

Do You See What I Mean?

An Introduction to Conceptual Metaphors

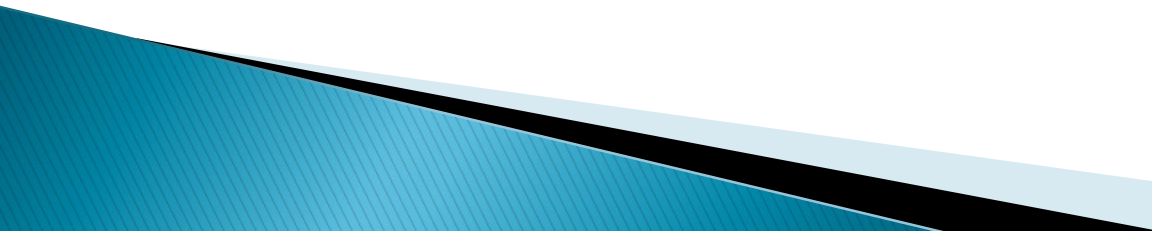
What is a Metaphor?

*“a word or phrase . . . is used **in place of another** to suggest a **likeness** or **analogy** between them”*

– Merriam Webster



Conventional Understanding

- Literary Devices
 - Ornamental & Unnecessary
 - Figures of Speech
- 



Examples from Literature

*“In the middle of **life’s road**,
I found myself in a dark wood.”*

– Dante

*“. . . I walked through the **wilderness of this world**”*

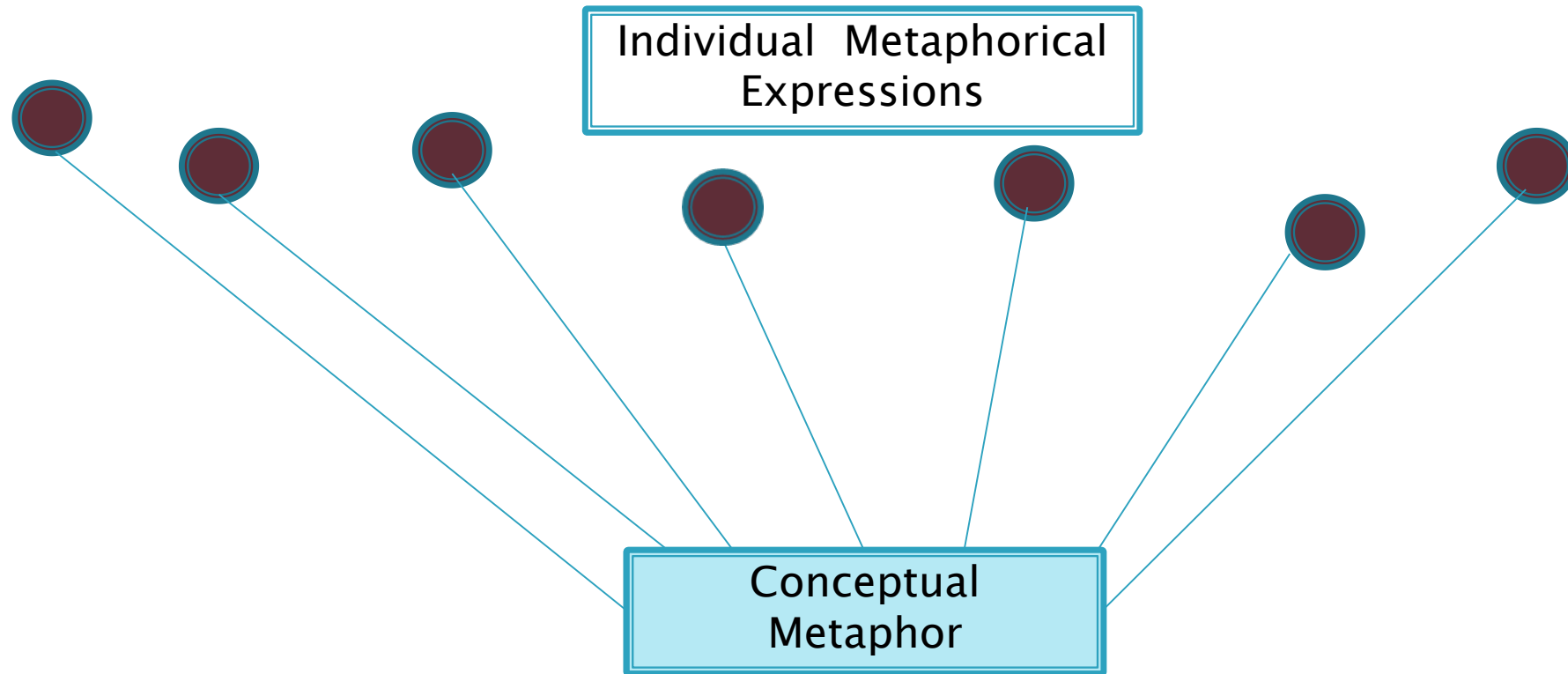
– John Bunyan

“Two roads diverged in a yellow wood”

