Reading Worksheet: Cognates and False Friends

When we learn English, some words look very similar to Spanish. These words are called **cognates**. Cognates usually have the same form and the same meaning. For example: *animal – animal, color – color, hospital – hospital*. These words are easy to understand because they are almost the same in both languages. Cognates can help us learn new vocabulary quickly.

However, there are also words that look similar but do **not** have the same meaning. These are called **false friends**. They are "tricky words" because they confuse many students. For example: the English word *actual* means "real," but in Spanish, *actual* means "current." Another example is *library*. In English, it is a place where you read and borrow books, but in Spanish, *librería* means "bookstore," a place where you buy books.

False friends can create funny mistakes. Imagine saying, "I am very *embarrassed*," when you want to say *embarazada*. In English, *embarrassed* means "ashamed," not "pregnant."

In short, cognates are your friends because they help you understand English faster. But false friends are "tricksters" because they can change the meaning completely. If you learn to recognize them, you will avoid many mistakes and communicate better.

True/False Questions

1. Cognates are words that look similar in English and Spanish and have the same meaning. (True/False)
2. False friends are easy words that always help students. (True/False)
3. The word 'hospital' is an example of a cognate. (True/False)
4. The word 'actual' means 'current' in English. (True/False)
5. False friends can cause confusion when students translate directly. (True/False)
6. 'Library' means 'librería' in English. (True/False)
7. Cognates can make learning English vocabulary easier. (True/False)
8. The word 'embarrassed' in English means 'pregnant.' (True/False)
9. False friends are called 'tricksters' in the text. (True/False)

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10. Recognizing cognates and false friends can improve communication. (True/False)

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