Metaphor: seeing the light

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each advanced term with its definition.

1 conceptual metaphor theory ____	**a** the theory that abstract thought is fundamentally structured by metaphorical mappings from bodily experience
2 embodied cognition ____	**b** the view that cognition is shaped by the physical body's interaction with the environment
3 metaphorical entailment ____	**c** a further implication or inference that logically follows once a metaphorical mapping is accepted
4 primary metaphor ____	**d** a basic, universal metaphor grounded directly in recurring bodily experience, such as 'more is up'
5 ontological metaphor ____	**e** a metaphor that treats an abstract concept as if it were a physical object or substance
6 orientational metaphor ____	**f** a metaphor organised around spatial orientation, such as up/down or in/out
7 catachresis ____	**g** the use of a metaphor to fill a lexical gap where no literal term exists
8 blending theory ____	**h** a cognitive framework explaining how elements from separate mental spaces combine to produce new, emergent meaning
9 cross-domain mapping ____	**i** the systematic correspondence established between a source and target domain
10 metaphorical coherence ____	**j** the consistency maintained when multiple metaphors for the same concept do not contradict one another

2 Choose the most precise term for each context.

1 The theory that abstract thought is structured by bodily metaphor is conceptual metaphor theory / pure logical reasoning.

2 The view that cognition is shaped by bodily interaction with the world is embodied cognition / disembodied rationalism.

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3 A further implication once a metaphorical mapping is accepted is metaphorical entailment / an unrelated fact.

4 A basic, universal metaphor grounded in bodily experience is a primary metaphor / a culturally specific invention.

5 A metaphor treating an abstract concept as a physical object is an ontological metaphor / a purely literal description.

6 A metaphor organised around spatial orientation is an orientational metaphor / a random image.

7 Using metaphor to fill a lexical gap is catachresis / precise terminology.

8 A framework explaining how mental spaces combine to create new meaning is blending theory / a static dictionary definition.

3 Match the verbs with the noun phrases to form academic collocations.

1 ground ____	**a** a metaphorical entailment
2 derive ____	**b** a primary metaphor in bodily experience
3 establish ____	**c** cross-domain mapping
4 sustain ____	**d** metaphorical coherence across a discourse
5 activate ____	**e** two mental spaces
6 blend ____	**f** an embodied schema
7 exploit ____	**g** a lexical gap through catachresis
8 preserve ____	**h** an ontological metaphor

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4 Complete the analysis with terms from the box.

blending theory | catachresis | conceptual metaphor theory | cross-domain mapping | embodied cognition | metaphorical coherence | metaphorical entailment | ontological metaphor | orientational metaphor | primary metaphor

Cognitive linguists working within 1 _____ argue that abstract reasoning is fundamentally structured by systematic 2 _____ from concrete bodily experience onto abstract domains. This framework rests substantially on 3 _____, the view that cognitive processes cannot be fully understood apart from the body's physical interaction with the environment. Basic mappings such as 'more is up' constitute a 4 _____, grounded directly in recurring physical experience rather than cultural convention. Related mappings include the 5 _____, organising abstract concepts spatially, and the 6 _____, treating an abstract concept, such as an argument, as if it were a physical container or substance. Once a particular mapping is accepted, further 7 _____ often follow logically, extending the metaphor's implications in ways speakers may not consciously notice. Where no precise literal term exists, speakers sometimes resort to 8 _____, extending an available word metaphorically to cover the gap. More recent 9 _____ extends this analysis further, proposing that novel meaning emerges from the dynamic integration of separate mental spaces rather than simple mapping alone, while skilled writers deliberately maintain 10 _____ across an entire text, ensuring multiple metaphors for the same underlying concept do not contradict one another.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

The embodied roots of abstract thought

Conceptual metaphor theory proposes that even highly abstract reasoning, in domains such as mathematics, morality or time, is fundamentally structured by metaphorical mappings grounded in concrete, universal bodily experience. Primary metaphors such as 'affection is warmth', which plausibly originates from the literal physical warmth of early caregiving, are argued to arise independently across unrelated languages and cultures precisely because they derive from shared features of human embodiment rather than arbitrary cultural convention. Critics of this framework note that demonstrating cross-cultural recurrence does not conclusively establish an embodied causal origin, since shared cultural contact or independent but culturally motivated invention remain alternative explanations that proponents of strong embodiment claims have not always fully ruled out through rigorous comparative evidence.

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1 What does conceptual metaphor theory propose about abstract reasoning? _____

2 Give the example of a primary metaphor mentioned in the text. _____

3 Where does this primary metaphor plausibly originate? _____

4 Why are such metaphors argued to arise independently across unrelated cultures? _____

5 What do critics of this framework note? _____

6 What alternative explanations remain, according to critics? _____

6 Replace the words in bold with a precise term or collocation.

1 The abstract concept was treated as if it were a physical container. _____

2 The basic metaphor was grounded directly in universal bodily experience. _____

3 A further logical implication followed once the mapping was accepted. _____

4 The writer maintained consistency among multiple metaphors throughout the text. _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 160-190 word critical commentary on whether abstract thought is genuinely grounded in embodied experience, distinguishing observation from theoretical claim.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Include four academic collocations. [ ] Maintain a precise, balanced register.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Advanced terms

1 a 2 b 3 c 4 d 5 e 6 f 7 g 8 h 9 i 10 j

2 Precise terms

1 conceptual metaphor theory 2 embodied cognition 3 metaphorical entailment 4 a primary metaphor 5 an ontological metaphor 6 an orientational metaphor 7 catachresis 8 blending theory

3 Academic collocations

1 b ground a primary metaphor in bodily experience 2 a derive a metaphorical entailment 3 c establish cross-domain mapping
4 d sustain metaphorical coherence across a discourse
5 f activate an embodied schema 6 e blend two mental spaces 7 g exploit a lexical gap through catachresis 8 h preserve an ontological metaphor

4 Analysis

1 conceptual metaphor theory 2 cross-domain mapping 3 embodied cognition 4 primary metaphor
5 orientational metaphor 6 ontological metaphor 7 metaphorical entailment 8 catachresis
9 blending theory 10 metaphorical coherence

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 That it is fundamentally structured by metaphorical mappings grounded in concrete, universal bodily experience.
2 'Affection is warmth'.
3 The literal physical warmth of early caregiving.
4 Because they derive from shared features of human embodiment rather than arbitrary cultural convention.
5 That demonstrating cross-cultural recurrence does not conclusively establish an embodied causal origin.
6 Shared cultural contact or independent but culturally motivated invention.

6 Precise terms and collocations

1 an ontological metaphor 2 a primary metaphor 3 a metaphorical entailment 4 metaphorical coherence

Over to you

Answers will vary. Look for conceptual precision, evidence-aware reasoning and balanced evaluation.