– Robert Frost



A New Metaphor Theory





Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Domains

▶ Abstract Domain

- Feelings & Emotions
- Love & Relationships
- Life & Death
- Knowledge & Understanding

▶ Concrete (Experiential/ Perceptual) Domain

- Senses: Sight, Taste, Smell
- Direction: up/down
- Location & Distance

Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Abstract Domain:

**Concrete Domain
(Experiential/Perceptual):**

**Speaking of and understanding
ideas in the abstract domain
in terms of the perceptual
domain**

Let's Go for a Hike

- ▶ Stay on the trail
- ▶ Venture off the path and explore
- ▶ Wander around
- ▶ Choose alternate routes/paths
- ▶ Lose our direction
- ▶ Take a wrong turn
- ▶ Get lost



Living life: (In terms of a pathway)

- ▶ Feel lost in life
- ▶ Take the wrong path
- ▶ Stay on the straight and narrow
- ▶ Wander through life
- ▶ Feel directionless
- ▶ Take a wrong turn, go in circles
- ▶ Come to a fork in the road



Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Abstract Domain:

A Lifetime

**Concrete Domain
(Experiential/Perceptual):**

A path or walkway

Speaking of and understanding
a lifetime (abstract) in terms of
a path or walkway (concrete)

Let's Make Tea

- ▶ Fill up the pot
- ▶ Heat it up
- ▶ Water boils
- ▶ Pressure builds up
- ▶ releases steam
- ▶ Pour it out



Feelings and Emotions

- ▶ let off steam/cool off
- ▶ under pressure
- ▶ Feeling empty/hollow inside
- ▶ Drained
- ▶ Unsettled inside
- ▶ Boiling anger



Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Abstract Domain:

Feelings & Emotions

**Concrete Domain
(Experiential/Perceptual):**

A container full of liquid

Speaking of and understanding
feelings & emotions in terms
of **a container full of liquid**

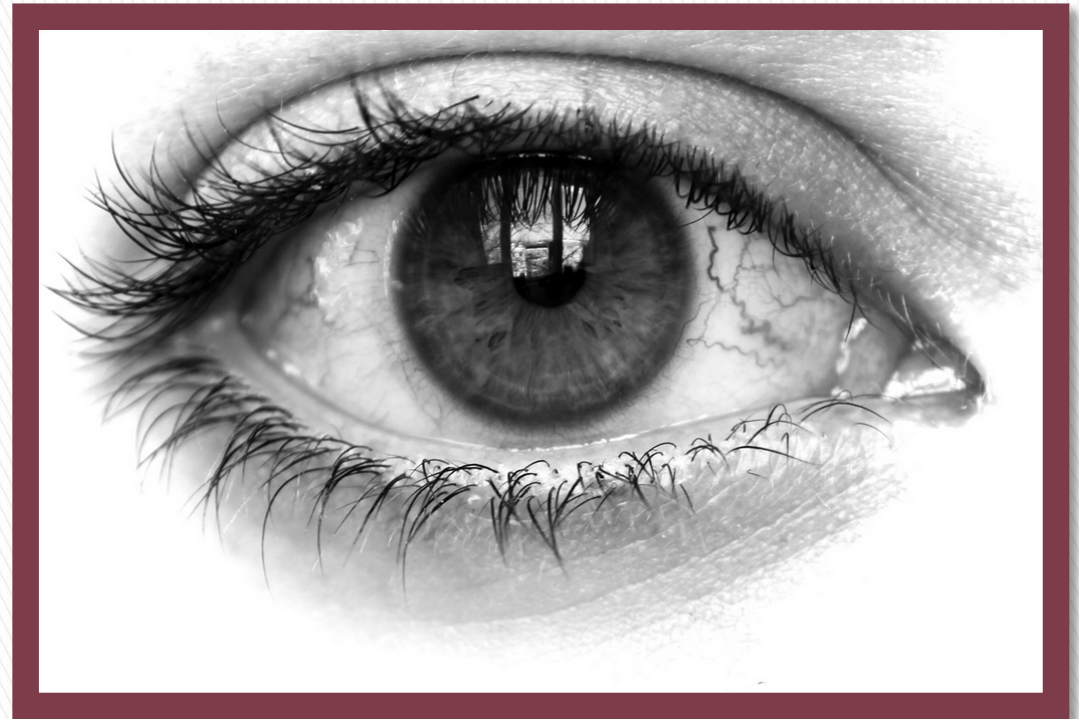
How is Your Vision?

