

# The Grammar Devotional

DAILY TIPS for  
SUCCESSFUL  
WRITING from  
GRAMMAR GIRL™

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## WORD SEARCH: PREPOSITION ME!

Prepositions are words, such as *on*, *in*, *at*, and *by*, that describe relationships between other words—relationships such as position and time. These are some of the most difficult words for people learning English to understand; often, there’s no reason why we use one preposition in a common phrase instead of another. Find some of the longer prepositions in the puzzle below.



ABOUT  
ABOVE  
ACROSS  
AFTER  
AGAINST  
AROUND  
BEFORE

BEHIND  
BELOW  
BENEATH  
BESIDE  
BESIDES  
BETWEEN  
BEYOND

DURING  
EXCEPT  
FOR  
INSIDE  
NEAR  
OFF  
OUT

OUTSIDE  
THROUGH  
THROUGHOUT  
TILL  
TOWARD  
UNDER  
UNTIL

UPON  
WITH  
WITHOUT

## WORD SEARCH: FOREIGN WORDS IN ENGLISH

English borrows liberally from other languages, especially words to describe animals or foods that are introduced from other countries. This puzzle contains just a few of the words that came to English from Dutch, Spanish, French, German, Swedish, Arabic, and Persian.



AARDVARK  
BUNGALOW  
CHUTNEY  
CAFÉ

DAM  
SCHADENFREUDE  
GUERRILLA  
JIHAD

KAPUT  
KHAKI  
KINDERGARTEN  
PUNDIT

SALSA  
SMORGASBORD  
TREK

## WORD SEARCH: HOMONYMS AND HOMOPHONES

Words that sound alike but are spelled differently can be tricky for people learning English. Heck, sometimes they're tricky for people who speak only English! Technically, such words are homophones, but they are more often called homonyms. See if you can find all the commonly confusing word pairs below. Each word is distinct in the puzzle. For example, you will find *hear* separately, not as part of *shear*.



BARE  
BEAR  
BOARD  
BORED  
DISCREET

DISCRETE  
FAIR  
FARE  
HEAR  
HERE

LOAN  
LONE  
MOOSE  
MOUSSE  
SHEAR

SHEER  
THEIR  
THERE  
YOUR  
YOU'RE

## WORD SEARCH: THEY SURE TALK FUNNY EVERYWHERE BUT HERE: REGIONALISMS

Every region has its own sayings. You can use them to add color to your fiction writing, but be careful about using them in nonfiction writing. In many areas they aren't considered standard English or can be distracting if you use words that aren't local where your work is published. See if you can find all the common regionalisms below. The words are in groups that mean the same thing in different regions.



YALL  
YOUSE  
YINS  
SODA  
POP

COKE  
COUCH  
SOFA  
DAVENPORT  
LOUNGE

PIZZA  
PIE  
FRAPPE  
SHAKE  
SUB

HOAGY  
HERO  
GRINDER  
CASSEROLE  
HOTDISH

ROUNDAABOUT  
ROTARY

## WORD SEARCH: DROPPING PESKY VOWELS: AMERICAN AND BRITISH SPELLING

Part of Noah Webster’s maneuver to create an American identity was to simplify and codify American English. In many cases, he did that by dropping “unnecessary” vowels. See if you can find all the words in this list of American and British word pairs.



- |             |               |           |           |             |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| ANEMIA      | ENCYCLOPEDIA  | FOETUS    | MANOEUVRE | ORTHOPEDIC  |
| ANAEMIA     | ENCYCLOPAEDIA | LEUKEMIA  | MEDIAEVAL | ORTHOPAEDIC |
| ARCHEOLOGY  | ESTROGEN      | LEUKAEMIA | MEDIAEVAL | PAEDIATRIC  |
| ARCHAEOLOGY | FETUS         | MANEUVER  | OESTROGEN | PEDIATRIC   |

## WORD SEARCH: BRITISH AND AMERICAN WORDS

Along with the specific changes in American spelling that Noah Webster introduced other changes are simply the result of language changing more over time in the United States than in Britain. For example, British English has been more likely to retain irregular past tense forms of verbs. See if you can find all the words in this list of American and British past tense word pairs. (The American spelling in each pair is listed above the British spelling.)



BURNED  
BURNT  
DREAMED

DREAMT  
LEARNED  
LEARNT

LEAPED  
LEAPT  
SPELLED

SPELT  
SPILLED  
SPILT

SPOILED  
SPOILT

## WORD SEARCH: ENGLISH WORDS THAT CAME FROM LATIN

As you've been reading this week, many English words came straight from Latin. Find a sampling of them in the puzzle below!



