

ACTIVITY: "Grammar Goes To Hollywood" • SKILL: Commonly Confused Words

Affect vs. Effect

The words **affect** and **effect** are often confused and misused. Figuring out which one to use is usually as easy as determining whether your sentence calls for a verb or a noun.

If a verb is needed, most of the time the word you want is **affect**. It means *to change* or *to influence*.

Examples:

*What you eat **affects** your health.*

*Mikayla's superb campaign speech **affected** my decision about whom to vote for.*

If a noun is needed, the word is you want is usually **effect**. It means *a result* or *a consequence*.

Examples:

*The **effect** of eating well is a healthy body.*

*The allergy medicine had a negative **effect** on Dylan; it actually made him itchier.*

Both **affect** and **effect** have additional meanings, but these meanings are used much less often. This activity uses only the most common meanings. **Directions:** Circle the correct boldface word in each sentence below.

1. Patrick's chronic knee pain has **affected/effect**ed his ability to play in the upcoming soccer tournament.
2. Reading Helen Keller's autobiography had a profound **affect/effect** on Isabella: She decided to learn sign language and volunteer at a school for deaf children.
3. The drought will certainly **affect/effect** the crops this season.
4. How do you think the new school dress code will **affect/effect** the students?
5. The loud music coming from next door **affected/effect**ed Stuart's ability to concentrate on his homework.
6. Gum disease is a possible **affect/effect** of not flossing your teeth.
7. The bright-yellow walls in my room have a positive **affect/effect** on my mood.

Directions: Rewrite the sentences below, changing the word in bold to a form of either **affect** or **effect**.

8. "Brain freeze" is one of the **results** of eating ice cream too fast.

9. Eating right before going to bed **alters** my sleep.

10. The rain had almost no **impact** on traffic.