
INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

Insert Instructor Name
Title, Company

- What is IA?
- Why is this important?
- Taxonomy
- Card Sorting

OBJECTIVES

- Define the field of Information Architecture and explain where its techniques are used in a project.
- Explain what a taxonomy is and provide an example.
- Conduct a Card Sort with the goal of understanding relationships and organization.

WHAT IS IA?

“The organization, search, and navigation systems that help people to complete tasks, find what they need, and understand what they’ve found.”

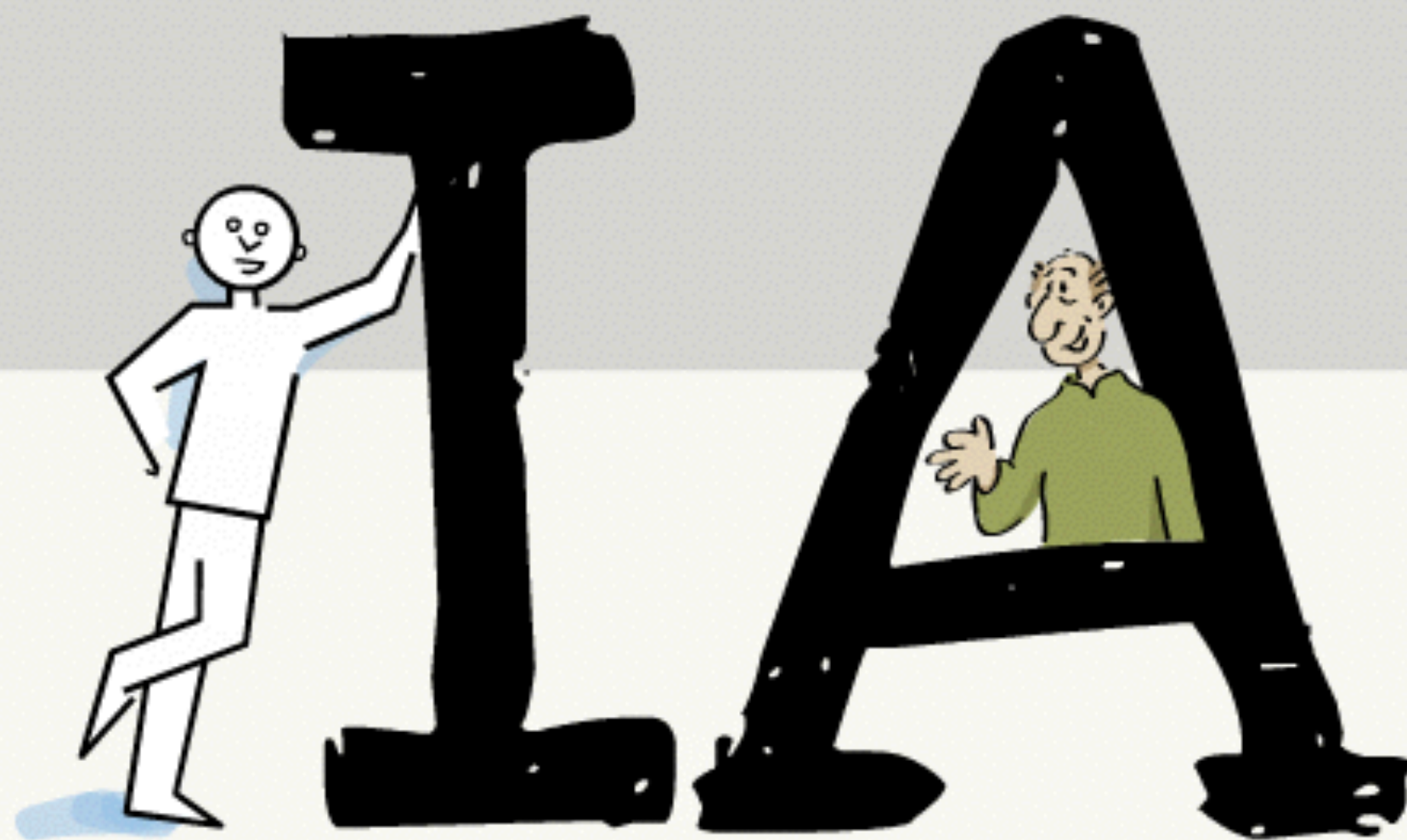
PETER MORVILLE

ROOTS IN LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE

Field of study also encompasses:

- › Information access, management, and retrieval
- › Information seeking behavior
- › Ontology
- › Database design and management

UNDERSTANDING



ideas by Peter Morville

illustrations by Jeff Callender

“Information Architecture is the way we choose to arrange the parts of something to make it understandable as a whole.”

