

## 100 sets of commonly confused words

The following is a list of the most commonly confused words that would be helpful in identifying grammatically erroneous sentences, choosing the appropriate word and fill in the blanks type of questions:

### 1. Sympathy, empathy, apathy

Sympathy: feelings of pity and sorrow

Empathy: experience of understanding another person's condition from their perspective

Apathy: lack of concern

### 2. Compliment, complement

Compliment: praise

Complement: something that completes

### 3. Confectionery, confectionary

Confectionery: sweet items selling shop

Confectionary: sweet items

### 4. Strait, straight

Strait: a naturally formed, narrow, typically navigable waterway that connects two larger bodies of water

Straight: in a single direction, without a bend

### 5. Rode, road

Rode: past tense of ride

Road: a path

### 6. Accept, except, expect

Accept: tolerate or submit to

Except: other than

Expect: regard as likely to happen

### 7. Moral, morale, mural

Moral: concerned with principles of right and wrong behaviour

Morale: confidence, enthusiasm, and discipline

Mural: work of art involving a wall

## **8. Advice, advise**

Advice (noun): opinion or recommendation

Advise (verb): to offer advice

## **9. Lead, led**

Lead: initiate, be in the first place (noun); be a route/means (verb)

Led: past and past participle form of lead

## **10. Alter, altar**

Alter: to change

Altar: sacred platform or place

## **11. Canvass, canvas**

Canvass: garner votes, propose and idea

Canvas: a variant of cloth used as a surface to paint

## **12. Metal, mettle**

Metal: an element which is strong, shiny, and can be moulded into sheets and wires

Mettle: spirit, resilience

## **13. Rain, reign, rein**

Rain: condensed moisture that falls from the sky

Reign: rule

Rein: a strap used to control an animal

## **14. Taut, taught**

Taut: tight

Taught: past tense of teach

## **15. Adverse, averse, everse, subverse, perverse**

Adverse: unfavorable

Averse: opposed to

Everse: to overthrow

Subversive: intending to overthrow an established order

Perverse: contrary to the accepted or expected standard

## **16. Respectfully, respectively**

Respectfully: courteous and considerate

Respectively: in an order previously mentioned

## **17. Their, there, they are**

Their: belonging to those who have been mentioned previously

There: a location in space

They are: a contraction of 'they're'

## **18. Meat, mate, mete, meet**

Meat: flesh/food of any kind

Mate: partner

Mete: give out measured justice

Meet: gathering (noun); join/touch (verb)

## **19. Affect, effect**

Affect: to influence (verb); emotional response (noun)

Effect: result (noun); to cause (verb)

## **20. Aisle, isle**

Aisle: space between rows

Isle: island

## **21. Amoral, immoral**

Amoral: lack of a moral sense

Immoral: not in accordance to the acceptable standards of morality

## **22. Dominant, dominate**

Dominant: having power/influence over others

Dominate: an entity that is dominant

## **23. Assistant, assistance**

Assistant: helper

Assistance: help

## **24. Allude, elude, allusion, elusion, illusion**

Allude: to make indirect reference to

Elude: avoid

Allusion: indirect reference

Elusion: avoidance

Illusion: misleading appearance

## **25. Already, all ready**

Already: by this time

All ready: fully prepared

## **26. Bore, boar**

Bore: past tense of bear, drill a hole into, dull

Boar: a wild, male pig

## **27. Maybe, may be**

Maybe (adverb): possibly (You can meet him, maybe on a Sunday)

May be (verbal construction): possibly (He may be in the office today)

**28. Beside, besides**

Beside: next to

Besides: in addition to

**29. Allot, a lot**

Allot: to divide

A lot: many

**30. Breathe, breath**

Breathe: the process of breathing

Breath: the air taken into the lungs for the process of breathing

**31. Dessert, desert**

Dessert: a sweet dish served at the end of a meal

Desert: a dry, barren land devoid of vegetation (noun); abandon (verb)

**32. Quiet, quite**

Quiet: silent

Quite: absolute/complete

**33. Angel, angle**

Angel: supernatural being, good person

Angle: shape made by joining 2 straight lines

**34. Our, hour, are**

Our: possessive form of 'we'

Hour: sixty minutes, a point in time

Are: plural form of "to be"

**35. Board, bored**

Board: a flat surface

Bored: dull, uninterested

## **36. Chose, choose**

Chose: past tense of choose

Choose: select

## **37. Raise, race, raze**

Raise: increase (noun), bring up (verb)

Race: competition, a geographically isolated group of individuals

Raze: destroy

## **38. Humane, human**

Humane: compassion, benevolence

Human: relating to mankind

## **39. Then, than**

Then: at a point in time either at that very instant or later

Than: introduction of a second element in a comparison

## **40. Borne, born**

Borne: carried/transported

Born: result of birth

## **41. Wont, won't**

Wont: habit

Won't: will not

## **42. Right, write, rite, riot**

Right: correct, pertaining to a direction

Write: mark on a surface

Rite: a religious ceremony

Riot: disturbance of peace

## **43. Buy, bye, by**

Buy: make a purchase

Bye: go from one round to the next without facing an opponent

By: identifying the agent performing the action

## **44. Hoard, horde**

Hoard: store in advance

Horde: a gathering of people

## **45. Capitol, capital**

Capitol: a building out of which, a government operates

Capital: a city or town that houses the administrative center of a region, wealth

## **46. Break, brake**

Break: separate

Brake: a device to slow down a vehicle (noun); the process of slowing down a moving vehicle (verb)

