

Functional Skills English

Level 2



Learning Resource 3
Spelling and Handwriting

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Information**Spelling Strategies**

We all learn differently but there are several spelling strategies which can help us learn to spell those awkward words which we find difficult to remember.

Different people will find some strategies more useful than others.

1) Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check

- **Look** carefully at the word, at its shape, its length, the letters that make it up. Take a mental 'photo' of it.
- As you 'take the photo', **say** it to yourself.
- When you feel you have that mental image, **cover** over the word so you can't see it.
- Try to **write** the word, remembering the way it looked, while saying it to yourself.
- Uncover the word and **check** it, letter for letter, against your attempt. If it wasn't correct try again.

2) Letter Strings

Learn words together in groups which have the same **letter strings**.

musician physician beautician

tough enough through

All these words have the same ending "-ough". Say the words out loud. What do you notice about the ending of each word?

cough tough through thorough bough dough bought

They all have different sounds

Exercise 1

These letter strings all make the sound “or”. Can you add words under each example with the same letter string and making the sound “or”.

The sound “or”			
	-augh	-ough	-our
e.g.	naughty	bought	source

From your own personal reading try finding other letter combinations that make different sounds.

The sound “a”			
	-eigh	-aigh	-ea-
e.g.	eight	straight	break

3) Mnemonics

Give each letter of the word a different word to remember it by.

e.g. eight – elephants in garters hate tights

or give the letters of the bit of the word which is difficult to remember, a different word to remember it by.

e.g. necessary - 1 collar and 2 sleeves.

4) Words Within Words

Little words can often be found in the longer words you are trying to learn and can help you remember the longer more difficult word.

e.g. **Friend**
(I will be your **friend** to the **end**)

Careful
(**Are** you always **careful**?)

5) Over Exposure

Stick those tricky words everywhere!!

Seeing words frequently is a good way of learning them.

- e.g.
- on the coffee jar!
 - on your college desk
 - on your purse or wallet
 - on the stairs at home
 - under the toilet seat!!

6) Word Derivation

cent is Latin for 100

There are lots of words which contain the word **cent** which has a connection to 100.

- e.g. **century** - 100 years
century - 100 runs at cricket
centimetre - one hundredth of a metre
centigrade - (a measurement of temperature with 100° between freezing and boiling point)
centipede - (a minibeast with lots of ...possibly ... 100 legs)

7) Highlighting Trouble Spots

Highlighting the difficult part of the word draws attention to it and may help you to learn it better.

e.g. **Wednesday**
February
interest
different

8) Word Association

If you think of a **battalion** as a body of soldiers ready for **battle** you will not have to wonder whether you should use double **t** or double **l**. Other associations and connections that you might usefully remember are given below.

Using the words in bold as clues (and as the words to be kept in mind), complete the unfinished words.

Exercise 2

- 1) The function of the _____ment is to **govern**.
- 2) A _____ic explosion fills one with **terror**.
- 3) A _____ary may have to deal with **secret** documents.
- 4) _____ine should be taken only on **medical** advice.
- 5) A _____ette is a small **cigar**.
- 6) Inflammation of the _____al tubes is called **bronchitis**.
- 7) A _____oon is shaped like a large **ball**.
- 8) _____mas is the festival of the birth of **Christ**.
- 9) A birth _____cate **certifies** the date of one's birth.

Check your answers using a dictionary.

9) Still Having Trouble?

Remember there are lots of places to go for help if you want to spell a new or difficult word.

- a dictionary
- the spelling and grammar check on your PC
- a spell check machine
- a confident speller
- your own personal spelling log

Information
Prefixes and Suffixes

If we understand the meaning of some prefixes and suffixes, it often becomes easier to solve the meaning of new words.

Examples:

Knowing that the prefix “micro-“ means “to indicate relatively small size”, we can then more easily understand words like “**microbiology**”, “**microsurgery**”, “**micrometer**” as well as the more familiar words such as “**microscope**” and “**microwave**”.

