

# Literacy Guide for Parents



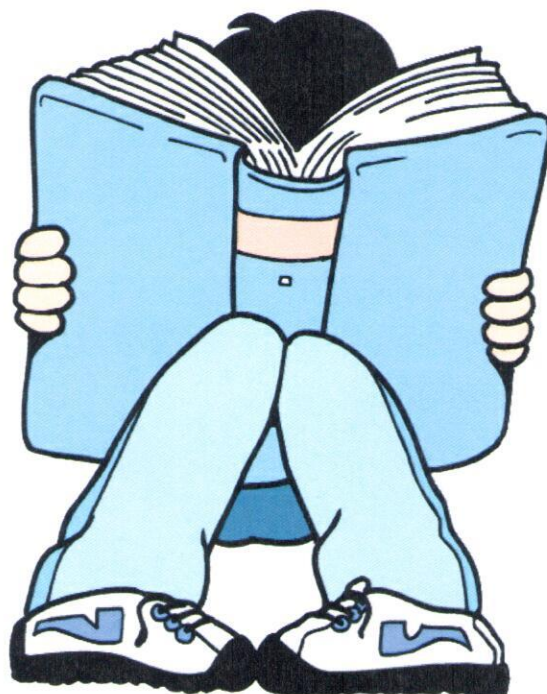
*Believe, Succeed, Together*

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Signature of Principal	
Signature of Chair of Governors	

## Words and their Function in a Sentence

These are the functions – or jobs - words do in sentences. Words can do different jobs; so at different times they can be different parts of a sentence.

<p><b>Collective nouns:</b> are the words or names given to a group of people or things. e.g. a <i>herd</i> of horses, a <i>band</i> of thieves, a <i>flock</i> of birds, a <i>swarm</i> of bees</p>	<p><b>Pronouns:</b> are the words that replace a noun, or that refer to a noun without naming it directly. e.g.: She got it and gave it to <u>them</u>.</p>
<p><b>Proper nouns:</b> are words that name particular people, places and things; they therefore always have a capital letter e.g. <i>Dartford</i>, <i>Callum</i>, <i>English</i>.</p>	<p><b>Adjectives</b> are the words that describe nouns. e.g.: <i>blue</i> book, <i>large</i> fields</p>
<p><b>Adverbs:</b> are the words that describe verbs and often end in <b>-LY</b> (but not always!). e.g.: She ran <i>quickly</i>. He shouted <i>loudly</i>. They spoke <i>fast</i>. He worked <i>hard</i>.</p>	<p><b>Conjunctions:</b> are the words we use to join sentences together to make them more interesting. e.g. The rain fell <i>and</i> we all went home. e.g. <i>and</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>with</i>.</p>
<p><b>Nouns</b> are naming words. e.g.: <i>dog</i>, <i>chair</i>, <i>Paul</i>, <i>book</i></p>	<p><b>Verbs</b> are doing or being words. e.g.: <i>run</i>, <i>drive</i>, <i>were</i>, <i>is</i>, <i>imagine</i></p>

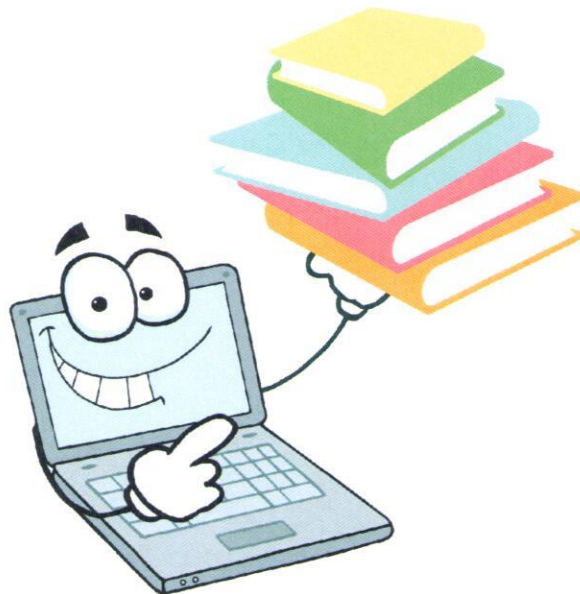


## What is a sentence?

**Sentences:** are a group of words that makes complete sense by itself. They:

- a) begin with a capital letter;
- b) contain a noun or pronoun;
- c) contain a verb in the past, present or future tense;
- d) then **must** end with a full stop. (Which is also found in ! and ?)

