



Vocabulary: Frequently Misused Words

The English language contains many homophones—pairs or groups of words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings. You must be familiar with the meanings of similar words so you can determine which word to use.

Read each sentence and think about the meanings of the words in parentheses. Then underline the correct homophone for that sentence.

- 1 Did you read the (forward/foreword) to the book?
- 2 The crowd had become increasingly (hostile/hostel).
- 3 The runner had only one more barrier to (hurdle/hurtle).
- 4 She tried to (lesson/lessen) the shock, but I was still stunned.
- 5 We (least/leased) a car instead of buying it.
- 6 Toward dawn, when the sky was (lightning/lightening), we found them.
- 7 The prospector found a forgotten (load/lode) of silver in the old mine.
- 8 She drew her (mantle/mantel) closer to ward off the cold.
- 9 The scar was right above his (navel/naval).
- 10 Ann Chapwood (overseas/oversees) the shipping department.
- 11 Some doctors do not spend enough time with their (patience/patients).
- 12 We took a (pole/poll) to see how many liked each topic.
- 13 The fish was rotting and had begun to (wreak/reek).
- 14 The farmer demonstrated how to (sheer/shear) a sheep.
- 15 The river was (teaming/teeming) with trout and other fish.