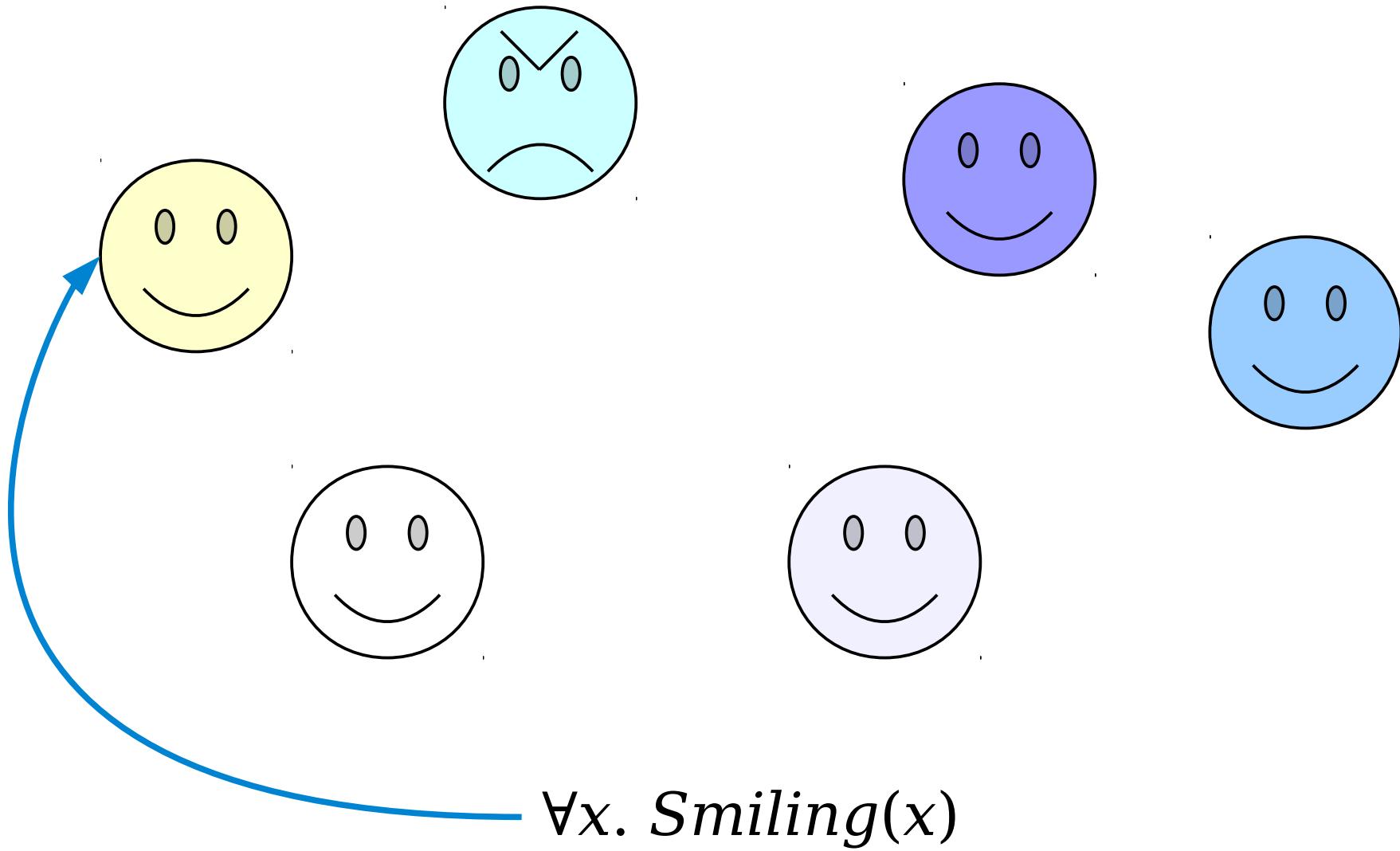
Since $\text{Smiling}(x)$ is true for every choice of x , this statement evaluates to true.

