10.1: Elements of Word Meaning: Intensions and Extensions

One way to define the meaning of a word is to point to examples in the world of things the word refers to; these examples are the word’s denotation, or extension. Another component of a word’s meaning is the list of attributes in our mind that describe the things the word can refer to; this list is the intension of a word.

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Check Yourself

1. Sidney Crosby, Wayne Gretzy, and Maurice Richard, are all _____________ of the phrase hockey player.

  • Extensions.
2. Has pages, binding, and contains writing are all ______________ of the word book.

3. Head of state, lives in the White House, and American are all ______________ of the phrase President of the United States.

Answers