

**A Hilarious Spelling and Grammar workshop
brought to you by The Daily Joker, written by Gareth P Jones and Rachel Delahaye.**

SPAG IS FUNNY!

SPAG = spelling and grammar

**In this workshop, we're going to learn some grammar and it's going to be fun.
You think I'm joking? You're absolutely right!**

LET'S GET READY TO JOKE!

Joking is the name and grammar is the game. Because most jokes – especially those one-liners that make you groan – get their funny business from playing around with grammar.

So let's start by looking at the main aspects of grammar that help jokes reach their hilarious punchlines. We'll call these Grammar points The Joker's Friends. Ready to meet them?

THE JOKER'S FRIENDS

HOMOPHONES

Means same (homo) sound (phone)

The words sound exactly the same, but they are spelled differently.



BEAR / BARE

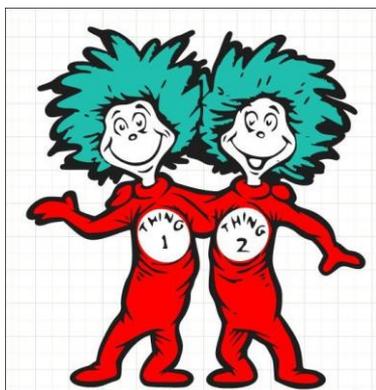
Why did Winnie the Pooh wear boots?

Because he had bear feet!

HOMONYMS

It has the same (homo) name (nym)

The words sound exactly the same, and they are spelled the same!



TIE / TIE

Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.

SYNONYMS

Same or similar meanings

Very important for constructing a joke because the punchline (the funny answer) should not contain the same key words as the set-up line (the question). You can find synonyms in a THESAURUS.

Will you tell me a synonym for **chuckle**? You're having a **laugh**!

What's another way of saying **exhausted**? I'm too **tired** for this.

RHYMES

Words that sound the same.

E.g., Street / beat / bleat / feet / meat / greet

How do you know when a sheep's got rhythm? It dances to the bleat.



Let's take a look at the Joker's Friends in action...

- The best way to communicate with a fish is to drop them a **line**.
- One horse said to another: your **pace** is familiar but I don't remember the **mane**.
- He bought a donkey because he thought he might get a **kick** out of it.
- Insects that make honey are always on their best **bee-hive-iour**.
- What do you call a bear in the rain? A **drizzly** bear.
- Why did the cat work for the Red Cross? She wanted to be a first aid **kit**.
- When a new hive is done bees have a **house swarming** party.
- I would avoid the sushi if I was you. It's a little **fishy**.
- Time flies like an arrow. Fruit **flies** like a banana.

JOKE EXERCISE NUMBER 1

WHAT IS THE KEY WORD IN THE JOKE? IS IT...

A HOMOPHONE?

Two words that sound the same but have different spellings and different meanings

A HOMONYM?

Two words that are spelled the same and sound the same but have different meanings

A RHYME?

Two words that have different meanings and spellings and different initial letters, but with endings that sound the same

A COMPOUND HOMOPHONE?

A string of two or more words that sound similar to a string of different words.

- Have you noticed bears don't wear shoes? They have bear feet.
- Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
- What happened when the skunk fell in the river? It stank to the bottom.
- Why are peacocks perfectionists? Because they show attention to de tail.
- What did the duck say to the bartender? Put it on my bill.
- It's amazing how eagles catch their prey; they're really talon-ted.
- When a vulture flies, he takes carrion luggage.
- The chicken crossed the playground to get to the other slide.
- A zoo had a camel with no humps named "Humphrey."
- It's OK to watch an elephant bathe as they usually have their trunks on.
- Why did the old man fall in the well? Because he couldn't see that well.
- What part of the car is the laziest? The wheels, because they are always tired!
- How does a penguin build its house? Igloos it together.
- Two goldfish are in a tank. One says to the other, "do you know how to drive this thing?"
- Why did the horse insist on eating one apple at a time? He didn't like pears.

LET'S WRITE JOKES!

Start with a homonym or a homophone.

