

The Reader

People, Words & Change



Adult literacy,
one-on-one.

DECEMBER
2025



The Reader is the quarterly newsletter of People, Words & Change. We welcome stories and articles by our learners.

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Feedback on the manner in which PWC provides its services to people with disabilities, and any other services, is encouraged and appreciated.



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PWC News!

PWC WINTER SCHEDULE



PWC is closed December 19, 2025 – January 2, 2026.
Office opens and Computer Classes start again on Monday, January 5, 2026.

The computer classes held at the Merivale Y will be closed on December 25, 2025 and January 1, 2026. Classes start again on January 8, 2026.

Christmas Cheer Breakfast

PWC attended the annual Christmas Cheer Breakfast on December 5th. We have once again been fortunate to be included as a charity supported by this wonderful foundation. Money is raised at this annual breakfast, and it is then distributed to local charities to help with food security of their clients. What a great event and initiative!

Last year, PWC was able to purchase grocery gift cards for 54 learners, many with families. Thank you!

Check out our next *Reader* in March 2026 to read about the feedback and “thank you’s” from our learners.



Goodbye and Hello! Staff Changes

Dee's Retirement

To all our wonderful volunteers and learners at People, Words & Change,

The time has come for me to retire. After being on staff at People, Words & Change for 18 years, I decided a while ago that the end of 2025 would be the right time to wind up my life with PWC and go on to the "what's next?", whatever that may be. I want to thank all PWC volunteer tutors, learners, and board members for being such a fabulous group to work with all these years. I have gotten to know many of you well, and I will miss you. I hope to see many of you at PWC's events throughout the year.

It's clear to me that the cause we all support and engage in on a daily basis remains as critical a priority now as it did back in 2007 when I joined PWC as an Education Counsellor. Literacy is fundamental to every aspect of our lives, isn't it? It seems somewhat absurd to even write that, yet the need persists to repeat this message loud and clear to anyone and everyone who will listen as we continue to meet adults who struggle with print, in all its forms, on a regular basis.

I am fortunate to have known you all, and to have worked in literacy for many years. This work combines all the things I enjoy the most -- encouraging people to believe in themselves, being part of those aha moments, meeting people from all walks of life, helping people as they work towards their goals, and of course sharing the pleasures of reading and writing. I have also learned a great deal from you about patience, creativity, generosity, and flexibility. From our learners I have seen how the values of courage, perseverance, commitment, and positivity work together to foster success. All of you have been a tremendous inspiration to me.

Those of you who are already retired have been great role models as people who want to give back to their communities, and who stay curious and want to keep learning all their lives. I hope I can live up to your example.

Although it's time to say goodbye, I know People, Words & Change will be in excellent hands with Karen taking over as Executive Director. Shaniece will continue as our Computer Instructor, and we have hired Mahtab as our new Education Counsellor.

Thank you for making my work such a pleasure. Together, we have made a difference.

With warm regards,

Dee

Goodbye and Hello! Staff Changes

Introducing Mahtab

Mahtab has been hired as the new Education Counsellor at PWC. Mahtab is an educator, communicator, and lifelong learner who is passionate about helping adult learners and newcomers gain confidence in their literacy skills and in themselves. With two decades of experience in teaching, as well as in communications and non-profit work, she brings a thoughtful, learner-centred approach to every conversation.



Before joining PWC, Mahtab worked across education and community-based organizations, supporting diverse learners, mentoring teams, and developing accessible programs and resources. She is known for her warm presence, deep empathy, and ability to help people clarify their goals and move forward with confidence.

As an immigrant herself, Mahtab understands the challenges of navigating a new country, finding their voice, and building a meaningful path. She is committed to equity, dignity, and supporting learners in ways that honour their lived experiences. At PWC, she looks forward to meeting tutors and learners celebrating their strengths, and helping them grow through language, learning, and community.

Stepping into a new role...

Starting in January, Karen will step into the role of Executive Director. This is a new and exciting opportunity with new things to learn! She has worked as an adult instructor for 27 years, the last 4 with PWC. The model of PWC – working one-on-one with learners – drew her to this organization. She has found great enjoyment helping learners upgrade reading, writing, math and digital literacy skills, and being part of their journey as they also build their confidence.

This new role will still have some of these same connections and opportunities, as well as new ones – to continue and grow PWC's mandate and values.



THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE LEARNER SECTIONS ARE THOSE OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS. THEIR CREATIONS ARE A DEMONSTRATION OF THE PROGRESS THEY HAVE MADE. PWC DOES NOT ENDORSE ANY OF THE VIEWS THAT MAY BE EXPRESSED.

THE WINTER RIDEAU CANAL

Ottawa has an amazing outdoor activity on the canal for skaters. Even if you're not great at skating, there are other things to do. It is the longest skating place in the world! It's also a high tourist location to visit with the family. There are so many vendors and booths to get warm and change your boots and have hot chocolate and yummy marshmallows, or a traditional Beavertail fired with cinnamon sugar on top.

Some people push strollers or toboggans. Even if you're not at good skater, it's worth going there for a visit. You can walk to see the ice sculptures at Confederation Park. It's close to the City Hall off Elgin Street. They used to make the ice sculptures on Dow's Lake. Since winters have been warmer and more unpredictable over the past 10 years, they don't build them on Dow's Lake anymore.

Winterlude starts in February, weather permitting! There's lots of entertainment for all ages, such as music groups. It can also get so packed with many tourists. On very cold sunny days when the ice is so smooth, it's the best. My son used to skate to Carleton University on the canal from Pretoria Bridge. Take a trip to Dow's Lake to Rideau Street downtown. It's soooo much fun and will be a huge memory for years to come.

- Carole



Living with Cats

Calli gets me up at 6:00 a.m. for her breakfast. She has her water and then her food. After her breakfast, she steals Lynx's food. Later, she plays with her toys and then she has her nap time.

I love my cats, but Calli is a very sneaky cat.

-Mary



Summary and Opinion on News Article “People Trash Many Clothes”

As part of the Summer Reading Challenge in the June issue of *The Reader*, Natt read the following article and then wrote about it.

Article from: <https://www.newsinlevels.com/products/people-trash-many-clothes-level-3/>

People trash many clothes – level 3 Globally, less than 1% of clothes are recycled into new ones; **discards** of clothes are overwhelming countries like Ghana or India.

Every day, people toss away tens of millions of garments to get new ones. When consumers throw away clothes, they do not think about what happens to them. Some of the clothes go to a second-hand supply chain; however, the situation is less common because more clothes are made quickly.

*Ghana’s one of the biggest importers of used clothing, and the unwanted clothes arrive by the **bale**. The local language calls them dead White people’s clothes. The large amount of clothing is unsellable, and around 40% remains in the country as waste.*

A reason for the situation is fast fashion. Fast fashion is when garments fall apart after a few washes. Cheap synthetic fabrics are difficult to reuse, and people buy and throw them away too quickly.

*In India, millions of tons of used clothing come from North America, Europe, Japan, and Australia; they get turned into car insulation, mattress filling, and cleaning cloths. However, even these products eventually go to a landfill or **incinerator**.*

Natt’s Summary and Opinion

I picked one article from newsinlevel.com. The article is titled “People trash many clothes”. I picked this article because I found the title interesting and I wanted to know what it talked about. The article mentions that in Ghana and India, millions of tons of used clothes imported from other countries cannot be sold and end up as waste.

I did not realize that clothes are one of the things people throw away the most, like garbage. Fashion comes and goes very fast. We do not often use our clothes as much as we should. Although they are still usable, we replace them with new ones.

The article states that in India, used clothes can be recycled into car insulation, mattress filling, and cleaning cloths. However, 40% of them are still considered as waste. I think people should donate clothes if they no longer use them. Also, second-hand clothes should get turned into something we can make use of their fabrics. We should try to reuse discarded clothes as much as possible.

I also learned new vocabularies from this article: bale (a large wrapped buddle of paper, clothing, or other things) and incinerator (a device to burn waste).



PWC Learners Write

An Afanti Story

Jingyu shares an “Afanti” story. Afanti stories have been handed down widely in China. Afanti is a folklore trickster and a poor people’s hero.

There is one story saying that once Afanti was asked to mediate a conflict between a smart man and an old man. The smart man asked the old man to pay him a lot of money because the old man accidentally killed his hen. The smart man said, “The hen would lay eggs and the eggs would hatch chickens, so I just asked the old man to pay me the amount that is reasonable.”