The Universal Quantifier

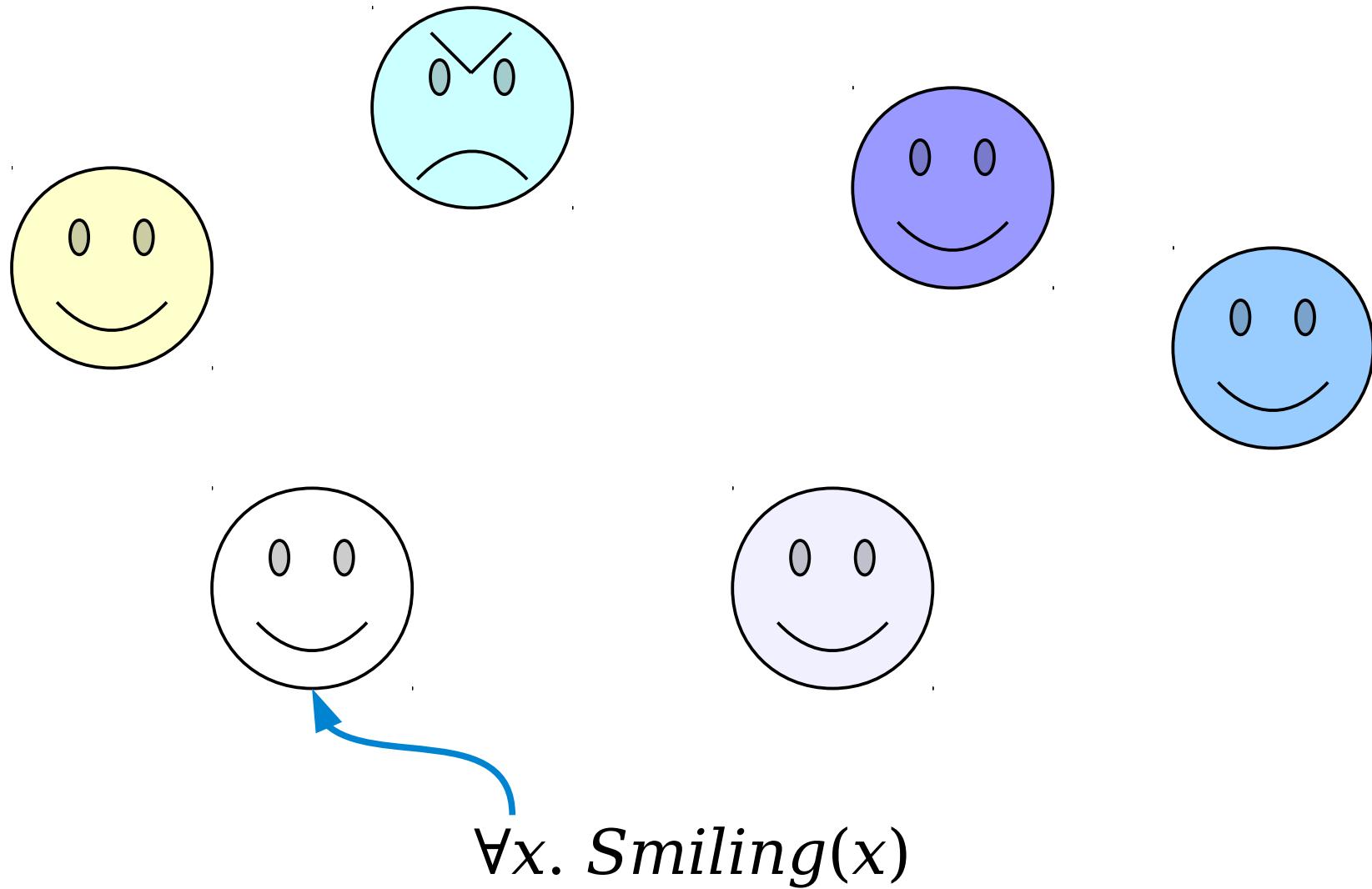


$\forall x. Smiling(x)$

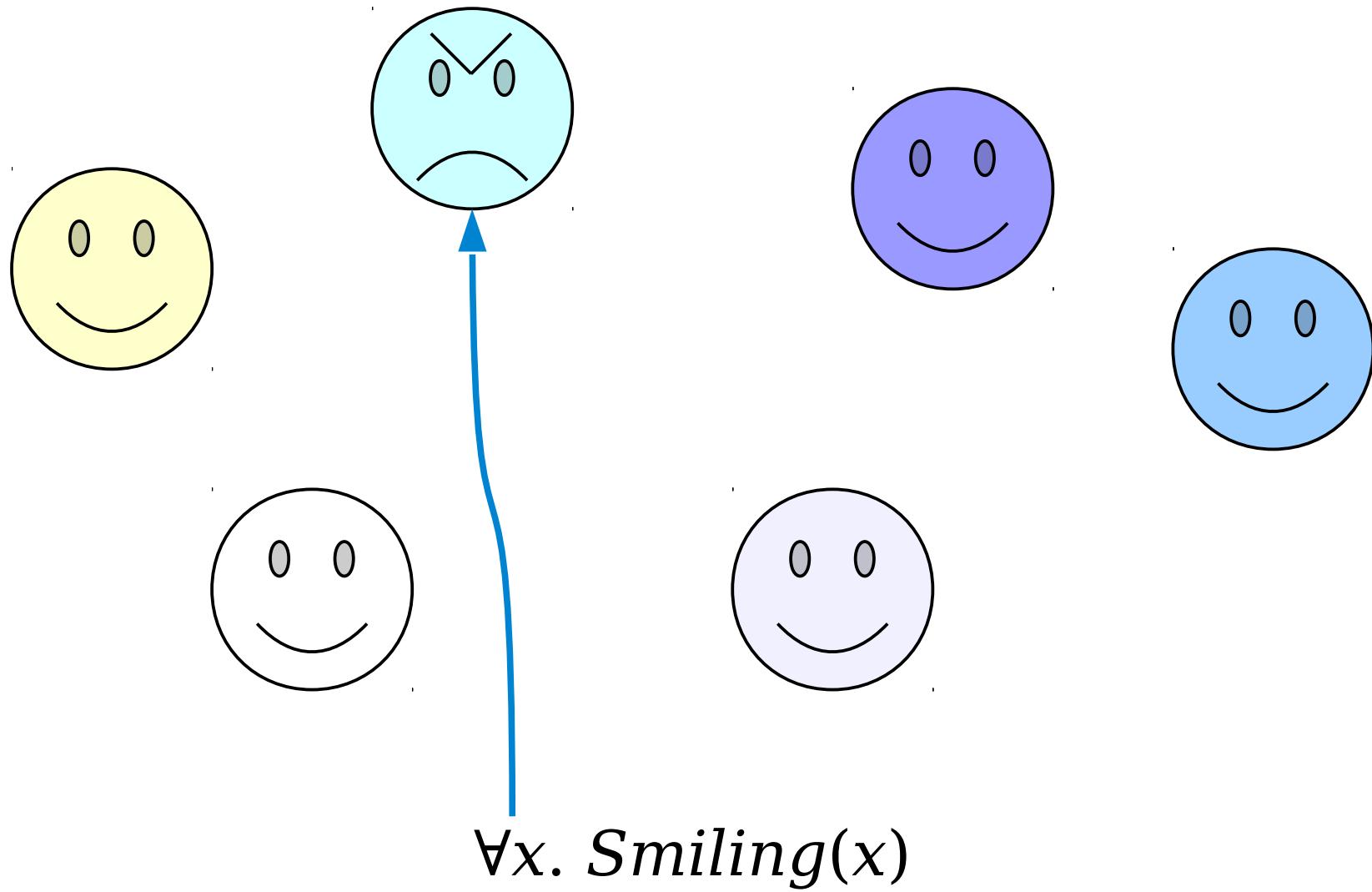
The Universal Quantifier



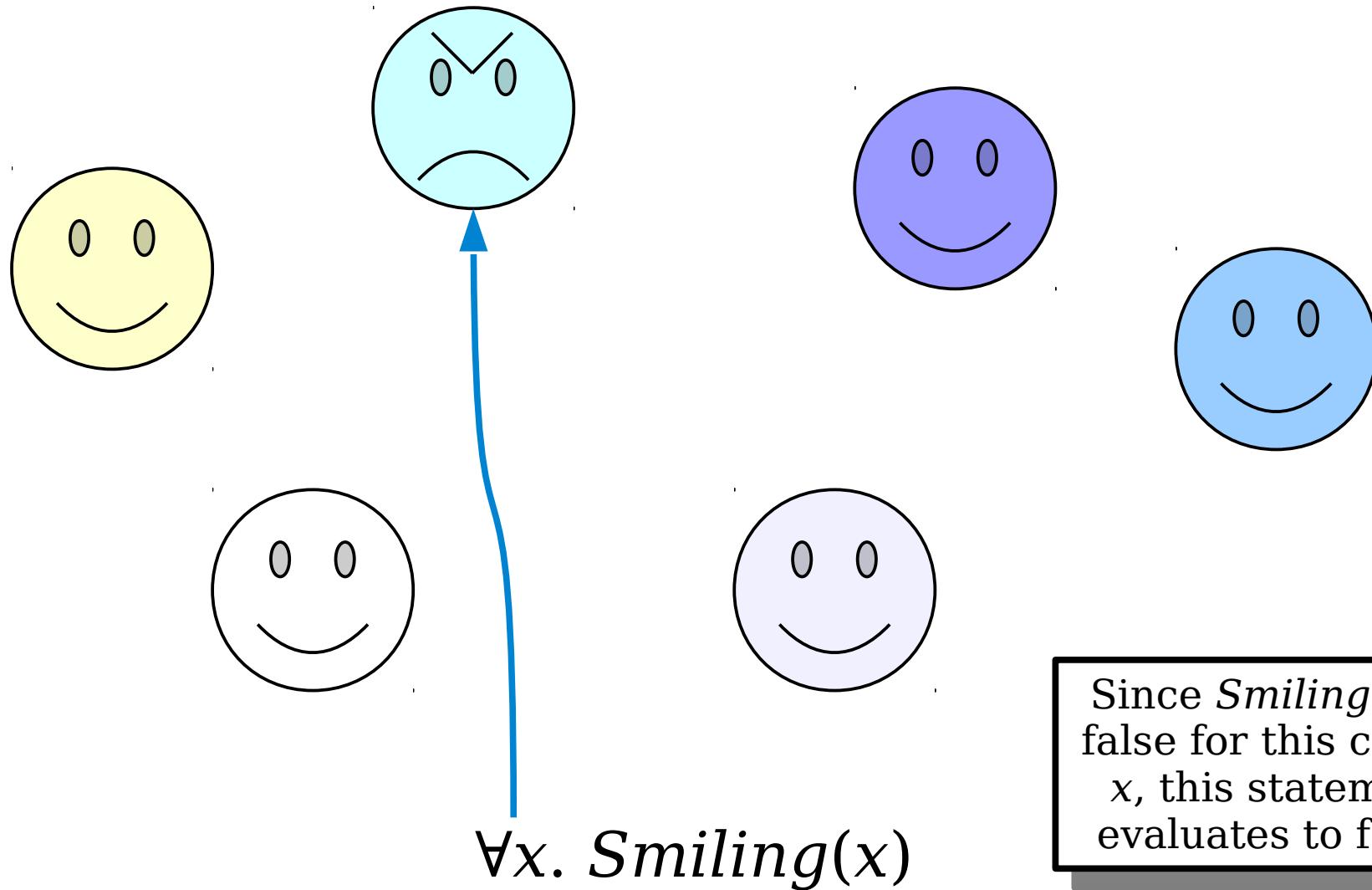
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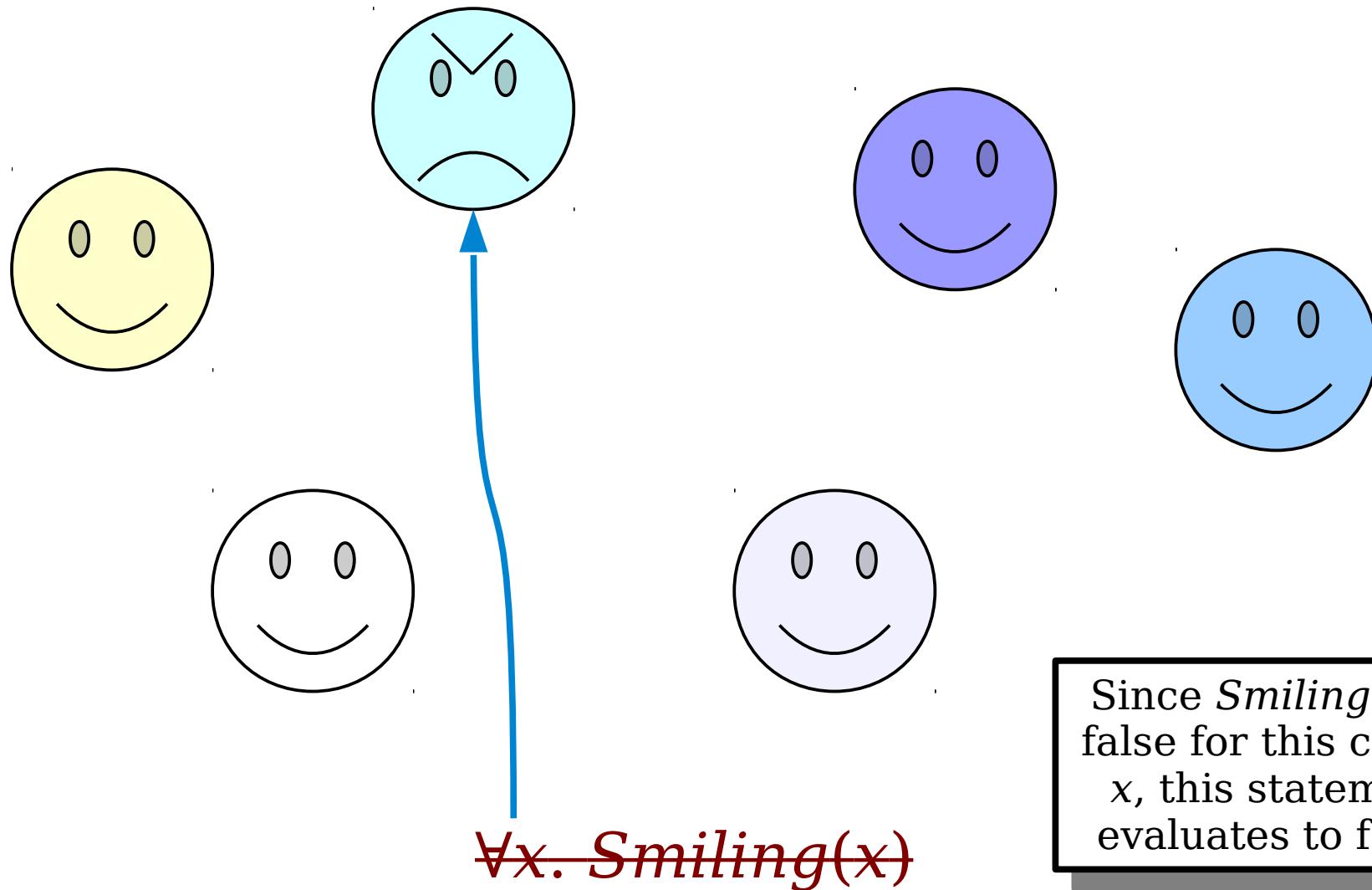
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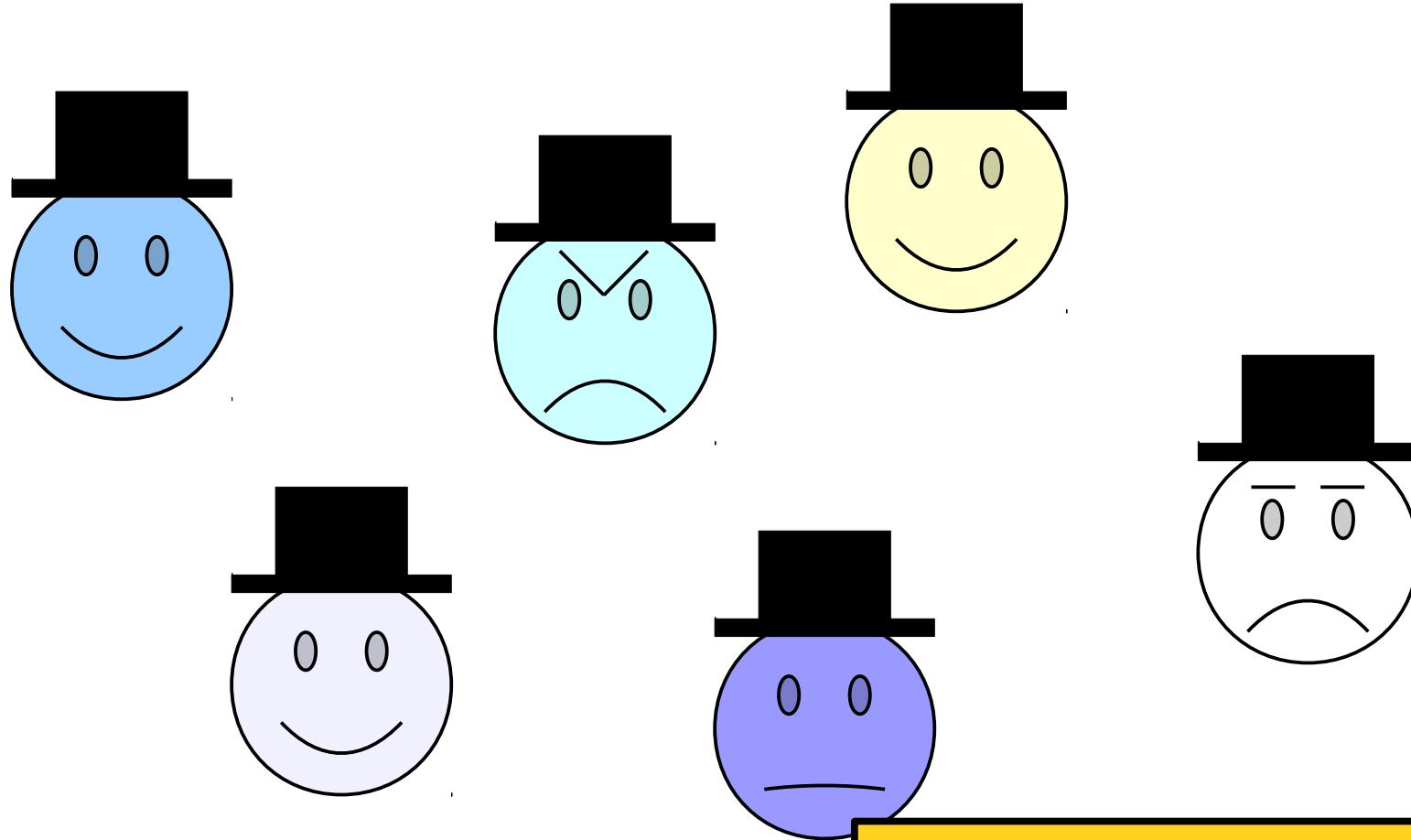
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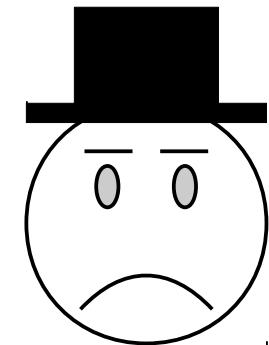
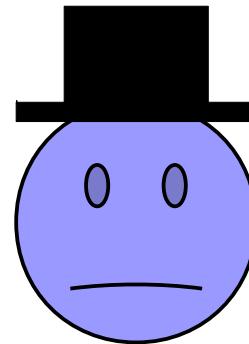
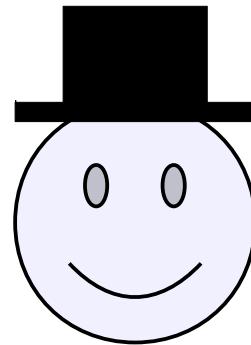