Exercise 3

Using a dictionary, find the meaning of these prefixes and suffixes and make a list of words that use them, with their meanings. The first has been done for you as an example.

Prefix	Meaning	Word	Meaning
post-	after	post-war postgraduate posthumous post-meridian	after the war after finishing a degree after death after noon
pre-			
sub-			
tele-			
bi-			

Prefixes and Suffixes Continued

Prefix	Meaning	Word	Meaning
neuro-			
biblio-			
circum-			



Prefixes and Suffixes Continued

Suffix	Meaning	Word	Meaning
-able			
-less			
-er			
-fy			
-ling			

Add more words that use prefixes and suffixes to your vocabulary list as you find them. You may also find words that use other prefixes and suffixes. Use the space below for additional material.

Prefixes and Suffixes Continued

Many words to describe people's occupations are formed by adding the suffixes -er, -or, -ist or -cian to the word describing their job, e.g. teacher, doctor, dentist or beautician.

Exercise 4

Add words that describe people's occupations to these lists as you find them. Collecting them together into word families will help you to learn their spelling.

-er	-or	-ist	-cian
teacher	doctor	dentist	beautician
miner	actor	chemist	musician
plumber	decorator	florist	optician
hairdresser	tutor	artist	politician



Information
Roots and Endings

A common ending to words is the suffix “-ly” which is often used to create an adverb from an adjective.

Examples:

Adjective	Adverb
severe	severely
sweet	sweetly
lucky	luckily
dreadful	dreadfully

Exercise 5

There are several rules governing the addition of “-ly” to a word. Try to work out some of them from the list of words below. The first has been done as an example. Don't forget that there are always exceptions!

Adjective	Adverb
1) definite absolute	definitely absolutely

Rule - when an adjective ends in “e” just add -ly.

2) full shrill	fully shrilly
-------------------	------------------

Rule -

3) terrible subtle	terribly subtly
-----------------------	--------------------

Rule -

4) happy funny	happily funnily
-------------------	--------------------

Rule -

5) basic scientific	basically scientifically
------------------------	-----------------------------

Rule -

Exercise 6**Roots and Endings Continued**

Look at the -ly words below and try to work out the base word from which they came.

-ly word	base word
finally	
stealthily	
immediately	
practically	
sincerely	
comically	
slyly	
singly	
musically	
solely	
duly	

There are two exceptions to the rules in the list above. Can you spot which ones they are? Write them again in the space below and explain which of the above rules they disobey.

Information**Spelling Rules y – i**

y changes to **i** before a suffix (something which is added to the end of a word) unless the suffix begins with an **i**.

Examples:

- beauty - beautiful
- happy - happiness
- dry - dried

Exceptions:

- hurry - hurrying
- dry - dryly dryness
- shy - shyly shyness
- sly - slyly slyness
- spry - spryly spryness

The rules for forming the **plurals** of words ending in **y** are as follows:

If the letter before **y** is a consonant, change the **y** to **i** and add **es**:

- dictionary - dictionaries

If the letter before **y** is a vowel, add **s**:

- highway - highways

Exercise 7

Write in the correct form of the root word, given in brackets, appropriate to the context of the sentence.

- 1) We should like to wish you all good health and (happy)
in your new home.
- 2) The tutor filled in an order form for fifty new (dictionary)
- 3) If Sarah fails her driving test again, it will be the fifth time she has (try)
and failed.
- 4) You will need to pay that parking fine within 14 (day)or the
amount payable will be double.
- 5) The injured dog looked a (pity) sight wrapped in bandages.

Information**Spelling Rule ise or ize**

The accepted spelling has slowly changed so now **ise** will almost always be correct to use. The only time you can properly use **ize** is when there is a word where the two different spellings have two different meanings.

Examples:

- prize - to win a prize
- prise - to prise open a door

Exercise 8

Keep a list of any other double meaning ise/ize words you come across.

Information**Spelling Rule c or s**

Where **c** used to be used in a word it is now common practice to use an **s**.