<p><b>Simple sentences:</b> Contain one piece of information, use one noun and one verb: e.g. <i>James ran home.</i> <b>Or</b> <i>The dog chased the postman.</i> <b>Or:</b> <i>I am hungry.</i></p>	<p><b>Compound sentences</b> Are simple sentences joined by a conjunction: e.g.: <i>James ran home <b>because</b> his dinner was ready.</i> Or: <i>The dog chased the postman <b>and</b> bit him on the bottom!</i></p>			
<p><b>Complex sentences</b> A complex sentence contains a main clause and at least one subordinate clause. The main clause can come at the start, at the end, or somewhere in the middle of the sentence. The main clauses are in bold print and the subordinate clauses are underlined. <i><b>I'll meet you tonight at six, <u>if I can.</u></b></i> <i><u>When Ceri speaks,</u> <b>everyone listens.</b></i></p>	<p><b>Subordinate clauses</b> Subordinate clauses are extra bits of information in a sentence. The sentence makes sense without the clause, but it makes the sentence more interesting. e.g. <i>The dwarves, <u>gasping and sweating,</u> ran into the cave.</i></p>			
<p><b>Tenses:</b> There are three main tenses in English:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>PAST</b> (Yesterday) I was I bought</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>PRESENT</b> (Today) I am I buy</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>FUTURE</b> (Tomorrow) I will be I will buy</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Keep to the same tense in narratives (stories).</p>		<p><b>PAST</b> (Yesterday) I was I bought</p>	<p><b>PRESENT</b> (Today) I am I buy</p>	<p><b>FUTURE</b> (Tomorrow) I will be I will buy</p>
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## Punctuation

### **Semi-colons (;)**

Can be used to separate main clauses:

e.g. *The guide opened the door; he showed us into the room.*

Or can break up lists containing more than one word, like a comma:

e.g. *Before the picnic we packed everything: a box for the plates and cutlery; cartons of sandwiches; two bottles of lemonade; a table cloth and serviettes.*

**N.B. Semi-colons are half way between a comma and a full stop.**

### **Commas (,)**

Are used to separate actions or adjectives in a sentence OR to separate items in a list:

e.g.: *Remember to buy one pineapple, 4kg of bananas, and some ice-cream for tea tonight.*

*I arrived home feeling tired, hungry and generally pleased.*

*My dad is the richest, most extravagant, most demanding chef in the world.*

**Do not use a comma where there should be a full stop!**

### **Capital Letters**

A capital letter must mark the beginning of every sentence; they also are used with proper nouns (names of people, places, days of the week and months)

e.g. *Once upon a time there was... London, Jenny, France, July, Friday*

### **Exclamation marks (!)**

Are used to indicate a voice raised or a strong emotion of shock, surprise, unhappiness etc.:

e.g.: *"Help!" she cried.*

**REMEMBER:** Question and exclamation marks **already have their own full stop.**

### **Colons (:)**

Introduce a list or a set of details.

e.g.: *You will need: scissors, paper and a pencil.*

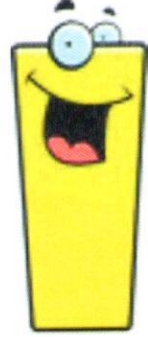
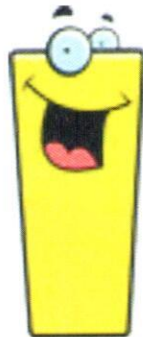
Or it tells you to expect more detail:

e.g.: *The ingredients are: eggs, butter, flour and milk.*

### **Question marks (?)**

Are used at the end of sentences which ask a question:

e.g. : *Where is your blazer?*



### Speech marks (""")

- Use speech marks when writing down what people actually say.
- Only the words actually spoken – the direct speech – go inside the speech marks.
- Introduce speech using a comma.
- Punctuation should go inside the speech marks.

There are three basic patterns to know:

Pattern 1: *He said, "Hello."*

Pattern 2: *"That is my book," he said.*

Pattern 3: *"Hello," he said, "my name is John."*

**REMEMBER: every time there is a new speaker you must start a new paragraph!**

### Apostrophes (')

They can be used for two different reasons:

a) Apostrophes are used to indicate where two words have been made into one (contracted) and a letter or letters have been left out. The apostrophe goes where the missing letter/letters should be.

e.g. *I have = I've you are = you're*

b) They can be used to show that one thing belongs to another. This is called **possession** or ownership.

