



PRAMANAS: THE SCIENCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Understanding the Six Instruments of Valid Knowledge in Indian Logic (Vedanta)



WESTERN LOGIC



- Focus: Argument Structure
- Tools: Syllogisms, Square of Opposition
- Goal: Validity of Reasoning

INDIAN LOGIC



- Focus: Epistemology (Pramanas)
- Tools: Sources of Knowledge
- Goal: Origin of Truth

PRAMANANA



Sanskrit Origin: "Prama" (True Knowledge) + "Ana" (Means/Instrument).



Definition: The specific means or instrument by which valid knowledge is obtained.



Core Inquiry: "How do I know this is true?" (e.g., did I see it? did I infer it?)

NOTE ON PRONUNCIATION & ACCURACY

PRAMAN

Vernacular / Hindi Pronunciation



- Final consonant is halved/silent.

PRAMANA

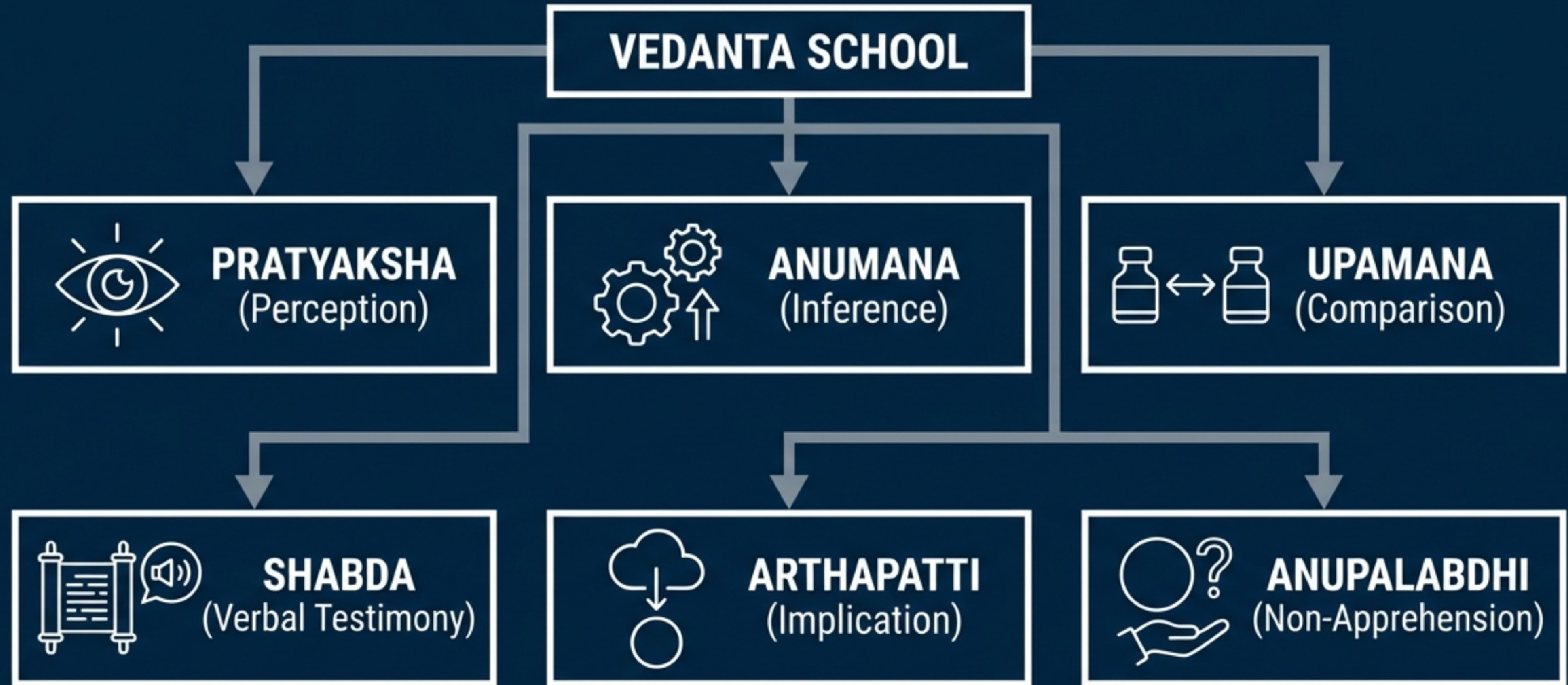
Classical Sanskrit Pronunciation



- Final consonant is fully articulated (Prama-na).

