

Activity

Definitions: Sort them out!

Learning objectives: to gain further knowledge of the term homophone; to use the dictionary more efficiently through practice in distinguishing between the spelling of homophones

Before you start

- Discuss the meaning of the term *homophone* (a word which sounds the same as another but is spelled differently, for example *ball* and *bawl*). Ask the children to think of or look up other examples in the dictionary.



Answers

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| a) stile | b) altar | c) currents |
| d) envelopes | e) allowed | f) mare |
| g) principal | h) foul | i) steak |
| j) desert | | |
- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| a) eccentric | b) canvasser | c) scapegoat |
| d) pilgrim | e) idol | f) au pair |
| g) spinster | h) diplomat | |
3. Check the children's answers are correct.



More to do

- Ask the children to find pairs of homophones, or very similar words, and to write five questions similar to those in question 1. These could then be answered by a partner or shared with a group or the class.

Name: _____

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1. Choose the correct answer and then use the dictionary to check if you were correct.

- a) Which would you climb over: a **stile** or a **style**? _____
- b) **Altar** or **alter**: which is in a church? _____
- c) **Currents** or **currants**: which are more dangerous? _____
- d) A parked car or a pile of envelopes: which is **stationery**? _____
- e) Are you **allowed** out or **aloud** out? _____
- f) Would a **mayor** or a **mare** live in a stable? _____
- g) Who's the boss: a **principal** or a **principle**? _____
- h) The referee's whistle blows: was it a **foul** or a **fowl**? _____
- i) Which would you eat with chips: a **steak** or a **stake**? _____
- j) Which would taste bad: a **dessert** or a **desert**? _____

2. Link the words below to the correct definition.

pilgrim
spinster
diplomat
scapegoat
eccentric
au pair

idol
canvasser

- a) a person who has habits or opinions which other people think are odd
- b) a person who tries to persuade people to vote for a particular political party
- c) a person who is blamed for something, although it may not be their fault
- d) a person who travels to a holy place
- e) a person who is loved and admired by fans
- f) a person who goes abroad to live with a family
- g) a woman who has never married
- h) a person who negotiates with another country on behalf of his or her own country

3. Use these **homophone** pairs correctly in the same sentence.

- a) stairs, stares _____
- b) seen, scene _____
- c) right, write _____

