

University of Catania

Scientific Writing Resources

Words and phrases that can confuse

(a bit of grammatical help)

Particular - Peculiar





University of Catania

Scientific Writing Resources

Particular - Peculiar

These two words are often used incorrectly.

Particular means special

synonyms: special, extra special, especial, exceptional, unusual, marked, singular, uncommon, notable, noteworthy, remarkable, outstanding, unique.

Peculiar means strange

synonyms: strange, unusual, odd, funny, curious, bizarre, weird, uncanny, queer, unexpected, unfamiliar, abnormal, atypical, anomalous, untypical, different.

Examples:

Personally, I see "perfume" as a product, and the "fragrance" as the **particular** smell of the perfume.

The **peculiar** smell of the breath in small-pox seems to indicate the lurking contagion.