

Overview of Spelling Bees Coverage

Dfe guidance for years 5 and 6

Statutory Requirements	Rules and Guidance (non-statutory)	Spelling Pattern	Set I Wk No.	Set J Wk No.
Endings which sound like jspelt –cious or –tious / əs/	Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in –ce , the sound is usually spelt as c – e.g. <i>vice – vicious, grace – gracious, space – spacious, malice – malicious.</i> Exception: <i>anxious.</i> /ʃ/	ious	1	1
Endings which sound like	–cial is common after a vowel letter and –tial after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions. Exceptions: <i>initial, financial, commercial, provincial</i> (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to <i>finance, commerce and province</i>).	cial	2	
		tial		2
Words ending in –ant, –ance/–ancy, –ent, –ence/–ency	Use –ant and –ance/–ancy if there is a related word with a /æ/ or /eɪ/ sound in the right position; –ation endings are often a clue.	ant and ance suffix	3	3
	Use –ent and –ence/–ency after soft c (/s/ sound), soft g (/dʒ/ sound) and qu, or if there is a related word with a clear /ɛ/ sound in the right position. There are many words, however, where the above guidance does not help. These words just have to be learnt.	ent suffix	4 and 5	4 and 5
Words ending in –able and –ible Words ending in –ably and	The –able/–ably endings are far more common than the –ible/–ibly endings. As with –ant and –ance/–ancy, the –able ending is used if there is a related word ending in –ation.	able suffix	6	6
		ible suffix	7	7
		ibly suffix		

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-ibly		ance suffix	8	8
	If the -able ending is added to a word ending in -ce or -ge, the e after the cor g must be kept as those letters would otherwise have their 'hard' sounds (as in cap and gap) before the a of the -able ending. The -able ending is usually but not always used if a complete root word can be heard before it, even if there is no related word ending in -ation. The first five examples opposite are obvious; in reliable, the complete word ation suffix ely is heard, but the y changes to l in accordance with the rule. The -ible ending is common if a complete root word can't be heard before it but it also sometimes occurs when a complete word can be heard (e.g. sensible).	ation suffix	9	9
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in -fer	The r is doubled if the -fer is still stressed when the ending is added.	fer words		10
	The r is not doubled if the -fer is no longer stressed.	double r	10	
Use of the hyphen	Hyphens can be used to join a prefix to a root word, especially if the prefix ends in a vowel letter and the root word also begins with one.		13	13
Words with the /i:/ sound spelt ei after c	The 'i before e except after c' rule applies to words where the sound spelt by ei is /i:/. Exceptions: protein, caffeine, seize (and either and neither if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).	i before e except after c	11	
		i before e except after c exceptions		11
Words containing the letter-string ough	ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.	ough words	12	12
Words with 'silent' letters (i.e. letters whose presence	Some letters which are no longer sounded used to be sounded hundreds of years ago: e.g. in knight, there was a		15	15

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cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	/k/ sound before the /n/, and the gh used to represent the sound that 'ch' now represents in the Scottish word loch.		16 17 18	16 17
Homophones and other words that are often confused	In the pairs of words opposite, nouns end –ce and verbs end –se. Advice and advise provide a useful clue as the word advise (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt c.		19	19
Keywords	accommodate, accompany, according, achieve, aggressive, amateur, ancient, apparent, appreciate, attached, available, , immediate, average, awkward, bargain		20	20
	bruise, category, cemetery, committee, communicate, community, competition, conscience, conscious, controversy, convenience, correspond, criticise, critic, curiosity		21	21
	definite, desperate, determined, develop, dictionary, disastrous, embarrass, environment, equipment, equip, equipped, especially, exaggerate, excellent, existence		22	22
	explanation, familiar, foreign, forty, frequently, government, guarantee, harass, hindrance, identity, immediately, individual, interfere, interrupt, language		23	23
	leisure, lightning, marvellous, mischievous, muscle, necessary, neighbour, nuisance, occupy, occur, opportunity, parliament, persuade, physical, prejudice		24	24
	privilege, profession, programme, pronunciation, queue, recognise, recommend, relevant, restaurant, rhyme, rhythm, sacrifice, secretary, shoulder, signature		25	25
	sincere, sincerely, soldier, stomach, sufficient, suggest, symbol, system, temperature, thorough, twelfth, variety, vegetable, vehicle, yacht		26	26

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Revision (Set I (year 5) taken from Set G (year 3) Set J (year 6) taken from Set H (year 4))	Like un–, the prefixes dis– and mis– have negative meanings.	mis prefix	27	
	sub– means ‘under’.	sub and inter prefix	28	
	inter– means ‘between’ or ‘among’.	ation suffix	29	
	inter– means ‘between’ or ‘among’.	changing e to sion	30	
		ch words with a k sound	31	
		ch words with a s sound	32	
	Before a root word starting with r , in– becomes ir– .	ir prefix	33	
	The prefix in– can mean both ‘not’ and ‘in’/‘into’. In the words given here it means ‘not’.	in prefix	34	
	The ending sounding like /ʒə/ is always spelt –sure.	sure suffix	35	
	The ending sounding like /tʃə/ is often spelt –ture, but check that the word is not a root word ending in (t)ch with an er ending – e.g. teacher, catcher, richer, stretcher.	ture suffix	36	
	If the last syllable of a word is stressed and ends with one consonant letter which has just one vowel letter before it, the final consonant letter is doubled before any ending beginning with a vowel letter is added. The consonant letter is not doubled if the syllable is unstressed.	double consonants		27
	Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see in– below.	un prefix		28
		ily suffix		29
		ally suffix		30
	Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see in– below.	ous suffix		31
		ssion suffix		32
	que and gue		33	

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		suffix		
		ch words with a k sound		34
		sc words with a s sound		35
		il prefix		36