

## Farewell 2018!

If you are looking forward to the new year, you might also be on the lookout for some activity ideas to start the new term, and take a look back over the past year.

Leoxicon, Leo Selivan's blog for EFL/ESL teachers, has just posted his latest annual News Quiz. A tried and trusted formula which goes down well with classes of B1+/B2- and B2/C1 (he has two different versions of this perfect January warmer).

<http://leoxicon.blogspot.com/2018/12/news-quiz-2018.html?m=1>

One of the stories which has alleviated the festive stuffing and seasonal whining for me has been the Word of the Year, as published annually by different dictionaries and reported on variously in the press.

To colour in the background a little, these words are counted up as they appear in the press and on internet and are chosen by reader polls, and serve to describe what ails society at a given moment.

Over recent years the Word of the Year, as chosen by Oxford Dictionaries, has been as follows:

2013 - selfie

2016 - post truth

2014 - vape

2017 - youthquake

2015 -



So what about 2018?

Well, [Oxford Dictionaries](#) chose "toxic", as the "sheer scope of its application made toxic the stand-out choice".

The Top Ten Collocations went as follows:

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. chemical    | 6. relationship |
| 2. masculinity | 7. culture      |
| 3. substance   | 8. waste        |
| 4. gas         | 9. algae        |
| 5. environment | 10. air         |

Cambridge Dictionary selected "[nomophobia](#)", meaning, naturally, the "fear or worry at the idea of being without your mobile phone or unable to use it."

[Merriam-Webster](#) decided that "justice" was their word of the year because, as they explain, "The concept of justice was at the center of many of our national debates in the past year: racial justice, social justice, criminal justice, economic justice. In any conversation about these topics, the question of just what exactly we mean when we use the term *justice* is relevant, and part of the discussion."

Collins dictionary went for "[single-use](#)" as their first choice, a term that describes items whose unchecked proliferation are blamed for damaging the environment and affecting the food chain". One of their runners-up was "floss" (as in dancing not dental - ask your kids) but I've also just learned a new word myself: I never knew that picking up litter while you jog was called "plogging" - as a kid we called it "wombling", but you'll have to find someone who grew up watching the BBC in the 1970s to explain that one (or just google it - to use a 2006 neologism).

The WOTY I liked best from the many and varied dictionaries and [articles](#) I've been bumbling through over the last week, was "cakeism" - not particularly for the political boorishness it implies, but because language can leap from the French Revolution to Brexit and come up with a revamped expression which says it all.

If you fancy testing your students (or yourself!) on the 2018 Trending Words, then take a look at [Macmillan](#)'s quiz. Enjoy!

And finally, have you discovered TED Talks Daily?

Here's an inspirational one to set you up for the year ahead, Lýdia Machová and The secrets of learning a new language, let's play it!

<https://www.podbean.com/media/share/dir-f6be9-55b0dd0>