

Learning by Insight

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Kohler's Theory of Learning by Insight. (Gestalt Theory of Learning)

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Introduction

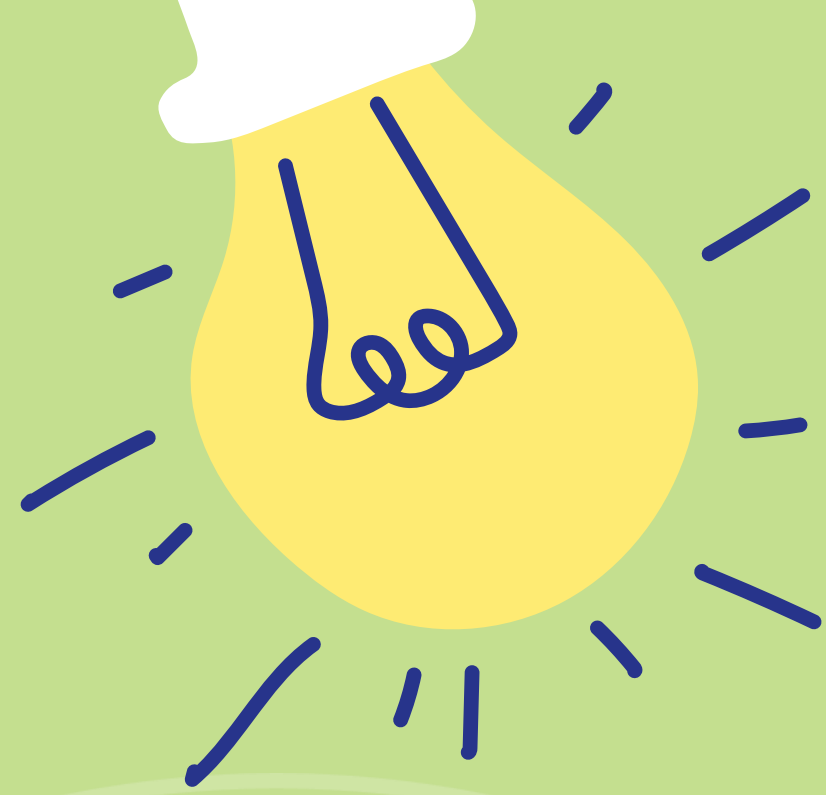
The German psychologist Wolfgang Köhler (1925) book "Mentality of Apes".

Experiments conducted on 'Canary Island' during 1913-17.

Also known as Gestalt Theory of Learning.

Kohler's famous experiment on nine chimpanzees of various ages with a variety of objects including boxes, poles, and sticks.