After knowing that, Afanti said to the smart man, “I’ll bring you the money tomorrow.” The next day, Afanti appeared to the smart man after he had waited for a long time. “How come you are so late?” Afanti replied, “I’m late because I boiled some wheat seed for growing.” The smart man was shocked and asked, “Are you insane? How can the boiled wheat seed grow?” Afanti said, “Then what about the dead hen?”

-Jingyu



PWC’s Library – Featuring Penguin Readers

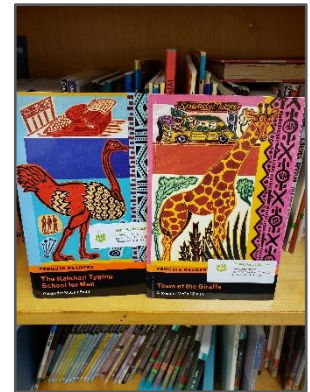
PWC has a small library with books that learners and tutors can borrow. We have an assortment of Penguin Readers which are popular books that have been rewritten and adapted to eight reading levels.

One of our learners, Natt, writes about what she discovered about these books.

Penguin Readers

I watched a short video about “All about the Penguin Readers”. I just wanted to know what Penguin Readers website is. The commissioning editor at Penguin Random House gave a full introductory about the website. The readings vary from novels, non-fiction, classics and many more. They are written by popular writers as Jojo Moyes, James Peterson, and Roald Daul, John Le Carre, etc. The series has eight levels using the Common European Framework for languages. The illustration will be used in a beginner level to help learner understand about the texts. Each Penguin Readers begins with a short introduction and introductory questions, and ends with comprehension questions. I definitely think that the Penguin Readers website will be useful sources for language learners and teachers around the world.

-Natt



PWC Computer Lab Learners Create

Our computer lab learners showcase some formatting and creative skills in Word that they are learning in class.



-Elaheh

PWC Computer Lab Learners Create

Neighbourhood Barbecue for Canada Day

- Beef barbecue
- Chicken sandwich
- Beef sandwich
- Hot dog
- Soft drinks
- Juice for children
- Toys for children

Canada Day is a fun, sunny and shiny day for family and friends in the neighbourhoods.



Lansdowne Park Ottawa

Saturday 01/07/25 2:00 PM

-Fadumo

PWC Learner Success Stories



Roman

Roman came to Canada almost 2 years ago. His background is in banking and since arriving in Canada, he has been working hard on improving his English skills and taking courses related to finance and investments. He found out about PWC when we had a table at a Job Fair hosted by the Y. When he joined, he was doing a mutual fund course. Last month he shared the happy news that he successfully passed the professional exam which opens up opportunities for him to work in Canadian banks in the future. Way to go, Roman! We celebrate this good news with you!

Word of the Year - 2025

Rage Bait



Oxford University Press Dictionary

Definition: (n.) Online content deliberately designed to elicit anger or outrage by being frustrating, provocative, or offensive, typically posted in order to increase traffic to, or engagement with, a particular web page or social media account.

Parasocial



Cambridge Dictionary

Definition: (adj.) involving or relating to a connection that someone feels between themselves and a famous person they do not know, a character in a book, film, TV series, etc., or an artificial intelligence.

A parasocial relationship (or PSR) is one in which a person feels like they know a celebrity on a personal level even though they have never met them.

Parasocial grief is the feeling of sadness a person experiences after the death of a celebrity or a character in a book or series. It can even occur when a TV series ends or a band breaks up.

Above definitions and examples were taken from:

<https://dictionaryblog.cambridge.org/2025/11/18/cambridge-dictionary-word-of-the-year-2025/>

<https://corp.oup.com/word-of-the-year/>

Community News

Free Holiday Meals



Free Holiday Meals

Community Navigation of Eastern Ontario 2025-26

Last updated: December 1, 2025

----- December 13 -----

The Salvation Army

Location: 171 George St, Ottawa, K1N 5W5

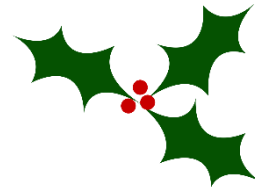
Description of event: Sit-down meal

Phone: 613-241-1573

Time : 2 pm-5 pm

Eligibility: No restrictions

Accessibility: Fully accessible



Samaritan S.S. Community Christmas Dinner & Winter Clothing Give-Away

Location: Ottawa Church of God, 1820 Carling Ave, K2A 1E2

Description of event: Take-out meal

Phone: 613-729-3172

Time : 2 pm-3:30 pm

Eligibility: Call or email communitychristmas@outlook.com ahead of time to reserve a spot

Accessibility: Partially accessible; take-out option available upon request when arriving.

