

Neothomism: Intelligence. 17
§6. Abstraction.

Accordingly, we shall go back over our examples from geometry and arithmetic in the hope of finding out by personal experience the meaning of the statement that an idea is an intelligible form emergent in sensible data or in images.

Now there occurs an act of insight between the act of imagining a cart-wheel and the act of ~~def~~ intelligently defining the circle. The content of that insight may be expressed in concepts and words without any great difficulty. For what one grasps is that, if all the radii are equal, the plane curve must be uniformly round and, if any of the radii are unequal, the plane curve cannot be uniformly round. However, what we wish to determine is not the content of the insight as expressed in concepts and words; what we wish to determine is the content of the insight as it is grasped in the insight itself. To illustrate this important point, let us compare the content of seeing and the conceptual account of that content. What is seen is always some particular color; it is such an instance of such a shade of red or green or blue or the like.