Euphemisms

A **euphemism (YOO-fa-miz-um)** is an expression intended by the speaker to be less offensive, disturbing, or troubling to the listener than the word or phrase it replaces, or to make it less troublesome for the speaker. Often times, they are used to make a sensitive topic more appropriate in polite society.

Nazi propaganda was filled with the use of such terminology, partly to hide the horrible acts that were being perpetrated against the Jewish people. Below are a few examples of such euphemisms. They mask much blunter, more direct and honest language.

* Final Solution
* Shower
* concentration camp
* utilization

Underline the euphemisms in the following sentences that are commonly used in our culture today. Then, one the line, write the more truthful phrase in its place.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Elizabeth excused herself from the table and asked where she might be able to powder her nose.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Barry said that he was sorry to hear that his neighbor’s mother had passed away.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Jerry, who enjoyed a good job as a sanitary worker, had been excited to hear of his raise.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Despite the fact that she was vertically challenged, the teacher was respected and feared by many students.
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Because Emily was visually impaired, all of her work needed to be translated into Braille.
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_It was announced that yet another soldier was killed by friendly fire in Iraq today.
7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_The United States announced that they were seeking the pacification of the many rebel groups in the region.
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Sarah was devastated to learn that her parents planned to put down her cat, Miffy.
9. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Dr. Ostalecki took her students to a sanitary landfill as a culmination for their science unit.
10. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Lexus often advertises for their pre-owned vehicles on the radio.
11. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Because he was not performing at the expected level, Harold was held back in the third grade.
12. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Due to a minor flaw in judgment, Billy wound up in a correctional facility for three years.
13. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Mr. Jones was saddened that the company he had worked for for twenty years decided to downsize his position.
14. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Sam panicked when he found himself in a stall that had no bathroom tissue.
15. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_My grandma always amused us as children when she would remove her dental appliance.
16. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_The mobile home is a very economical choice for the up-and-coming family.
17. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Many families in America unfortunately live in substandard housing.
18. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Because Olivia is hearing impaired, she both reads lips and uses sign language.
19. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Following the birth of her three children, Diane found herself shopping in the full-figured woman stores.
20. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Harry Potter will most surely bring down “He Who Must Not Be Named” in J.K. Rowling’s seventh book.

Severe appearance deficit = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Try your hand at creating 5 new euphemisms. Write the euphemism below, along with its blunt, truthful translation.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_