AGENDA

AXIS

HIATUS

MEDIA

CAMPUS

INDEX

MEMORANDUM

ALUMNI

DATA

LARVA

RADIUS

APPENDIX

FORMULA

LOCUS

VIRUS



## WORD SEARCH: GREEK'S INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH

Greek had a significant influence on English. Not only do many English words come directly from Greek, but many Latin words that entered the English language themselves came from Greek. The plural of some Greek words have been Anglicized; for example, the traditional plurals of *octopus* and *trauma* would be *octopodes* and *traumata*, but of course we commonly say *octopuses* and *traumas*. See if you can find all of the words below, which came to English directly from Greek.



CACTUS  
CALLIGRAPHY  
CATASTROPHE  
CRITERIA

ECSTASY  
ENTROPY  
GAIA  
KALEIDOSCOPE

KINETIC  
KUDOS  
NOSTALGIA  
OCTOPUS

PARANOIA  
PATHOS  
PROTAGONIST  
TRAUMA

## WORD SEARCH: I BEFORE E, EXCEPT AFTER C (AND EXCEPT WHEN IT DOESN'T WORK)

Students often learn the spelling rule “i before e, except after c,” but it’s not a very good rule; there are many exceptions. When completing this puzzle, try to memorize the correct spelling for these exceptions.



ANCIENT  
GLACIER  
SCIENCE  
SOCIETY

SPECIES  
SUFFICIENT  
BEING  
CAFFEINE

FEISTY  
KALEIDOSCOPE  
LEISURE  
NEIGHBOR

NEITHER  
SEIZE  
SOVEREIGNTY  
VEIN

WEIRD

## WORD SEARCH: LINKING VERBS

Last Sunday, you learned about linking verbs. Find the most common words that can be linking verbs or action verbs in the puzzle below. You know they are linking verbs when you can replace them with *is* (or another verb of being) in your sentence.



APPEAR  
FEEL  
GET  
GROW  
LIE

LOOK  
PROVE  
REMAIN  
SMELL  
SOUND

STAY  
TASTE  
TURN

## WORD SEARCH: FAILED INKHORN TERMS

Remember learning about inkhorn words last week? As interesting as the inkhorn words that made it into Modern English are the words that didn't make it. (I've included the definitions of these nonsurviving inkhorn words with the word search list.)



ANACEPHALIZE (to recapitulate)  
 CUBICULARY (of or pertaining to a bedchamber)  
 DEMIT (to dismiss or send away)  
 DIGLADIATION (a combat with swords)  
 DIGNOTION (a distinction or distinguishing mark)  
 EMACERATE (emaciate; to waste away)  
 EXOLETE (obsolete or faded)  
 EXPEDE (to accomplish)

FATIGATE (to fatigue)  
 ILLECEBROUS (delicate, alluring)  
 INCOMPOSSIBLE (incapable of coexisting)  
 INGENT (immense, very great)  
 SUPPEDITATE (to supply or furnish)  
 TEMULENT (drunk)  
 UNPOSSIBLE (impossible)

## WORD SEARCH: COMMON CAPITALIZATIONS

This puzzle will introduce you to twelve more types of words or phrases that are always capitalized. Each underlined word appears separately in the puzzle.



CIVIL WAR (wars)	(trademarked terms)	(governmental programs)	PROZAC (medication brand names)	SUPER BOWL (sporting events)
EASTER (holidays)	MAGNA CARTA (historical documents)	MIDDLE AGES (ages)	SEARS TOWER (building names)	THE HAGUE ("The" is part of the official name of this city.)
JAZZ AGE (historical periods)	MEDICARE	PATRIOT ACT (laws)		
KLEENEX				

## WORD SEARCH: SPELLING BEE WORDS

Noah Webster's *Blue-backed Speller* was an important inspiration for the first American spelling bees. Today, the official dictionary for the Scripps National Spelling Bee is *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged*, and the publisher's website lists these words, among others, as those that are most commonly misspelled.



ATHLETE	LEAGUE	SATELLITE
BUREAU	MISSPELL	VACUUM
CONSCIENTIOUS	NOTICEABLE	VILLAIN
EXHILARATE	OCCURRENCE	WEIRD
INDEPENDENCE	PRIVILEGE	
KNOWLEDGE	RECEIPT	