

Note

Before using this activity, check that the dictionary you are using shows the pronunciation of *-ed* endings.

Key (Box 35)

Pattern 1 follows these letters: - p - k - s - ch - sh - f - x - h

Pattern 2 follows these letters: - l - v - n - m - r - b - v - g - w - y - z

Pattern 3 follows these letters: - t - d

4.4 Homophones

Aim	To check spelling of common errors
Focus	Homophones
Level	Intermediate and above
Time	10–15 minutes
Preparation	Prepare a number of sentences that contain a homophone or use the sentences in Box 36. Write both homophones, one to be crossed out.

Procedure

- 1 Give students the sentences. Ask them to work alone, in pairs or in small groups as appropriate, and choose the correct spelling.
- 2 Either give students a time limit or make the activity a race to see who finishes first.

Box 36

Which word is correctly spelled in these sentences? Cross out the incorrect word.

1	That's a <i>great</i> / <i>grate</i> looking car! /greɪt/
2	There were <i>two</i> / <i>too</i> many children in the room. /tuː/
3	Do you want half an apple or a <i>whole</i> / <i>hole</i> one? /həʊl/
4	<i>Their</i> / <i>They're</i> usually late. /ðeə/
5	Let's <i>meat</i> / <i>meet</i> in front of the hotel. /mi:t/
6	You <i>seem</i> / <i>seam</i> a little down – what's wrong? /si:m/
7	What time did you get <i>there</i> / <i>their</i> ? /ðeə/
8	He hit the <i>breaks</i> / <i>brakes</i> and stopped just in time. /breɪks/
9	The <i>gorillas</i> / <i>guerrillas</i> have never been in contact with humans. /gə'rɪləz/
10	You really are a <i>site</i> / <i>sight</i> for sore eyes! /saɪt/

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Follow-up

Put each pair of homophones (the two spellings and the phonemic script) on a card. Put the class into teams. Teams take a card in turn and must produce two sentences – one for each homophone. Award a point for each pair of correct sentences.

Variation

If your students know IPA, you can write the homophone in phonemic script and ask them to write the correct spelling of the word.