For an example, let's use the homophones

CHEAP and CHEEP

1. Explore **SYNONYMS** for each word.

CHEAP

Doesn't cost much

Discounted

Cut-price

Bargain

CHEEP

Bird noise

Sing

Twitter

2. Now link them together. The **SET-UP** (question) must have something to do with money and with birds. But keep your homophone or homonym as the **PUNCHLINE**.

WHY?

BECAUSE

NOISY

BIRD

BARGAIN

CHEAP/CHEEP

3. Play around with some ideas until you find one that works.

Why did the man buy so many birds? BECAUSE THEY WERE GOING CHEEP!

What you call a bird that goes cheap? A bargain.

JOKE EXERCISE NUMBER 2

WRITE YOUR OWN JOKES

On the next two sheets are some homophones and homonyms to help you

HOMOPHONES

It has the same (homo) sound (phone)

Aisle Isle	Bare Bear	Be Bee	Boar Bore
Bell Belle	Blew Blue	Allowed Aloud	Brews Bruise
Buy Bye	Cheap Cheep	Heard Herd	Brake Break
Chilli Chilly	Dyeing Dying	Genes Jeans	Gussed Guest
Knit Nit	Knight Night	Meddle Medal	Patience Patients
Rain Reign	Stairs Stares	Sent Scent	Soared Sword
Write Right	Reign Rain	Pain Pane	Main Mane
Whole Hole	Layer Lair	Heir Hair	Son Sun
Read Red	Sea See	Piece Peace	Tail Tale
Bread Bred	Tea Tee	Through Threw	Alter Altar
Week Weak	Would Wood	Rose Rows	Taught Taut
Knit Nit	Muscle Mussel	Knows Nose	Maize Maze
Roll Role	Prince Prints	Plum Plumb	Thyme Time

HOMONYMS

It has the same (homo) name (nym)

Address - to speak to / location

Arms - body parts / weapons

Band - a musical group / a ring

Bark - a tree's out layer / the sound a dog makes

Bat - used to hit a ball / a nocturnal flying mammal

Bright - very smart or intelligent / filled with light

Current - up to date / flow of water

Die - to cease living / singular of DICE

Fair - just / beautiful

Kind - type / caring

Lie - to recline / to tell a falsehood

Match - to pair like items / a stick for making a flame

Mean - average / not nice / as in what a word means

Pole - a person from Poland / a piece of metal that holds a flag

Ring - a band on a finger / something circular in shape

Right - correct / direction opposite of left

Rock - a genre of music / a stone / tilt to the side

Rose - to have gotten up / a flower

Spring - a season / coiled metal

Tire - to grow fatigued / a part of a wheel

Well - in good health / a source for water in the ground

Line - a string of things / a straight measurement

Leaves – plural of leaf / departs

MORE GRAMMAR

ADVERBS

An adjective that describes the verb

Quick tip: ask how they did it?

How did the clown talk to the class? Funnily!

FRONTAL ADVERB

An adverb that goes at the beginning of a sentence

How did Van Gough paint his sunflowers?

Masterfully, he painted his sunflowers!

JOKE EXERCISE NUMBER 3

Let's look at how we can make funny sentences with **adverbs**. Make some of your jokes with a **frontal adverb**.

Write ADVERB jokes for the following words.

Abominably

Detestably

Freely

Grandly

Handily

Masterfully

Monstrously

Notably

Tirelessly

Sorely

Sweetly

Carefully

Sleepily

EVEN MORE GRAMMAR

COLON

Use a colon to introduce information after a complete sentence.

Lucy went to the shops to buy milk, cheese and chocolate.

Lucy bought things from the shop: milk, cheese and chocolate.

And long dialogue: Lucy said she was going to the shop: "I want to buy milk, cheese and chocolate!"

There's nothing funny about a colon (although the word colon also means part of your intestine!) But you should probably know what one is before we move onto to the very funny semi-colon.

SEMI-COLON

Used to separate a first sentence from a second that is related, but could stand alone.

My aunt has crazy hair; she combs it with fork.

Think of it as a wink – before giving a little extra information.

