

Vocabulary: Problem Words

These words sound the same, or almost the same, and are often confused. Some of the words can be pronounced in more than one way. However, the words are spelled differently and have different meanings.

1. (a) stationary (adjective) – not moving, immobile
(b) stationery (noun) – writing materials: paper, pens, pencils
2. (a) cloth (noun) – fabric, piece of fabric
(b) clothe (verb) – to dress someone, to provide clothing for someone
3. (a) weak (adjective) – not strong or fit
(b) week (noun) – seven-day period
4. (a) mayor (noun) – head of city or town government
(b) mare (noun) – adult female horse
5. (a) tear (noun) – single drop of fluid from the eye, drop of liquid
(b) tier (noun) – layer; row or seats in rising series; level in hierarchy
6. (a) isle (noun) – island
(b) aisle (noun) – passageway between seats, goods; division in church.
7. (a) elude (verb) – escape or avoid
(b) allude (verb) – refer indirectly
8. (a) hostel (noun) – cheap inn
(b) hostile (adjective) – very unfriendly; against, aggressive
9. (a) roll (verb) – turn over and over
(b) role (noun) – acting part; specific function
10. (a) lone (adjective) – solitary; only; isolated
(b) loan (noun) – money lent
loan (verb) – to lend
11. (a) board (noun) – flat piece of wood, flat surface for particular purpose; group chosen to make decisions
(b) bored (adjective) – tired and impatient, not interesting in something
12. (a) peel (verb) – remove outer layer of something
(b) peal (verb) - ringing of bells; noisy outburst
13. (a) reign (noun) – period of rule; control or influence
(b) reign (verb) – to rule a nation
(c) rein (noun) – strap for controlling horses
(d) rain (noun) – water falling from clouds

Intermediate 3 – Exercise 11 – Vocabulary: Problem Words

Fill in the blanks with the correct word.

STATIONARY

STATIONERY

1. The firm buys its _____, which includes letterhead, envelopes etc., from ABC Office Supplies.
2. The cars remained _____ at the crossing until the train had passed.

CLOTH

CLOTHE

3. Her designer suit was made of fine, imported _____.
4. It's expensive to _____ young children today.

WEAK

WEEK

5. On their vacation, they spent a _____ in Hawaii.
6. Not hearing the alarm clock is a _____ excuse for being late.

MAYOR

MARE

7. Do you know who the _____ of your city is?
8. He rode a young _____ in the rodeo.

TEARS

TIERS

9. The wedding cake was made up of four _____.
10. The mother of the bride wiped away her _____ as the newlyweds cut the first piece of cake.

ISLE

AISLE

11. All heads turned as the bride walked down the _____ of the church toward the altar.
12. From the terrace, they could see the _____ in the middle of the bay.

ELUDE

ALLUDE

13. The thief tried to _____ the police as he sped away from the scene of the burglary.
14. In his speech, he would often _____ to sources of his information.

HOSTEL

HOSTILE

15. He was very _____ when he was arrested by the police.
16. The travelling students stayed overnight at a _____.

Fill in the blanks with the correct word. Don't forget to conjugate the verbs when necessary.

ROLL

ROLE

1. They _____ up their sleeping bags and packed the car to go home.
2. He won an Oscar for his leading _____ in the movie.
3. She _____ out the dough to make her piecrust.

LONE

LOAN

4. He was the _____ survivor of the plane crash.
5. I must return the three videos I have on _____ from the video shop.
6. He asked his bank manager for a _____ to buy a new car.

BOARD

BORED

7. The butcher cut the meat into thin slices on his cutting _____ .
8. After I listened to the speeches by the _____ of Directors for two hours, I was very _____ .
9. At the end of the summer, the children were _____ and wanted to go back to school.

PEEL

PEAL

10. Carl _____ the potatoes while his wife prepared the salad.
11. The _____ of the church bells reminded him of his wedding day.
12. They suddenly heard the _____ of thunder just before it began to rain heavily.

REIGN

REIN

RAIN

13. The _____ fell heavily for two hours.
14. His instructor told him to keep a firm _____ on the horse.
15. That king will always be remembered for his long _____ .