I. Administrative

A. Reading essay #2 – due tomorrow by 5

B. Readings for the week after the break: Lycan, Ch. 7, Grice – Ch. 21 in Martinich and Sosa

C. Questions?

II. Thoughts about Goals for a Theory of Meaning

III. Continued Work on Desiderata

IV. Reflections on Wittgenstein and the Picture of Meaning as Use

A. Entity theories of meaning suggest that words and other linguistic items are meaningful because they stand in some kind of relation (e.g., reference, denotation, expression) to something in the world

1. RTM in at least one incarnation (perhaps a crude one) is a type of entity theory, but as we have seen, this doesn’t work as a comprehensive theory of meaning

2. Several alternatives have been defended:

   a. Concrete entities: ideas, images

   b. Abstract entities: truth conditions, verification conditions, propositions

3. These theories struggle, though, to account for important dimensions of human language, e.g., communication, or perhaps to
account for anything at all!

B. Wittgenstein and others (e.g., Austin, Strawson, Searle) have proposed a different picture for linguistic meaning

1. This picture doesn’t turn on abstract relations among words and the world, but on the multifarious ways in which language is involved in our lives

2. Call it the Meaning as Use Picture

C. Meaning as Use

1. “For a large class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word ‘meaning’ it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language

2. The Target: In the sections of the Philosophical Investigations we read, it is clear that entity theories of meaning are under fire

   a. He singles out Augustine

   b. What does he say about Augustine? (Look at p. 661-2, and p. 668)

3. The Details

   a. Language games – what are these?

   b. Question: What does Wittgenstein mean by this:

      “… to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life” (664)

   c. The picture is motivated by the idea that language is a complex, rule-governed form of social activity and that linguistic items derive their meanings from being embedded in this social activity

   d. Meaning is embodied in the sense that it can only be understood as a dimension of this social practice and not as something abstract or independent of language use
D. Concerns about the Sufficiency of Meaning as Use

1. You could have two worlds (Earth and Twin Earth) with the same practices but different meanings

2. Are there rules for the use of names that don’t presuppose reference?

3. How can this view accommodate long, unspoken sentences?

4. Can’t I use an expression without understanding it?

5. Many rule-governed games involve pieces and moves, but the pieces aren’t meaningful

E. **Exercise:** Construct an argument for one of these objections