ABBY COVERT @ABBY_THE_IA

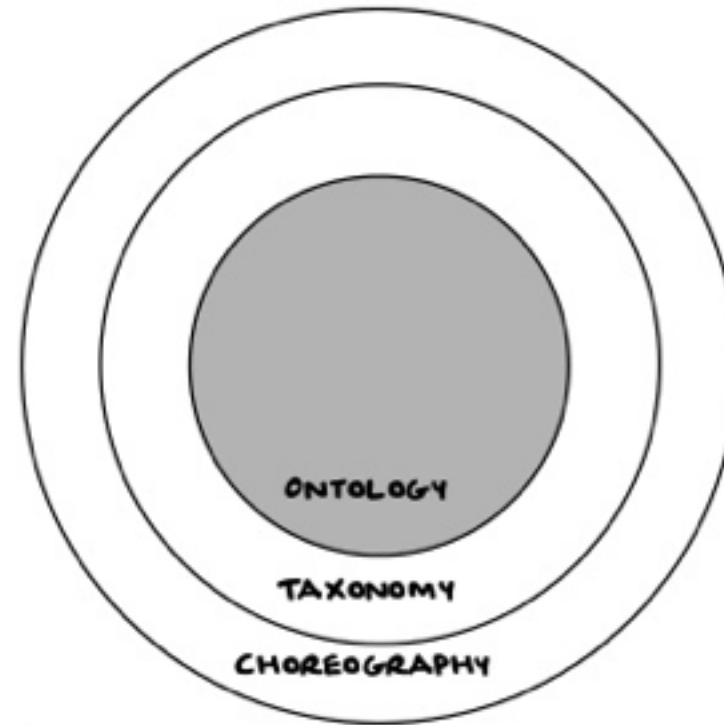
CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF IA*

Ontology:

Do you know what you
mean when you say
what you say?

Taxonomy:

Have you provided logical
structures that bring **meaning**
to what you present?



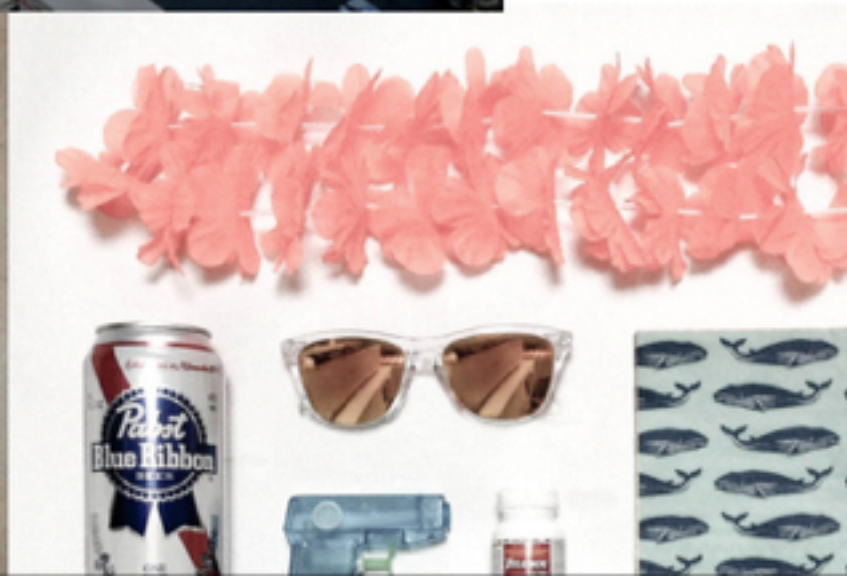
Choreography:

How is **meaning** affected across
various channels, over time and
through usage?