Scholarly Standard: We use the Sanskrit transliteration
'Pramana' (similar to Ram vs. Rama).

THE VEDANTA PERSPECTIVE



Vedanta philosophy accepts all six instruments as valid sources of knowledge.

1. PRATYAKSHA (PERCEPTION)



Definition: Direct knowledge received through the sense organs.

Mechanism: Immediate contact between senses and object.

Characteristics: Concrete, Direct, Fastest.

Reliability: High ('Seeing is believing').

PRATYAKSHA IN ACTION

PANEL 1



Sensory Input: Loud engine roar.

Knowledge:
A motorcycle is passing by.

PANEL 1

PANEL 2



Sensory Input:
Visual of burning trash.

Knowledge: There is fire.

PANEL 2

No inference required. The knowledge is immediate.

2. ANUMANA (INFERENCE)



Definition: Knowledge obtained through logical deduction when direct perception is absent.

Mechanism: Relies on 'Vyapti' (Invariable Concomitance) or Universal Laws.

Core Concept: Previous knowledge allows for new conclusions.

Use Case: When we cannot see the object, but we see the signs.

CLASSIC EXAMPLE: SMOKE & FIRE



We see the smoke (Pratyaksha), but we infer the fire (Anumana).

3. UPAMANA (COMPARISON)



Definition: Knowledge gained by comparing a new/unknown object with a known object.

Also Known As: Analogy.

Mechanism: Mapping the characteristics of a known entity onto an unknown entity.

Use Case: Explaining concepts that have never been perceived by the subject.

EXAMPLES OF UPAMANA

The Planet Mars



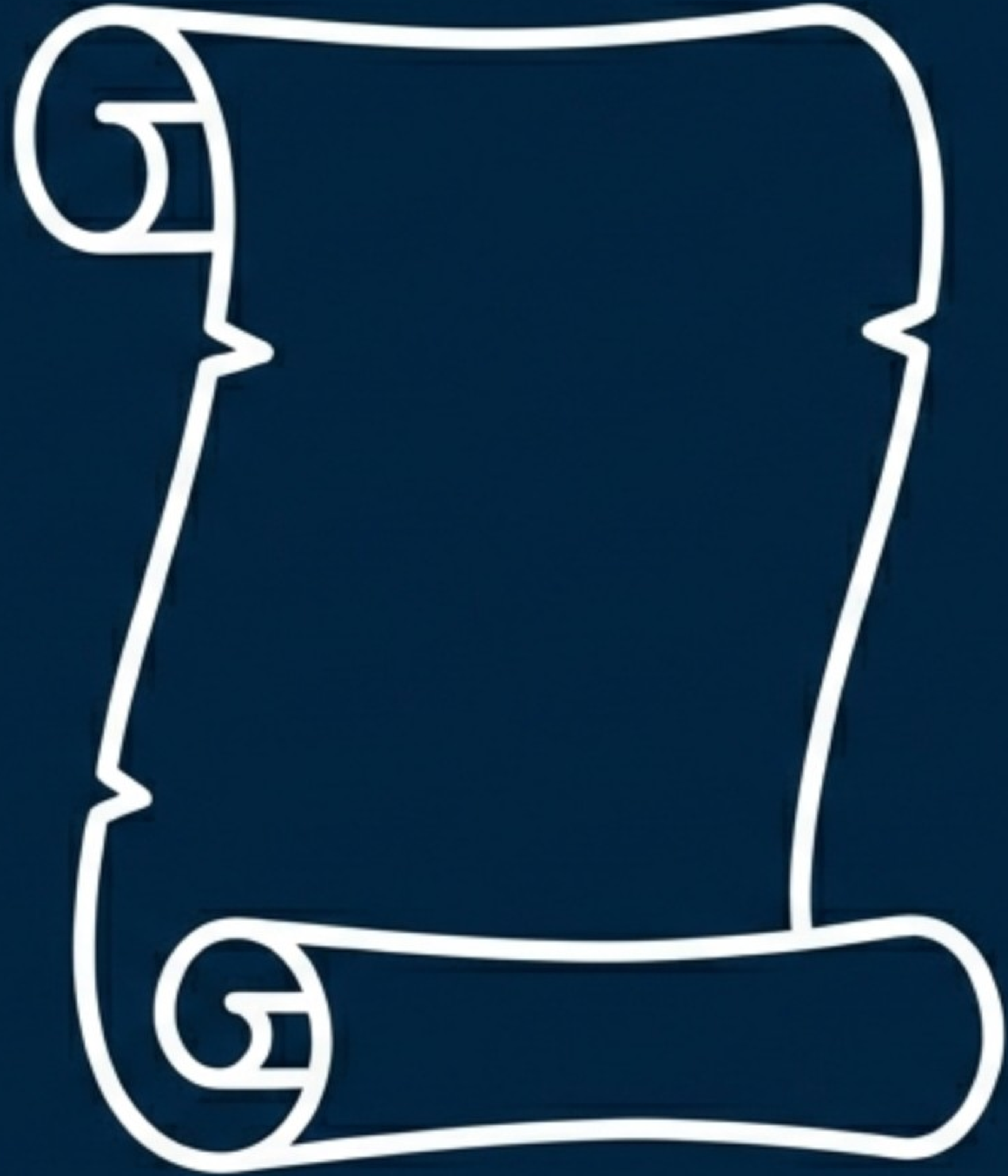
Mars (Unknown) is like a
Desert (Known).