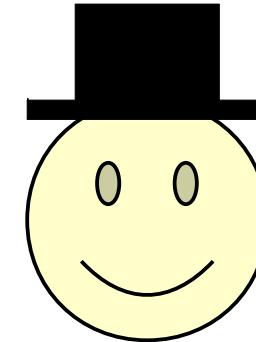
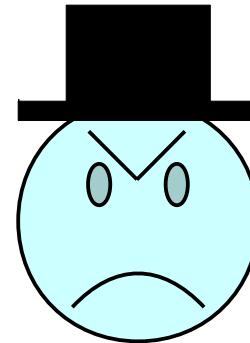
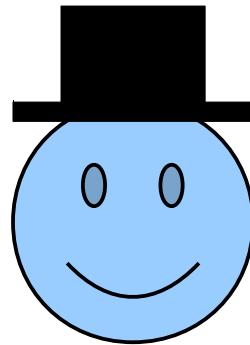
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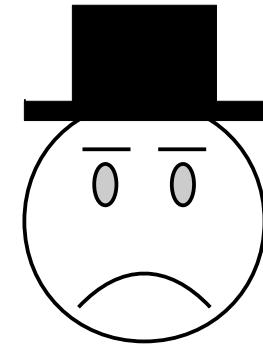
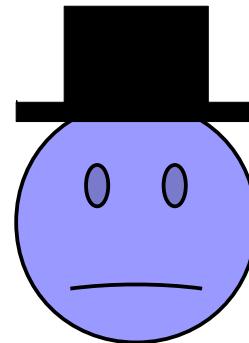
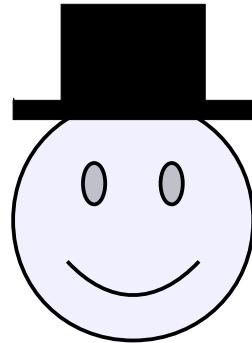
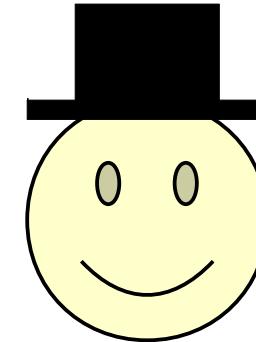
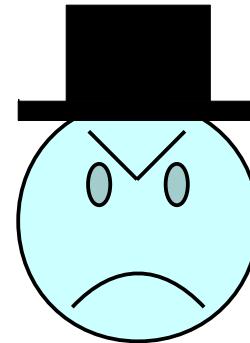
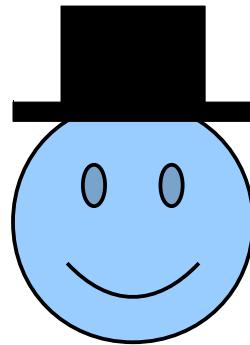
Answer at
<https://cs103.stanford.edu/pollev>

$$(\forall x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\forall y. WearingHat(y))$$