▶ Easy to see:

- Clear
- Crystal Clear
- Bright
- Brilliant
- Transparent

▶ Hard to see:

- Unclear
- Murky
- Cloudy
- Fuzzy
- Opaque
- Foggy



Quality of Understanding:

▶ Easy to Understand:

- Clear
- Crystal Clear
- Bright
- Brilliant
- Transparent

▶ Hard to Understand:

- Unclear
- Murky
- Cloudy
- Fuzzy
- Opaque
- Foggy



SIGHT IS KNOWLEDGE: A Conceptual Metaphor

▶ Knowledgeable Person:

- Bright
- Brilliant
- See the big picture
- Good perspective
- 20/20 vision

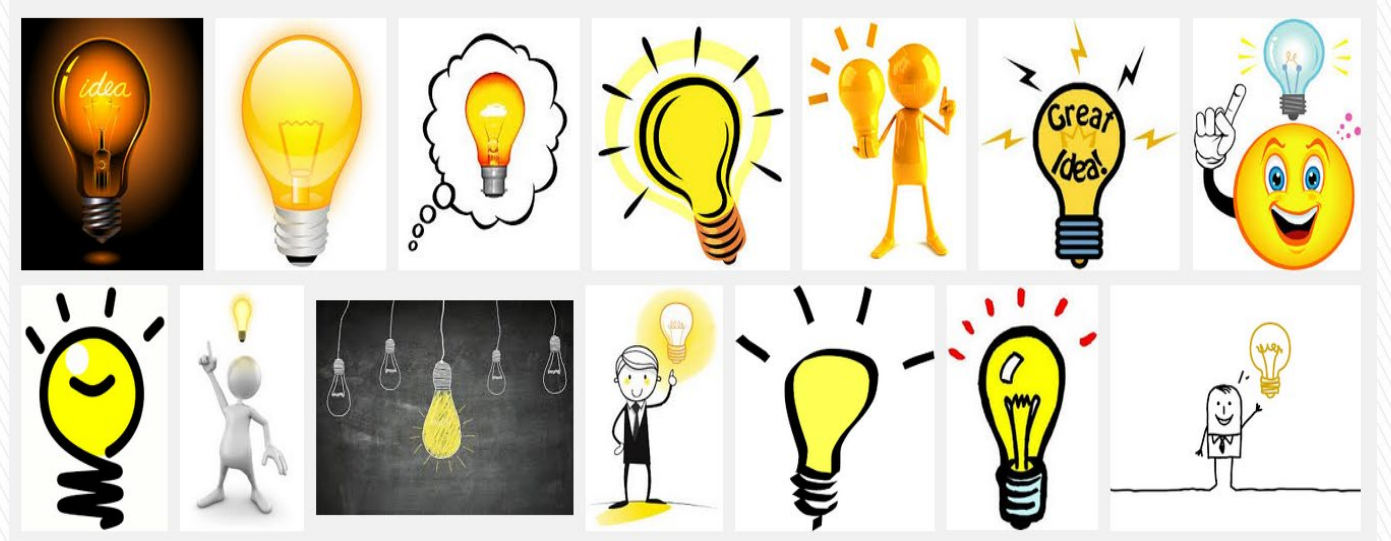
▶ Lacking Knowledge:

- In the dark
- Blind
- Understanding is clouded
- Myopic
- Tunnel-vision
- Overlooking an important point
- Blinded by love
- Rose-colored glasses