The apostrophe is placed on the word that does the owning.

If there is one owner the apostrophe goes before the **s**:

e.g.: *The farmer's dog.* (One farmer owning a dog)

If there is more than one owner, the apostrophe goes after the **S**:

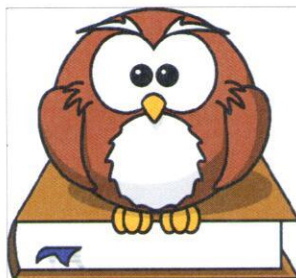
e.g.: *The farmers' dogs.* (Several farmers owning several dogs)

### Important exceptions:

**It's** means *it is* or *it has* and does not indicate possession. (use **its**)

**Its** shows possession (there is no apostrophe)

**Who's** means *who is* or *who has* and does not indicate possession. (use **whose**).



**REMEMBER: If in doubt leave it out!**



## Paragraphing

A **paragraph** is a **group of sentences** about **one** particular **subject**. The sentences in a paragraph should be linked in some way because they should all be about the same topic. The main sentence in a paragraph is called the **topic sentence**. Every **new idea** needs a **new paragraph**.

Paragraphs help us because they break up the text into smaller, more readable parts.

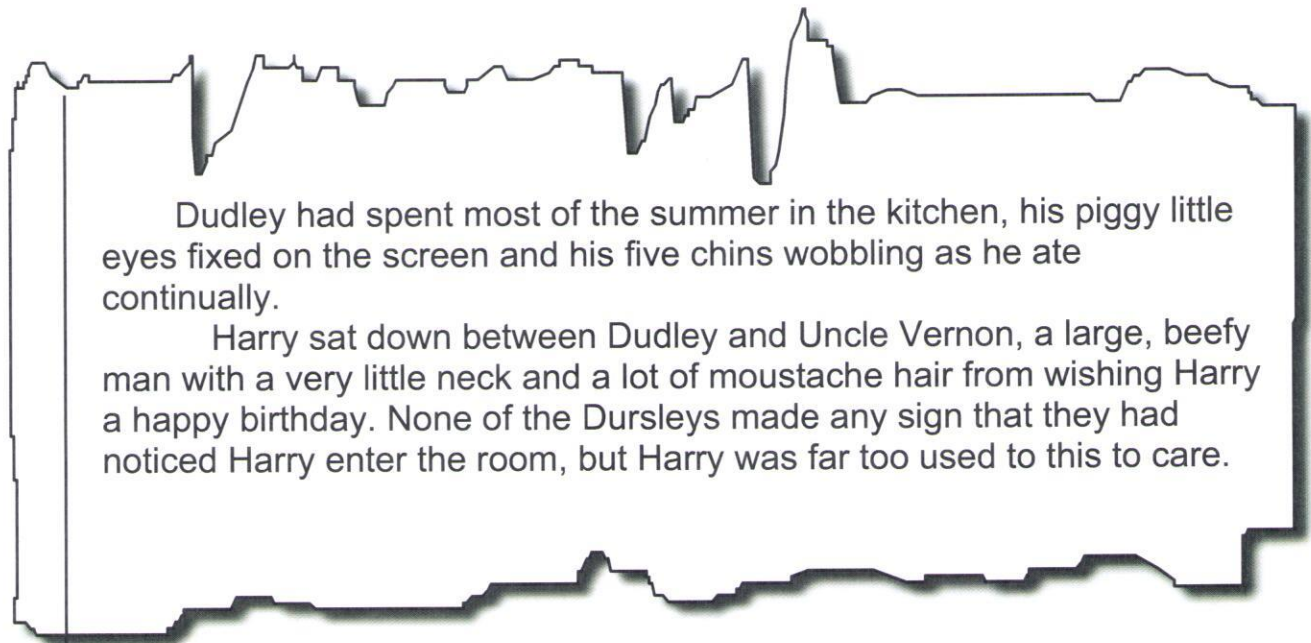
You should begin a new paragraph when there is:

- *A change of time*
- *A change of speaker*
- *A change of place*
- *A change of topic*
- *A new point being made.*

The first word in a new paragraph should be about 1 cm away from the margin. You must always use paragraphs in your work, whatever subject you are writing for.

