

The purpose of a database application is to provide forms, reports, and queries so that the users can track entities or objects important to their work. The goals of the early stages of database development are to determine the things to be represented in the database, to specify the characteristics of those things, and to establish the relationships along them. We refer to these things as entities. Here, we refer to them as **semantic objects**, or some times as just objects.

The word *semantic* means meaning, and a semantic object is one that models, in part the meaning of the users data. Semantic objects model the users perceptions more closely than does the ER model. We use the adjective *semantic* with the word *object* distinguish the objects discussed from the objects defined in object oriented programming (OOP) Languages.