●
;

The astronaut next door is a bit unfriendly;
he just needs a little space.

(Semi-colons are also used when listing things that are more than one word.
E.g, This summer I'd like to do lots of things: go to Italy, where my aunt lives; climb a mountain, such as the Matterhorn; eat lots, preferably pizza)

JOKE EXERCISE NUMBER 4

WINK WINK JOKES

Let's look at **semi-colons** when they're winking –
when they're giving extra information.

Find some jokes in a joke book or online and see if you can break them down and write them out as two sentences separated with a semi-colon.

For example – here's a joke:

Why do tissues make great dancers?

Because they love a little boogie.

Now break it down and add a semi-colon:

Tissues make great dancers; they love a little boogie.

YES, MORE GRAMMAR

SIMILES

Using the word 'like' to compare.

E.g., The green carpet is like a lawn.

Comparisons are great for making silly jokes.

Think of a **simile**, then remove the 'LIKE' and turn it into a straight-forward joke.

Simile: a goldfish with no tail is like a grape.

What do you call a goldfish with no tail?

A grape.

What do you call a flying sheep with no legs?

A cloud.

JOKE EXERCISE NUMBER 5

Now we all like SIMILES let's joke!

**Find similes for the following words and then turn it into a joke!
They can be the subject OR the punchline.**

Cucumber

Stick

Jelly

Caterpillar

Pea

When you've done that, look for jokes that are based on similes and turn them back into ordinary sentences by using the word LIKE.

FUNNY EXTRAS

TO HELP YOU REMEMBER

Here are some jokey tips for remembering common grammar points.

WHO OR WHOM?

KNOCK KNOCK!

Who's there?

TO.

To who?

IT'S TO WHOM!

*also, another tip to remember: you give things TO him or to them (ends in M), not to he or to they.

WHO'S OR WHOSE?

KNOCK KNOCK!

Who's there?

WHOSE.

Whose who?

WHOSE HOUSE IS THIS?

Who's means either *who is* or *who has*. If it is about possession, it's whose.

DANGLING / MISPLACED MODIFIERS

You need to put the modifier (extra information) as close to the action (verb) as possible to give it the meaning you want.

I found my missing hat *cleaning my room*.

Why was your hat cleaning your room?

No! ... While cleaning my room, I found my hat.

I saw lots of horses *on holiday in Spain*.

There were horses on holiday?

No! ... When I was on holiday in Spain, I saw lots of horses.

Can you think of how putting a DANGLING MODIFIER could make a sentence funny? Try some out.

HYPHENS

Linking two words for a tailor-made adjective.

This isn't a much-hyphenated sentence, because there is only one hyphen.

What do you call a blind deer? No-eyed deer.

What do you call a blind deer with no legs? Still no-eyed deer.

What do you call a three-legged deer? Lean meat.

DASHES

An important interruption
used to insert some important information

When I ask the class if they've seen an interrupting cow dashing past – which they usually laugh at – I like to follow it with my best cow impression. Moo!

PARENTHESIS

(also known as brackets)

Used to quickly add an explanation to support or clarify the meaning.

When dad was building shelves, he first put up the brackets (bits of wood to support the shelf).

There's a new type of women's sports underwear that is fully supporting. It's called a Bracket (they pronounce it bra-kit).

WITHOUT PUNCTUATION THE WORLD WOULD BE FUNNY...

A comma is just a little gasp for breath which gives us time to understand the real meaning.

A full stop makes sure your sentences don't run together.

Question marks make it a question.

Exclamation marks make it something to take notice of, or a command.

A dash makes sure you take notice of important information.

JOKE EXERCISE NUMBER 6

**These sentences sound a little bit crazy!
Add some punctuation to change their meaning.**

Let's eat Grandma.

Some people enjoy cooking their family and their pets.

Help a thief.

Most of the time travellers worry about their luggage.

What is this thing called love.

I'm sorry I love you.

We're going to learn to cut and paste kids.

Slow cows crossing.

Be careful when hunting people hiking.

I love my parents Kermit the frog and Scooby-Do.