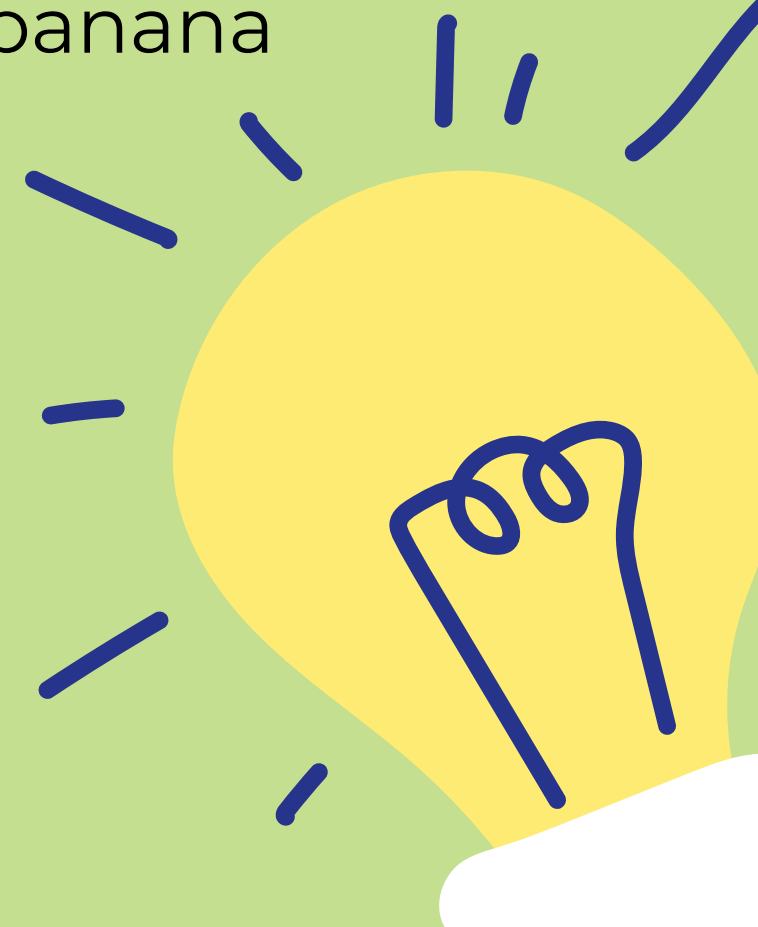




Experiment 1

In one experiment, Kohler put a chimpanzee Sultan inside a cage and a banana was hung from the roof of the cage. A box was placed inside the cage. The chimpanzee tried to reach the banana by jumping but could not succeed. Suddenly, he got an idea and used the box as a jumping platform by placing it just below the hanging banana

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Experiment 2

In other experiment, Kohler made this problem more difficult. Now it required two or three boxes to reach the banana. Moreover, the placing of one box over the other required different specific arrangements.

Experiment 3

In a more complicated experiment, banana was placed outside the cage of the chimpanzee. Two sticks, one larger than the other, were placed inside the cage. One was hollow at one end so that the other stick could be thrust into it to form a longer stick. The banana was so kept that it could not be picked up by one of the sticks. The chimpanzee first tried these sticks one after the other but failed. Suddenly, he got a bright idea. The animal joined the two sticks together and reached the banana.





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Among Chica, Grande, Konsul, Sulton and others Sulton who was the most intelligent of Kohler's chimpanzees, could solve all the problems. Other chimpanzees could solve the problems only when they saw Sulton solving them.

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Conclusion

With such experiments, Kohler concluded that in the solution of problems, his apes did not resort to blind trial and error mechanism. They solved their problems intelligently. Kohler used The term 'Insight' to describe the learning of his apes.

