

## English – Homonyms

Today, we are going to learn about **homonyms** and **homophones**. The first part of the words – *homo* – means *the same*. If you ask a **linguist**, who is a scientist who studies language, what the words mean he would explain that homonyms are words that sound the same and are spelled the same but have different meanings, and homophones are words, which sound the same but are often spelled differently and have different meanings. A good example of a homonym is right, meaning correct, and right, meaning direction. Examples of homophones are: to (meaning towards), too (meaning also) and two (meaning the number).

Most people, though, use the word homonym to describe homonyms and homophones, so we will too.

Homonyms can cause a lot of confusion, especially for people who are learning to read and write English. For example, can you imagine how confused someone who didn't know English very well would be if you asked: "When we get to the corner we need to turn left. Right?" Can you think of any other sentence, which could be very confusing?

Homonyms are also fun to use in **puns**, which are a type of wordplay, deliberately using homonyms to be funny. People often say that puns are the lowest form of humor. Here is a pun, what do you think?

Billy was stroking the new foal in the stable when he sneezed. His friend asked him if he had a cold. "No," said Billy, "I'm just feeling a little hoarse (horse)."

Almost all languages the languages in the world use puns as jokes.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## English – Homonyms Questions

### A: Fill in the homonyms

See if you can think of two homonyms to complete each sentence.

1. During class, we are not \_\_\_\_\_ to speak \_\_\_\_\_.
2. At \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock we \_\_\_\_\_ our meal.
3. The yellow and black insect was not a wasp so it had to \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The wind \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ balloon into the sky.
5. 'Are \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_?', the farmer asked the female sheep.
6. I wonder \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ is going to be fine today, or if it is going to rain.
7. I couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ my library book so the librarian \_\_\_\_\_ me 50c.
8. I bought \_\_\_\_\_ sweets \_\_\_\_\_ me and my three friends.
9. It took us an \_\_\_\_\_ to finish \_\_\_\_\_ work.
10. I broke my sister's perfume bottle so mom \_\_\_\_\_ me to buy her some more \_\_\_\_\_.

### B: Write some 'punny' sentences.

Here are some more pairs of homonyms. See if you can use them in your own sentences:

bare/bear   chews/choose   heard/herd   brake/break   no/know

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## English – Homonyms Answers

### Activity A

1. During class, we are not **allowed** to speak **aloud**.
2. At **eight** o'clock, we **ate** our meal.
3. The yellow and black insect was not a wasp so it had to **be** a **bee**.
4. The wind **blew** the **blue** balloon into the sky.
5. 'Are **you** a **ewe**?', the farmer asked the female sheep.
6. I wonder **whether** the **weather** is going to be fine today, or if it is going to rain.
7. I couldn't **find** my library book so the librarian **fin**ed me 50c.
8. I bought **four** sweets **for** me and my three friends.
9. It took us an **hour** to finish **our** work.
10. I broke my sister's perfume bottle so mom **sent** me to buy her some more **scent**.

### Activity B

The words should be used appropriately in full sentences.