

## Finding a Narrative

Emotional Engagement	Central Image or Metaphor	Organizing Content into Story Form
<p><b>What is emotionally engaging about the topic? How is it meaningful? Why should it matter to us?</b></p> <p>Homophones are words that sound the same, but have different meanings and spellings. A source of wonder, then, might be that despite their identical sounds, different homophones awaken different emotions, associations, meanings—in short, each retains its individual character.</p> <p><b>What binary concepts best capture the meaning and emotion of the topic? If this were a story, what would the opposing forces be?</b></p> <p>Bland/ characterful Alternative: boring sameness/ interesting variety</p>	<p><b>What content most dramatically illustrates the contrast between the binary opposite? Is there a metaphor or image that can do this?</b></p> <p>The “characters” there, their and they’re, obviously related, but also distinct individuals</p>	<p><b>How can we organize the content into a developing story form?</b></p> <p>We can start the unit by dividing the class into three groups. Tell the students that the following three homophones are members of a family: “there” is a girl, “their” is her twin brother, and “they’re” is their older brother. Each group is given one of the homophones. They must come up with a description of each family member or “person” based on the way the word looks and its meaning. For example, “there” might be helpful, with the final “e” of her name pointing the way to others who are lost: “over there.” The first “e” sets up the direction, the “r” checks that it is right, and the final “e” does the precision pointing. She is a helpful, cheerful and precise individual. “Their” might be egotistical, always thinking about himself: he has an “l” trapped in the middle of his name. He is competitive and possessive and always wants to know what is his and what is theirs. “They’re” is clearly the eldest, as he has grown more letters. He was always very inquisitive, asking “Why?” and raising his hand (hence, the apostrophe). He is a bit boring, always explaining what everyone else is doing: “they’re ...”.</p> <p>Once numerous features of the characters are worked out (e.g. voice, clothing, diet, hobbies), based on the way the word looks, students can create a story in which the particular characters drive the plot.</p>

# Developing Cognitive Tools

# Characterful Homophones

Images and Metaphor	Rhythm, Rhyme and Patterns	Drama and Roleplay	Teacher-led/structured ↕ Student-led/open-ended
<p><b>What activities help students develop images, metaphors, other forms of creative depiction?</b></p> <p>Based on the various homophones covered, students can develop images/metaphors to distinguish them. For variety, teachers might focus on different categories for each homophone family (e.g. animals, seasons, food, fairy tale characters).</p> <p><b>What jokes or fantastic stories can be found or invented that relate to the topic?</b></p> <p>See neighbouring columns.</p>	<p><b>What activities help students experience and extend a sense of rhythm, rhyme or predictability?</b></p> <p>Some homophones belong to word families which have similar spellings and sounds (e.g. -ale/-ail; -ead/-ed). These patterns, and “rulebreakers” could be explored (e.g. lead/led, read/red, bead/bed, dead).</p> <p>Poems (such as limericks) could be written using various homophones, bringing out their individual characteristics where possible.</p> <p>Students could make drawings which incorporate the meanings of both homophones (e.g. the “eye” of an “I”; the “right” to “write”).</p>	<p><b>How can the students become characters in the story? How can they be encouraged and aided to contribute to or retell it using their own words, gestures, and actions?</b></p> <p>Students could create a mystery drama, in which one of the homophones has committed a crime (e.g. “they’re” has eaten a letter!). The detective interviews various homophones (e.g. pear/pair/pare; read/red) to try to discover what the guilty party looks like, activities he or she participates in, etc. (To throw another “twist,” certain letters or words could try to change their appearances, for example, “w” might hide as “m” by walking on its head.)</p> <p>Wordplays in drama, such as Gilbert and Sullivan’s <i>Pirates of Penzance</i> (pilot/ pirate; orphan/ often) could be viewed or performed by the class.</p> <p>For a slightly older class, students might be given the homophones whose and who’s and “Who’s on First?” might be played. Students could then develop their own radio drama, play, conversation, etc, the plot of which is driven by two or three homophones.</p> <p>Students could write and perform songs, skits, conversations that use the various homophones that have been studied.</p>	

## Looking Forward and Concluding

## Characterful Homophones

Towards Further Understanding	Resolution	Assessment
<p><b><i>How can the unit develop embryonic forms of Romantic, Philosophic, Ironic understanding? What cognitive tools characteristic of literacy, the disciplines, or embodied self-awareness can be introduced here?</i></b></p> <p>How did the printing press and the dictionary influence/ create systematized spelling?</p> <p>What other forms of language and communication do humans and animals use (e.g. sign language, communicating through gestures, animal communication, logographic languages (versus phonographic) languages)?</p> <p>Does written language represent spoken language? Are they distinct? What accounts for the differences?</p> <p>The International Phonetic Alphabet or Esperanto might be of interest to particular students.</p>	<p><b><i>How does the story end? How are the opposites mediated or resolved?</i></b></p> <p>Create a book of class jokes (which depend upon homophones).</p> <p>Make a People magazine in which each character is profiled, with appropriate drawings, distinguishing features, aliases, etc.</p> <p>Create Wanted posters which include drawings of the outlaw, his or her crimes, relatives, the reward offered, etc.</p>	<p><b><i>How can one know whether the topic has been understood, its importance grasped and the content learned?</i></b></p> <p>Did students use their imaginations in representing the homophones?</p> <p>Did students gain awareness of how images can assist memory?</p> <p>Did students play with language meaning, associations, etc.?</p> <p>In their writing, did students show correct use of the various homophones explored?</p>