The Universal Quantifier


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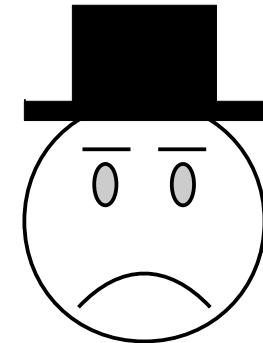
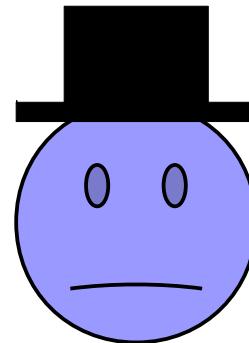
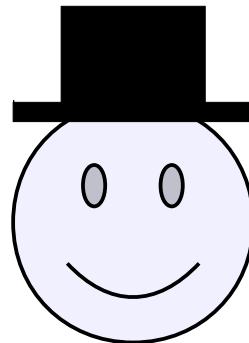
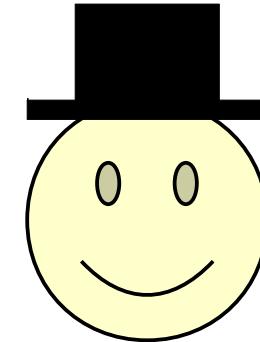
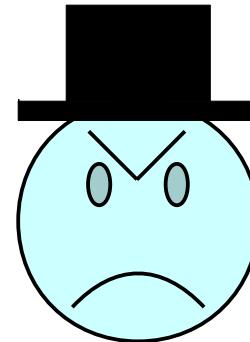
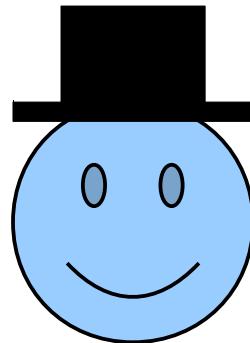
The Universal Quantifier



Is this part of the statement true or false?

$$(\forall x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\forall y. WearingHat(y))$$

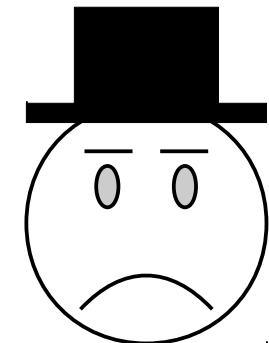
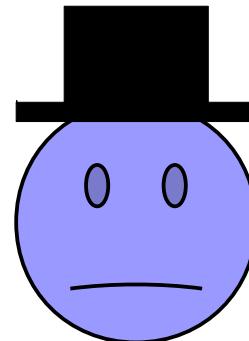
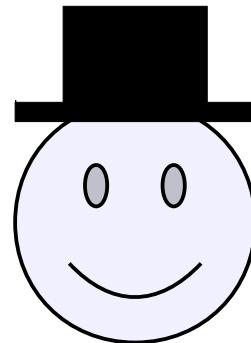
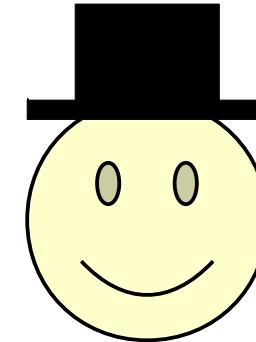
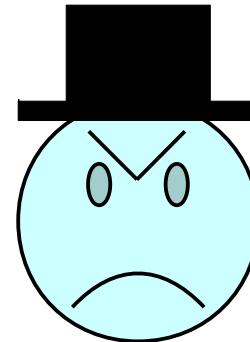
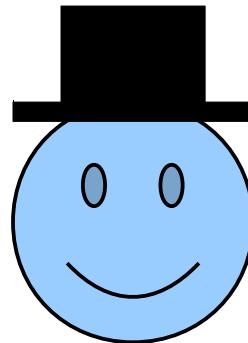
The Universal Quantifier



Is this part of the statement true or false?

$(\forall x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\forall y. WearingHat(y))$

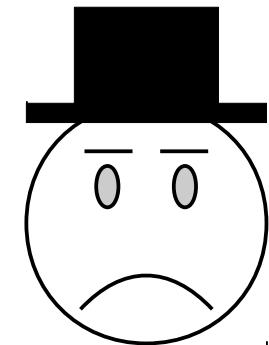
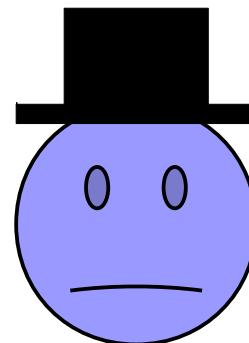
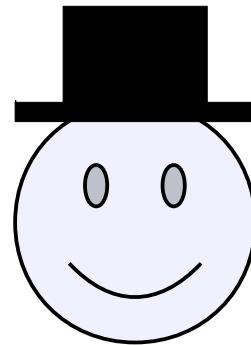
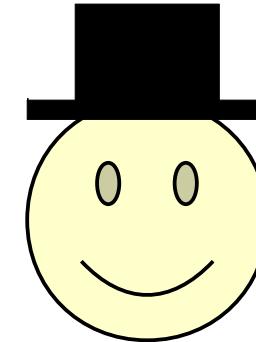
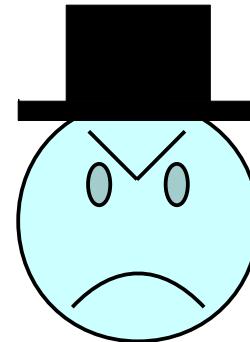
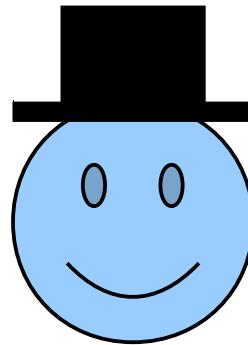
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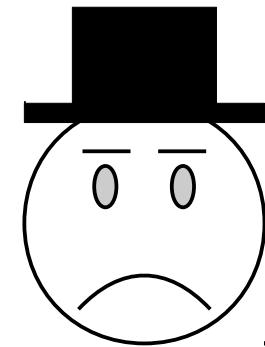
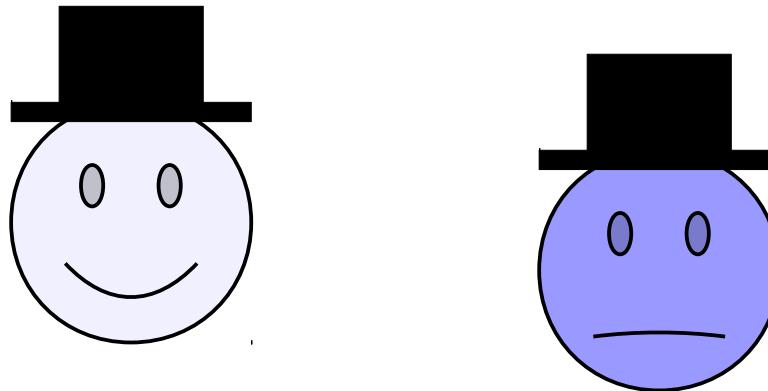
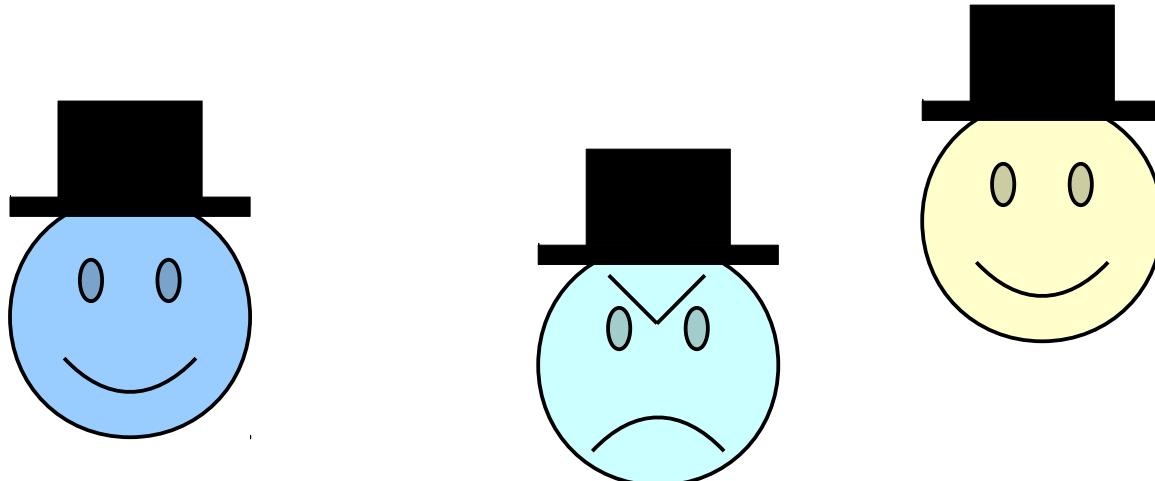
The Universal Quantifier



Is this part of the statement true or false?