The Passion Fruit



Passion Fruit (Unknown) tastes like
a mix of Mango + Lemon +
Orange (Known).

4. SHABDA (VERBAL TESTIMONY)

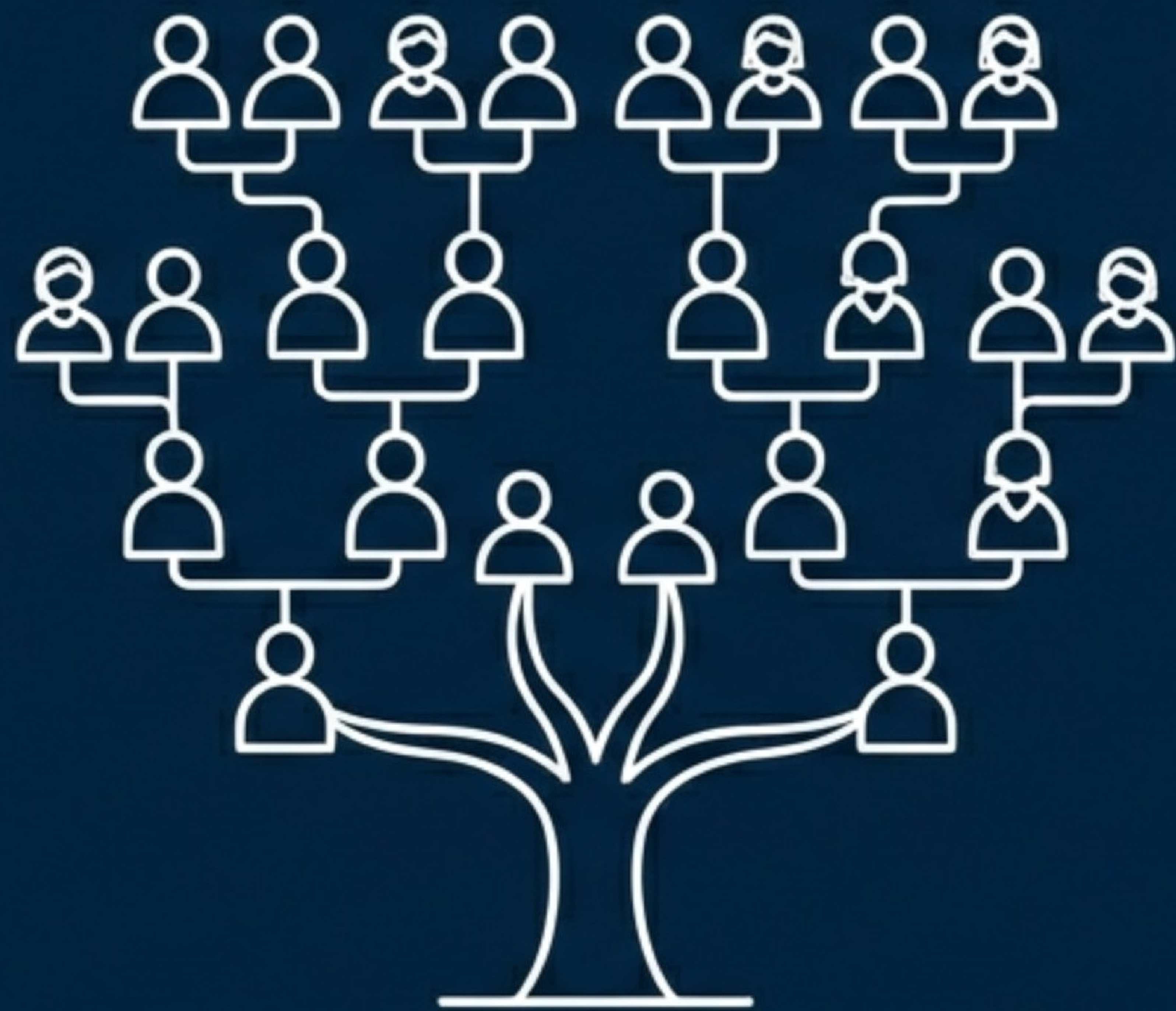


Definition: Knowledge derived from the words of a reliable, authoritative source.

