



# Michigan University Releases New List of Banned Words

Discussion > Advanced 8



## Exercise 1 – Vocabulary

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>banish</b> | To make one leave a place as a punishment; to get rid of something unwanted.       |
| [verb]        | <i>Ex: She was <b>banished</b> from the town because of her religious beliefs.</i> |

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>influencer</b> | A person who is very popular on social media and is often paid by companies to promote their products. |
| [noun]            | <i>Ex: She is one of the most well-known <b>influencers</b> on Instagram.</i>                          |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>ageist</b> | Showing discrimination towards older people.            |
| [adjective]   | <i>Ex: His comments seem a bit <b>ageist</b> to me.</i> |

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>impeachment</b> | The act of charging a government official with a crime.                              |
| [noun]             | <i>Ex: The <b>impeachment</b> of US President Andrew Johnson took place in 1868.</i> |

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>archive</b> | A collection of documents; a place where documents are kept.  |
| [noun]         | <i>Ex: We went to the <b>archive</b> to see if we could find some information for our research paper.</i> |



## Exercise 2 – Reading

*Read the text aloud with your tutor and discuss the key points.*

### Michigan University Releases New List of Banned Words

Lake Superior State University in Michigan has released its 45th annual "List of Words Banished from the Queen's English for Misuse, Overuse and General Uselessness".

Each year, the university invites the public to send in the words and phrases they don't want to hear anymore. The newest list has more than a dozen, including "influencer," "living my best life", and "literally".

It also includes "jelly," short for jealous, and "totes," from the word totally. And it's apparently time to stop using the phrase "OK, boomer."

"Boomer" refers to people born between 1946 and 1965; when the US had a significant rise – or boom – in birth rates. "Ok, boomer" has become a popular response among younger people to older people who they disagree with, especially online. Some people think it is a rude and ageist response.



Writers for the university said, however, that boomers should remember that there is nothing new about these fights and disagreements between the young and the old.

They added, "In fact, it was the boomers who gave us the declaration, 'Don't trust anyone over 30!'"

A centuries-old Latin phrase has made the list this year too; "quid pro quo", meaning something that is done in return for something else.

The phrase was used a lot during the impeachment of US President Donald Trump. He repeatedly said that there was no "quid pro quo" with Ukraine over US military aid to that country and an investigation of former US Vice President Joe Biden's son.

There now are more than 1,000 banned words or phrases in the university's archive. The first list was made by school staff at a New Year's Eve party in 1975. Since then, the list has been made up of suggestions sent from people around the world, the school said.



## Exercise 3 – Discussion

*Discuss the following questions with your tutor.*

1. What are your thoughts on this year's additions to the list of banished words?
2. Have you ever used any of the words or phrases featured in the article? If so, which ones and when?
3. If you were to add a word or phrase to the list, what would it be? Why?
4. Are there any English words that are commonly used in your country?
5. What's the most interesting English word you've learned recently?
6. Do you consider yourself to be a good writer? Why? Why not?
7. Are you active on social media? If so, do you follow many influencers?
8. If you were to start university tomorrow, what would you choose to study? Why?