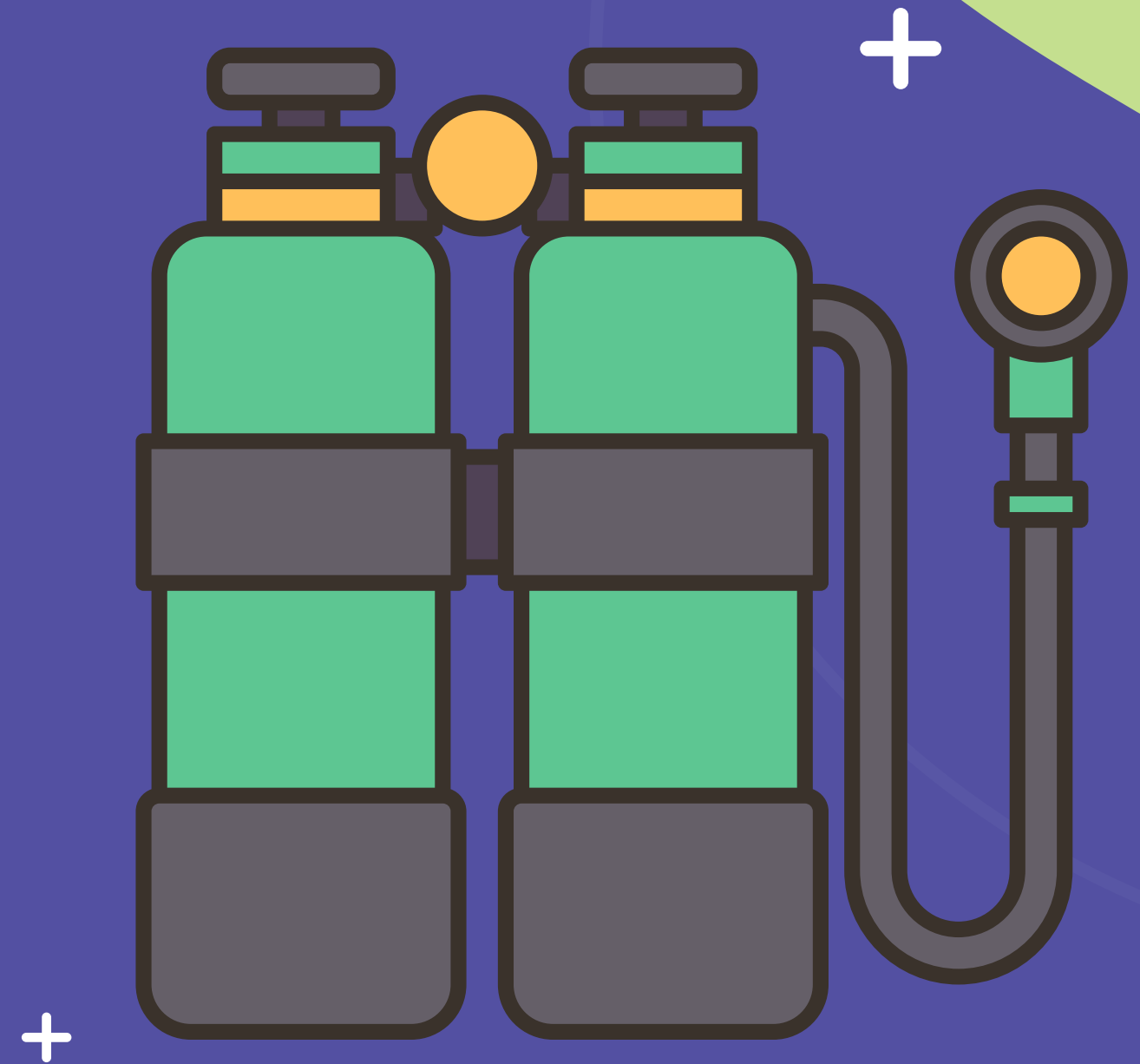


Insightful Theory of Learning Implies that :

Solution to a Problem arrives 'all of a sudden' flash of insight when a person is struggling with something.

Insight enhances an individual's ability to perceive and understand something or someone instinctively.

Insight does not rely on behaviour or observation, it is just a sudden realization of problem by intuition.



