Misunderstanding

**Temperature Change: One year after Canadian weather forecasters started getting temperatures in Celsius, CBC Vancouver took an opinion poll of how the changeover was working. "What would you say the temperature is right now?" the interviewer would ask. One man guessed the temperature was 55 degrees. "What would that be in Celsius?" the reporter persisted. Puzzled, the man replied, "I don't know where that is." *(CBC, in Reader's Digest)***

**My wife of six months and I spent a long time selecting the card we would send to friends on our first Christmas together. We chose a card with a distinctive abstract design and a meaningful message, and proudly mailed early. Shortly after the holiday we received a silver baby rattle from a generous, elderly aunt who apparently misunderstood the message: "A Child Is Born and Peace Descends." *(Douglas E. Lam, in Reader's Digest)***

**I am so clever that sometimes I don’t understand a single word of what I am saying. *(The PassTime Paper)***

**Not long after I got contact lenses, I pulled a traffic violator over. As I wrote out a citation, another car whizzed by, blowing dust into my eyes. Tears started streaming down my cheeks. Seeing me in this state, the man I was ticketing said, “If you feel that sorry about giving me a ticket, officer, don’t do it.” *(Ted A. McGregor, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Most misunderstandings in the world could be avoided, if people would simply take the time to ask, "What else could this mean?" *(Shannon L. Adler)***

**A boy yelled to his teacher, "I ain't got no crayons!" The teacher smiled and tried to correct him. "You mean, 'I don't have any crayons.' You don't have any crayons. We don't have any crayons. They don't have any crayons. Do you understand?" "I think so," the boy said, puzzled. "Teacher, what happened to all the crayons?" *(The American Legion magazine)***

**If envy were not such a tearing thing to feel, it would be the most comic of sins. It is usually, if not always, based on a complete misunderstanding of another person’s situation. *(Monica Furlong, in Christian Uncertainties)***

**Listen Up:** [**Every morning, a friend of mine and her children listened to programs of instruction on the radio. She particularly enjoyed the exercise class. One day she tuned in late, only to hear an energetic instructor already urging pupils along at a fast pace: “Up . . . down . . . circle round . . . up . . . down . . . circle round. . . .” Just as my friend was about to drop with exhaustion, the voice added, “Now, everyone stop and put your paintbrush back in the water jar.” *(Mrs. Robin Waalkens, in Reader’s Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**A couple attended a marriage seminar on communication. It's essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other," the instructor said. He turned to the husband and asked, "Can you name your wife's favorite flower?" The man leaned over to his wife and whispered, "It's Pillsbury, right?" *(The American Legion magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**When a trout rising to a fly gets hooked and finds himself unable to swim about freely, he begins a fight which results in struggles and splashes and sometimes an escape. In the same way, the human being struggles with the hooks that catch him. Sometimes he masters his difficulties; sometimes they are too much for him. His struggles are all that the world sees, and it usually misunderstands them. It is hard for a free fish to understand what is happening to a hooked one. *(Karl A. Menninger, in The Human Mind)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**A bar and restaurant which sponsors a golf league every year had to close its kitchen for a short period. Upon reopening, the management posted a notice on the golf bulletin board that read: “Kitchen Open.” By the following evening, nine golfers had signed up underneath. *(Robert W. Gallagher, in Reader’s Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**I guess I should warn you. If I turn out to be particularly clear, you've probably misunderstood what I said. *(Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve Board chairman)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**My son, William, 9, brought a note home from his teacher stating that William had not finished his homework. He was to bring back a written reason for not having done the work, signed by a parent. William asked me what he should write. I said, “I think you should write, ‘I was too lazy.’” William, his eyes now wide open, replied, “Mom, I can’t write that!” “Well, I think that’s exactly what you should write,” I responded. The next morning, just before he left for school, William came to me with the note and said, “You have to sign this.” I took the time to look at it first, and he’d written, “My mom was too lazy.” Talk about being misunderstood. *(Anne Marie Pelkofer, in Country magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**There is no worse lie than a truth misunderstood by those who hear it. *(William James)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**I regularly jog several miles a day, and when I went to Maine on a two-week vacation I vowed to maintain my routine. I quickly found a three-mile route that took me through a little town that boasted a fire station, gas station and post office. The first two mornings, as I passed the gas station, an elderly man sitting in a worn kitchen chair tilted against the garage door, tipped his hat and nodded. On the third day, the old Mainer stood up. "Ay-ah," he said. "You must be in first place, all right. No one else has passed by yet." *(Virginia Lockman, in Reader's Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. *(Martin Luther King, Jr.)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**During a visit to my parents' home, my fiancee and I enjoyed looking over photographs and other memorabilia of years gone by. One item that gave us a chuckle was a note written by Mom to remind Dad to put out the trash cans before he left for work. The note read: "Mike – Garbage." On the bottom he had added: "You're not so great yourself!" *(Sheila R. Branick, in Reader's Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**The most annoying thing in the world is to be misunderstood. *(Bits & Pieces)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**A wealthy lawyer was having his house painted when a passerby walked up and asked if he could do something to earn a few dollars. "Sure," the lawyer said. "Take a can of paint, go around back and paint my porch." Fifteen minutes later, the wanderer was back. "Done already?" he asked. "Yeah, but it's actually a Mercedes." *(The American Legion magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**When religion is understood, it is a great blessing to humanity; but when it is not understood it is a curse. Peace, harmony, and brotherly love are fruits of the understanding of religion and worship. On the other hand, strife and religious wars are the fruits of misunderstanding. *(George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 550)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Nine-tenths of the serious controversies that arise in life result from misunderstanding, from one man not knowing the facts which to the other man seem important, or otherwise failing to appreciate his point of view. *(Justice Louis D. Brandeis)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**More and more doctors are running their practices like assembly lines. One fellow walked into a doctor’s office and the receptionist asked him what he had. "Shingles," he replied.” So she took down his name, address and medical-insurance number and told him to have a seat. Fifteen minutes later, a nurse came out and asked him what he had. “Shingles," he answered. So she took down his height, weight and complete medical history. Then she told him to go into the examining room, take off his clothes and wait for the doctor. An hour later, the doctor came in and asked him what he had. “Shingles," the man said. “Where?" asked the doctor. "Outside in the truck," said the fellow. "Where do you want then?” *(Orben's Current Comedy)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

**During a church service, a woman announced she would be singing the 22nd Psalm. What followed was a lovely and moving performance, everyone agreed. Everyone, that is, except my 7-year-old son, who whispered, "That song was way longer than 20 seconds." *(Ray Hall, in Reader's Digest)***

[**"No, we haven't had any in a long time now," said the supermarket clerk to the shopper. "Whoa!" said a manager who had just come along. "I'm sure we have, lady. This is a new clerk and he doesn't know how we keep our stock records and inventory. We've got plenty in the warehouse and will get some over this afternoon. If you come back after lunch, we'll have all you need. Now, tell me, just what was it that he said we haven't had in a long time?" "Rain," said the woman. *(Bits & Pieces)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**A salesman talked my uncle into buying 10,000 personalized pens for his business with the promise that he would be eligible to win a 32-foot yacht. A born gambler, my uncle agreed. Well, he won, and a few weeks after the pens arrived, his prize show up: a 12-inch plastic yacht with 32 plastic feet glued to the bottom. *(Eddie Edwards, in Reader's Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Only two kinds of men don’t understand women – husbands and single men. *(Franklin P. Jones, in Quote magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

**Police descended on a yoga class in England after passersby saw several participants lying on the floor in “corpse pose,” surrounded by candles, and reported a mass murder. They “thought it was some sort of ritual mass killing,” said Millie Laws, a yoga instructor in the coastal resort village Chapel St. Leonards. She had candles lit and seven students on their backs in deep relaxation when two dog walkers peered through a window. Five police cars soon raced up, sirens wailing. Laws said the massive response was “surreal,” but added, “You’ve got to see the lighter side.” *(The Week magazine, December 29, 2023/January 5, 2024)***

[**A woman driving a station wagon filled with kids went through a stop light. When a policeman asked, "Don't you know when to stop?," she looked back at her car load and protested, "But they're not all mine!" *(Reader's Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**It's good to be idealistic. But be prepared to be misunderstood.**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)[***(Mark Zuckerberg)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

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