### **Do not leave lines in your work.**

The fourth line below shows how to start a new paragraph:



## Some other useful terms to know

<p><b>Vowels</b> are the letters: <b>A E I O U</b>. In English two vowel sounds one immediately after the other, such as in "a apple", is avoided by using <b>an</b> instead: "an apple"</p>	<p><b>Consonants</b> are all the other letters of the alphabet, apart from AEIOU.</p>
<p><b>Prefixes</b> are the letters added to the beginning of a word.</p> <p>e.g. <b>dis</b> added to <i>appear</i> makes <i>disappear</i></p>	<p><b>Suffixes</b> are the letters added at the end of a word e.g. <b>ed</b> added to <i>walk</i> makes <i>walked</i></p>
<p><b>Synonyms</b> are words which are very similar in meaning</p> <p>e.g.: <i>asked, enquired, or observed, noticed.</i></p>	<p><b>Antonyms</b> are words which are opposite in meaning</p> <p>e.g.: <i>love, hate or good, bad.</i></p>
<p><b>Imagery</b> creates vivid pictures or sensations in the mind by likening one thing to another; it includes metaphors and similes.</p>	<p><b>Symbols</b> are objects or a set of objects that stands for some idea.</p> <p>e.g. the cross being a symbol for Christianity.</p>
<p><b>Syllables</b> are the smallest unit of pronunciation produced by a single breath. They are like <u>beats</u> in a word:</p> <p>e.g. in <b>biggest</b> there are two: big-gest.</p>	

## Figures of Speech OR Figurative Language

<p><b>Simile:</b>  a) often uses 'like' or 'as'  b) compares two or more things  e.g.: <u>Last night Bob slept <b>like</b> a log.</u>  <u>As tall <b>as</b> a skyscraper...</u> or <u>As cold <b>as</b> ice.</u></p>	<p><b>Metaphor:</b>  a) does not use like or as  b) changes a person or thing into another thing  c) is often not literally/really true.  e.g.: <u>She is a <i>whirlwind on the dance floor.</i></u></p>
<p><b>Personification:</b> is a particular kind of metaphor: it changes a thing into a person or speaks of something, which is not living as if it was alive or gives it human qualities.   e.g.: <i>The wind tickled her cheek. Or: The angry-looking clouds.</i></p>	<p><b>Alliteration:</b>  a) words <b>close</b> together  b) beginning with the same <b>sound</b>  c) but <b>not</b> necessarily the same letter  e.g.: <i>The <u>f</u>antastic <u>f</u>ox <u>f</u>ound a <u>f</u>righ<u>t</u>fully good <u>f</u>east awaiting him in his den.</i></p>
<p><b>Irony:</b>  Suggests the opposite of what is said, e.g.: "Charming!" (Which means it is not charming)  Any difference between what we expect or intend and what happens, or a situation showing such a difference   e.g. <i>a paramedic running over somebody on the way to an accident.</i></p>	<p><b>Pun:</b>  A pun is a word that has two or more meanings (a play on words).  Advertisers and newspapers employ puns as economical ways of introducing multiple meanings:   e.g. <i>A <u>great deal</u> in every department.</i> (Department Stores advertising campaign)</p>
<p><b>Onomatopoeia:</b>  where the sound of the word is similar to the noise being described  e.g.: <u>Splash, hiss, whisper, snap, crackle, pop.</u></p>	<p><b>Dramatic irony</b> is where the audience understands what is being said better than the characters e.g. at the start of the film <i>Titanic</i>, the main character thinks he's lucky because he has won tickets.</p>
<p><b>Rhetorical question:</b>  Asks a question, but does not expect a reply e.g. <i>Do you think I am stupid?</i></p>	



## How to write an essay

- 1. An introduction:** introduce your essay topic, explain definitions – briefly.
- 2. An argument:** a minimum of three or four paragraphs - depending on the essay
- 3. A conclusion:** give briefly your most important arguments or an overview - add no new ideas. The conclusion ties the essay together. Some people write the conclusion first when doing their first draft.

In each paragraph of the **argument** you must use POINT EVIDENCE EXPLAIN:

<b>POINT</b>	This restates the question set in the title, but focuses on one argument. This is the topic sentence.	In a plan - a single word. A sentence in an essay.
<b>EVIDENCE</b>	This is the evidence - quotation, facts, other viewpoints	In a plan – a few words. No more than one sentence in an essay.
<b>EXPLAIN</b>	<p><b>Always</b> relates directly to the essay question.</p> <p><b>Why</b> did it happen?</p> <p><b>What</b> do you think about it?</p> <p><b>How</b> did it made you feel (if appropriate)?</p> <p><b>What</b> do others think about it?</p>	In a plan –basic notes. One or two sentences in an essay.