$$(\cancel{\forall x. Smiling(x)}) \rightarrow (\forall y. WearingHat(y))$$

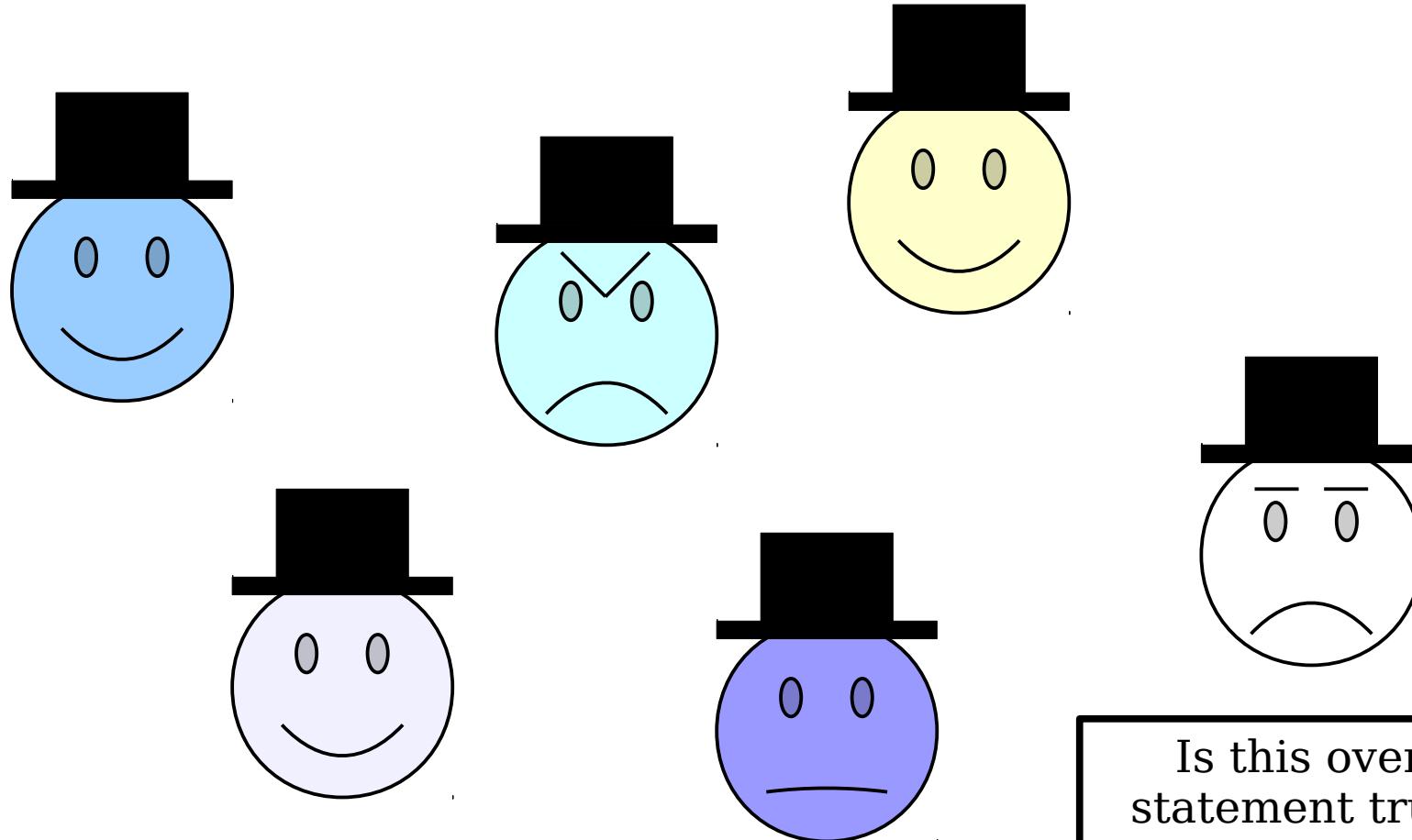
The Universal Quantifier



Is this overall statement true or false in this scenario?

$$(\cancel{\forall x. Smiling(x)}) \rightarrow (\forall y. WearingHat(y))$$

The Universal Quantifier


$$(\forall x. Smiling(x)) \rightarrow (\forall y. WearingHat(y))$$

Fun with Edge Cases

$\forall x. Smiling(x)$

Fun with Edge Cases

Universally-quantified statements are said to be ***vacuously true*** in empty worlds.

$\forall x. Smiling(x)$

Translating into First-Order Logic

Translating Into Logic

- First-order logic is an excellent tool for manipulating definitions and theorems to learn more about them.
- Need to take a negation? Translate your statement into FOL, negate it, then translate it back.
- Want to prove something by contrapositive? Translate your implication into FOL, take the contrapositive, then translate it back.

Translating Into Logic

- When translating from English into first-order logic, we recommend that you
think of first-order logic as a mathematical programming language.
- Your goal is to learn how to combine basic concepts (quantifiers, connectives, etc.) together in ways that say what you mean.

Using the predicates

- $\text{Smiling}(x)$, which states that x is smiling, and
- $\text{WearingHat}(x)$, which states that x is wearing a hat,

write a formula in first-order logic that says

some smiling person wears a hat.

How would you represent this in first-order logic?

Answer at

<https://cs103.stanford.edu/pollev>

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Which of the following are correct translations?

- (A) $\exists x. \text{WearingHat}(\text{Smiling}(x))$
- (B) $\exists x. (\text{Smiling}(x) = \text{WearingHat}(x))$
- (C) $\exists x. (\text{Smiling}(x) \wedge \text{WearingHat}(x))$
- (D) $\exists x. (\text{Smiling}(x) \rightarrow \text{WearingHat}(x))$

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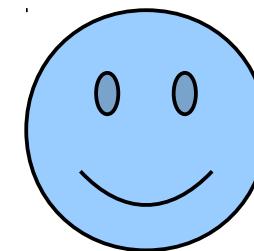
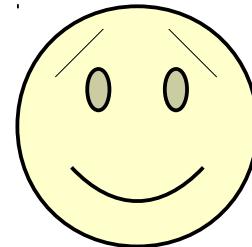
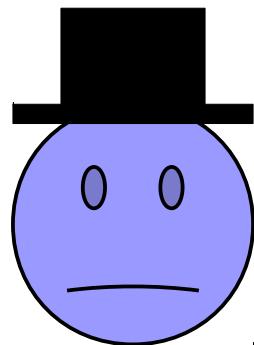
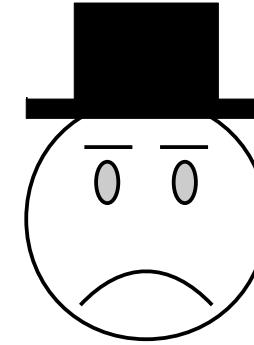
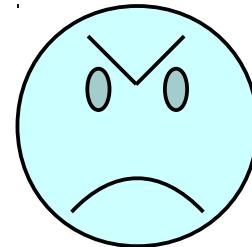
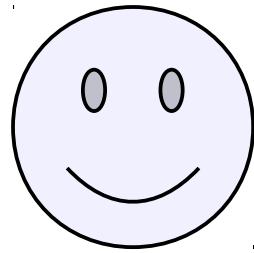
Which of the following are correct translations?

- (A) ~~$\exists x. \text{Smiling}(\text{Person}(x))$~~
- (B) ~~$\exists x. (\text{Smiling}(x) = \text{WearingHat}(x))$~~
- (C) $\exists x. (\text{Smiling}(x) \wedge \text{WearingHat}(x))$
- (D) $\exists x. (\text{Smiling}(x) \rightarrow \text{WearingHat}(x))$

“Some smiling person wears a hat.”

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$

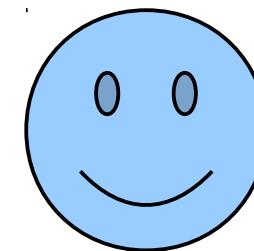
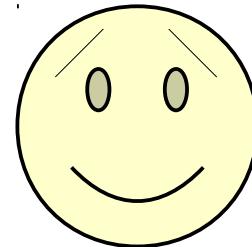
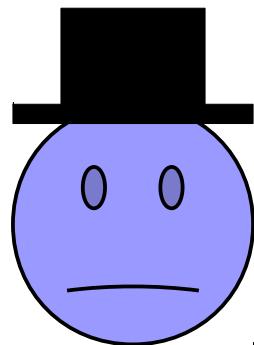
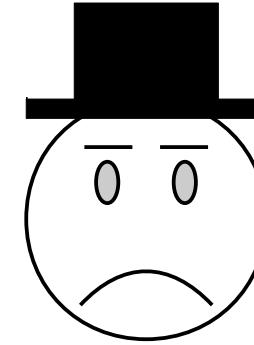
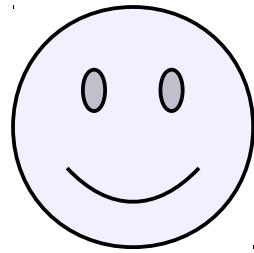
$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$



“Some smiling person wears a hat.”

$$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$$

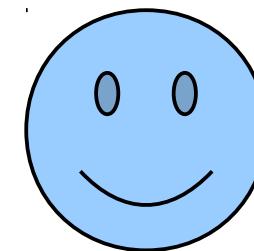
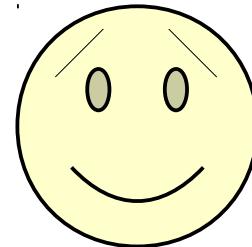
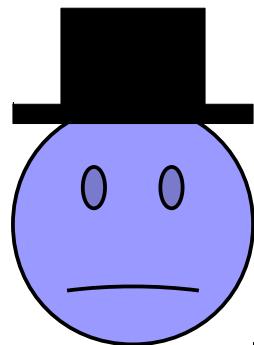
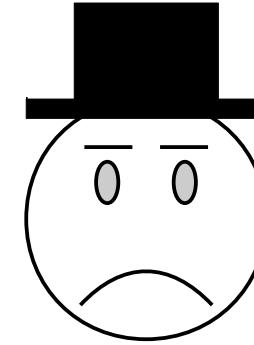
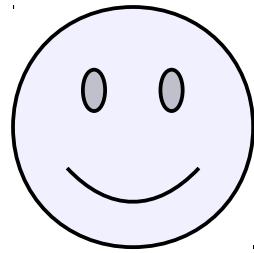
$$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$$



