

Year 5 and 6 Spelling Patterns



Endings which sound like 'shuss' and are spelled -cious or -tious

Which endings need to be applied to turn the following root words in to adjectives?

ambition	ambitious
vice	vicious
infection	infectious
caution	cautious
malice	malicious
superstition	superstitious
nutrition	nutritious

Challenge

Which is most common? Find 10 more words spelt with -cious or -tious and see what you think.



CLUE

Endings which sound like 'shul' and are spelt -cial or -tial

Which of the following are spelt correctly?

parcial	✗	partial
artifitial	✗	artificial
essential	✓	
special	✓	
presidential	✓	
benefitial	✗	beneficial
substancial	✗	substantial

Challenge

Can you think of any words with these spelling patterns in the middle?



Words ending in -ant, -ance/-ancy, -ent, -ence/-ency

Which of the following are spelt correctly?

excellance ✗ excellence

president ✓

evidence ✗ evidence

resident ✓

expectent ✗ expectant

restaurent ✗ restaurant

parliamant ✗ parliament

Challenge

Can you think of a word that doesn't follow the rule given in the clue?

CLUE

Words ending in -able

Which of the following are spelt correctly?

dependible ✗ dependable

indestructable ✓

reasonable ✓

enjoyible ✗ enjoyable

bearible ✗ bearable

vegetible ✗ vegetable

edible ✓

Challenge

What is the shortest word you can think of that uses one of these prefixes?



CLUE

Words ending in –ible and -ibly

Will you use **–ible** or **–ibly** to finish these words off?

terr	-ible ✓	-able
sens	-ibly ✓	-ably
incred	-ible ✓	-able
save	-ible	-able ✓
watch	-ible	-able ✓

Challenge

Find some –ible and –able words – read them aloud to a partner. Can you predict the ending by following the clue?



Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in -fer

Which of these suffixes have been added correctly?

prefer	-prefering	-preferring ✓
refer	-reference ✓	-reference
transfer	-transference ✓	-transference
confer	-confered	-conferred ✓
defer	-defering	-deferring ✓

Challenge

Use the double 'r' pattern to find a word with as many r's in it as possible.



Use of the hyphen

Where would the hyphen need to be positioned in these words?

reenter

coordination

cooperate

coown

recover

Challenge

Experiment with words that have prefixes on a spell check. How many can you find that your spell check will not accept without hyphens?



CLUE

Words with the 'ee' sound spelt 'ei' after 'c'

Can you put the letters **e** and **i** into these words to make the spellings correct?

c	e	i	ling
rec	e	i	ve
bel	i	e	ve
dec	e	i	ve
caff	e	i	ne

Challenge

How many words can you think of where there is just plain 'i' before 'c'?



Words containing the letter string -ough

How many different sounds does **-ough** make in this word list?

bought

although

thought

tough

cough

though

through

thorough

ought

enough

brought

bough

Challenge

How many other words can you think of which contain the letter string -ough?



CLUE

Words with 'silent' letters

Add silent letters to these words to make correct spellings...

dout doubt

iland island

lam lamb

solem solemn

autum autumn

niht knight

Challenge

What is the word you can find that has the largest number of silent letters?



CLUE

Homophones – nouns ending in -ce and verbs ending in -se

Can you think of a sentence to put each of these words into?

Noun	Verb
advice	advise
device	devise
licence	license
practice	practise
prophecy	prophecy

Challenge

Can you find any more sets of words that follow the -ce/-se pattern?



Homophones and other words that are often confused

How many of these words can you think of a homophone or near-homophone for?

isle

aisle

herd

heard

allowed

aloud

led

lead

father

farther

past

passed

guessed

guest

mourning

morning

Homophones and other words that are often confused

Match these confusable words to their correct definitions...

descent



The act of going down.

dissent



To disagree.

dessert



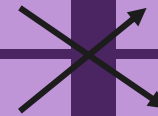
A barren place (noun). To leave a position of responsibility (verb).

desert



Pudding after a main course.

draught



First attempt at writing something.

draft



A current of air.

Homophones and other words that are often confused

Match these confusable words to their correct definitions...

stationery



Equipment used for writing and drawing.

stationary



Not moving.

principal



Basic belief.

principle



Most important person.

profit



Someone who tells the future.

prophet



Money made from an enterprise.

Clue

If a root word ends in
-**ce** the **sh** sound is
normally spelt as **c**.

malice – malicious
grace – gracious
space – spacious

Exception:
anxious!



Clue

-cial is common after a vowel letter and **-tial** after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions.

Exceptions include:
initial, financial,
commercial, provincial



Clue

Use **-ant**, **-ance** or **-ancy** if there is a related word with an **a** or **e** sound in the right position (**-ation** endings are a clue).

Use **-ent** and **-ence/-ency** after soft **c**, soft **g** and **qu** sound, or if there is a related word with a clear **e** sound in the right position.



However – some words don't match this pattern and have to be learned!



Clue

able endings are more common than 'ible' endings.

able is used with words that have an associated root word ending in 'ation'. For example application – applicable.

If the **-able** ending is added to a word ending in **-ce** or **-ge**, the **e** after the **c** or **g** must be kept. Without the **e**, the **c** or **g** would make a hard sound before the **-able** ending. For example, without the **e** the word changeable would be changable.



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**.
For example dependable = depend (complete word) + able.

Clue

Not as common as **able** and **ably**; words.

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.

For example, horrible – a complete root word can't be heard. But sensible – sense (a complete root word can be heard!)



Clue

The **r** is doubled if the **-fer** is still stressed when the ending is added.

The **r** is not doubled if the **-fer** is no longer stressed.



Clue

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.



Clue

The **i** before **e** except after **c**' rule applies to words where the sound spelt by **ei** is **ee**.

Exceptions: protein, caffeine, seize (and either and neither if pronounced with an initial **i** sound).



Clue

ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.

Try to remember it by finding a memorable way of saying the letters in the pattern out loud!



Clue

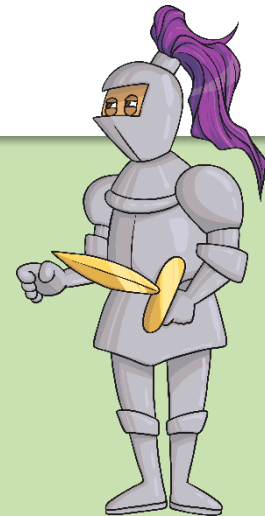
Silent letters are letters whose presence cannot be predicted by the pronunciation of a word.

Some letters which used to be sounded in the past are not sounded any longer, but saying them out loud can help you remember how to spell them.

The **k** and **gh** in knight used to be pronounced.



knight



Clue

In the list of words given, 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**.