For students that are writing with more depth, they will also use **D** on the end to form **PEED**.

<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	<p>This shows/explores the evidence in more detail and explains how it relates to the essay question.</p> <p><b>Why</b> is the evidence important?</p> <p><b>How</b> does it explore the major issues?</p>	In a plan –basic notes. One or two sentences in an essay.
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Paragraphs begin with a topic sentence stating what the paragraph will be about. It is where you make a judgement or give your opinion to **answer** part of the question/task in the essay title.

**Plan** essays by following your teacher’s system, write AQE in the margin and write notes using as few words as possible. This helps to catch ideas before they escape. It organises your ideas: each time you answer, quote and explain, underline this section. You have dealt with one set of ideas - so this will be one paragraph. Never attempt to write an argument essay without planning it first.

Do NOT put **PEE** in your final draft. It is just to remind you of what you should include.

## Spelling

Always check work with a dictionary and learn difficult spellings. You will be regularly tested on your spelling ability during lessons. Keep a list of your corrected spellings in your planner or homework diary.

### **Tackling spellings:**

Break it down bit by bit:

Break the word into syllables and spell them one at a time e.g. man u fac ture

Choose the most popular letters:

If you don't know part of a word, choose the most common way of spelling e.g. *tion* is more common than *sion*, *tian*, *sian* or *cian* and **e** is a more common vowel than **a**, **i**, **o** or **u**.

### **Remembering spellings:**

Say it as it's spelt e.g.: know, knowledge, knife, gnome, lamb, Wednesday, length, crumb, dumb, numb, thumb, tomb, womb, comb, limb

### **Learning spellings:**

Be sure to make a note of difficult spellings, setting yourself regular targets to learn.

**Mnemonics** help you remember. What will help you remember difficult spellings?

There is a double helping of S in *dessert*, of which you would like a double helping.

*Accommodation*: remember there are two cots and therefore two mattresses.

Necessary: one collar, two sleeves OR Never Eat Crisps Eat Salad Sandwiches  
And Remain Young

*Because*: **b**ig **e**lephants **c**an **a**lways **u**se **s**ome **e**ggs.

Or, make them up using the names of friends and family!

Receive: Rachel Eats Carly's Ear In Violent Event.

Rhymes can help: I'll be your *friend* to the *end*.

There are also words within words to help you remember spellings:

There's: **a rat** in **separate**

**sin** in **business**

There's a **pie** in a **piece** of pie already.



**Some helpful spelling rules:**

1. **i** before **e**, except after **c**, e.g. *believe* and *deceive*  
(except: *seize, seizure, weir, weird, protein, counterfeit, surfeit, forfeit*)
2. Words which end in **o, s, x, ch, sh** and **z** - add **es** to form a plural  
e.g. : *one match - two matches*  
(except: *pianos, photos, sopranos* - i.e. foreign or abbreviated words)
3. Some words that end in **f** or **fe** - change these to **v** and add **es** to form a plural.  
e.g.: *one knife - two knives,*  
Exceptions - add **s** to *roof* and *chief* = *roofs, chiefs*
4. Some words are the same in the singular and in the plural:  
e.g. *one sheep - two sheep,* - also: *deer, salmon, aircraft*
5. **Well** and **full** drop an **l** when added to a word e.g.: *welfare, fulfil*
6. **All** joined to the beginning of a word becomes **al** e.g.: *altogether*
7. Use a double consonant when adding **ing** and **ed** suffixes to short vowel words  
e.g. *dig - digging, hop - hopping*
8. Take off the **e** when adding **ing** and **ed** to long vowel words  
e.g. *hope - hoping*
9. **Words ending in Y**  
If there is a:  
vowel immediately before the Y, just add the suffix  
consonant immediately before the Y, change the Y to I and add the suffix  
e.g.:

consonant+Y	vowel+Y
Happy Happiness, happily, happier, happiest	Play Plays, playing, playful
Beauty Beautiful	Joy Joyful, joyous
Fly Flies, flying	Stray Strays, straying
Story Stories	Storey Storeys

## Different endings

### **- able and - ible**

If the base word makes sense by itself (e.g. *accept, desire* or *predict*), then add - *able*