Examples:

- defence - defense

But sometimes the different spellings show the difference between the noun and the verb.

- | Noun | Verb |
|-------------|-------------|
| • licence | license |
| • practice | practise |

Examples:

- 1) I have lost my driving licence.
but
The pub is licensed to sell alcohol.
- 2) Practices vary in different parts of the country.
but
I must practise my piano lesson.

Information

Spelling Rule Vowel + “m”

Usually a word which ends in a vowel or y plus an ‘m’ sound also takes a silent ‘n’.

Examples:

- column
- hymn
- solemn
- condemn

Exceptions:

- memorandum (foreign word)
- rhythm (there is no vowel before the m)

Information

Spelling Rule Dropping the final “e”

If a word ends in a silent e, drop the e when adding a vowel-suffix:

Example:

- replace - replacing

Exception:

The e is not dropped when a consonant-suffix is added:

- replace - replacement

Exercise 9

Observing the above rule, combine the following words with the suffixes given in brackets. Use a dictionary if necessary.

excite (-ment)		sense (-less)	
spite (-ful)		love (-ing)	
amaze (-ing)		grope (-ing)	
fame (-ous)		separate (-ing)	
assure (-ance)		idle (-ness)	
separate (-ly)		excite (-able)	
lone (-ly)		amaze (-ment)	
white (-ish)		postpone (-ment)	

An exception to the above rule is that words ending in **ce** and **ge** keep the **e** when adding **-able** or **-ous**.

Examples:

- replace, **replaceable**.
- **courage**, **courageous**

Exercise 10

Bearing this in mind, continue with the following combinations of words and suffixes:

overtake (-ing)		trace (-ing)	
desire (-ous)		advantage (-ous)	
late (-ly)		observe (-ant)	
late (-ish)		true (-ly)	
manage (-able)		notice (-able)	
elope (-ment)		dine (-ing)	
change (-able)		white (-ness)	
outrage (-ous)		peace (-able)	
desire (-able)		nightmare (-ish)	

Information**Spelling Rules - Compound Words**

Words such as:

- all
- fill
- full
- till
- well

are often added to the **end** of other words as **suffixes**, or to the **beginning** of other words as **prefixes**, thus forming a **simple** compound word.

In this case the single double letter **ll** mostly becomes a single **l**.

Examples:

- **almighty**
- **fulfil**
- **handful**
- **until**
- **welfare**

Exceptions:

- farewell
- illness
- tallness
- wellbeing

Information

In compound words, a silent 'e' is retained before a consonant but is dropped before a vowel.

Examples:

- value - valueless, valuable
- sense - sensible, senseless

Information**Spelling Rules -able/-ible**

From the word **prevent** we get **preventable**, spelt with **a**, but **convert** gives us **convertible**, with an **i**. There is no easy rule for deciding whether to use **-able** or **-ible**, when making adjectives of this kind your best plan is to learn each word as you meet it.

Exercise 11**Complete the following:**

- 1) What makes him so irrit_____ble?
- 2) This is a sens_____ble suggestion.
- 3) He would make an admir_____ble prefect.
- 4) Is the disease cur_____ble?
- 5) Smoking is not permiss_____ble in this hall.
- 6) Do you think it advis_____ble for us to go without coats?
- 7) The frost did a neglig_____ble amount of damage.
- 8) Her stockings are almost invis_____ble.
- 9) Strong boots are indespens_____ble for rock climbing.
- 10) She is a very excit_____ble girl.
- 11) I hold you respons_____ble for the safe keeping of this book.
- 12) His insulting manner was contempt_____ble.
- 13) They told us an almost incred_____ble story of hardship and danger.
- 14) The village is not approach_____ble from the north.
- 15) The village is easily access_____ble from the west.
- 16) Is it poss_____ble for man to reach Mars?

Use a dictionary whenever you are not sure of the spelling.

Information**Spelling Rules – Disappearing Letters**

The feminine form of the word **waiter** is **waitress** (not **waiteress**), and a person who is full of **vigour** is **vigorous** (not **vigourous**). You will see that the **e** is dropped from the word **waiter**, and the **u** from the word **vigour**.

