

## **Description**

In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet says, "that which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet." She means that since her family and Romeo's family are enemies, if either she or Romeo changed their names, they would still be lovers in love. A name change wouldn't change who they, as individuals, were. But exchanging one word for another sometimes *does* change the meaning, especially in the English language, which Shakespeare near invented. This often happens when two (or more) words that sound alike are spelled differently. We call these words *homophones*. And unlike the names of Romeo and Juliet, your love...errr, your *writing* will be erroneous if you put in the wrong word!\*

## Do You Know Your Homophones?

Read the sentences below and choose the correct homophone. Then check your answers and get the definitions of the word's homophones below.

1.	My collar is	LOSE	LOOSE	
2.	My car is over	THEY'RE	THERE	THEIR
3.	coat is missing.	YOUR	YOU'RE	
4.	color was gone.	ITS	IT'S	
5.	That's of cheese!	A LOT	ALOT	
6.	After you clean your room, you can go to the park.	THAN	THEN	
7.	You can go,	TO	TOO	TWO
8.	I'm not going to cheat because I have	PRINCIPLES PRINCIPALS		
9.	We saw 10 whales. It was quite a	SIGHT	SITE	
10.	Speak now or forever hold your	PIECE	PEACE	

## **Answers and Definitions**

- 1. LOOSE = not tight. LOSE means to misplace something. How would you misplace your collar?
  - Don't lose your keys.
- 2. THERE = indicating a spot at some distance. THEY'RE is a contraction of "they are." THEIR is 3rd person plural possessive (they own something).
  - Their pants are ripped.
  - They're going to Hawaii.



- 3. YOUR = 2nd person possessive (you own something). YOU'RE is a contraction of "you are."
  - You're looking swell.
- 4. ITS = 3rd person possessive (it owns something). IT'S is a contraction of "it is."
  - It's getting hot.
- **5.** A LOT = a large amount of
  - Alot not actually a homophone. Not even a word!
- **6.** THEN = shows order of events. THAN compares things.
  - I'd rather have cake than ice cream.
- 7. TOO = also. TWO is a number. TO either indicates direction or is part of the infinitive version
  of a verb.
  - The *two* of you should go.
  - You should go to the store. (directional)
  - I want to run. (with infinitive verb form)
- 8. PRINCIPLES = morals, beliefs that guide one's activities. PRINCIPALS are the heads of schools in the U.S.
  - I was sent to the *principal's* office.
- 9. SIGHT = something worth seeing or viewing. SITE = place or short for "website."
  - We are looking for the site of our next home.
  - The site won't load.
- 10. PEACE... this is a tricky one. It's an idiom, which means it generally can't be literally translated or defined. But, in years gone by, "to hold your PEACE" was to keeping quiet. Essentially, to keep things peaceful by not speaking. But, confusingly, "to speak your PIECE" means to say what your opinion is or say what you are really thinking. Similarly, "give him a piece of your mind" means to tell someone what you really think.

How did you do? 8 or over means you're a homophone whiz. 5 to 7 correct is about average. Below 5 means you might want to study this list—it will make your writing much more clear! And, if you'd like to study more homophones, there are plenty of website resources. Just Google "English homophones." Good luck!

## Category

- Language & Grammar
- 2. Reporting Research

Date Created 2015/04/08 Author daveishan