If the base word makes **no** sense by itself (e.g. *horr, poss* or *terr*), then add - *ible*

### **- tion – cian – and - sion**

Words ending in:

**t** or **te** often end in **-tion** e.g. generate – generation

**c** often end in **-cian** e.g. optic – optician

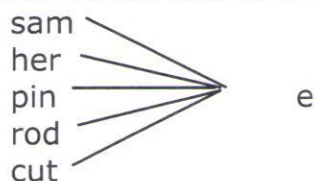
**d** often end in **-sion** e.g. extend – extension

## Same sound, different meaning (homophones):

- a) 1. Their: means belonging to example: *their bike*  
2. They're: is short for *they are*  
3. There: the **here** in **there** reminds you this often refers to a place.  
(Tip: Does the one you want mean either 1 or 2? If it doesn't then use 3)  
This may help you to remember: **Their heir** to the throne.
- b) **Whether**: like **why**, asks a question  
**Weather**: the climate of the **earth**
- c) Quite: a small amount (an adverb): e.g. It was quite bright.  
Quiet: refers to sound (a noun or adjective): (**qui-et**) e.g. It was a quiet night.
- d) Here: is a place, like **there**  
**Hear**: is what you do with your **ears**  
(**There, where, here** all refer to places)
- e) Pairs of words are spelt with a C or an S. The C is the noun; the S is the verb, e.g.:  
You give advice but you advise some one. You go to a practice, but you practise.
- f) Stationary is when you stand still. Stationery includes envelopes.  
Or: stationary car - stationery paper

## **Silent 'e'**

When added to the end of a word it makes the middle vowel say its name e.g.:



A silent e changes the vowel sound from a short sound to a long sound.



## Consonants and vowel sounds

*lady and laddy*  
*tiny and tinny*  
*bony and bonny*  
*fury and furry*  
*biting and bitten*  
*writing and written*  
*cute and cutting*  
*ape and apple*  
*fate and fattening*

A **single consonant** after the vowel means the vowel says its name. (It has a long sound)

A **double consonant** after the vowel shortens the vowel sound.

### Your spellings

- Keep all your corrected spellings safe in your homework diary or the A4 folder you use to keep your English work in at home.
- Have two sections: one for English, and one for spellings for other subjects under different subject headings.

### How to remember the words that have been corrected in your work

1. Copy the corrected word exactly.
2. Set a target of learning three spellings each week.
3. Test yourself regularly on these or get some one to test you.
- 4.

### Learning to spell a word

1. Look carefully at the word. Try to remember it. Moving your eyes up (or closing your eyes) while you make a mental picture of the word can help.
2. Cover the word.
3. Write the word without copying.
4. Check you have written the word correctly.

**Remember:** LOOK - COVER - WRITE - CHECK

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**

Additional spelling advice is available from the SEN Department.

## General Spelling List

The following list of spellings was compiled by a number of secondary schools which all identified the following words as commonly misspelled.

accommodation	evidence	possession
actually	explanation	potential
alcohol	February	preparation
although	fierce	prioritise
analyse/analysis	forty	process
argument	fulfil	proportion
assessment	furthermore	proposition
atmosphere	guard	questionnaire
audible	happened	queue
audience	health	reaction
autumn	height	receive
beautiful	imaginary	reference
beginning	improvise	relief
believe	industrial	remember
beneath	interesting	research
buried	interrupt	resources
business	issue	safety
caught	jealous	Saturday
chocolate	knowledge	secondary
climb	listening	separate
column	lonely	sequence
concentration	lovely	shoulder
conclusion	marriage	sincerely
conscience	material	skilful
conscious	meanwhile	soldier
consequence	miscellaneous	stomach
continuous	mischief	straight
creation	modern	strategy
daughter	moreover	strength
decide/decision	murmur	success
definite	necessary	surely
design	nervous	surprise
development	original	survey
diamond	outrageous	technique
diary	parallel	technology
disappear	participation	texture
disappoint	pattern	tomorrow
embarrass	peaceful	unfortunately
energy	people	Wednesday
engagement	performance	weight
enquire	permanent	weird
environment	persuade/persuasion	women
evaluation	physical	

### Common homophones and confusions

a lot/allot	choose/chose	quiet/quite
advise/advice	cloth/clothe	sites/sights
affect/effect	conscience/conscious	source/sauce
allowed/aloud	course/coarse	threw/through
bought/brought	our/are	to/too/two
braking/breaking	practise/practice	