Exercise 12

To each of the following words add the suffix shown in brackets, omitting one letter from the given word as you do so.

Make sure your writing is legible.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) tiger (-ess) | 2) humour (-ous) |
| 3) remember (-ance) | 4) wonder (-ous) |
| 5) winter (-y) | 6) proprietor (-ess) |
| 7) encumber (-ance) | 8) disaster (-ous) |
| 9) enter (-ance) | 10) humour (-ist) |
| 11) hinder (-ance) | 12) administer (-ation) |
| 13) monster (-ous) | 13) enchanter (-ess) |
| 15) labour (-ious) | 15) vapour (-ise) |
| 17) carpenter (-y) | 17) generous (-ity) |
| 19) curious (-ity) | 19) glamour (-ous) |
| 21) exclaim (-ation) | 21) register (-ar) |
| 23) repeat (-ition) | 23) impetuous (-ity) |
| The last two are slightly different: | |
| 25) pronounce (-ation) | 25) (de-) odour (-ant) |

Use a dictionary to check your answers.

Information**Words Commonly Confused**

Another kind of "spelling error" is not really a spelling error at all but a confusing of words that have a similar sound but different meanings. We have so many of these that confusion is hardly surprising. It is worth remembering that these errors would not be picked up on the spell check on a word processor since the actual word you have typed does exist.

Exercise 13

Use the following words, each in a separate sentence, to show that you clearly understand the difference.

Take care with your handwriting. You should produce a legible text.

1) accept, except

.....
.....

2) advice, advise

.....
.....

3) draft, draught

.....
.....

4) ensure, insure

.....
.....

5) instance, instants

.....
.....

6) its, it's

.....
.....

7) loose, lose

.....
.....

8) new, knew

.....
.....

9) past, passed

.....
.....

10) practice, practise

.....
.....

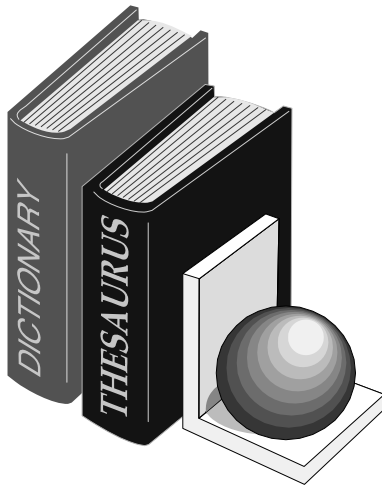
11) there, their

.....
.....

12) whose, who's

.....
.....

Check your answers using a dictionary.



Information**Awkward Spellings**

Words of several syllables are sometimes difficult to spell because everyday usage has altered the pronunciation of them, with the result that whole or parts of syllables are missed out in speech but still need to be included in the written form.

Examples

In these words the letters **underlined** are not used in the current spoken version of the words. Read each word aloud and then read it again but this time include the **unstressed vowels** you missed out at first. Saying them as they are written will help you to remember their spelling.

diff <u>e</u> rent	laborat <u>o</u> ry
int <u>e</u> resting	lavat <u>o</u> ry
refer <u>e</u> nce	temp <u>o</u> rary
veter <u>i</u> nary	obligat <u>o</u> ry
second <u>a</u> ry	poison <u>o</u> us
secret <u>a</u> ry	medic <u>i</u> ne
necess <u>a</u> ry	

Exercise 14

Apart from the **underlined letters** all being vowels, can you see any other common factors about some of these words? Look at the letters that follow the unstressed vowels. Can you formulate any rules that would help you to spell other words like these? Make a spelling list of any such words as they occur in your personal reading.

Exercise 15**Other Difficult Spellings**

Here are fifty unfinished words that cause many people to stumble in their spelling.