## **47. Gorilla, guerilla**

Gorilla: the largest living primate, ape

Guerrilla: a small faction that is at war with a significantly larger group and operating in the form of short, surprise attacks

## **48. Miner, minor, manor**

Miner: a person who works at a mine

Minor: lesser in importance (adjective), underage (noun)

Manor: a house

## **49. Waist, waste**

Waist: part of human body below the ribs and above the hips

Waste: unproductive

**50. Rational, rationale**

Rational: logical (adjective)

Rationale: a set of reasons for a course of action (noun)

**51. Whole, hole**

Whole: complete

Hole: a gap

**52. Reverend, reverent**

Reverend: a title for the members of the clergy

Reverent: respectful

**53. Two, too, to**

Two: a couple

Too: more than permissible; in addition to

**54. Whose, who's**

Whose: belonging to an entity

Who's: a contraction of 'who is'

**55. Thorough, through, threw**

Thorough: detailed

Through: go from one end to another

Threw: past tense of throw

**56. Witch, which**

Witch: a woman with magic powers

Which: asking for information

**57. Scene, seen**

Scene: a place where events (real life or otherwise) occur

Seen: past tense of see



**58. Patients, patience**

Patients: a person registered to receive medical treatment

Patience: capacity to tolerate/accept

**59. Accede, exceed**

Accede: agree to a request

Exceed: to be greater than

**60. Wave, waive**

Wave: greeting signal, a body of water curling into arched form

Waive: give up

**61. Straight, strut**

Straight: not bent or curved

Strut: walk with a stiff, arrogant gait

**62. Peddle, pedal**

Peddle: sell or promote

Pedal: foot-operated device used to propel a vehicle

**63. Your, you are (you're), yore**

Your: possessive form of 'you'

You're: contraction of 'you are'

Yore: a thing of the past

**64. Weak, week**

Weak: not healthy

Week: duration amounting to seven consecutive days

**65. Sense, since**

Sense: sight, smell, hearing, taste or touch

Since: from a time mentioned till the present

**66. Piece, peace**

Piece: a part

Peace: freedom from disturbance, tranquility

**67. Lightning, lightening**

Lightning: naturally occurring sudden electrical discharge usually accompanied by rain (noun); quick (adjective)

Lightening: to make something lighter

**68. Cite, sight, site, scythe**

Cite: quote

Sight: the sense of seeing

Site: a designated place

Scythe: a tool used to cut through crops

**69. Weather, whether, wither**

Weather: state of the atmosphere

Whether: a choice between alternatives

Wither: become dry, decay

**70. Proceed, precede**

Proceed: begin or continue

Precede: come before

**71. Personal, personnel**

Personal: belonging to an individual

Personnel: team of employees

**72. Later, latter**

Later: at a future point in time

Latter: the second of two things mentioned

**73. Elicit, illicit**

Elicit: evoke, draw out

Illicit: forbidden by law

**74. Knew, new**

Knew: past tense of know

New: recent

**75. Pique, peak, peek**

Pique: irritation (noun), thought provoking (verb)

Peak: the topmost point

Peek: quick look

**76. Dye, die**

Dye: colour

Die: cease to live

**77. Ordinance, ordinance**

Ordinance: branch of government dealing with weapons/military

Ordinance: an order

**78. Further, farther**

Further: figuratively at a greater distance

Farther: literally at a greater distance

**79. Know, no**

Know: be aware of

No: negative

**80. Plane, plain**

Plane: a flat surface

Plain: simple

## **81. Its, it's**

Its: possessive form of 'it'

It's: contraction of 'it is'

## **82. Eminent, imminent**

Eminent: well-known, important

Imminent: about to happen, impending

## **83. Plate, plait**

Plate: a flat dish

Plait: a formation of interlaced strands of hair

## **84. Fare, fair, fear**

Fear: unpleasant emotion caused due to a threat

Fair: equal, light complexioned

Fare: charge, quality of performance

## **85. Lose, loose**

Lose: unable to win

Loose: not tight

## **86. Principal, principle**

Principal: first in order, main

Principle: fundamental truth or a law

## **87. Former, formal**

Former: the one before

Formal: done in accordance with convention

## **88. Formerly, formally**

Formerly: in the past

Formally: adhering to convention

**89. Forth, Fourth**

Forth: away from the starting point

Fourth: adjective form of four

**90. Diary, dairy**

Diary: a notebook used to record events

Dairy: a place where milk and milk products are processed or stored

**91. Counsel, Console, council**

Counsel: formal advice, a practitioner of law

Console: comfort someone (verb); a small cabinet (noun)

Council: an administrative body of people

**92. Dissent, descent**

Dissent: disagreement with common notions

Descent: come down from a previous position

**93. Coarse, course**

Coarse: rough

Course: a path taken

**94. Corps, corpse, crops**

Corps: a division of the army

Corpse: a dead body

Crops: cultivated plants

**95. Conscious, conscience**

Conscious: aware

Conscience: a moral sense of right and wrong

**96. Hear, here**

Hear: the sense of hearing

Here: at a particular place

**97. Heard, herd**

Heard: the past tense of hear

Herd: a group of animals, usually cattle

**98. Stationary, stationery**

Stationary: not in motion

Stationery: pertaining to writing and other office materials

**99. Cloth, clothe**

Cloth: garment

Clothe: the act of putting clothes on someone

**100. Altogether, all together**

Altogether: completely

All together: all in a group