

homononyms, homophones and homographs

1. Richard III – Shakespeare – Learning what a PUN is

Richard III (1452-1585), formerly duke of Gloucester, son of Richard Plantagenet, duke of York, in Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part 2* and *Henry VI, Part 3*; **later king of England in *Richard III***. One of Shakespeare's finest creations, Richard III is among the earliest and most vivid of the **playwright's** sympathetic villains. In his plot to become king, Richard commits himself to murder, treason, and dissimulation with an inventive imagination that an audience can both relish and condemn. Shakespeare also puts into Richard's speeches some of his most beautiful early poetry, as in the opening **soliloquy** of *Richard III*, and ...

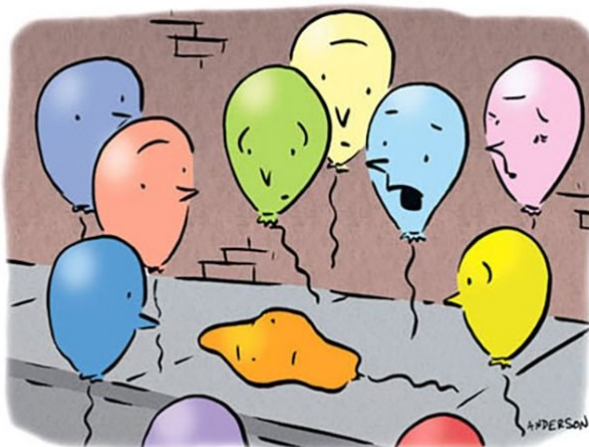
(from Encyclopaedia Britannica online)

Prologue:

'Now is the winter of our discontent, made glorious Summer by this sun of York'.

1. Read the line from the prologue out loud. Does it make sense to you?
2. Watch the video where Sir Ian McKellen reads the prologue and discover what a **PUN** is. Can you explain it in your own words?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_WJSHy_szE



"Everyone back! Give him some air!"



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- ⇒ **Pun** (noun): A joke exploiting the different possible meanings of a word or the fact that there are words which sound alike but have different meanings.

(from lexico.com)

2. omonyms, Homophones and Homographs

- ⇒ A **homonym** is a word that has the same sound or spelling as another but a different meaning. Homonyms can be separated into two groups, **homographs** (same spelling) and **homophones** (same sound).

Example:

‘Write’, ‘right’ and ‘rite’ are examples of homophones, and ‘wind’ is a homograph (but not a homophone) with several meanings (‘wind the clock’ ‘a howling wind’).

(from the British Council –Teaching English website)

- ⇒ Watch this introductory video about homophones and homographs:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_7FR59AKmQ

Curiosity note: If you’re wondering what exactly a homonyms means, it is a Greek word, and it means “the same name” = ὁμῶ-νυμος (= pronounced *homó-nymos*).

- ⇒ Let’s read the **extra handout** on homonyms (attached). Their definition of homonyms, homophones and homographs is slightly different.

3. Some selected words for practice:

board - bored aisle – I’ll – isle * awe – oar – ore * lava – larva knows – nose * cue – Q (kyu) – queue knot – not knight – night hour – our whether – weather	bear (n) – bear (verb) bark (n) – bark (verb) ruler (n) – ruler (n) spring (n) – spring (v) mean (adj) – mean (v) well (adv) – well (n) sink (n) – sink (verb) trip (n) – trip (verb) park (n) – park (verb) die (v) – die (noun)	row (n) – row (n) wind (n) – wind (verb) produce (n) – produce (v) present (n) – present (v) desert (v) – desert (n) minute (n) – minute (adj)
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- ⇒ Now, let's read **a cut from an article published on The Independent** (UK) about how people are no longer able to identify puns and homophones in Shakespeare's plays.



Five shakespeare puns RUINED by modern **E**nglish

Tuesday 16 February 2016 20:41



A host of William Shakespeare's puns, rhymes and rhythms are completely lost on modern audiences due to changes in pronunciation, a linguistics expert has said.

David Crystal has dedicated 12 years to studying original pronunciation (OP) productions of Shakespeare plays, where actors pronounce their lines in what research suggests would have been the accent used in Shakespeare's time.

The recitation of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets in modern British accents means many of his puns and rhymes are effectively lost in translation. Below are some of those that risk being rendered obsolete:

1. *Romeo and Juliet*, Prologue:

"From forth the fatal **loins** of these two **foes**,

A pair of star-crossed lovers **take their life**."

*Dos fatais **ventres** desses inimigos*

Um par de amantes, com má estrela, tiram suas vidas.

The word 'loins' would originally have been pronounced the same as 'lines'.

This pun refers to the fatal blood lines of Romeo and Juliet – the families that they descended from are the reason for their death, as well as their 'loins' (their physical relationship).

4. *Sonnet 116*:

"If this be error and upon me **proved**,

I never **writ**, nor no man ever **loved**."

Se isto um erro for, e contra mim provado,

Eu nunca escrevi, e tampouco homem algum teria amado.

In Shakespeare's time, 'proved' would have been pronounced to rhyme with 'loved', making this sonnet end with an elegant rhyme.

(from <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/five-shakespeare-puns-ruined-modern-english-a6876931.html>)

4. ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATION & LOST PUNS

⇒ Now let's watch this Open University video, where Dr. Crystal and his son explain his theory in greater detail (watch from 0:00 to 6:50).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPlpphT7n9s>



MOVIE: Shakespeare in Love (RP) clips

Prologue: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-aCCV4wMb1Y>

Gloriana Regina: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kgtRCiypTyo>