



## Common Core Language Standards: “~~Its~~ It’s Over ~~Their~~ There”

### Focus: Spelling Common Words

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#### Overview

This lesson introduces students to the problem of misspelling commonly-used words such as two/to/too and provides activities and resources to strengthen students’ listening and writing skills.

#### Standards

**9-10.LS.2c.** Spell correctly.

#### Objectives

- Learn why correct spelling of common words is important
- Learn to distinguish between and among commonly-confused words
- Improve listening skills and ability to determine correct words from context.
- Practice using correct words in context.

#### Materials

- ELMO projector
  - YouTube access (Optional)
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#### Activity 1

##### Lecture

If possible, show students the following pictures and ask them what’s wrong with them. Note: Teachers may have to copy the pictures to a different file and display using an ELMO projector or other projector.

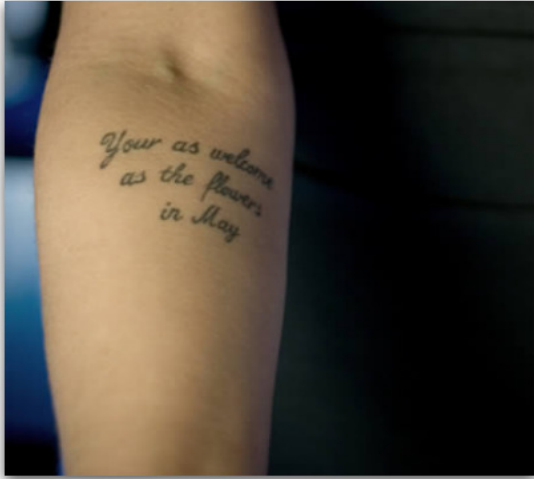


IMAGE #1



IMAGE #2



IMAGE #3

Ask students, “NOW do you see why spelling is important?”

**Lecture**

Explain that in English, there are several different homophones (sound-alike) words that bedevil native and second-language speakers alike. Here are some of the most common:

Commonly Confused Words	
Word	Word Used in a Sentence
Your	<b>Your</b> marmoset plays banjo beautifully.
You're	<b>You're</b> sending him to Julliard, I hope?
To	I went <b>to</b> dinosaur-boxing camp to learn <b>to</b> box dinosaurs.
Two	Did you know I fought the angry tyrannosaurus for <b>two</b> whole seconds?
Too	He had a wicked right cross that proved <b>too</b> much for me.
There	<b>There</b> is a capybara, the world's largest



Their	rodent.  Imagine a rat the size of a rather ill-tempered spaniel, and you will have a good sense of <b>their</b> size.
They're	<b>They're</b> like gerbils from a horror movie where a science experiment has gone horridly wrong.
It's	It's not that I have anything against capybaras.
Its	I find <b>its</b> beady black eyes a little scary.
Women	Did you ever notice that " <b>women</b> " rhymes with "swimmin"?
Woman	That <b>woman</b> owns a lovely pterodactyl.
Everyday	Billy wanted to ride the manatee to school so often that it became an ordinary, <b>everyday</b> event.
Every day	<b>Every day</b> is capybara day!

A large part of the problem with these words is that they sound exactly alike (or at least most of them do), and students don't necessarily get used to listening for context as a guide to correct spelling.

**Spelling Contest**

A good old-fashioned spelling contest helps achieve two goals: It reinforces students' ability to listen carefully for context, and it makes spelling fun. Students can be split up into two groups: guys versus girls, one side of the room versus the other side, and so forth. Competition can be for (minor) extra credit points for the winning team or for something deliberately silly -- temporary ownership of a gold-painted Stapler of Awesomeness, for instance (surprisingly effective with freshmen).



**Spelling Contest Procedures**

1. Students get into their respective teams.
2. Each team member must go up at least one time.
3. Misspelling gets the team member eliminated.
4. Team members may call on others for help, but only twice during the contest. After that, they have no more "lifelines."
5. The teacher reads a word, then a sentence containing that word, as in, "Spell the word 'its,' as in 'Its tail was a lovely shade of puce.'"
6. Students are called up individually by the teacher, who should keep track on a seating chart of who's gone and who has not.
7. The winners get the prize after a particular number of questions -- ideally enough for each student to have a chance to participate in the contest.