“Some smiling person wears a hat.”

$$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$$

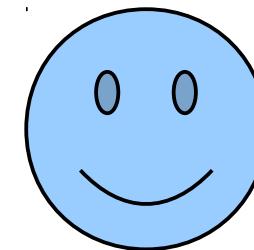
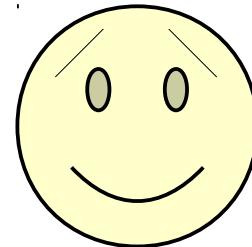
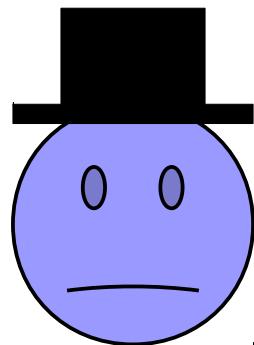
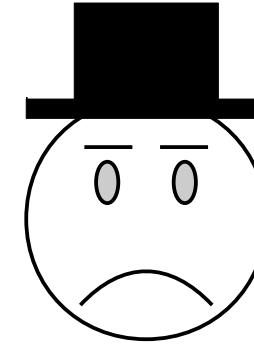
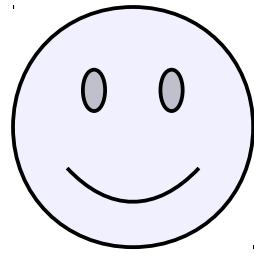
$$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$$



“Some smiling person wears a hat.” ***False***

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$

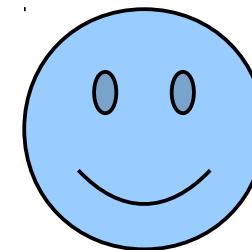
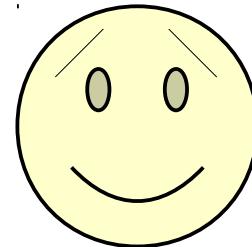
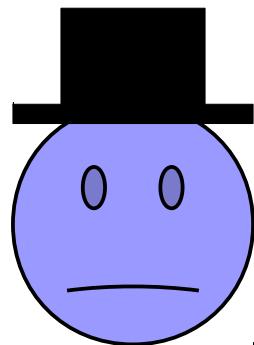
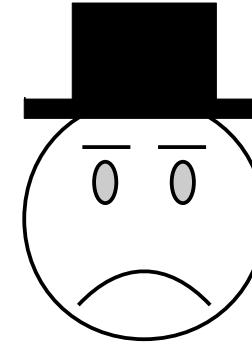
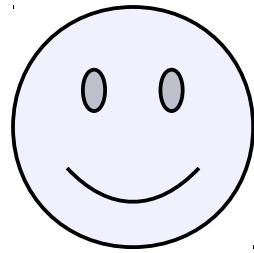
$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$



“Some smiling person wears a hat.” ***False***

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$

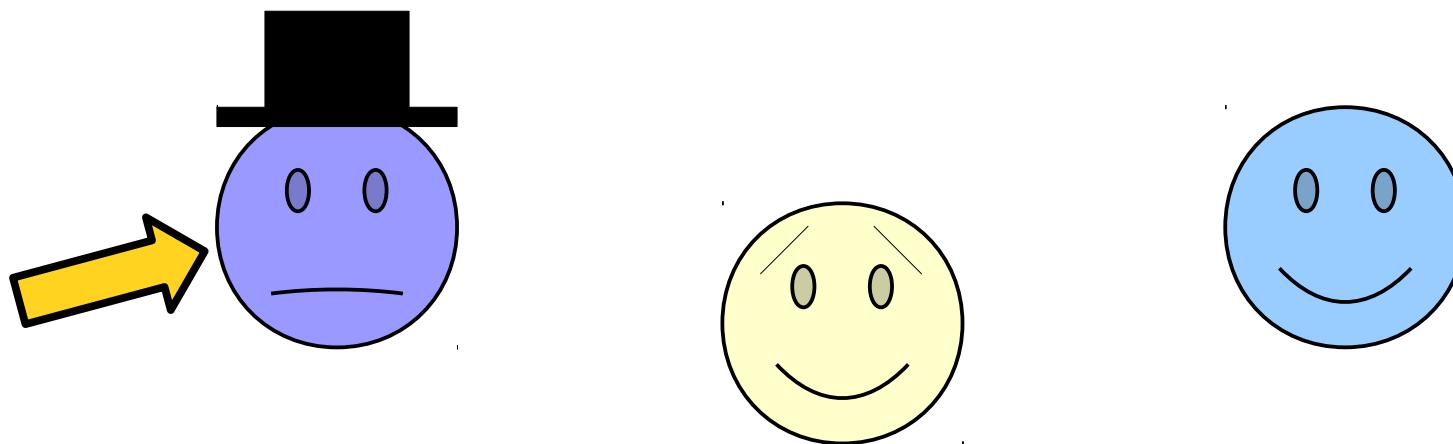
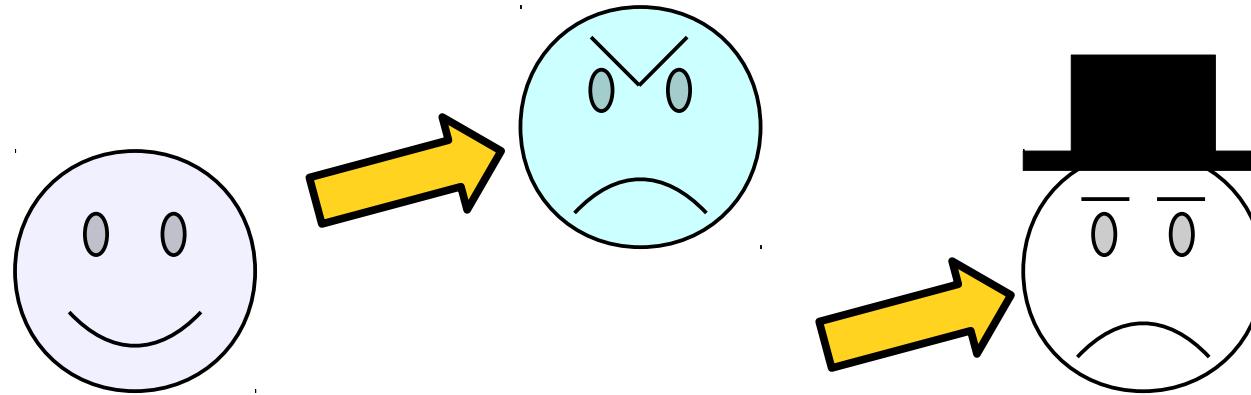
$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$



“Some smiling person wears a hat.” **False**

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$ **False**

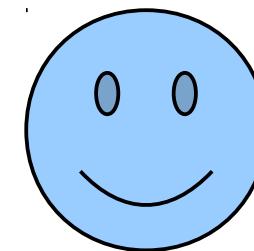
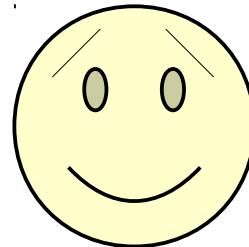
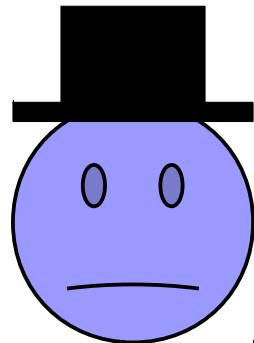
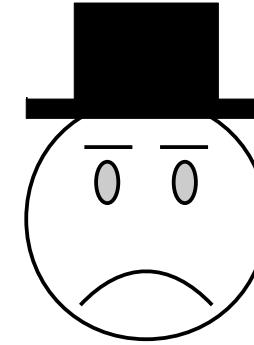
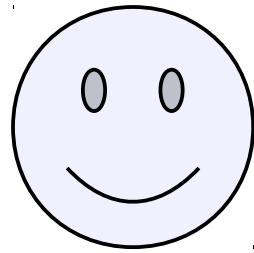
$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$



“Some smiling person wears a hat.” ***False***

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$ ***False***

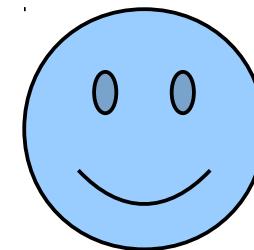
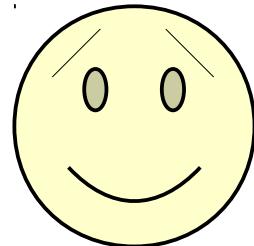
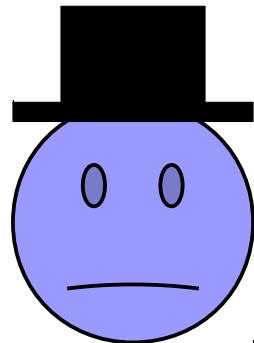
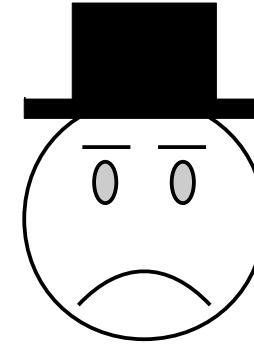
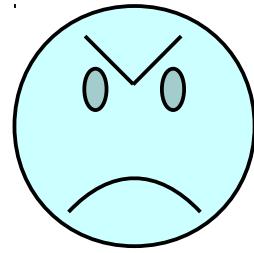
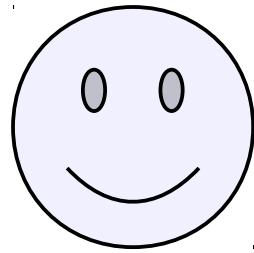
$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$ ***True***



“Some smiling person wears a hat.” ***False***

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$ ***False***

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$ ***True***



“Some smiling person wears a hat.” ***False***

$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$ ***False***

~~$\exists x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$~~ ***True***

“Some P is a Q ”

translates as

$\exists x. (P(x) \wedge Q(x))$

Useful Intuition:

Existentially-quantified statements are false unless there's a positive example.

$$\exists x. (P(x) \wedge Q(x))$$

If x is an example, it must have property P on top of property Q .