Using a dictionary, complete them correctly.

reco__nise

maint__nance

mis__letoe

sep__rate

cat__pill__r

mant__piece

lib__ary

her__tic

par__lel

prof__sor

sat__lite

asp__rin

campai__n

manoe__vre

laburn__m

lite__ary

vac__um

par__fin

shep__rd

ras__berry

rhod__dendron

parl__ment

rhinocer__s

vet__inary

lunch__on

propel__r

rest__ant

choc__late

dip__theria

sacr__l__gious

uncon__cious

auxil__ary

Feb__uary

substan__ial

lab__rinth

Portug__ese

contempor__y

diaphra__m

mis__aneous

cu__board

pomegran__te

ex__hibition

min__ature

mack__rel

b__oyant

cemet__ry

hyg__enic

Everyone has their own 'hang ups' – words they know they are likely to spell wrongly!

Make a list of yours – spelled correctly!

N.B. Writing them neatly helps you “catch” the spelling more easily in your memory.

Spellings
Spell these correctly and you're above average

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. absence | 51. criticism | 101. hypocrisy | 151. preference |
| 2. accidentally | 52. deceive | 102. imagination | 152. prejudice |
| 3. accommodate | 53. decision | 103. immediately | 153. preliminary |
| 4. achieved | 54. definite | 104. immigrate | 154. prestige |
| 5. acknowledge | 55. desirable | 105. incidentally | 155. privilege |
| 6. acquainted | 56. desperate | 106. independent | 156. procedure |
| 7. addresses | 57. disappeared | 107. indispensable | 157. proceeds |
| 8. aerial | 58. disappointed | 108. influential | 158. professional |
| 9. aggravate | 59. disastrous | 109. intelligence | 159. professor |
| 10. aggregate | 60. discipline | 110. irresistible | 160. pronunciation |
| 11. agreeable | 61. dissatisfied | 111. knowledge | 161. proprietary |
| 12. amateur | 62. efficiency | 112. liaison | 162. psychology |
| 13. among | 63. eight | 113. literature | 163. quiet |
| 14. analyse (z) USA | 64. eliminated | 114. livelihood | 164. really |
| 15. analysis | 65. embarrassed | 115. lose | 165. received |
| 16. anxiety | 66. emphasise (z) USA | 116. losing | 166. recognise (z) USA |
| 17. apparent | 67. enthusiasm | 117. lying | 167. recommended |
| 18. appearance | 68. equipped | 118. mortgage | 168. referred |
| 19. appropriate | 69. especially | 119. maintenance | 169. relieved |
| 20. argument | 70. essential | 120. marriage | 170. repetition |
| 21. arrangements | 71. exaggerated | 121. medicine | 171. restaurant |
| 22. athletic | 72. excellent | 122. Mediterranean | 172. rhythm |
| 23. automation | 73. exercise | 123. miniature | 173. schedule |
| 24. awful | 74. exhausted | 124. minutes | 174. scarcely |
| 25. bachelor | 75. existence | 125. mischievous | 175. secretaries |
| 26. beginning | 76. expenses | 126. murmur | 176. seize |
| 27. believed | 77. experience | 127. necessary | 177. sentence |
| 28. benefited | 78. extremely | 128. negotiate | 178. separate |
| 29. beneficial | 79. familiar | 129. niece | 179. severely |
| 30. breathe | 80. February | 130. noticeable | 180. shining |
| 31. budgeted | 81. financial | 131. occasional | 181. similar |
| 32. business | 82. foreign | 132. occasionally | 182. sincerely |
| 33. catalogue | 83. forty | 133. occurred | 183. statutory |
| 34. ceiling | 84. friend | 134. occurrence | 184. successful |
| 35. certain | 85. fulfil | 135. omitted | 185. suppression |
| 36. choice | 86. fulfilled | 136. omission | 186. surprising |
| 37. clothes | 87. gauge | 137. opinion | 187. tendency |
| 38. college | 88. genius | 138. originally | 188. tragedy |
| 39. colleagues | 89. government | 139. parallel | 189. transferred |
| 40. coming | 90. grammar | 140. parliament | 190. twelfth |
| 41. committee | 91. grievance | 141. pastime | 191. unconscious |
| 42. comparative | 92. guard | 142. permanent | 192. undoubtedly |
| 43. competent | 93. guardian | 143. permissible | 193. unnecessary |
| 44. completely | 94. handkerchief | 144. perseverance | 194. until |
| 45. conscientious | 95. height | 145. personnel | 195. usually |
| 46. conscious | 96. heroes | 146. physical | 196. valuable |
| 47. consistent | 97. honorary | 147. planning | 197. view |
| 48. convenience | 98. humorous | 148. pleasant | 198. Wednesday |
| 49. courteous | 99. hungry | 149. possesses | 199. woollen |
| 50. courtesy | 100. hurriedly | 150. preceding | 200. warehouse |