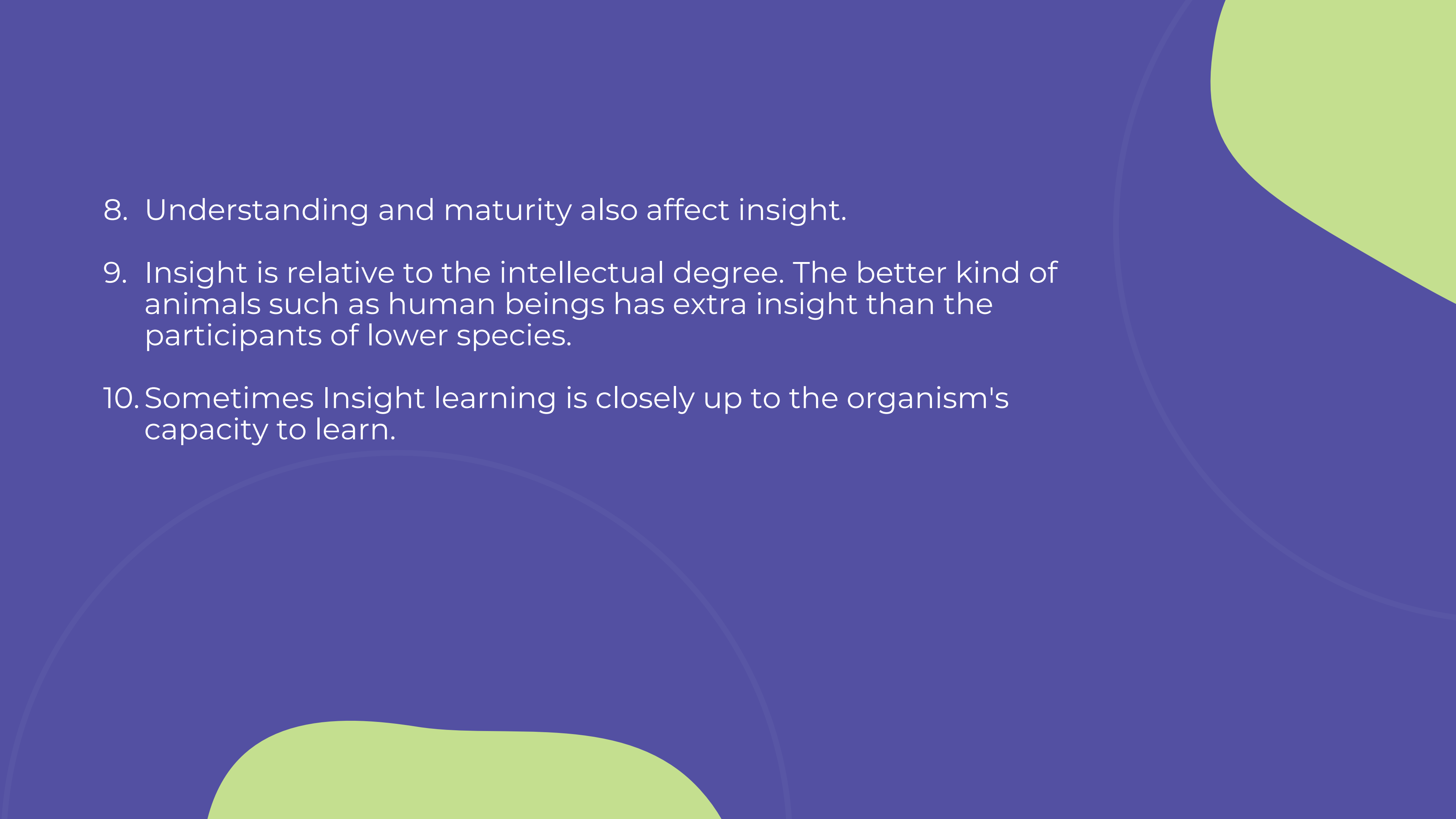
Attributes of Insightful Theory of Learning

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1. Insight occurs sudden.
2. Involves the "I have Found it feelings Eureka!"
3. Expressed as "Wow moment".
4. Insight alters perception.
5. Past experience is important in insight learning.
6. Age, intelligence, learning situation influences insight learning.
7. Insight learning is related to associative learning.

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8. Understanding and maturity also affect insight.
 9. Insight is relative to the intellectual degree. The better kind of animals such as human beings has extra insight than the participants of lower species.
 10. Sometimes Insight learning is closely up to the organism's capacity to learn.

Educational Implications of Learning by Insight

The whole is greater than the parts and, therefore, the situation should be viewed as a whole.

The use of blind fumbling and mechanical trial and error should be minimized. The learner should try to see relevant relationships and act intelligently.

The purpose or motive plays the central role in the learning process.

Subject matter (learning material) should be presented in Gestalt form. e.g. to teach about flower, take a complete flower and then go to parts.





The greater contribution of the insight theory of learning is that it has made learning an intelligent task requiring mental abilities instead of blind fumbling and automatic responses to specific stimuli.



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thank you

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