ENGLISH, LITERACY, AND COMMUNICATION

Commonly misused words

Difficulty level: Intermediate

English, Literacy, and Communication

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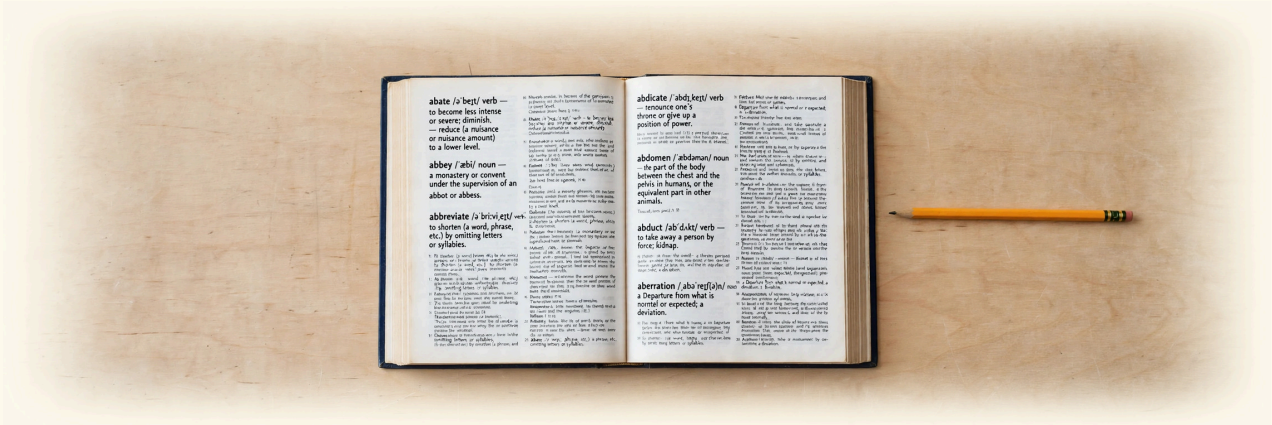
Overview of the concept

This is how you stop using a word in the wrong sense. Affect when you mean effect is the usual example, and the mistake makes your sentence say the opposite of what you intended. Getting these words right matters because your reader trusts the words on the page, not the words in your head.



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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Choose: The rain will ___ the game. (to influence)

SOLUTION

The meaning needed is 'to influence', a verb.

The verb is 'affect'.

So: The rain will affect the game.

EXAMPLE 2

Q Choose: The ___ of the rain was a delay. (the result, a noun)

SOLUTION

The meaning needed is 'the result', a noun.

The noun is 'effect'.

So: The effect of the rain was a delay.

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Practice questions

1

Choose: The news will ___ our plans. (to influence)

A affect

B effect

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2

Choose: The ___ of the news was a change of plans. (the result, a noun)

A affect

B effect

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3

Choose: ___ going to the park after lunch. (they are)

A their

B there

C they're

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4

Choose: ___ welcome to join us. (you are)

A your

B you're

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5

Choose: The dog wagged ___ tail. (belonging to it)

A its

B it's

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6

Choose: I have ___ apples in my bag. (the number 2)

A to

B too

C two

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7

Choose: She is taller ___ her brother. (comparing)

A then

B than

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8

Choose: Do not ___ your keys. (misplace)

A lose

B loose

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9

Choose: Everyone came ___ Sam. (not including)

A accept

B except

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10

Choose: I wonder ___ it will rain. (if)

A weather

B whether

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ANSWER KEY

1. affect

2. effect

3. they're

4. you're

5. its

6. two

7. than

8. lose

9. except

10. whether

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