

## EXPLORING HOMONYMS



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English students wish to expand their vocabularies. We see this consistently in A/3/1, home of the LEP (Language Enhancement Program). Recently, a list of 243 homonym sets served as a conversation stimulus for students and faculty members alike. According to **Webster's New World College Dictionary (Fifth Edition)**, a homonym is "a word with the same pronunciation as another, but with a different meaning, origin, and, usually, spelling." I will share some of these homonym sets with you.

A **stationary** bicycle offers a thorough cardiovascular exercise at the home or office, while well-designed **stationery** is used to write tasteful "thank you" letters.

When finding disagreement or absurdity, flashing a naturally **wry** smile can be a more mature, patient reaction than resorting to insults or complaints. When confronted with wheat allergies, some digestive systems still manage to agree with **rye bread**, despite the fact that it contains gluten.

From most any area or century, historians cite the examination or use of "**guerrilla** tactics," dating back more than two thousand years, to Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. Perhaps an animal-loving youngster, fidgeting his way through a social studies class, hears this term and immediately pictures a large, powerful ape. However, it is only on the African continent that

a **gorilla** appears in its natural habitat.

A property owner sometimes "changes the **locks**," as a security measure, or merely to upgrade operability. Meanwhile, a bagel shop customer may order "**lox** with cream cheese on poppy." A deeper consideration of this sound

yields two additional forms, not included on the list: the **lochs** (lakes) of Scotland and John **Locke's** seminal works, including his 1693 treatise entitled *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*.

When organizational meetings are governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*, the people often vote for a motion by voice. Members signify a positive response by saying "**aye**," pronounced the same way as an organ used for sight, one's left or right "**eye**."

Those expressing a negative response to a motion then signify by saying "**nay**," not to be confused with the term representing a horse's cry, "**neigh**." The chairman listens for the majority by determining the superior source of volume. He then responds with "the **eyes** have it" or "the **nays** have it."

These are just a few examples of how a vocabulary list can prompt interesting conversations and unique learning opportunities in an extracurricular setting. I encourage anyone on campus with an English interest to discover the LEP, found in room A/3/1.

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