

NEWS LESSON

What Does "Mogging" Mean?

BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Have you heard a word recently that you had to ask somebody to explain?
2. Who steals the attention in your family photographs?
3. When is competition between friends fun?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**outperforming**	☐	A	calm and not worried
2	**status**	☐	B	how important people think you are
3	**ranked**	☐	C	making fun of someone, often in a friendly way
4	**teasing**	☐	D	extremely good
5	**brilliant**	☐	E	doing something better than someone else
6	**hiring**	☐	F	unhappy or angry about something
7	**upset**	☐	G	giving jobs to new workers
8	**relaxed**	☐	H	put in order from best to worst

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

Collins has picked its word of the year. Teenagers use it as a joke, but it did not begin as one.

1 Imagine a family standing together for a photograph. Everyone smiles. At the last second the dog walks into the middle of the shot and looks straight at the camera. Somebody posts the picture and writes that the dog has mogged the entire family. Nobody is upset. The joke is that the dog got all the attention.

2 On 3 November 2026, Collins chose mogging as its word of the year. It means outshining or outperforming someone or something. Collins says the word is used about 210% more often this year than last, and that young people mostly use it in a light, joking way when somebody is upstaged. A brilliant goal, a very good coat, a dog in a photograph.

3 The word did not start there. It is short for AMOG, which stands for alpha male of the group. Around 2016 it was used in gyms for the most physically powerful man in the room. From there it moved into corners of the internet where some men ranked each other by looks, confidence and status. Being mogged meant being made to look smaller.

4 So the same word can do two very different jobs. A friend laughing about a dog is not doing what a website that scores faces is doing. Words change as new people pick them up, and most teenagers using it have no idea where it came from. That is normal. It is still useful to know.

5 Comparing ourselves with other people is nothing new. Somebody is always faster, funnier or more relaxed in a room full of strangers. A little of that is fun. It stops being fun when every photograph turns into a test of who looks best, because people are more than a face or a score.

6 There is also a difference between a joke everybody is in on and a joke about somebody who is not. If the person in the photograph is laughing too, it is teasing. If they are not, the word is doing something else, whatever it sounded like.

7 Collins also chose a shortlist of other new words, including ghost job, which is a job advertised by a company that is not actually hiring. Language keeps moving. Whether or not you use mogging yourself, you can still choose how you talk about the people around you.

Sources: Collins Dictionary, Word of the Year 2026; Associated Press, Collins Dictionary chooses mogging as its 2026 word of the year; Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Looksmaxxing trend poses risks for boys and teens. Picture: .

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Collins chose mogging as its word of the year in November 2026. T F NG
2. The word was invented by teenagers. T F NG
3. The dog in the imagined photograph is called Max. T F NG
4. A ghost job is a job advertised by a company that is not really hiring. T F NG
5. The article says a word can do two different jobs. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

attention	outshining	powerful	queue	score	suitcase	upstaged

1. Mogging means _____ or outperforming someone or something.
2. Young people use it in a joking way when somebody is _____ , for example by a dog in a photograph.
3. In the photograph, the dog got all the _____ .
4. People are more than a face or a _____ .
5. In gyms, the strongest man in the room was called the most _____ one there.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. On 3 November 2026, Collins _____ mogging as its word of the year. (CHOOSE)
2. The dog _____ into the middle of the shot. (WALK)
3. Words _____ as new people pick them up. (CHANGE)
4. Most teenagers using it _____ no idea where it came from. (HAVE)
5. A job may be _____ by a company that is not hiring. (ADVERTISE)

7 Language focus: prepositions

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Some verbs and adjectives always take one small word after them, like short for or compare with. Learn the pair together.

beneath beside between by for into with

1. The word mogging is short _____ AMOG.
2. At the last second the dog walks _____ the middle of the shot.
3. Some men ranked each other _____ looks, confidence and status.
4. Comparing ourselves _____ other people is nothing new.
5. There is a difference _____ a joke everybody is in on and a joke about somebody who is not.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Is it a problem if a word used as a joke came from an unkind place?
2. Do you compare yourself with other people? When?
3. What word would you choose as the word of the year?

9 Role-play: is it just a joke?

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the parent

You read that mogging began in gyms and online groups that ranked people by looks. Your teenager uses the word all the time. Ask what it means to them. Decide if they can keep using it.

Student B · the teenager

You use mogging as a joke about dogs, football and photos. Explain why it's harmless. Say what your friends mean by it. Try to keep using it.

Useful phrases

I read where that word comes from.
What do you and your friends mean by it?
It's just a joke, I promise.
I'm not sure it's harmless, though.
Would you say it to someone who wasn't laughing?
Let's agree to be careful with it.

Afterwards, tell the class: did the parent change their mind, and why?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 E · 2 B · 3 H · 4 C · 5 D · 6 G · 7 F · 8 A

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 T

5 Vocabulary

1 outshining · 2 upstaged · 3 attention · 4 score · 5 powerful

6 Verb forms

1 chose · 2 walks · 3 change · 4 have · 5 advertised

7 Language focus

1 for · 2 into · 3 by · 4 with · 5 between

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