Using the predicates

- $\text{Smiling}(x)$, which states that x is smiling, and
- $\text{WearingHat}(x)$, which states that x is wearing a hat,

write a sentence in first-order logic that says

every smiling person wears a hat.

Which of the following are correct translations?

- (A) $\forall x. (\text{Smiling}(x) \wedge \text{WearingHat}(x))$
- (B) $\forall x. (\text{Smiling}(x) \rightarrow \text{WearingHat}(x))$

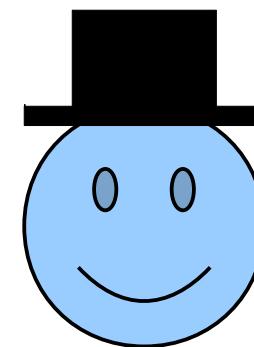
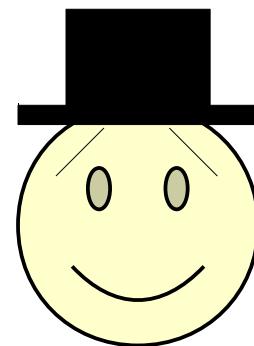
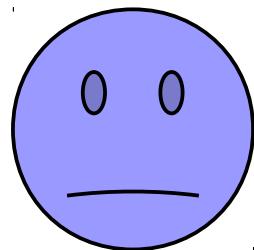
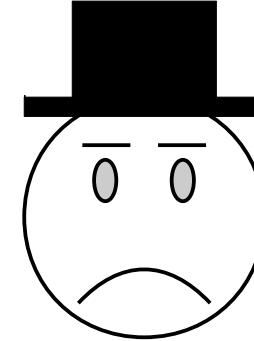
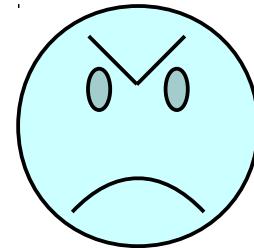
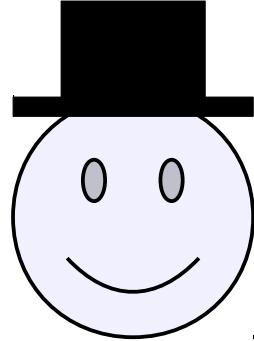
Answer at

<https://cs103.stanford.edu/pollev>

“Every smiling person wears a hat.”

$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$

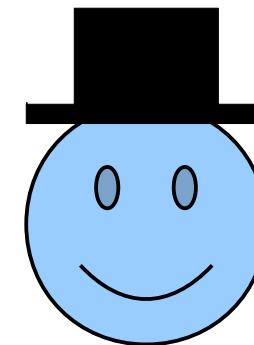
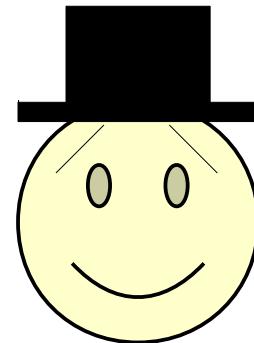
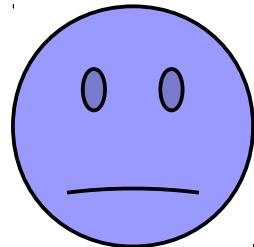
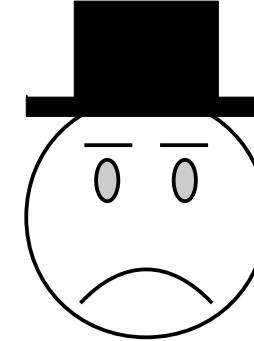
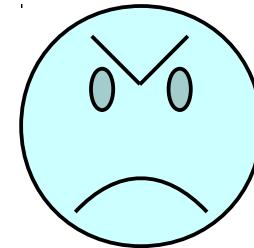
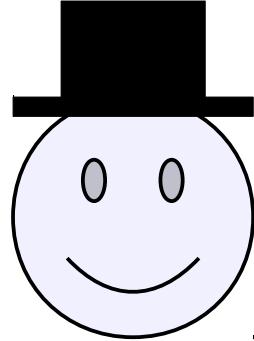
$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$



“Every smiling person wears a hat.”

$$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$$

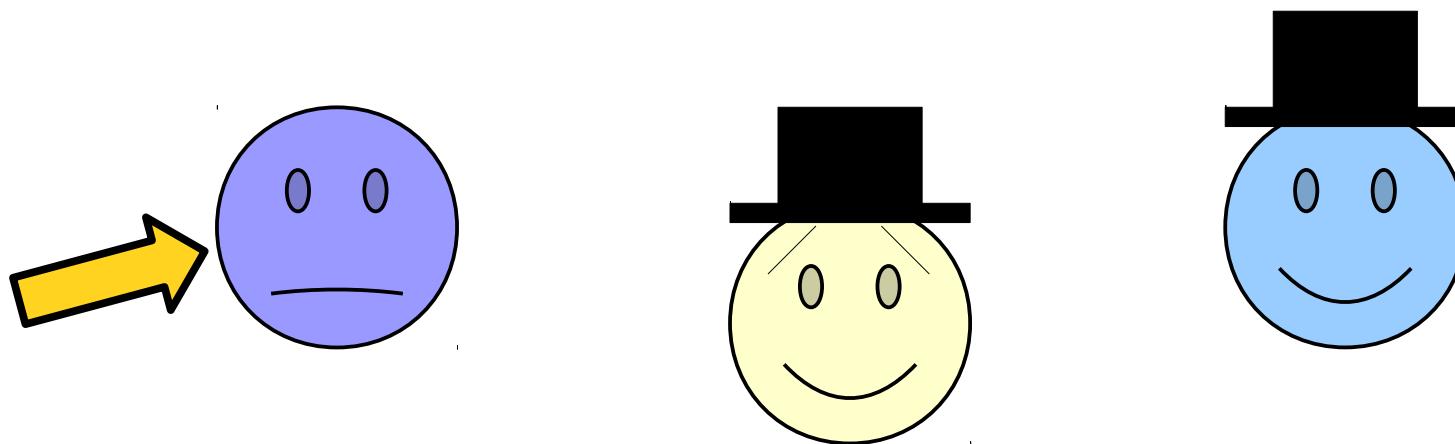
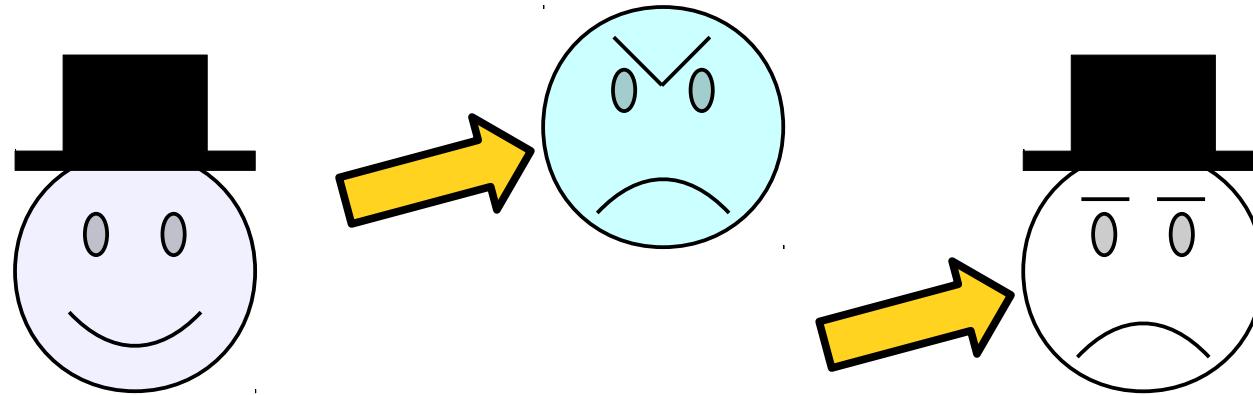
$$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$$



