Homophones - Instructions for teachers

You need: a copy of the Homophones handout

Procedure:

1) Dictate this list of words to your students (homophones are in brackets):
   1. saw (sore)
   2. right (write)
   3. to (too/two)
   4. aren’t (aunt)
   5. new (knew)
   6. sea (see)
   7. eight (ate)

Then, either get students to compare answers and see if any wrote the words with different spellings, or ...

... if you don’t let them compare answers first, you can get a lot of humour out of this.
Pick a confident student first and elicit answer number 1.
Make a big deal out of them getting it wrong (even if they got it right - pretend you said the other spelling instead).
Write up both the answers though. Then ask another student for question 2, again over-acting the “I can’t believe you got it wrong again!”

When you’ve got all the answers on the board, admit that you weren’t being fair - the words are in fact pronounced exactly the same.

2) Ask students if they can think of any other examples. Then give the handout below. They should work in pairs and say the words, to see if they know another word with the same pronunciation. Emphasize that they don’t need the word-search - it’s just there to help if they don’t know the answer.

3) Finally, they complete the sentences with the correct spelling of each of the homophones they have studied. Students who finish quickly could then practise saying the sentences - their partner should listen and make sure they are pronouncing both words the same.
Homophones

Some words in English have the same pronunciation, but different spelling and meaning. Find words with the same pronunciation in the word-search below. For example, the homophone for ‘new’ is ‘knew’.

threw  wait  past  side
piece  wood  there  plain
board  pear  wore  hear
meat  where  missed  hear

And which words would you use to complete these sentences?

1. I nearly _____ of embarrassment. / I’ve _____ my hair pink.
2. I _____ a cat costume to the party. / The First World _____ ended in 1918.
3. Can I have a _____ of cake? / I just want some _____ and quiet.
4. This chair is made of ___. / What _____ you like to do tonight?
5. _____ are you going? / I don’t usually _____ suits.
6. I’m ___. / The teacher wrote some questions on the _____.
7. The Beatles are great - I love _____ music. / _____ isn’t much to do in this town.
8. I’ll _____ you outside the cinema at 6 o’clock. / I don’t usually eat _____.
9. I bought a really nice _____ of jeans. / I only ate a _____ for lunch today.
10. I walked _____ the park. / He _____ the ball really hard.
11. I never travel by ___. / The food here is really _____.
12. I _____ the exam! / I never think about the _____.
13. If anyone phones, tell them I’m not ___. / I can’t _____ you!
14. Tomorrow there will be some _____. / I really _____ him when I went abroad.
15. I always sleep on my ___. / I _____ when I found out he was late again.
16. I’ve put on a lot of ___. / I can’t _____ any longer.
Answers:

threw/through wait/weight past/passed side/sighed
piece/peace wood/would there/their plain/plane
board/bored pear/pair wore/war hear/her
meat/meet where/wear missed/mist died/dyed

17. I nearly died of embarrassment / I’ve dyed my hair pink.
18. I wore a cat costume to the party. / The First World War ended in 1918.
19. Can I have a piece of cake? / I just want some peace and quiet.
20. This chair is made of wood. / What would you like to do tonight?
21. Where are you going? / I don’t usually wear suits.
22. I’m bored. / The teacher wrote some questions on the board.
23. The Beatles are great – I love their music. / There isn’t much to do in this town.
24. I’ll meet you outside the cinema at 6 o’clock. / I don’t usually eat meat.
25. I bought a really nice pair of jeans. / I only ate a pear for lunch today.
26. I walked through the park. / He threw the ball really hard.
27. I never travel by plane. / The food here is really plain.
28. I passed the exam! / I never think about the past.
29. If anyone phones, tell them I’m not here. / I can’t hear you!
30. Tomorrow there will be some mist. / I really missed my family when I went abroad.
31. I always sleep on my side. / I sighed when I found out he was late again.
32. I’ve put on a lot of weight. / I can’t wait any longer.