

# Puns in Context



A **pun** is a figure of speech that involves using a word or phrase in a way that suggests multiple meanings. The pun might reference multiple senses of a word or a word that sounds similar but means something different. Puns are usually intended to create humor.

**Directions:** Explain the pun in each scenario below. *Sample Answers*

1. As with most social media trends, people are perplexed by the broom craze that is sweeping the nation.  
*Sweeping means cleaning up dirt with a broom, but it can also mean quickly moving through and affecting an area.*
2. Hank told me he was worried about the calendar because its days are numbered.  
*The phrase "days are numbered" means that something will end soon. More literally, a calendar also labels days with numbers.*
3. The tag on the bucket of used batteries at the yard sale said that the batteries were free of charge.  
*"Free of charge" often means that you don't have to pay money for something. Here it also means that the used batteries don't have any electric energy left in them.*
4. I wanted scrambled eggs for breakfast, but a hard-boiled egg is hard to beat.  
*"Hard to beat" is a phrase that means something is very good and hard to surpass. The word "beat" also means to mix by stirring. It would be physically difficult to beat a hard-boiled egg for scrambled eggs.*
5. Jazmyn often breaks into song because she can't find the key.  
*If someone "breaks into" something, that means they are getting in without using a key. The phrase also means suddenly beginning something. A key is used to open a lock, but it's also a musical term.*
6. When Wyatt's pencil broke during the spelling test, he decided the whole thing was pointless.  
*Pointless means meaningless or unimportant, but here it also means that the pencil is lacking a point or a tip to write with.*
7. I was standing there wondering why a softball gets bigger as it gets closer, and then it hit me.  
*"It hit me" is a phrase that means you suddenly understand something, but it also means a physical object striking you.*
8. The doctor assured me that I was of average height for my age, but I told her that was just mean.  
*Mean is another word for a mathematical average, but it also means being unkind.*
9. When the short fortune-teller escaped from jail, the judge issued a warrant for a small medium at large.  
*Small, medium, and large are words for size. Here, small indicates that the person was short, medium is another word for a fortune-teller, and "at large" is a phrase that means someone has escaped.*