Spelling – work for years 3 and 4

Revision of work from years 1 and 2

Pay special attention to the rules for adding suffixes.

New work for years 3 and 4

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable	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.	forgetting, forgotten, beginning, beginner, prefer, preferred gardening, gardener, limiting, limited, limitation
The /ɪ/ sound spelt y elsewhere than at the end of words	These words should be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	These words should be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
More prefixes	Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see **in–** below. Like **un–**, the prefixes **dis–** and **mis–** have negative meanings. The prefix **in–** can mean both 'not' and 'in'/'into'. In the words given here it means 'not'.	**dis–**: disappoint, disagree, disobey **mis–**: misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell) **in–**: inactive, incorrect

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
	Before a root word starting with **l**, **in–** becomes **il**.	illegal, illegible
	Before a root word starting with **m** or **p**, **in–** becomes **im–**.	immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect
	Before a root word starting with **r**, **in–** becomes **ir–**.	irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible
	re– means ‘again’ or ‘back’.	**re–**: redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate
	sub– means ‘under’.	**sub–**: subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge
	inter– means ‘between’ or ‘among’.	**inter–**: interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related)
	super– means ‘above’.	**super–**: supermarket, superman, superstar
	anti– means ‘against’.	**anti–**: antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial
	auto– means ‘self’ or ‘own’.	**auto–**: autobiography, autograph
The suffix –ation	The suffix **–ation** is added to verbs to form nouns. The rules already learnt still apply.	information, adoration, sensation, preparation, admiration
The suffix –ly	The suffix **–ly** is added to an adjective to form an adverb. The rules already learnt still apply. The suffix **–ly** starts with a consonant letter, so it is added straight on to most root words.	sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly)

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
	Exceptions: (1) If the root word ends in –y with a consonant letter before it, the **y** is changed to **i**, but only if the root word has more than one syllable. (2) If the root word ends with **–le**, the **–le** is changed to **–ly**. (3) If the root word ends with **–ic**, **–ally** is added rather than just **–ly**, except in the word *publicly*. (4) The words *truly*, *duly*, *wholly.*	happily, angrily gently, simply, humbly, nobly basically, frantically, dramatically
Words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/	The ending sounding like */ʒə/* is always spelt –**sure**. 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.*	measure, treasure, pleasure, enclosure creature, furniture, picture, nature, adventure
Endings which sound like /ʒən/	If the ending sounds like */ʒən/*, it is spelt as **–sion**.	division, invasion, confusion, decision, collision, television
The suffix –ous	Sometimes the root word is obvious and the usual rules apply for adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters. Sometimes there is no obvious root word. **–our** is changed to **–or** before **–ous** is added. A final 'e' of the root word must be kept if the /dʒ/ sound of 'g' is to be kept. If there is an /i:/ sound before the **–ous** ending, it is usually spelt as **i**, but a few words have **e**.	poisonous, dangerous, mountainous, famous, various tremendous, enormous, jealous humorous, glamorous, vigorous courageous, outrageous serious, obvious, curious hideous, spontaneous, courteous

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Endings which sound like /ʃən/, spelt –tion, –sion, –cian	Strictly speaking, the suffixes are **–ion** and **–ian**. Clues about whether to put **t**, **s**, **ss** or **c** before these suffixes often come from the last letter or letters of the root word.	
	–tion is the most common spelling. It is used if the root word ends in **t** or **te**.	invention, injection, action, hesitation, completion
	–ssion is used if the root word ends in **ss** or –**mit**.	expression, discussion, confession, permission, admission
	–sion is used if the root word ends in **d** or **se**. **Exceptions**: *attend – attention*, *intend – intention.*	expansion, extension, comprehension, tension
	–cian is used if the root word ends in **c** or **cs**.	musician, electrician, magician, politician, mathematician
Words with the /k/ sound spelt ch (Greek in origin)		scheme, chorus, chemist, echo, character
Words with the /ʃ/ sound spelt ch (mostly French in origin)		chef, chalet, machine, brochure
Words ending with the /g/ sound spelt –gue and the /k/ sound spelt –que (French in origin)		league, tongue, antique, unique
Words with the /s/ sound spelt sc (Latin in origin)	In the Latin words from which these words come, the Romans probably pronounced the **c** and the **k** as two sounds rather than one – /s/ /k/.	science, scene, discipline, fascinate, crescent
Words with the /eɪ/ sound spelt ei, eigh, or ey		vein, weigh, eight, neighbour, they, obey

