

# *Apprehension and Comprehension*



**CONFUSING WORDS SERIES**  
**APPREHENSION AND COMPREHENSION**

What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god.

— WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A man may imagine things that are false, but he can only understand things that are true, for if the things be false, the apprehension of them is not understanding.

— ISAAC NEWTON

Some other faculty than the intellect is necessary for the apprehension of reality.

— HENRI BERGSON

Wisdom is that apprehension of heavenly things to which the spirit rises through love.

— HONORÉ DE BALZAC

Cold reason is purely human, a faculty of the brain. But natural instinct is an endowment of deity. Reason can only develop at the expense of instinct.

Reason is the outcome of a slow development of the human brain (νοητικόν). Instinct is the spiritual unity of the five senses endowed by Deity (αισθητικόν).

It is only when the sixth sense fully develops in the average man of the Sixth Race by Buddhi, galvanised by the essence of the awakened Manas, that man can comprehend what he beholds clearly. This is spiritual clairvoyance, par excellence, as opposed to psychic. The one is normal and real; the other, abnormal and counterfeit.

For an in-depth analysis, consult “Sixth Sense is Reason over Instinct,” in our Constitution of Man Series.

T. T.  
Series Editor



## Knowing by the senses versus knowing by the mind

### To apprehend is to know<sup>1</sup> by the senses

<b>Apprehend</b>	To perceive.   To seize, applied to Romance language fringe sense, <i>i.e.</i> , lay hold with the mind.   To become or to be conscious by the senses of (any external perception).
<b>Δράττομαι</b>	To grasp with the mind (not as in grasping a drachma).
<b>Καταλαμβάνω</b>	To grasp, to seize for oneself. <i>Cf.</i> φαντασία (Phantasia), <i>esp.</i> in Stoicism.
<b>Συλλαμβάνω</b>	To collect, gather together, put together, lay hands on, seize, conceive, grasp the meaning of, comprehend.

### To comprehend is to know by the mind

<b>Comprehend</b>	To understand.   To seize, grasp, lay hold, catch with mind or senses.
<b>Αντιλαμβάνω</b>	To grasp with the mind, perceive, apprehend.

### Examples

“When the light shone in the darknesse, and our darknesse, though it apprehended, yet it comprehended it not.” Austin: *Medit.* 1635

“To *know* may mean either to perceive or apprehend, or it may mean to understand or comprehend. . . . Thus a blind man, who cannot *know* about light in the first sense, may *know* about light in the second, if he studies a treatise on optics.” Ward: *Encycl. Brit.* XX. 49 s.v. *Psychology*

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<sup>1</sup> Knowledge comes from *gnosco*, *gnosis*, *jnana*. Wit, from *weid*, *vide*, *veda*.

## Related words

<b>Γνωρίζω</b>	To make known, point out.
<b>Κατανοέω</b>	To observe well, understand, appreciate, introspect.

## Δράσις vs. Πράξις

<b>Δράσις</b>	Strength, efficacy, action ( <i>opp.</i> of passivity).
<b>Δράττομαι</b>	To grasp with the mind (not as in grasping a drachma).
<b>Δράω</b>	To accomplish, to do.
<b>Πράξις</b>	The result ( <i>esp.</i> good results) or issue of business, action.

