

# UNIT 3

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## Ambiguity in Newspapers

In some cases, newspaper headlines or classified advertisements have two or more possible meanings. There is a real meaning, of course, but sometimes there is an alternate, usually humorous, meaning. Look at the following ambiguous headline:

### Dealers to Hear Car Talk Monday

Do you see two possible meanings for this headline?

- a. The **real** meaning is that car dealers will hear someone talk about cars on Monday.
- b. The **humorous** meaning is that car dealers will actually hear a car talk (a talking car!) on Monday.

Being able to see two or more meanings is sometimes difficult. Try to find two or more meanings in these 10 headlines.

1. EYE DROPS OFF SHELF \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. POLICE HELP DOG BITE VICTIM \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. MINERS REFUSE TO WORK AFTER DEATH \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. STOLEN PURSE FOUND BY TREE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. CHILDREN MAKE HEALTHY SNACKS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. MAN SENTENCED TO DIE SECOND TIME IN THREE YEARS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. GRANDMOTHER OF SIX MAKES HOLE IN ONE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. EIGHT FOOT DOCTORS FILE COMPLAINT \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. TEACHER STRIKES IDLE KIDS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. LIGHT TURNOUT AT VOTING BOOTH \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Can you find the real meaning and the humorous meaning in each of these advertisements?

11. Dog For Sale: Eats Anything and Is Fond of Children

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

12. 3-Year-Old Teacher Needed. Experience Necessary

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Dinner Special: Burger Basket \$6.75; Soup and Salad \$7.50; Children \$4.00

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

14. For Sale: Several Old Suits from Father in Good Condition

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Semi-Annual After-Christmas Sale

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Stock Up and Save: Limit One

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

17. We Do Not Tear Your Clothing with Machinery; We Do It By Hand

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Delivery Help Wanted: Must Have Drivers License and Car with Good Personality

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

19. For Sale: Braille Dictionary. Must See to Appreciate

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Tired of Cleaning Yourself? Let Me Do It!

Real: \_\_\_\_\_

Humorous: \_\_\_\_\_

# UNIT 11

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## Sentence Study—Comprehension

Read each sentence and question, and then select the best response. Find examples of riddles (a kind of word puzzles) in English; the answers require some logic (reasoning or thinking) and also should be fun to discover. Solving riddles in another language is a great accomplishment.

1. You have two coins that are worth a total of 15 cents, and one of them is not a nickel.

What are the two coins?

- a. two dimes
  - b. three nickels
  - c. two pennies and a dime
  - d. one dime and one nickel
2. There is a picture hanging on the wall. A person who is looking at it says, “I am an only child. The father of the person in the portrait is the son of my father.”

Who is pictured in the portrait?

- a. the person speaking
  - b. the son of the person speaking
  - c. the grandfather of the person speaking
  - d. the father of the son of the person speaking
3. The father of the son of the professor and the son of the father of the professor fought, and the professor did not fight.

Who fought?

- a. husband and father
- b. father and son
- c. wife and brother
- d. husband and brother

4. There are four people who want to cross a river. To cross the only bridge, Ron takes one minute, Sue takes two minutes, Kim takes five minutes, and Dave takes ten minutes. They can cross alone or in pairs, but each single or pair must carry a flashlight. There is only one flashlight, and it cannot be thrown across the river.

What is the shortest time that it will take all of the people to cross the bridge? (This requires some math.)

- a. 18 minutes
  - b. 10 minutes
  - c. 17 minutes
  - d. 26 minutes
5. You have to decide which road to take. One leads to a city where only liars live; the other leads to a city where the inhabitants always tell the truth. You have only one question to ask a stranger who is standing at the corner of the two roads how to get to the city of truth-tellers.

What single question must you ask in order to get to the city of truth-tellers?

- a. “How do I get to the city of truth-tellers?”
  - b. “How do I get to the city of liars?”
  - c. “Which is the road to the city of truth-tellers?”
  - d. “Where are you from?”
6. There are three boxes—one is made of gold, one of silver, and one of bronze. You have to pick the one that has the chocolate candy in it. The following are written on the boxes: on the gold, “The candy is here”; on the silver, “The candy is not here”; and on the bronze, “The candy is not in the gold box.” Only one of these is a true statement.

Where is the candy? (This requires logic/reasoning.)

- a. in the gold box
  - b. in the silver box
  - c. in the bronze box
  - d. we cannot determine this
7. What has four legs at dawn, two legs at noon, and three legs at sunset?
- a. a broken chair
  - b. a sofa
  - c. a human
  - d. there is no such thing

8. A man is trapped in a room and wants to get out. The room has only two doors, with no other exits. Through the first door there is a room where the blazing hot sun instantly fries anything or anyone that enters because it is constructed of magnifying glass. Through the second door, there is a man-eating (and hungry) monster.

How does the man escape?

- a. through the ceiling
- b. through the floor
- c. he waits until night time
- d. he must live in the room forever

9. The maker doesn't want it; the buyer doesn't use it; the user doesn't see it.

What is it?

- a. a coffin
- b. a cane
- c. a camera
- d. a flashlight

10. I went to the wood pile and I got it. After I got it, I looked for it. Because I couldn't find it, I brought it home in my hand.

What is it?

- a. a ladybug
- b. a spider
- c. a splinter
- d. a log

11. I build up castles and destroy mountains over time. I make some people blind. I help others to see.

What am I?

- a. wind
- b. sand
- c. water
- d. sunshine

12. You would die without me, yet you never thank me. You walk right through me, yet you never feel me. I am always watching, never speaking, always lurking, but never seen.

What am I?

- a. water
- b. sand
- c. air
- d. sunshine

13. We are five little objects used every day, and you can find us all in *a tennis court*.

What are we?

- a. lines
- b. balls
- c. shoes
- d. vowels

14. I am a box with a golden treasure inside, but there is no key, no lid, and no way to open me without breaking me.

What am I?

- a. a jewelry box
- b. a bank
- c. a deposit box
- d. an egg

15. On my way to St. Ives, I met a man with seven wives. Each wife had seven sacks. Each sack had seven cats. Each cat had seven kittens.

How many were going to St. Ives?

- a. 21
- b. 14
- c. 1
- d. 7

16. You can see nothing else when you look in my face. I look you right in the eye, and I will never lie.

What am I?

- a. your friend
- b. your sister
- c. your reflection
- d. your eyes

17. You were running in a race, and you passed the person in second place.

What place would you be in now?

- a. 2<sup>nd</sup> place
- b. 1<sup>st</sup> place
- c. 3<sup>rd</sup> place
- d. none of the above

18. I have as many brothers as sisters, but my brothers have twice the number of sisters as brothers.

How many of us are there?

- a. 5
- b. 6
- c. 7
- d. 8