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Possessive apostrophe with plural words	The apostrophe is placed after the plural form of the word; **–s** is not added if the plural already ends in **–s**, but *is* added if the plural does not end in **–s** (i.e. is an irregular plural – e.g. *children's*).	girls', boys', babies', children's, men's, mice's (**Note:** singular proper nouns ending in an *s* use the 's suffix e.g. Cyprus's population)
Homophones and near-homophones		accept/except, affect/effect, ball/bawl, berry/bury, brake/break, fair/fare, grate/great, groan/grown, here/hear, heel/heal/he'll, knot/not, mail/male, main/mane, meat/meet, medal/meddle, missed/mist, peace/piece, plain/plane, rain/rein/reign, scene/seen, weather/whether, whose/who's

Word list – years 3 and 4

accident(ally)
actual(ly)
address
answer
appear
arrive
believe
bicycle
breath
breathe
build
busy/business
calendar
caught
centre
century
certain
circle
complete
consider
continue
decide
describe
different
difficult
disappear
early
earth
eight/eighth
enough
exercise
experience
experiment
extreme
famous
favourite
February
forward(s)
fruit
grammar
group
guard
guide
heard
heart
height
history
imagine
increase
important
interest
island
knowledge
learn
length
library
material
medicine
mention
minute
natural
naughty
notice
occasion(ally)
often
opposite
ordinary
particular
peculiar
perhaps
popular
position
possess(ion)
possible
potatoes
pressure
probably
promise
purpose
quarter
question
recent
regular
reign
remember
sentence
separate
special
straight
strange
strength
suppose
surprise
therefore
though/although
thought
through
various
weight
woman/women

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Teachers should continue to emphasise to pupils the relationships between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual. Once root words are learnt in this way, longer words can be spelt correctly, if the rules and guidance for adding prefixes and suffixes are also known.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Examples:

business: once busy is learnt, with due attention to the unusual spelling of the /i/ sound as 'u', business can then be spelt as **busy + ness**, with the **y** of **busy** changed to **i** according to the rule.

disappear: the root word *appear* contains sounds which can be spelt in more than one way so it needs to be learnt, but the prefix **dis–** is then simply added to **appear**.

Understanding the relationships between words can also help with spelling. Examples:

- *bicycle* is *cycle* (from the Greek for *wheel*) with **bi–** (meaning 'two') before it.
- *medicine* is related to *medical* so the /s/ sound is spelt as **c**.
- *opposite* is related to *oppose*, so the schwa sound in *opposite* is spelt as **o**.

Spelling – years 5 and 6

Revise work done in previous years

New work for years 5 and 6

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Endings which sound like /ʃəs/ spelt –cious or –tious	Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in **–ce**, the /ʃ/ sound is usually spelt as **c** – e.g. *vice – vicious*, *grace – gracious*, *space – spacious*, *malice – malicious.* **Exception**: *anxious*.	vicious, precious, conscious, delicious, malicious, suspicious ambitious, cautious, fictitious, infectious, nutritious
Endings which sound like /ʃəl/	**–cial** is common after a vowel letter and **–tial** after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions. **Exceptions**: initial, financial, commercial, provincial (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to *finance*, *commerce* and *province*).	official, special, artificial, partial, confidential, essential
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.	observant, observance, (observation), expectant (expectation), hesitant, hesitancy (hesitation), tolerant, tolerance (toleration), substance (substantial)
	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.	innocent, innocence, decent, decency, frequent, frequency, confident, confidence (confidential) assistant, assistance, obedient, obedience, independent, independence

