

English Conversation Club – Saratoga Library

May 7, 2026

Emotions and Mood

Like last week, we are going to do something different for this session. We are going to talk about emotions and feelings and use them in the context of great architecture and natural wonders. First, review the vocabulary words.

Vocabulary

Take turns reading and discussing the following words. How many different ways can you express the same emotion or feeling? Discuss words that have the same meaning. These are called **synonyms**.

1. affection (noun; uh-fek-shuhn)

Meaning: fond attachment

Synonym: love

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: I have great **affection** for Yosemite National Park because I went on many camping trips there when I was young.

2. anger (noun; ang-ger), **angry** (adjective)

Meaning: feeling of displeasure or wrath; (adj) outraged

Synonym: outrage

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: There was an outburst of **anger** among many in the community when the vandals cut down the new trees.

3. awe (noun; aw), **awestruck** (adjective)

Meaning: an overwhelming feeling of respect, admiration, or fear that is produced by something grand, beautiful, extremely powerful, or the like; (adj) filled with marvel, wonder, or fear

Synonym: marvel, wonder

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: I was in **awe** of the beautiful stain glass windows in the cathedral. He was **awestruck** by the beauty of the place.

4. a concern (noun; kuhn-surn); **concerned** (adjective)

Meaning: a matter that one cares or worries about; (adj) worried

Synonym: involvement, worry

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: Molly looked with **concern** at the growing number of patients in the hospital. She was **concerned** about her daughter's health.

5. delight (noun; dih-lhyt), **to delight in/with** (verb)

Meaning: a high degree of pleasure or enjoyment; (verb) to take joy in something

Synonym: joy

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: She takes great **delight** in her garden. She **delights** in her grandchildren learning about plants.

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6. grief (noun; **grief**) (noun), **to grieve** (verb)

Meaning: feeling of suffering due to a loss or painful sorrow; (verb) to mourn

Synonym: sorrow

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentences: The young man could not help but feel **grief** when he went to Arlington Cemetery. She still **grieves** the loss of her dog.



7. inspiration (noun; in-spuh-ray-shuhn); **to inspire** (verb)

Meaning: a sudden good idea; a creative spark; a spark of interest; (verb) to spark an idea

Synonym: stimulation

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: The golden autumn light provided the **inspiration** for the painting. Nature **inspires** me to paint.

8. meditative (adjective, med-i-tay-tiv)

Meaning: contemplative, a calm, focused mental state

Synonym: reflective

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: As I entered the deep woods, But I was struck by the **meditative** feeling that swept over me in that room.

9. pride (pryd) ; **to pride oneself** (verb)

Meaning: self-satisfaction; (verb) to feel deep satisfaction regarding one's own achievements, qualities, or possessions

Synonym: self-respect

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: The young woman felt **pride** after climbing to the top of the mountain. They **prided** themselves on their accomplishment.

10. serenity (noun; suh-ren-i-tee)

Meaning: the state of being calm; utter calmness, peace

Synonym: tranquility

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: As he walked into the deep forest, he felt complete **serenity** as in breathed in the fresh air.

11. empathy (noun; em-puh-thee)

Meaning: sharing the same or similar feelings of another person; the feeling of care, sorrow, or pity for someone else's misfortune, alongside an understanding of their suffering

Synonym: compassion

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: Karl had a lot of **empathy** for the new employee because he had just started his job a year before.

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12. wonder (noun; **wuhn-der**); **to wonder** (verb)

Meaning: a feeling of surprise, admiration, or awe caused by something beautiful, unexpected, or difficult to explain; (verb) to think curiously or to be filled with awe

Synonyms: amazement

Can you think of another synonym?

Example sentence: Henry stood in **wonder** as he looked upon the Grand Canyon. He **wondered** how the canyon was formed.



Discussion Questions

1. Are you a sensitive person in terms of your surroundings? In other words, how aware are you of your surroundings and how you feel?
2. Do certain environments such as big cities or natural landscapes affect you? How so?
3. Do you like to arrange the furniture in your home in a certain way?
4. Do you think architects design their buildings to make people feel certain emotions? Explain why or why not?
5. Do you find it easy to explain your feelings to another person?

Describing Great Structures and Natural Wonders of the World

In this exercise, discuss how you would describe the following famous sights. Some of them are natural landmarks and others are famous structures and buildings. You can discuss:

- How they make you feel when you see a photo of them or if you have seen them in person, how did you feel?
- What are some of the features of the sight that you especially like and why?
- If you have not been to them, would you want to visit them?
- Or anything else you want to discuss.

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1. Yosemite National Park



King of Hearts - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=28519137>

2. Taj Mahal



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3. Yellowstone National Park



National Park Service

4. Pompeii



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5. Cathedral of Brasilia, Brazil



Interior of the Cathedral of Brasilia with angel sculptures. Brasilia Cathedral

References

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yosemite_National_Park
- <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/cathedral-of-brasilia>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yellowstone_National_Park
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompeii>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal

REMINDERS

- May 14, 2026: No Session
- May 21, 2026: Back to our regular session time of 11 am to 12:15 pm.

See you in a couple of weeks!