

Letters and Words

Adding a three-letter word

Find the missing three-letter word that can be added to the words in capital letters to make a sensible word that fits into the sentence.

She rode her bike to the shops and put the groceries in her bicycle BET.

It was a long way to travel for their summer HOAYS.

Step-By-Step Technique:

- 1) Read the sentence carefully to work out what is happening.
- 2) What words give us clues to the missing word?
- 3) Find the word you are after then write it down.
- 4) Find which three-letter word is missing to solve the problem.

She rode her bike to the shops and put the groceries in her bicycle BET.

Where do we put groceries? In a bag, in a box, in a basket?

There is a basket on the front of her bike!

The missing word is ASK. (BET + ASK = BASKET)

It was a long way to travel for their summer HOAYS.

Where do we go when we travel? Work, moving house, on holiday?

In the summer, people often go on holiday.

The missing word is LID. (HOAYS + LID = HOLIDAYS)

Another version of this question is to find some missing words that don't make a three-letter word. Any number of letters might be missing, but you might be given the space where the missing letters will go.

Find the missing letters to add to the letters on the right that is a word most opposite to the word on the left.

rude

p _ l _ t _

Find the missing letters to add to the letters on the right that is a word most similar to the word on the left.

Rude dis _ esp _ f _ l

Step-By-Step Technique:

- 1) Read the question carefully to check whether you are looking for a synonym or an antonym.
- 2) Think of some words that might fit.
- 3) Try thinking of the given word in a sentence then find other words that might fit if you are struggling.
- 4) Look for common prefixes and suffixes to help you. A three-letter ending that begins with 'i' could be 'ing'. A three-letter start beginning with 'd' could be 'dis'.
- 5) Look for common letter strings. Groups such as 'ious', 'ight' and 'tion' are common.
- 6) Look for common letter groupings such as 'ch', 'sh', 'th'.
- 7) Use spelling logic. It is unusual to have more than two vowels together, but double consonants in the middle of a word is common. If a word has a 'q' in it, then it will be followed by a 'u' and words rarely end in j, z, or qu.

Worked example

Find the missing letters to add to the letters on the right that is a word most opposite to the word on the left.

rude p _ l _ t _

The opposite to rude is well-mannered, respectful, polite!

Always check the word is spelt correctly. Writing it down in your own handwriting can help with this.

Find the missing letters to add to the letters on the right that is a word most similar to the word on the left.

Rude dis _ esp _ f _ l

Words that mean the same as rude are offensive, impolite, disrespectful!

Have a prefix is always handy and 'dis' means the opposite – agree and disagree. Thinking of words with the same meaning as polite might be useful if you cannot think of an antonym.