<http://www.slideshare.net/AbbyCovert/lessons-from-an-ontology-nerd>

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?





PEOPLE ORGANIZE INFORMATION DIFFERENTLY

- Users have different mental models
- Information access is an important aspect to the user experience
- Websites have evolving information

THE PAYOFF

- › Builds a shared vocabulary of terms
- › Informs interface design and navigation
- › Helps with database design
- › Helps us plan for scale
- › Makes sites more usable

PRACTICE ACTIVITY 15 min



Question:

KEY OBJECTIVE(S)

- Practice Sorting

TIMING

1. Dump your box of items onto the floor or table
2. Sort them with your team
3. Be prepared to explain your methodology



IA

DISCUSSION TIME

HOW DO WE PRACTICE IA?

WHERE IT FITS

- Typically practiced after the planning phase
- Important to database and navigation design
- Especially important for sites with a lot of content

IA HEURISTICS



FINDABLE



ACCESSIBLE



CLEAR



COMMUNICATIVE



USEFUL



CREDIBLE



CONTROLLABLE



VALUABLE



LEARNABLE



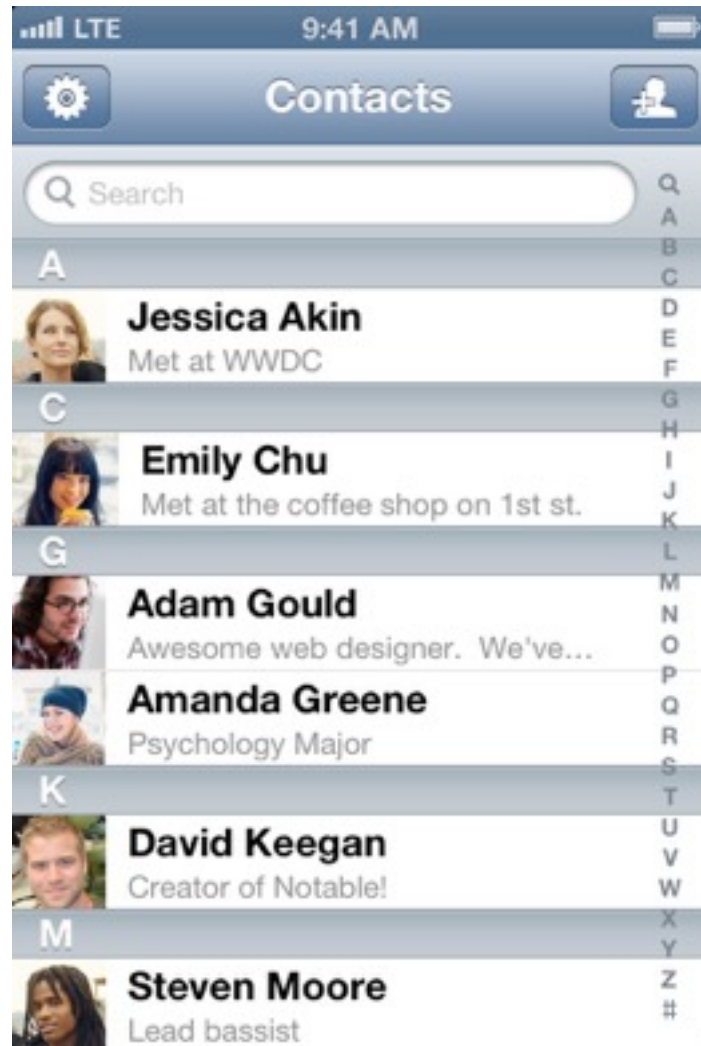
DELIGHTFUL

IA HEURISTICS



ORGANIZATION SCHEMES

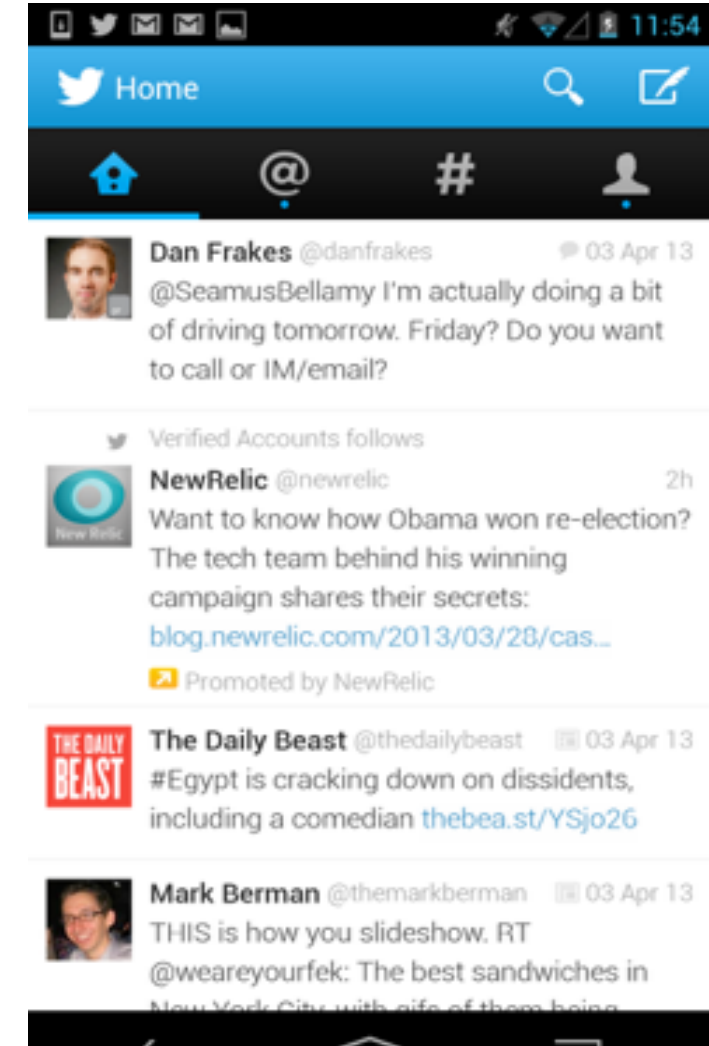
- Exact
 - Alphabetical
 - Chronological
 - Geographical
- Ambiguous
 - Topic
 - Task
 - Audience
 - Metaphor



