
Section Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify and demonstrate understanding of properly written sentences.
- Practice the behaviors of effective, active listeners▪
- Students will be able to identify and analyze imagery, alliteration and assonance in poetry.

Grammar

Commonly Confused Homonyms

The English language is full of subtle differences that sometimes confuse even the most accomplished speakers and writers. Let's look at common usage problems that we often encounter with **homonyms**. **Homonyms** are words that sound alike but are spelled differently and have different meanings. The two **homonym** errors we will discuss are:

- Their/They're/There
- It's/Its

Why is proper usage so important? For one thing, proper usage shows that you care about the message you're communicating. For another, it guarantees that you will get your point across in the clearest manner possible. We all have important things to say, and we should always present our points as carefully and as correctly as possible. Let's take a closer look at each of the ten common usage errors listed above and see if we can identify ways to choose the proper usage to communicate our thoughts and ideas.

Their vs. They're vs. There – This common usage error relies on knowing the parts of speech; *their* is a possessive pronoun, *they're* (they are) is a contraction, and *there* is an odd part of speech that indicates location, and can be used in several different ways. In other words, many students know that *their* English class will be very useful when *they're* applying to college and getting ready to go *there*.

Examples:

1. The Girl Scouts sold *their* cookies in front of the store.
2. *They're* positive that the game will end in a tie.
3. Please put the package on the table over *there*.

It's vs. Its – This common usage error has the potential to be one of the most confusing, because it goes against traditional grammar rules; possessive form usually requires an apostrophe, but in this case, the contraction *it's* (it is) requires the apostrophe, and the possessive *its* does not. In other words, *it's* always good to know when to use a word in *its* proper context.

Examples:

1. It's going to be a beautiful day!
2. The dog got its leash caught on the light post.

Practice

Directions: Choose the correct homonym in parentheses to complete each sentence.

1. (Their/There/They're) Please have a seat over _____ while I get the doctor.
 2. (Their/There/They're) _____ my favorite band because they all play their own instruments.
 3. (Their/There/They're) The children on the playground gathered _____ toys before the rain came.
 4. (Their/There/They're) _____ are a lot of people who don't believe anything that man says.
 5. (It's/Its) I'm sure _____ going to be at least an hour until the train arrives.
 6. (It's/Its) _____ not always possible to get a perfect score on every test.
 7. (It's/Its) That building is missing _____ original door.
 8. (It's/Its) Call me when _____ time for dinner, please.
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Growth Activity:

1. Write a letter or email to your best friend using all forms of the homonyms we've discussed today.