

# GRAMMARIAN

---

## **AIM:**

- To help Toastmasters express themselves clearly and concisely by reporting on good expressive use, and incorrect use, of the English language.
- To present a ‘Word of the Evening’ to help improve or expand the vocabulary of Toastmasters.
- To enhance your listening skills.

## **PREPARATION:**

Select a Word of the Evening for the Toastmasters to incorporate into their assignments. The idea is to help members expand their vocabulary, so pick a word that can be used in daily conversation, but is not commonly used, or is different from the way we usually express ourselves.

Have the word of the evening ready to display on two large piece of paper that they can be stuck to the lectern and to the table in front of the Chairman. You should also include a brief explanation of the word or examples on how to use the word. The word should be clearly visible from either end of the room.

## **ON THE NIGHT:**

Early in the meeting you will be asked to present the “Word of the Evening”. Stand and address the Chairman and Members.

Make sure you know the correct spelling; give an example of the correct use of the word in a sentence and encourage members to use it during the meeting.

If you have prepared a sign of the word, affix it in a prominent position as a reminder during the meeting.

As the meeting progresses, listen and note examples of either good or bad grammar from all assignments including the Chairman and speakers. Examples include:

1. Words/phrases: that have impact; that create pictures; that provide colour; that express subtle shades of meaning.
2. Or anything that falls into the “I wish I had said that” category - ie. memorable words.
3. Any obvious/awkward misuse of the language eg: a **new** innovation (tautology), OR Joe and his Dad was fishing ( Joe & his Dad **were** ...) OR “He set forth on the stream of public life, where he climbed to the peak of success” (mixed metaphors) OR over-use of cliches (as clear as mud!).
4. Mispronunciation of words, slurring of syllables and endings (runnin, comin).
5. Note everyone who uses the Word of the Evening and how many times.

### **PRESENTING YOUR REPORT:**

Proceed to the lectern and acknowledge the Chairman and Members.

Summarise the use of the “Word of the Evening” - who used it most successfully and how many times.

Select the best examples of the memorable words/phrases - repeat them and compliment those who used them. This encourages us all to be more expressive.

Point out any glaring misuse of language or sentences that are confusing or annoying. Offer pointers for improvement.

### **POINTS TO REMEMBER:**

- Don't become pedantic and obsessed with schoolbook grammar - it can destroy creativity and vibrancy in a presentation.
- Include visitors in praise, not in errors.
- If you are complimenting, mention the name of the Toastmaster. If you are pointing out an error, it may NOT be appropriate to mention the name, especially if a new Toastmaster or one who has difficulty with grammar, is just as effective to preface your report with “Tonight, I heard....” or “one speaker said .....

**AWARD PRESENTED AT MEETING:**

*Most Innovative Use of the Word*

**EDUCATION MATERIALS:**

The Dictionary

**TIMING:**

Introduction – 1 minute

Report - 2 minutes