Forms: Written texts, oral traditions, expert testimony.

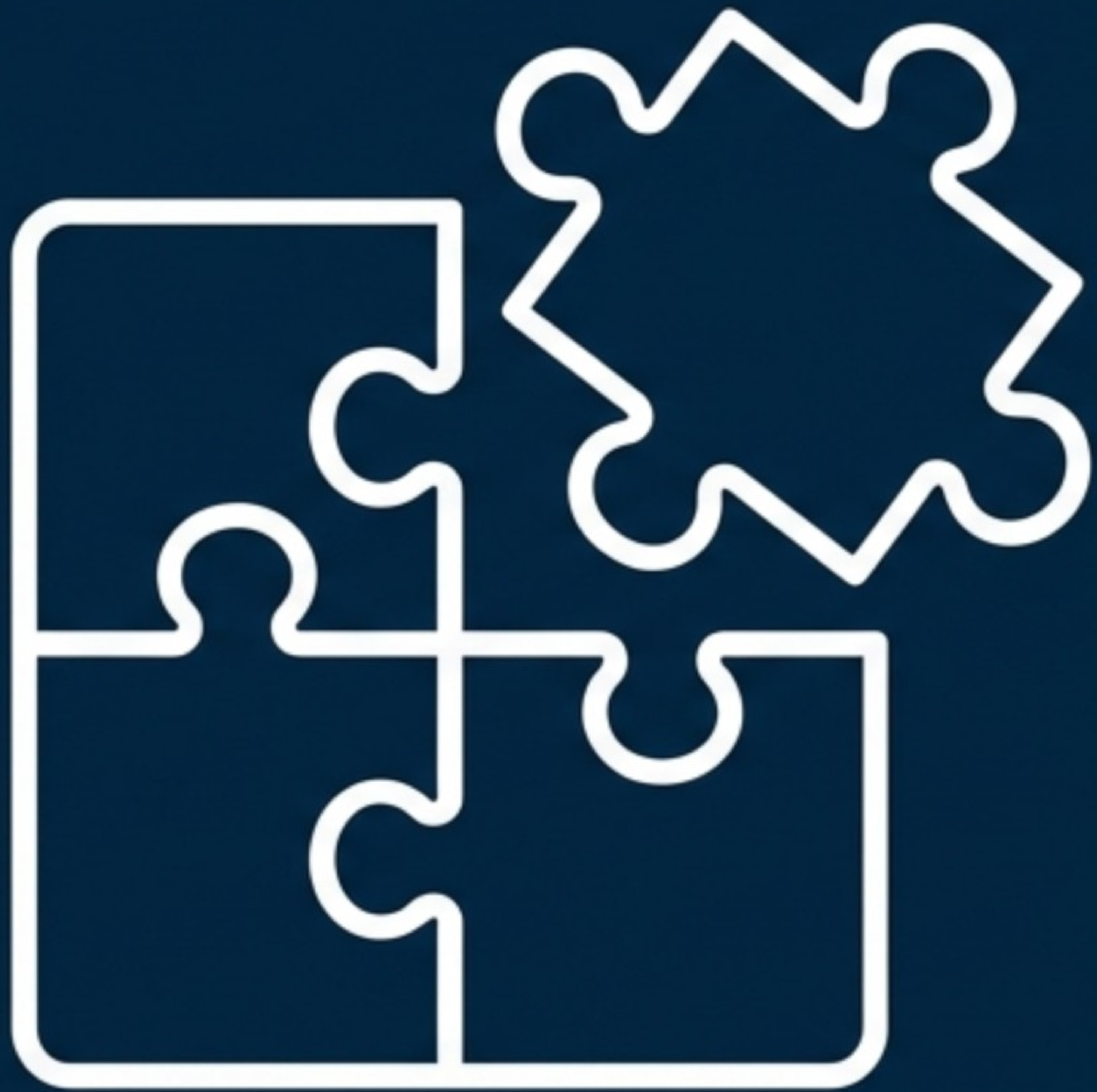
Necessity: Essential for facts that cannot be perceived (Pratyaksha), inferred (Anumana), or compared (Upamana).