Alphabetical

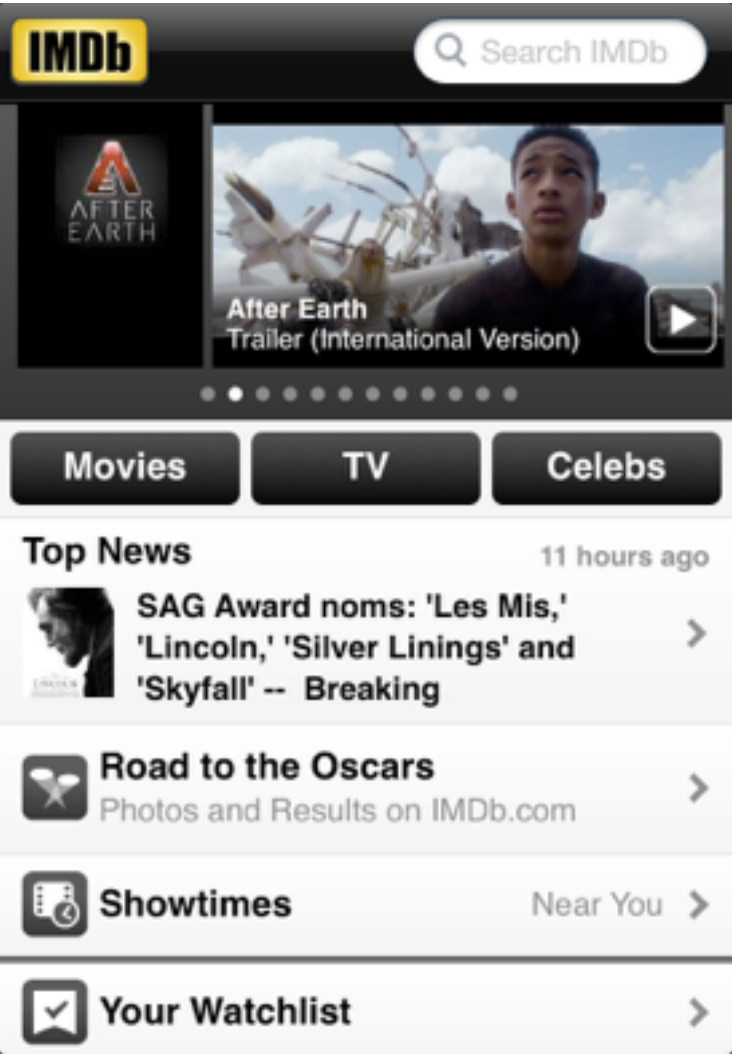


Geographical

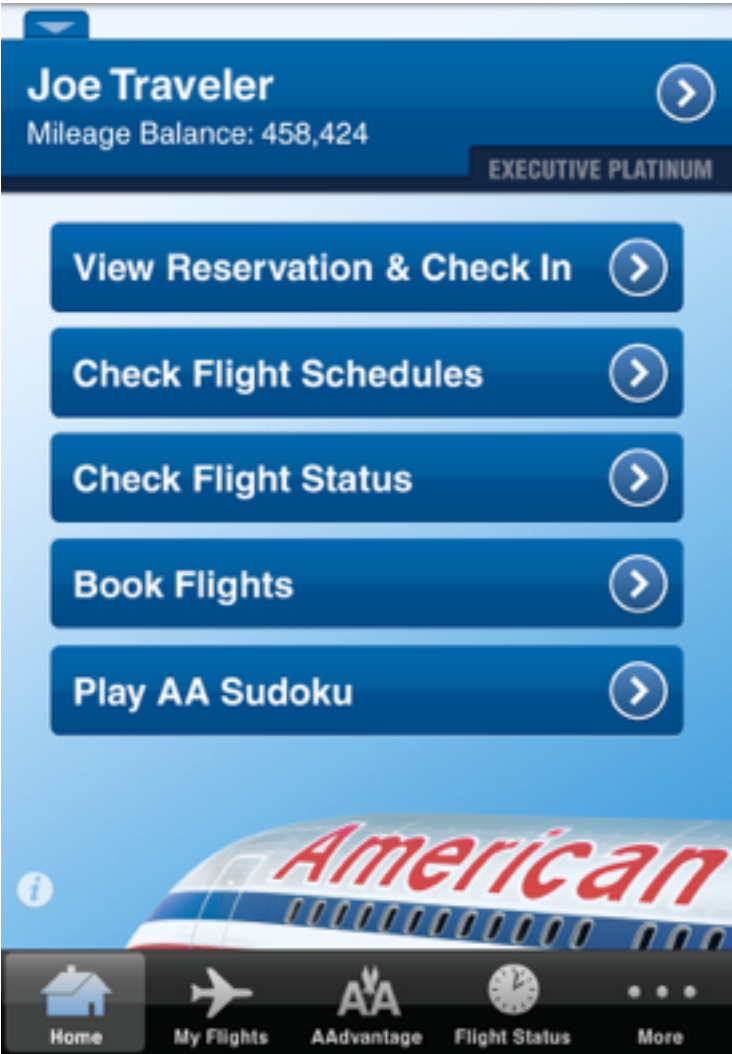


Chronological

HOW DO WE PRACTICE IA?



Topic



Task



Metaphor

TAXONOMY

WHAT IS TAXONOMY?

The study and practice of classification.

WHAT IS A TAXONOMY?

A particular classification.

WHAT ARE THESE?



WHAT ARE THESE?



“They are all birds”

—Ornithologist

WHAT ARE THESE?



