

# COGNITIVE AND NON-COGNITIVE LANGUAGE

Cognitive language communicates information directly. Cognitive statements are either true or false. They are straightforwardly meaningful (even if they are false) because they refer to facts outside of ourselves in a straightforwardly descriptive way. To test whether a statement is an example of cognitive language or not, simply ask the question of any statement, "Is it true?" If the answer is either "Yes" or "No" then the statement is a case in point of cognitive language. If it is not possible to answer a question of this kind or if such a question sounds like a stupid question then the statement is probably some kind of non-cognitive language.

## COGNITIVE

Non cognitive language does not communicate any kind of information directly. Non- cognitive statements are neither true nor false. They are straightforwardly meaningless since it is not possible to assign any truth value to them. They do not refer to facts outside of ourselves in a straightforwardly descriptive way. If they communicate any information at all it is indirect and must be inferred by the listener. The information inferred will usually be information about the speaker rather than a fact about the world. (Consider the statement: "OW!" This is neither true nor false, nor does it communicate any information directly but we can infer from it something about the person who speaks such a statement.)

## NON - COGNITIVE

**For each of the statements below, state whether they are examples of cognitive or non cognitive language:**

It is raining today

Would you like a cup of tea?

Good morning and how do you do?

Saddam Hussein was an evil man

I love you

There are nine planets in the solar system

The moon is made of green cheese

Boo!

God is love

What a load of rubbish

"God exists" is an example of a non cognitive use of language