----- December 14 -----

The Ottawa Mission

Location: 35 Waller St, Ottawa, K1N 7G4

Description of event: Sit-down meal

Phone: 613-234-1144

Time: 11 am-5 pm

Eligibility: No restrictions

Accessibility: Fully accessible



Community News continued...

----- December 19 -----

St Joe's Supper Table

Location: 174 Wilbrod St, Ottawa, K1N 6N8

Description of event: Sit-down meal (prior notice required for take-out)

Phone: 613-233-4095, press 6 then 2

Time: Two seating times: 3 pm and 4 pm

Eligibility: No restrictions

Accessibility: Fully accessible but prior notice is required

Notes: Please call or email (suppertable@st-josephs.ca) to register before coming. Registration begins on December 1st. Please provide names of all attendees, the ages and genders of any children also attending, as well as service animals. Vegetarian and Halal options available, no Celiac option.



Caldwell Family Centre

Location: 1475 Caldwell Ave, Ottawa, K1Z 5L6

Description of event: Sit-down meal

Phone: 819-593-9327

Time: 6 pm

Eligibility: No restrictions

Accessibility: Fully accessible

Notes: 100-person capacity: first come, first serve.

----- December 25 -----

St Peter's & St Paul's Anglican Church

Location: 152 Metcalfe St, Ottawa, K2P 1N9

Description of event: Sit-down meal

Phone: 613-235-1636

Time: Two seating times: 1:30 pm and 4 pm

Eligibility: No restrictions

Accessibility: Fully accessible

----- January 13 -----

Ottawa Innerscity Ministries

Location: Knox Presbyterian Church, 120 Lisgar St, Ottawa, K2P 2L7

Description of event: Sit-down meal

Phone: 613-237-6031

Time: 12:30 pm-2:30 pm

Eligibility: No restrictions

Accessibility: Not accessible



PWC Computer Corner

Computer Cleaning Apps Information!

COMPUTER CORNER APPS



Apps for cleaning devices do not work!

These apps are often harmful and can act like viruses. They usually need to be downloaded onto your device, and once installed, they can try to access your personal information.



CLEAN UP REQUIRED!

27 Dangerous apps found

[Click here to fix](#)

What should you do if you already have one of these apps on your device?

Do not open the app. Delete it from your device right away.

Ways to clean up your devices.

1. Regularly check how much storage you have in your device settings.
2. If you are running out of storage, remove apps and files you no longer need.
3. Many devices allow you to purchase more storage. This can usually be done through the device settings.



Much, Many, A lot of

We can use ***much*** and ***many*** to talk about quantities. We can also use ***a lot of*** or ***lots of***.

*There aren't ***many*** stores in my town.*

*Do you get ***much*** homework?*

*I've got ***a lot of*** games.*

How to use them

1. We usually use ***a lot of*** or ***lots of*** in positive sentences.

****A lot of*** people were at the party.*

*There's ***lots of*** information on this website.*

2. For things we can count, we use ***many*** or ***a lot of*** (or ***lots of***) in negative sentences and questions.

*He doesn't have ***many*** books.*

*Do you have ***a lot of*** friends?*

3. For things we can't count, we use ***much*** or ***a lot of*** (or ***lots of***) in negative sentences and questions.

*I haven't got ***a lot of*** money.*

*Do you drink ***much*** milk?*

4. To ask about quantities, we use ***how many*** for things we can count and ***how much*** for things we can't count.

****How many*** candies are there?*

****How much*** water would you like?*

much
many
a lot of

Grammar Corner continued...

MUCH MANY A LOT OF

Practice Exercises:

1. Circle the correct answer.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| a. There isn't _____ information. | <u>much</u> / many |
| b. There weren't _____ people at the park. | much / many |
| c. He hasn't got _____ money. | much / many |
| d. Do you get _____ homework? | much / many |
| e. How _____ books do you have? | much / many |
| f. They haven't got _____ ideas for their project. | much / many |
| g. How _____ water do you drink every day? | much / many |
| h. How _____ students are there in your class? | much / many |

2. Make it right! Find the mistake in each sentence and correct it.

- a. He's got much homework today.