Information**Handwriting Pointers**

Although much communication today is word processed, legibility and presentation of handwriting is still important. Some job applications welcome a handwritten letter of application alongside a word processed C.V.; most application **forms** need filling in manually – often in BLOCK LETTERS.

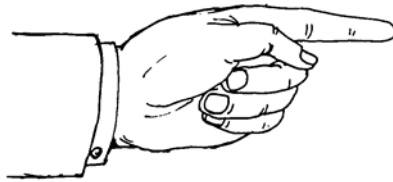
However, it is recognised that not everyone finds it easy to develop a neat, attractive handwriting style. What **is** important, is that what is handwritten is **legible** (i.e. easily readable) and there are certain pointers which we can all attempt to satisfy in order to ensure the reader finds our written communication as easy on the eye as possible.

Pointers:

- size of writing - try and make your handwriting a **uniform** size i.e. it should not vary within a document and you should attempt to make all the letters within a word a uniform size. The writing in a document should be “easy on the eye” i.e. neither too large or too small;
- spacing – again, uniformity is the name of the game. Keep the spaces between words approximately the same. Adequate spacing between words prevents confusion where words appear to ‘run into one another’;
- alterations – keep alterations to a minimum. A rough draft of your documents should help to keep alterations to a minimum. Think about the impression your letter, application form etc. will make on the recipient. If, after proofreading, you need to make minor adjustments, do so as neatly as possible and cause as little confusion as possible to the reader;
- the right tools for the job – choose your ‘tools’ carefully. We all have our favourite kind of pen, ones we are comfortable using. Make sure the pen is “in good working order” i.e. it is running smoothly, without leaving any unsightly blobs of ink along the way, and showing a uniform colour. Blue or black ink is usually acceptable, although some forms ask specifically for black ink as this colour photocopies more successfully. Unlined paper is usually most acceptable. If you have difficulty keeping writing straight on unlined paper try using a line guide under your paper.
- using the appropriate case – most documents require a cursive (i.e. joined) handwriting style, and should be written using capital letters only in the appropriate places (i.e. at the beginning of sentences, for names etc.). Try and avoid using them spasmodically in the middle of words. However, most application forms require you to fill them in using BLOCK CAPITALS. Take care to use **all** CAPITAL LETTERS and do not join the letters in any way;

- overall presentation – look at the overall “look” of your piece of work when you have finished and ask yourself the following questions:-
 - 1) Would I be happy to read this? If not, why not? Can I do anything to improve it?
 - 2) What kind of impression does my writing make? If you think it unfavourable, why? Maybe there are too many alterations and therefore it could be written out again or the paper looks dirty and curled at the edges.

Remember first impressions do count heavily. An application form or letter is often that important FIRST IMPRESSION.



Exercise 16

Fill in the following application form, with your details. Take care to follow the instructions.

Use black ink and capital letters on all sections.

Application for the Post of		Ref:
Surname		
Forename(s)		
Address		
Post Code		
Date of birth		
Telephone Number – Home		
Telephone Number – Work		
National Insurance Number		
Present Employer		
Previous Employer		
School/College/University	Date from and to	Qualification

<p>Further information Use a separate sheet if necessary</p>		
<p>Interests and Hobbies</p>		
<p>Name and address of 2 referees</p>		