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Words ending in –able and –ible Words ending in –ably and –ibly	The **–able/–ably** endings are far more common than the **–ible/–ibly** endings.	adorable/adorably (adoration),
	As with **–ant** and **–ance/–ancy**, the **–able** ending is used if there is a related word ending in **–ation**.	applicable/applicably (application), considerable/considerably (consideration), tolerable/tolerably (toleration)
	If the **–able** ending is added to a word ending in **–ce** or **–ge**, the **e** after the **c** or **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.	changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible
	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 *rely* is heard, but the **y** changes to **i** in accordance with the rule.	dependable, comfortable, understandable, reasonable, enjoyable, reliable
	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*).	possible/possibly, horrible/horribly, terrible/terribly, visible/visibly, incredible/incredibly, sensible/sensibly
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.	referring, referred, referral, preferring, preferred, transferring, transferred
	The **r** is not doubled if the **–fer** is no longer stressed.	reference, referee, preference, transference
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.	co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
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).	deceive, conceive, receive, perceive, ceiling
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.	ought, bought, thought, nought, brought, fought rough, tough, enough cough though, although, dough through thorough, borough plough, bough
Words with 'silent' letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	Some letters which are no longer sounded used to be sounded hundreds of years ago: e.g. in *knight*, there was a /k/ sound before the /n/, and the **gh** used to represent the sound that 'ch' now represents in the Scottish word *loch.*	doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
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**. <u>More examples:</u> aisle: a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane). isle: an island. aloud: out loud. allowed: permitted. affect: usually a verb (e.g. *The weather may affect our plans*). effect: usually a noun (e.g. *It may have an effect on our plans*). If a verb, it means 'bring about' (e.g. *He will effect changes in the running of the business*). altar: a table-like piece of furniture in a church. alter: to change. ascent: the act of ascending (going up). assent: to agree/agreement (verb and noun). bridal: to do with a bride at a wedding. bridle: reins etc. for controlling a horse. cereal: made from grain (e.g. breakfast cereal). serial: adjective from the noun *series* – a succession of things one after the other. compliment: to make nice remarks about someone (verb) or the remark that is made (noun). complement: related to the word *complete* – to make something complete or more complete (e.g. *her scarf complemented her outfit*).	advice/advise device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy farther: further father: a male parent guessed: past tense of the verb *guess* guest: visitor heard: past tense of the verb *hear* herd: a group of animals led: past tense of the verb *lead* lead: present tense of that verb, or else the metal which is very heavy (*as heavy as lead*) morning: before noon mourning: grieving for someone who has died past: noun or adjective referring to a previous time (e.g. *In the past*) or preposition or adverb showing place (e.g. *he walked past me*) passed: past tense of the verb 'pass' (e.g. *I passed him in the road*) precede: go in front of or before proceed: go on

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Homophones and other words that are often confused (continued)	descent: the act of descending (going down). dissent: to disagree/disagreement (verb and noun). desert: as a noun – a barren place (stress on first syllable); as a verb – to abandon (stress on second syllable) dessert: (stress on second syllable) a sweet course after the main course of a meal. draft: noun – a first attempt at writing something; verb – to make the first attempt; also, to draw in someone (e.g. *to draft in extra help*) draught: a current of air.	principal: adjective – most important (e.g. *principal ballerina*) noun – important person (e.g. *principal of a college*) principle: basic truth or belief profit: money that is made in selling things prophet: someone who foretells the future stationary: not moving stationery: paper, envelopes etc. steal: take something that does not belong to you steel: metal wary: cautious weary: tired who's: contraction of *who is* or *who has* whose: belonging to someone (e.g. *Whose jacket is that?*)

Word list – years 5 and 6

accommodate
accompany
according
achieve
aggressive
amateur
ancient
apparent
appreciate
attached
available
average
awkward
bargain
bruise
category
cemetery
committee
communicate
community
competition
conscience*
conscious*
controversy
convenience
correspond
criticise (critic + ise)
curiosity
definite
desperate
determined
develop
dictionary
disastrous
embarrass
environment
equip (–ped, –ment)
especially
exaggerate
excellent
existence
explanation
familiar
foreign
forty
frequently
government
guarantee
harass
hindrance
identity
immediate(ly)
individual
interfere
interrupt
language
leisure
lightning
marvellous
mischievous
muscle
necessary
neighbour
nuisance
occupy
occur
opportunity
parliament
persuade
physical
prejudice
privilege
profession
programme
pronunciation
queue
recognise
recommend
relevant
restaurant
rhyme
rhythm
sacrifice
secretary
shoulder
signature
sincere(ly)
soldier
stomach
sufficient
suggest
symbol
system
temperature
thorough
twelfth
variety
vegetable
vehicle
yacht

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Teachers should continue to emphasis to pupils the relationships between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual. Once root words are learnt in this way, longer words can be spelt correctly if the rules and guidance for adding prefixes and suffixes are also known. Many of the words in the list above can be used for practice in adding suffixes.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Understanding the history of words and relationships between them can also help with spelling.

Examples:

- *Conscience* and *conscious* are related to *science: conscience* is simply *science* with the prefix *con-* added. These words come from the Latin word *scio* meaning *I know*.
- The word *desperate*, meaning 'without hope', is often pronounced in English as *desp'rate*, but the *–sper-* part comes from the Latin *spero,* meaning 'I hope', in which the **e** was clearly sounded.
- *Familiar* is related to *family*, so the /ə/ sound in the first syllable of *familiar* is spelt as **a**.