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**Writing Practice**

Students should be given the list of commonly confused words and choose three sets. For instance, "to/two/too" is one set; "women/woman" is another set. For each set, write a sentence in which the student differentiates between (or among) the commonly confused words. Encourage them to be funny (though classroom-appropriate) -- there is no earthly reason grammar and spelling sentences have to be duller than paint. Put the best ones up for display for the week.

Students should be given several sets every week to practice in contests or in writing, particularly if the class in general finds these words challenging or troublesome. The resources below can be extremely helpful, as can the attached worksheet from Holt, Rinehart, and Winston below.

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**Closing**

Show this optional YouTube video for fun and to reinforce the idea that spelling is important:

**Owned by a Five-Year Old**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UArINUEgEUw>



### Resources

The following websites are from [grammar.ccc.comnet.edu](http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu); explore this site!

- [http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/affect\\_except\\_options.htm](http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/affect_except_options.htm)
- <http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/cgi-shl/quiz.pl/confusibles.htm>
- <http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/notorious3.htm>
- [http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/notorious\\_pairs.htm](http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/notorious_pairs.htm)
- <http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/notorious5.htm>
- [http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/notorious\\_pairs2.htm](http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/notorious_pairs2.htm)
- [http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/cgi-shl/quiz.pl/its\\_there\\_quiz.htm](http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/cgi-shl/quiz.pl/its_there_quiz.htm)
- [http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/cgi-shl/quiz.pl/lie\\_lay\\_quiz.htm](http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/cgi-shl/quiz.pl/lie_lay_quiz.htm)
- [http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/affect\\_except\\_options.htm](http://grammar.ccc.comnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/affect_except_options.htm)



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# Words Often Confused Homework 1

\*\*To be completed after WOC Day 1 and 2

Review the Words Often Confused covered on Day 1 and Day 2 for information on the correct spelling and usage of the following terms:

<i>affect, effect</i>	<i>all together, altogether</i>	<i>brake, break</i>
<i>all ready, already</i>	<i>coarse, course</i>	<i>capital, capitol</i>

**EXERCISE** Underline the word in parentheses that correctly completes the meaning of each sentence below.

**Example** 1. During the test, I didn't let distractions (affect, effect) my concentration.

1. I didn't feel (*all together, altogether*) safe, so I asked for an escort to my car.
2. If you see debris or an animal in the road, you should (*brake, break*) the car.
3. The nap had a good (*affect, effect*) on my mood.
4. My bruised shin soon felt (*all right, allright*) after I applied an ice pack.
5. The boys were (*already, all ready*) full, so we skipped the last course.
6. Hartford is Connecticut's (*capital, capitol*).
7. The club members were (*already, all ready*) to elect a new president.
8. His snide remarks (*affected, effected*) my opinion of him.
9. A rounded dome complements the (*capital's, capitol's*) classic lines.
10. Is he sure that he'll raise enough (*capital, capitol*) for the business venture?
11. I have (*already, all ready*) been to the dentist for my six-month checkup.
12. Begin with (*coarse, course*) sandpaper and gradually switch to a finer grade.
13. Once you've gathered your laundry (*altogether, all together*), we'll go to the laundromat.
14. Everyone looked forward to the main (*coarse, course*) of the dinner.
15. The sign in the store said, "If you (*brake, break*) it, you buy it."
16. "We are (*altogether, all together*) happy to have you with us this weekend," said Grandma.
17. I use sunscreen to prevent some of the damaging (*affects, effects*) of the sun's rays.
18. Toshio has signed up for a (*coarse, course*) in calligraphy.
19. The birthday cake and punch are (*already, all ready*), but the decorations are not finished.
20. Five-year-old Trina printed her name in large (*capital, capitol*) letters.