SIGHT IS KNOWLEDGE: A Conceptual Metaphor

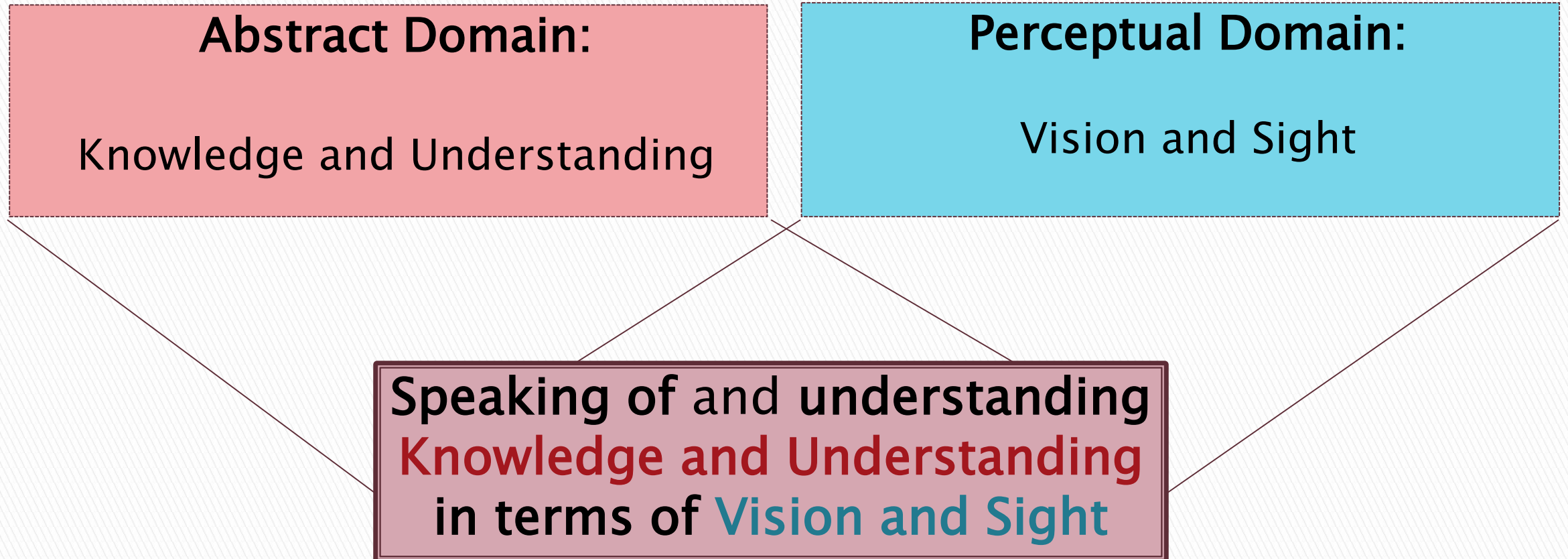
▶ To gain knowledge:

- Shed some light
- Take a closer look
- Gain perspective
- Have our eyes opened
- Clear it up
- Scales fall from eyes
- Lightbulb moment



google image search for "idea"

Conceptual Metaphor Theory



SIGHT IS KNOWLEDGE: A Conceptual Metaphor

- ▶ Examples from Etymology (the origin and history of words):

Illuminate: from Latin *lumen*, “light”

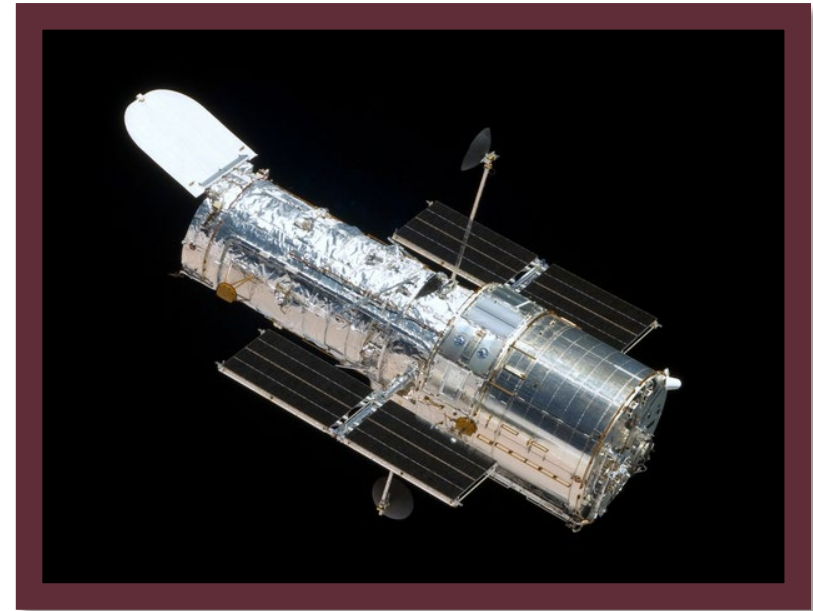
Elucidate: from Latin *lux or luc-*, “light”

Illustrate: from same Latin root as *luster*, “shine”

Enlighten: from Old English, intensifying “light”

Generating New Metaphors

“Buddhist Meditation is the Hubble Telescope of self-awareness”
– Dr. David Hargreaves



Combining Conceptual Metaphors

“The young monks have almost reached enlightenment”

SIGHT IS SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE



LIFE IS A JOURNEY



Combining Conceptual Metaphors

“The young monks have almost reached enlightenment”



Just Scratching the Surface...

“Metaphor is an integral part of our ordinary everyday thought and language. And it is irreplaceable: metaphor allows us to understand our selves and our world in ways no other mode of thought can”

-Lakoff and Turner



References:

▶ Photo Credit:

- https://www.google.com/search?hl=en&site=img&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=667&bih=589&q=idea&oq=idea&gs_l=img.3..0l10.941.1406.0.1759.4.4.0.0.0.69.186.4.4.0.msedr...0...1ac.1.64.img..0.4.183.oE52MkjkUI4
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▶ Quotes:

- <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/metaphor>
- More than Cool Reason, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson