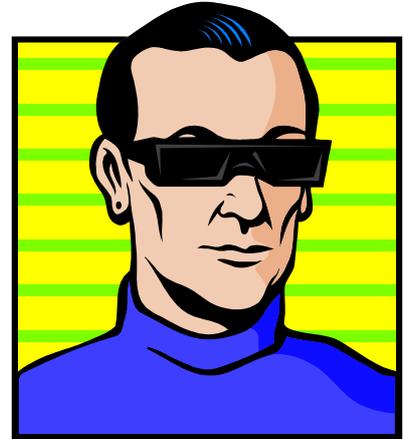


# Buyer Beware



Ivor Cheetham is rather a dishonest Estate Agent. Although he says that he works very hard, I think that I disbelieve him. He lives in a huge house, with seven bedrooms, four reception rooms and a conservatory. His home is close to the river and he has a yacht moored at the bottom of the garden. Or so he says, it is impossible to know if he is telling the truth, which I think is unacceptable. Mr Cheetham also pretends to be friends with some famous film stars but I imagine that is very unlikely.

If you met Ivor, you might be inclined to share my opinion, or you might disagree. He looks untrustworthy, as he likes to wear sunglasses, all the time, even when he is indoors. His business partner is called Simon Swindells and they manage an Estate Agency in the High Street in the town of Great Snoring on the Ouze.



Great Snoring is an unexciting and uneventful place to live in but it is very pretty, with a market square, a bandstand and a duck pond. I expect that you can picture such a typical English country town? I am Great Snoring's newest resident, as I have just bought a cottage here.

This is how I came to meet Cheetham and Swindells, as they dealt with my purchase. Unfortunately this is also how I know that Ivor's word is unreliable, to say the least!

Tumbledown Cottage has proved to be a good name. It was described as: "A beautiful thatched property, overlooking the ancient market square, with views to the sea. Full of charm and character, this



delightful period home offers the right owner the chance of a lifetime". This has turned out to be misinformation; though it has given me the chance to empty my bank balance! The views of the sea can only be seen if I stand tiptoe on top of my roof, which would be inadvisable. This is because there is no roof, as the birds have eaten all the thatch. Sadly, Tumbledown Cottage also has a very unattractive view of the gasworks!

I brought the cottage over the Internet, without actually viewing it and now it is too late to undo my purchase. The moral of this story is "never buy a property from anyone called Swindells and Cheatham".

## Suggested activities

Read the text through carefully.

- 1) Then, read it again and highlight all the words that have prefixes.

Circle the root word or make a separate list.

**Example:** un**accept**able prefix – un, root word – accept

- 2) What is the name for a word that means the opposite of something? (antonym)
- 3) Highlight the punctuation marks. Discuss in pairs.
- 4) In pairs, ask each student to create three comprehension type questions about the text for their partner to answer.
- 5) As 1) but look for suffixes or compound words.
- 6) As a basis for class discussion...

## Teaching notes and further ideas

- This shared text was used in a series of Entry 3 - Level 1 literacy lessons at Abingdon and Witney College. The main theme was descriptive writing, focusing on Estate Agents Ads. Sentence level work focused on using adjectives; word level work on prefixes and suffixes.
- The text is best enlarged to A3 to allow for annotation and highlighting.
- For further ideas please refer to the following resources (listed in suggested order of use):
  - a) **Estate Agents Ads and Holiday cottages:** a shared text for group work. Two houses for sale and a garage (all based on real descriptions from local Estate Agents). Plus a detailed description of a holiday cottage. This text is best printed or enlarged to A3 - give each student a copy and encourage annotation, underlining, highlighting etc. PDF (2002).
  - b) **Descriptive – persuasive texts.** Reading activity – use House ads from local papers to distinguish between facts and opinions. Fill-in sheets, handout, extension ideas. PDF (2002).
  - c) **Chomwell Green House Ad.** OHT for modelling group writing. (2002, updated 2005)
  - d) **Estate Agent Writing Frames.** Describe your house in the Estate Agent's window! Step by step prompts take learners through the planning and writing process (2005).Use (a), (b), (c), (d) for studying: fact - opinion, adjectives, descriptive - persuasive language, preparation for group or individual writing projects
- Examples of writing projects can be found at <http://www.skillsworkshop.org/group1.htm> an online class writing project (house ads, using adjectives), and <http://www.skillsworkshop.org/individ1.htm> (individual writing projects. Jan 2002).

Many thanks to **Penny Halliday** for contributing this resource.

To obtain an editable word version of this document please send a resource you would like to share to [maggie@skillsworkshop.org](mailto:maggie@skillsworkshop.org) THANKS!