He's got a lot of homework today.

- b. How many cup of coffee do you drink every day?

- c. There aren't computers many at my school.

- d. My kids spend much time playing computer games.

- e. She ate much hamburgers yesterday.

- f. They didn't find many information on the website.

- g. My aunt doesn't have many patience.

- h. We've got shoes lots of.

Emotions Word Search - Beginner

Find the words in the word search below.
Then, write sentences with those words!
The answers are on the last page.

Emotions Word Search

Can you find the words hidden in the puzzle?
Words are horizontal, vertical, or diagonal.

After you find them, write sentences with the words using the structure:
"When I feel (emotion), I _____."

V	A	S	A	D	M	T	I	R	E	D	C
H	X	L	P	N	I	R	O	M	I	N	L
S	A	N	G	R	G	I	E	B	S	S	A
H	A	P	N	E	N	R	H	H	U	L	N
N	M	E	P	G	F	C	Y	R	R	T	E
S	S	J	O	Y	F	U	L	L	P	O	R
C	T	C	G	U	G	P	I	L	R	R	V
A	A	H	B	O	R	E	D	E	I	T	O
R	R	L	F	O	S	E	D	U	S	E	U
E	A	R	M	L	E	R	O	T	E	I	S
D	F	C	O	N	F	U	S	E	D	E	N
G	W	O	R	R	I	E	D	O	K	E	T

BORED

JOYFUL

CONFUSED

SAD

ANGRY

SCARED

SURPRISED

CALM

HAPPY

WORRIED

NERVOUS

TIRED

Emotions Word Search - Advanced

Find the words in the word search below.
Then, write sentences with those words!
The answers are on the last page.

EMOTIONAL ADJECTIVES



Find the words in the puzzle. Words are horizontal, vertical, or diagonal.
After you find them, write sentences with the words.

I	R	R	I	T	A	T	E	D	C	M	D
N	O	X	H	Z	B	S	H	I	V	E	E
J	F	U	Q	E	H	P	T	M	I	F	I
X	D	P	T	H	D	E	K	Z	D	P	F
S	M	E	V	R	H	B	I	V	A	J	I
T	D	I	L	T	A	N	R	N	G	O	R
A	G	E	A	T	S	G	I	Y	G	V	R
R	C	P	T	P	T	C	E	C	R	I	O
T	A	F	I	A	K	A	O	D	J	A	H
L	M	R	D	E	L	T	R	W	S	L	T
E	E	V	D	T	A	E	B	P	U	N	V
D	E	K	C	O	H	S	W	I	Z	I	F

STARTLED

HORRIFIED

JOVIAL

PANICKED

APATHETIC

INSPIRED

SHOCKED

IRRITATED

UPBEAT

RATTLED

OUTRAGED

ELATED

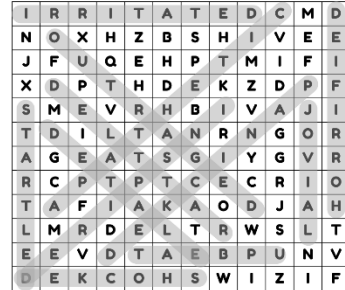


Answers

Solution Emotions Word Search



SOLUTION EMOTIONAL ADJECTIVES



Answers to Much, Many, A lot of Practice Exercises:

1. Circle the correct answer.

- There isn't _____ information.
- There weren't _____ people at the park.
- He hasn't got _____ money.
- Do you get _____ homework?
- How _____ books do you have?
- They haven't got _____ ideas for their project.
- How _____ water do you drink every day?
- How _____ students are there in your class?

much / many
much / many
much / many
much / many
much / many
much / many
much / many
much / many

2. Make it right! Find the mistake in each sentence and correct it.

- He's got much homework today.
He's got a lot of homework today.
- How many cup of coffee do you drink every day?
How many cups of coffee do you drink every day?
- There aren't computers many at my school.
There aren't many/a lot of computers at my school.
- My kids spend much time playing computer games.
My kids spend a lot of (lots of) time playing computer games.
- She ate much hamburgers yesterday.
She ate many hamburgers yesterday.
- They didn't find many information on the website.
They didn't find much/a lot of information on the website.
- My aunt doesn't have many patience.
My aunt doesn't have much/a lot of patience.
- We've got shoes lots of.
We've got lots of shoes.