THE AUTHORITY OF SHABDA



- The Ultimate Example: Ancestry.
- **Problem:** You cannot use logic or perception to prove your own birth.
- **Solution:** You accept the testimony of your parents/family.
- **Extension:** Religious beliefs, historical facts, and cultural heritage are transmitted via Shabda.

5. ARTHAPATTI (IMPLICATION)



Definition: Postulation or assumption derived from circumstances.

Process: Guessing a fact to explain a visible contradiction.

Key Difference: Unlike Anumana, it is not based on a universal law, but on a 'best fit' hypothesis.

Function: Satisfies curiosity when facts appear missing.

EXAMPLE: 'FAT JAMES'

Observation 1



James is gaining weight.

Observation 2



James is not seen eating during the day.

Implication (Arthapatti)



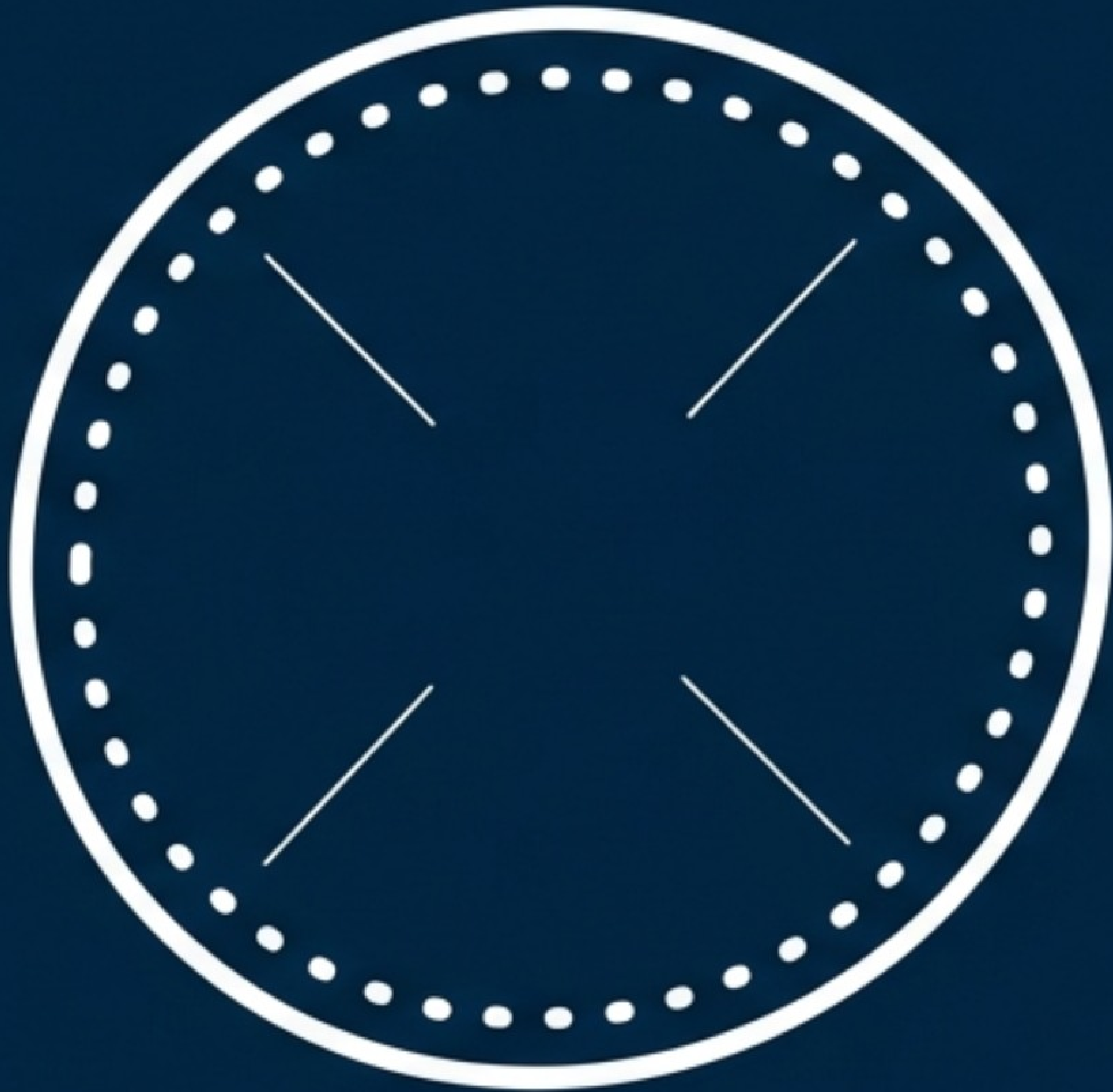
He must be eating at night.

