

## Word of the Day – **Phobia**

### Transcript

Hi everyone. Today's word of the day is **phobia**. **Phobia** is a fear. This may be something scary to some people, which is not really found scary to others. It's usually an object or creature such as spiders or situation, maybe social situation. And this fear compels the person so much that they want to avoid whatever the object or creature or the situation is. A **phobia** is a noun but it can also be used as a suffix. So later on, I'll explain other examples of **phobias**. First, you can use the word **phobia** just to describe a fear.

**"So the boy suffered from many phobias including spiders, snakes, and rats."**

So in this case, **phobia** is just used as a classification of all the things that he is afraid of. But I'm also going to describe three other common phobias that we use: **Arachnophobia**, **Claustrophobia**, **Xenophobia**.

So first, **arachnophobia** is just a fear of arachnids or a fear of spiders. In the US we have this nursery rhyme that children learn when they're around three or four and it goes

*Little Miss Muffet  
Sat on a tuffet,  
Eating her curds and whey;  
Along came a spider,  
Who sat down beside her  
And frightened Miss Muffet away.*

In this case, Miss Muffet has a fear of spiders or she's **arachnophobic**.

Second is **claustrophobia**. **Claustrophobia** just means having a fear of small, enclosed spaces. So actually my mom is **claustrophobic**. She's afraid of going into elevators and when she does she tends to get nervous or get a headache. Something like that.

And a third one is **xenophobia**. And this isn't typically a fear as in an object but this is a fear of foreigners. This is related to hate or racism and prejudice. And the first time I remember learning this word was in my US History class in maybe middle school or high school and this was really something common that was associated with anti-Irish movements within the US during the 1800's. And I can use it to describe this situation. In the 1800's throughout the UK and the US there was an anti-Irish sentiment. So immigrating Irish suffered a lot of prejudice. Shopkeepers would actually hang signs in their windows that read "N.I.N.A" which should for "No Irish Need Apply" and these signs were symbols of **xenophobia**. So I hope you can use the word **phobia** and maybe even **arachnophobia**, **claustrophobia**, and **xenophobia** in your everyday lives. Thank you for listening to the Word of the Day. You can find the script at [Practicus.co.kr](http://Practicus.co.kr). Thank you and have a good day.