“Every smiling person wears a hat.” **True**

$$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$$

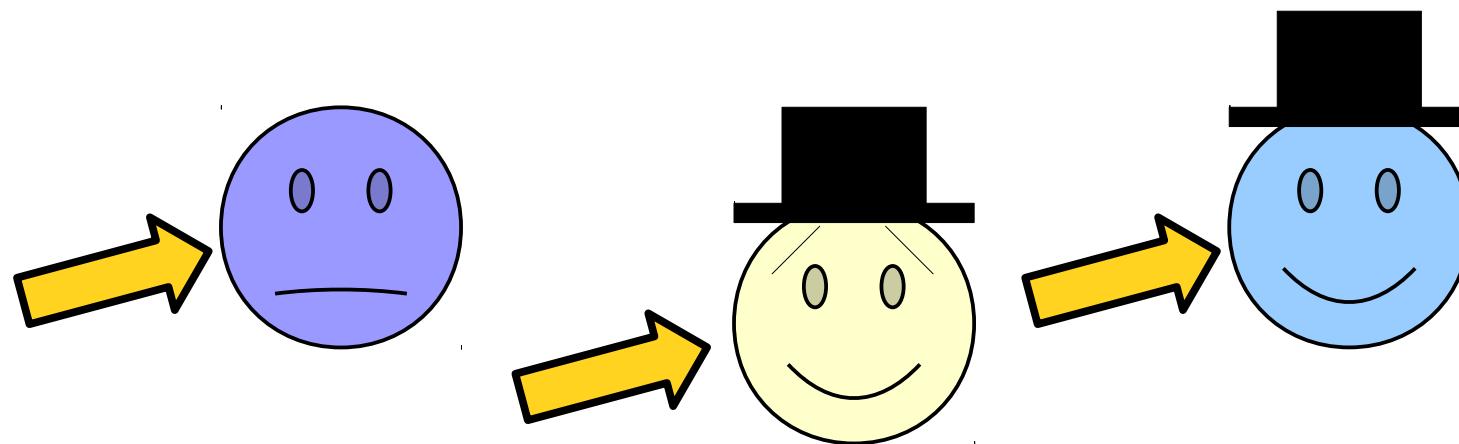
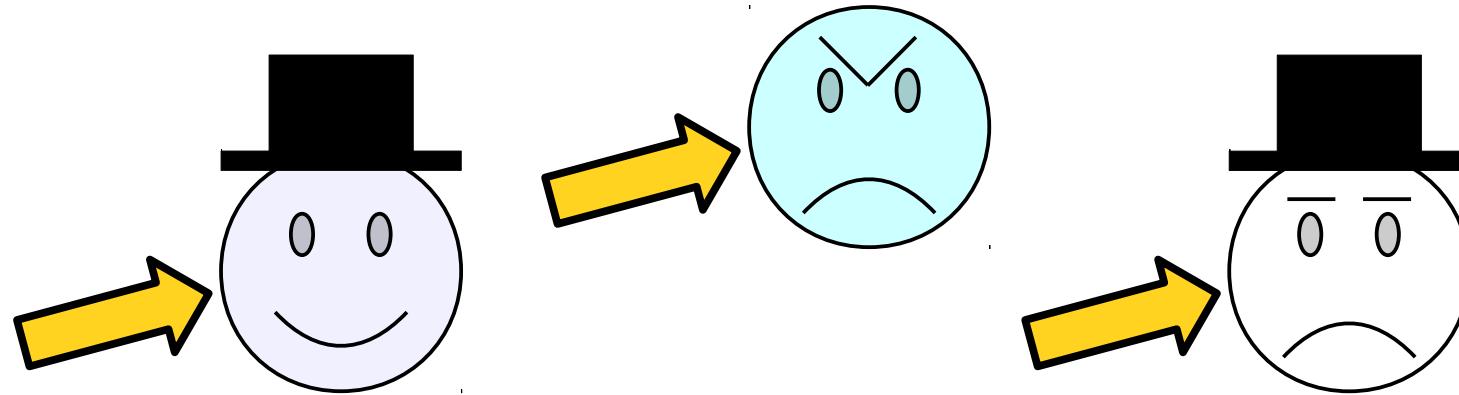
$$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$$



“Every smiling person wears a hat.” **True**

$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$ **False**

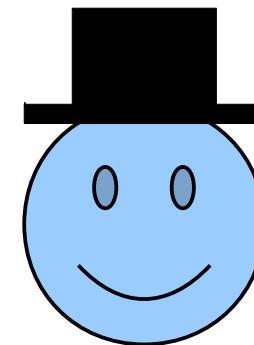
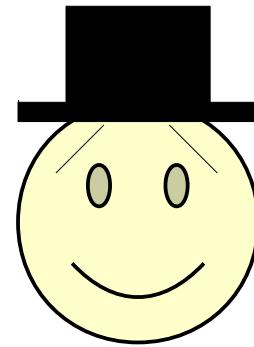
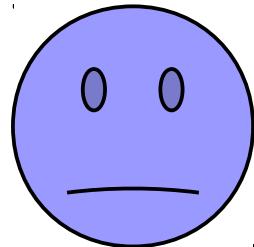
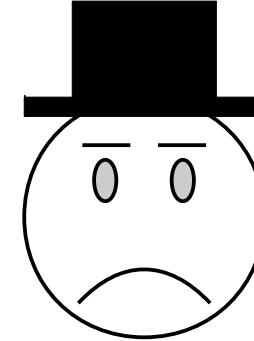
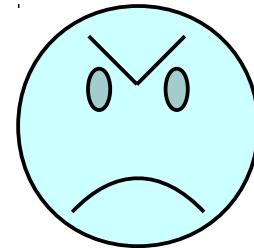
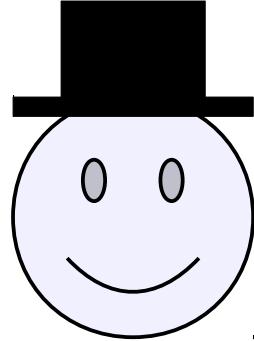
$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$



“Every smiling person wears a hat.” **True**

$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$ **False**

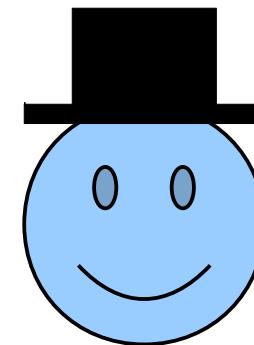
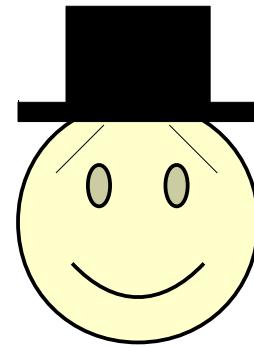
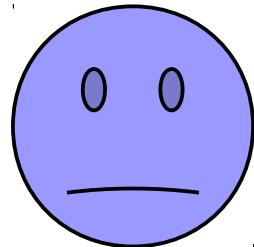
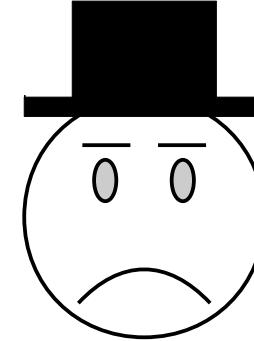
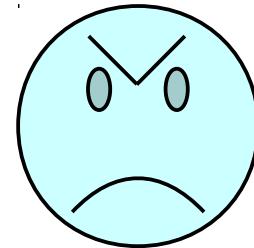
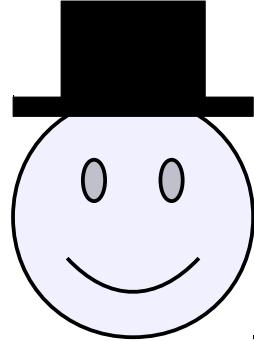
$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$ **True**



“Every smiling person wears a hat.” **True**

$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$ **False**

$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$ **True**



“Every smiling person wears a hat.” **True**

~~$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \wedge WearingHat(x))$~~ **False**

$\forall x. (Smiling(x) \rightarrow WearingHat(x))$ **True**

“All P 's are Q 's”

translates as

$\forall x. (P(x) \rightarrow Q(x))$

Useful Intuition:

Universally-quantified statements are true unless there's a counterexample.

$$\forall x. (P(x) \rightarrow Q(x))$$

If x is a counterexample, it must have property P but not have property Q .

Good Pairings

- The \forall quantifier *usually* is paired with \rightarrow .

$$\forall x. \ (\mathbf{P}(x) \rightarrow Q(x))$$

- The \exists quantifier *usually* is paired with \wedge .

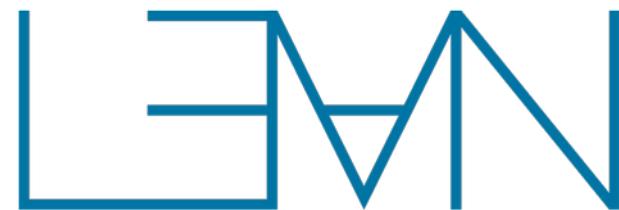
$$\exists x. \ (\mathbf{P}(x) \wedge Q(x))$$

- In the case of \forall , the \rightarrow connective prevents the statement from being *false* when speaking about some object you don't care about.
- In the case of \exists , the \wedge connective prevents the statement from being *true* when speaking about some object you don't care about.

Quantifiers in the Wild



Center for Automated Reasoning at Stanford University



theorem prover

Next Time

- ***First-Order Translations***
 - How do we translate from English into first-order logic?
- ***Quantifier Orderings***
 - How do you select the order of quantifiers in first-order logic formulas?
- ***Negating Formulas***
 - How do you mechanically determine the negation of a first-order formula?
- ***Expressing Uniqueness***
 - How do we say there's just one object of a certain type?