We postulate the night-eating to resolve the contradiction between weight gain and fasting.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF IMPLICATION



6. ANUPALABDHI (NON-APPREHENSION)



Definition: Knowledge gained from the absence or non-existence of something.

Concept: 'Not seeing' is a valid form of 'seeing'.

Role: Perceiving the negative.

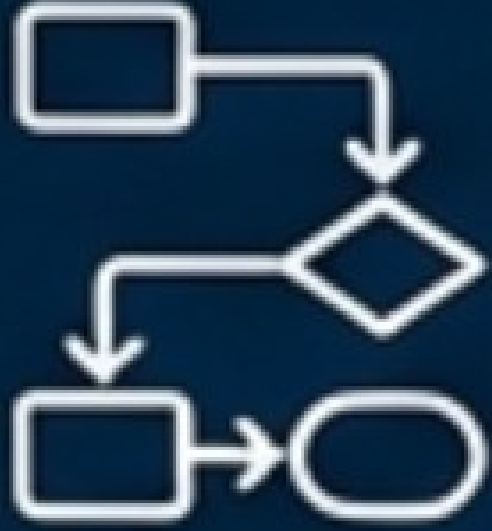
Core Idea: The absence of an object is itself a distinct piece of information.

EXAMPLE: THE DRY FLOOR



- **Observation:** The ground outside is completely dry.
 - **Absence:** There is no water.
 - **Knowledge Gained:** "It did not rain last night."
 - **Mechanism:** The non-existence of water proves the weather condition (*Anupalabdhi*).
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CRITICAL DISTINCTION: ANUMANA VS. ARTHAPATTI

ANUMANA (Inference)	ARTHAPATTI (Implication)
 Basis: Strict logical pattern (Vyapti).	 Basis: Assumption to fit facts.
 Example: Smoke always equals Fire.	 Example: Weight gain equals 'probably' eating.
 Type: Cause & Effect.	 Type: Hypothesis / Best Guess.

Key Test: Is there a universal rule? Yes = Anumana. No = Arthapatti.

CASE STUDY 1: THE COFFEE CUP



- **Scenario:** I left the room (no cup). I returned (cup is there).
- **Conclusion:** Someone must have entered and placed it there.
- **Question:** Which Pramana is this?
- **Answer:** Arthapatti (Implication).
- **Reasoning:** We assume a story to explain the object's appearance. It is not Anumana (no universal rule) and not Anupalabdhi (the cup is present).