“They are all birds”

—Ornithologist

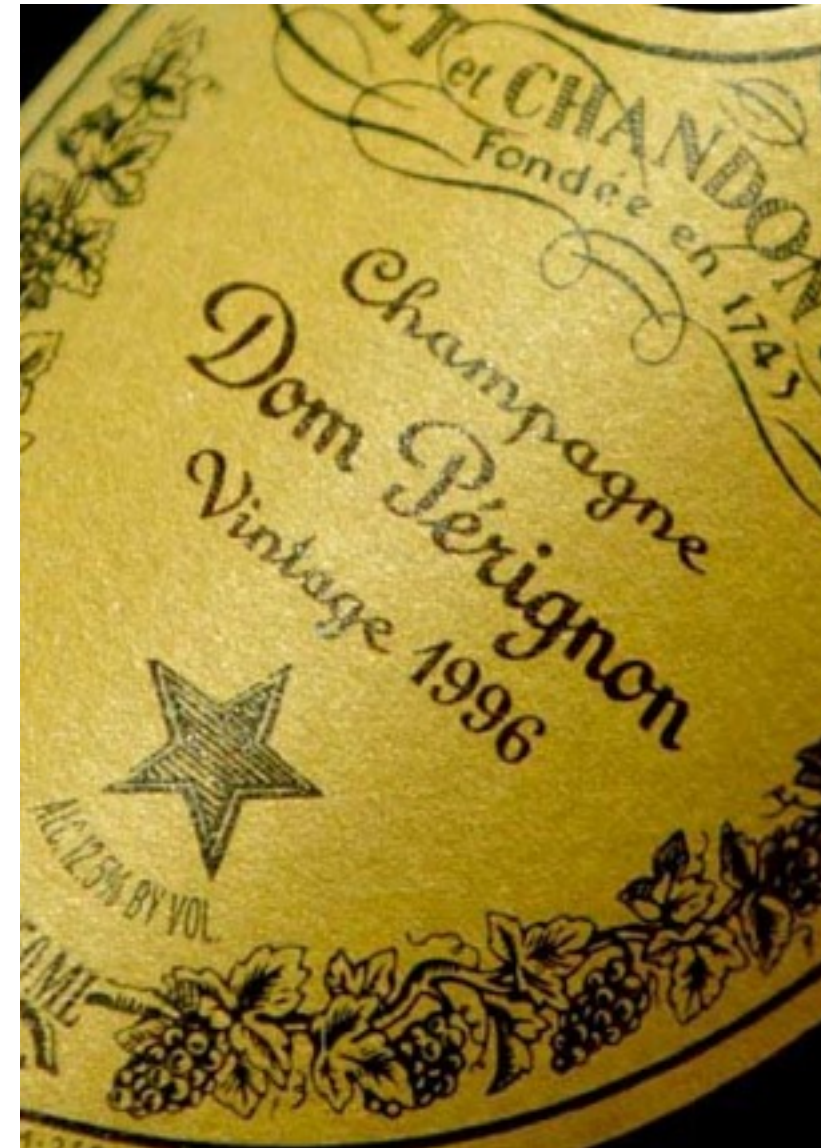
“The Cassowary is not a bird”

—Native Karam, Papua New Guinea



WHAT IS THIS?

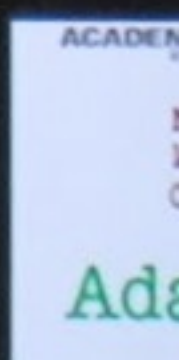
- A bottle of one vintage?
- A vintage of one brand?
- One brand of one house?
- The name of a person born in 1638?
- Champagne?



British Period Pieces Featuring a Strong Female Lead



Critically-acclaimed Mind-bending Movies



CARD SORTING

WHAT IS CARD SORTING?

- A research tool for IA
- A flexible method to understand how others organize information
- Pretty easy!

CONDUCTING A CARD SORT

- Write each item on an index card or Post-It
- Ask participants to arrange them into logical categories
- Observe and inquire about their rationale
- Analyze similarities and differences between people

TYPES OF CARD SORTS

Open

Participants can organize cards into as many groups as they want and assign their own labels to the groups

Closed

Participants are given both cards and category labels, and have to match the cards to the categories

LET'S TRY IT

PRACTICE ACTIVITY 60 min



Question:

KEY OBJECTIVE(S)

- Candy Sorting

TIMING

1. Dump your box of candies on the table
2. Perform an open sort with your group
3. Document your work
4. Perform a closed sort with an individual not from your group
5. Document your work



IA