

Journalism Style

Choosing the Correct Word

In the Chapter 17 *Journalism Style*, you learned about how oft-confused words and spelling errors can create embarrassing or misleading headlines and stories. Sometimes errors result from mishearing a word or expression, as in “*Will the team’s new recruit pass mustard?*” instead of “*Will the team’s new recruit pass muster?*” These errors can be difficult to catch using spell check programs and can cause embarrassment for the writer or publication. If you are unsure of how an expression should read, look it up online or ask your editor.

Try It!

Choose the correct word or words to complete each sentence below.

1. Three players were moved from the freshman/freshmen team to the JV team.
2. Every day/Everyday clothes will be fine for the service project.
3. Everyone/Every one had a good time.
4. She will not go with him any way/anyway/ anyways.
5. Wow! Are you all right/all-right/alright?
6. Will you please lead/led the singing?
7. “Know/No way!” he replied.
8. She forgets her homework almost every day/ everyday.
9. Every one/Everyone of her children graduated from college.
10. Missouri is a bellweather/bellwether/ bellwhether state.
11. She said, “It does not matter. Any way/ Anyway/Anyways, I am leaving.”
12. He led/lead the singing.
13. Is there any way/anyway/anyways he can pass?
14. What is the lead/led of the story? (Standard English, not the journalism wire service variation)
15. He was hit over the head with a lead/led pipe.
16. My uncle that/who/which died was a journalist.
17. Are you getting these all right/all-right/ alright?
18. The gun, who/which/that has a pearl handle, was never fired. (The pearl handle is nonessential; it is extra information, decoration, and not very important to the sentence. Note the commas setting off the nonessential clause. See the Journalism Style lesson on comma use.)
19. The gun who/which/that has a pearl handle was never fired. (The pearl handle is essential to the sentence. There are two guns, one with a metal handle and one with a pearl handle. If the pearl-handled one was in Suzy’s hand, she is probably innocent. Note the absence of commas around the essential clause. It is not set off from the sentence.)
20. Did he know/no you are dating his cousin?
21. Did he come threw/through/thru the hall on the left?
22. No matter what happens, he defiantly/ definitely is planning on graduating with his class.
23. I was literally/figuratively swimming in a pool of tears after he broke up with me.
24. It’s a doggy-dog world/dog-eat-dog world— some people will betray their friends just to become valedictorian.
25. Irregardless/Regardless of the weather, I am going to the beach.
26. She spilled her milk by accident/on accident.
27. It doesn’t matter. It is a moot/mute point.
28. I should have/should of worked out instead of taking a nap.
29. “Young man, if you think you can get away with that, you have another thing/think coming.”
30. She threw/through/thru a precise curveball neatly toward the batter’s chest.
31. Is it lunchtime yet? I have hunger pains/ pangs.
32. Her surprise quizzes wreck havoc/wreak havoc on our grades.
33. Yoko Ono is a famous escape goat/ scapegoat, often blamed for the breakup of the Beatles.