The vocabulary of English contains anywhere from three-quarters of a million to one million words - by far the largest in the history of humankind. Despite this impressive accomplishment, many words in English have to do double duty and convey more than one meaning. As a result, one word can function as the opposite of two very different words.

To see this process at work, try the following quiz. Fill in each blank with a word that is opposite in meaning to the word in the left-hand column and the different word in the right-hand column. Then check your responses against those that appear in Answers and Solutions. Example: light is the opposite of heavy and of dark.

1. loud
2. young
3. wrong
4. tall
5. smooth
6. even
7. sharp
8. costly
9. bring
10. rich
11. win
12. soft
13. past
14. foul
15. stop
16. sharp
17. spend
18. good
19. thick
20. major
21. common
22. coarse
23. loose
24. stale
25. unbiased
26. front
27. sane
28. rise

1. hard
2. new
3. left
4. long
5. gentle
6. normal
7. interesting
8. enslaved
9. give
10. excellent
11. find
12. easy
13. absent
14. dark
15. come
16. bumpy
17. imperil
18. healthy
19. fat
20. adult
21. well done
22. sick
23. slow
24. polite
25. complete
26. forth
27. happy
28. spring