

St Mark's Word of the Week



Tautologous

Are you familiar with this word?

Do you know this word?

Do you recognise this word?



Tautologous (adjective)

Definition

Saying the same thing twice when it is unnecessary

Where does the word come from? What is its etymology?



You might not be using the same words but the meaning is repeated.



Tautologous (adjective)

Definition

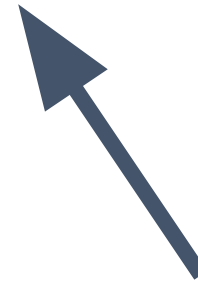
Saying the same thing twice when it is unnecessary

Let's look at an example:

They left at 3am in the morning.



'am' stands for 'ante meridiem'
This means before midday so it
means 'in the morning'!



'in the morning' means
'in the morning'!

This sentence is tautologous.



Tautologous (adjective)

Definition

Saying the same thing twice when it is unnecessary

For each sentence, can you spot where they are being tautologous?

1. Unmarried bachelors are more likely to buy fancy cars.
2. This is a new innovation.
3. The vote was totally unanimous.
4. The reason is because he left during the dinner.
5. They were the reason why she left.
6. In our opinion, we think it is good.
7. Everyone is the sum total of their past experiences.



Tautologous (adjective)

Definition

Saying the same thing twice when it is unnecessary

1. Unmarried bachelors are more likely to buy fancy cars.

Bachelors are by definition unmarried.

2. This is a new innovation.

Innovations are always new. The concept of new is inherent in "innovation".

3. The vote was totally unanimous.

The word "totally" doesn't add anything. "Totally" is inherent in "unanimous".

4. The reason is because he left during the dinner.

The word "because" doesn't add anything. It means "for the reason".

5. They were the reason why she left.

"Why" means "for what reason."

6. In our opinion, we think it is good.

If something is your opinion it is what you think.

7. Everyone is the sum total of their past experiences.

Sum and total mean the same thing, all experiences that could have shaped someone must be in the past.

Can you come up with your own tautologous statement?



Tautologous (adjective)

Definition

Saying the same thing twice when it is unnecessary

**Tautologies are regularly used by many people.
Why are they doing this?**

- 1. Repetition can be a really effective technique for emphasising a point.**
- 2. Sometimes it just sounds better.**

“Everyone is the sum total of their past experiences.” sounds more natural than
“Everyone is the total of their experiences.”



Tautologous (adjective)

Definition

Saying the same thing twice when it is unnecessary

Examples:

- The student's writing became increasingly tautologous as they tried to reach the word count.
- The politician wasn't afraid of being tautologous in emphasising their point.
- They correct their friend for saying PIN number, explaining that it was tautologous as the 'N' in 'PIN' stood for 'number'.

