

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

ANAEMIA

ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGY

ENCYCLOPEDIA

ENCYCLOPAEDIA

ESTROGEN

FETUS

FOETUS

LEUKEMIA

LEUKAEMIA

MANEUVER

MANOEUVRE

MEDIAEVAL

MEDIAEVAL

OESTROGEN

ORTHOPEDIC

ORTHOPAEDIC

PAEDIATRIC

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.)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | G | Q | K | V | F | R | A | M | E | D | L | X |
| R | E | C | S | P | I | L | L | E | D | I | V | Y |
| D | H | L | E | A | R | N | E | D | N | Y | I | C |
| A | E | W | K | H | J | L | R | T | L | I | P | S |
| D | G | L | U | S | X | E | Q | L | D | U | N | N |
| N | E | B | I | T | L | I | O | P | S | H | X | D |
| J | Q | L | J | O | B | U | R | N | E | D | R | O |
| S | F | P | L | Z | P | N | Y | C | W | E | G | N |
| T | W | O | G | E | D | S | P | Y | A | Q | M | R |
| S | A | D | E | Y | P | H | J | M | H | Q | E | P |
| H | Z | F | R | X | L | S | E | D | O | W | C | K |
| J | O | R | B | E | E | D | O | R | K | P | D | E |
| P | T | S | Y | U | A | T | E | Q | C | T | K | L |
| G | T | P | N | J | R | M | X | P | V | P | G | U |
| D | Z | E | E | Q | N | N | T | O | A | A | S | D |
| J | C | L | F | L | T | O | T | N | P | E | B | Q |
| E | H | T | M | J | R | R | Q | E | M | L | L | F |

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
ALGAE
ALUMNI
APPENDIX

AXIS
CAMPUS
DATA
FORMULA

HIATUS
INDEX
LARVA
LOCUS

MEDIA
MEMORANDUM
RADIUS
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

BUREAU

CONSCIENTIOUS

EXHILARATE

INDEPENDENCE

KNOWLEDGE

LEAGUE

MISSPELL

NOTICEABLE

OCCURRENCE

PRIVILEGE

RECEIPT

SATELLITE

VACUUM

VILLAIN

WEIRD