

Year 5 Spelling: A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents

This step-by-step explanation to spelling can help you support your child's learning at home. Each subject is broken down into manageable chunks, providing all the resources you need to understand how the spelling patterns work in each year group along with techniques and resources to help you support your child.

Within this area of the website, you will find a selection of materials and activities intended to help your child learn about each step of this guide. Each step also contains a keyword or phrase that you can use to search the Twinkl site for more resources and activities, designed to support your child in achieving that stage. Simply type the keyword or phrase into the search bar and press enter to explore together.



We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. The contents of this resource are for general, informational purposes only. This guide is intended to offer parents general guidance on what subject areas tend to be covered in their child's year group and where they could support their children at home. However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date. There are some subject areas that we have intentionally not covered due to the nature of how they are taught or because a trained professional needs to teach these areas. We try to ensure that the information in our resources is correct but every school teaches the national curriculum in its own way. If you would like further guidance or are unsure in any way, we recommend that you speak to your child's teacher or another suitably qualified professional.

Spelling

How Is Spelling Taught in Year 5?

In years 5 and 6, spelling work follows a set list (often referred to as 'statutory spellings') that is required by the national curriculum, but can be taught in a pattern chosen by the school. Primary schools often organise their spelling programme to link with other aspects of their literacy curriculum. One notable difference in year 5 and 6 from previous years is the increase in tricky spellings that use silent letters, such as knight, psalm and solemn. At this stage, children also continue to learn about adding prefixes and suffixes to words and to distinguish between homophones.

What Are Prefixes and Suffixes?

Prefixes and suffixes are small groups of letters that are added to the beginning or end of words to change their meaning. Your child will have learnt about these spelling patterns for adding prefixes and suffixes to words, meaning that they should be able to read and write them with more accuracy and fluency. They may also explore the meanings of these prefixes and suffixes and how they change the meaning of the words they are added to, e.g. un- means reverse or opposite of, so unhappy is the reverse or opposite of happy.

The word patterns taught in year 5 and 6 are often seen to be tricky ones. For example, your child may well be taught how words that end in -ce can become words that end -cious. So 'grace' becomes 'gracious'. They may also focus on words that end in -tious, -cial and -tial. You can find more advice for parents in our useful **Parent Spelling Guide for Year 5 and 6**.

What Are Homophones?

Homophones are words that sound the same but have a different meaning, e.g. hoarse and horse. As a child's vocabulary develops, school will introduce an increasing number of 'difficult to spell' homophones that often crop up in written English.

What Is a Thesaurus?

A thesaurus is a companion to a dictionary; instead of explaining what words mean with definitions, a thesaurus provides alternative words with an identical or similar meaning. In years 5 and 6, children are taught to use a thesaurus to find synonyms (words of similar meaning). However, they also need to learn to use judgement, as writing can quickly become full of grand words that can make a piece less readable and less appropriate to purpose, e.g. to level up their description of a nice flower, they might call it beautiful, dazzling or alluring, but probably shouldn't call it pulchritudinous, even if it's listed in the thesaurus.

Forwards Then Backwards

Sometimes trying a different approach or looking from a different perspective can spark an 'aha' moment. To practise your spellings, why not write the spelling word out forward then backwards and keep repeating? It could really help your child to concentrate and focus in a different way. They could count the letters to be sure they haven't missed any out.

Make a Short Story

Challenge your child to write a short story that includes all of their current spellings that need practising. It can be as silly or serious as they like! Using the words in context will develop and demonstrate their understanding of the meaning of the words.

Compute That Word

When children take ownership over their work and space, they are more likely to connect and take notice. Have them write out some spelling words on the computer, using different fonts and colours. They could even add some pictures that correspond with the words written. Print out their posters and display in a prominent place where they might do their homework.

Create an Anagram Puzzle

Take your child's spelling list and rearrange the letters in each word; you could do this written on a normal piece of paper, or else cut up some smaller pieces with the letters on them and arrange them on a flat surface. Can your child get the letters back into the right pattern to form one of their spelling words?

Step 1

Spelling Practice

By the time your child is in year 5, it is likely they've worked out which ways to practise spellings work best for them. This bumper pack of materials covers all the statutory spellings for year 5 and 6 and provides resources that can help your child to maintain interest in spelling. As long as your child is learning their weekly spellings, allow them to choose which activities in the packs they want to try and which they'd rather leave aside. The upper junior years are all about learning what works best for the individual so that children are enabled to make their own study decisions as they enter secondary school.



Learning to Spell with Dictation

Dictation describes a process where one person writes down what another person is reading aloud at a measured pace. In schools, this can be a recorded passage that needs writing down, but is most often read aloud by the teacher. This pack includes dictation passages that contain the required (statutory) spellings and exception words that are taught in years 5 and 6. Practising dictation helps children to learn spellings and also helps them to write fluently under a time constraint, which is a skill needed before taking SATs in year 6. When you try your first dictation, judge the speed of your child's writing and slowly increase the pace over multiple sessions.

Step 2



Step 3

Get Marking With Mr Whoops!

Even for children in older juniors, they love to pretend to be the teacher. When you're heading ever closer to SATs, the light-hearted notion of correcting someone else's errors can be a really positive way for your child to keep practising spellings and to recognise that making mistakes can be the first step to improving work. This pack contains a list of the statutory spellings for year 5 and 6 and a range of activity sheets where Mr Whoops has been terribly clumsy with his spelling; your child will be encouraged to spot the mistakes and correct his work. Encourage your child to improve the spelling errors and to learn the skill of spotting mistakes when rereading and editing work.

Statutory Spellings Crosswords

Crosswords are more difficult than word searches and children soon find that if they don't spell words correctly, the crossword doesn't work. Use the crosswords when your child does not have access to their spelling word list so that they need to concentrate on spelling each word correctly. Crosswords also check if your child knows the meaning of the word. At the end, let your child have a dictionary to check the spellings and see if the clue matches the dictionary's definition.

Step 4

Explore and Discover More

Twinkl Go! is a digital platform, hosting interactive content such as videos, games, audiobooks and more. Twinkl Go! enables digital content to be streamed to your computer or mobile device.



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Go!



twinkl
Book Club

Twinkl Book Club is our book subscription service. Enjoy our original works of fiction in beautiful printed form, delivered to you each half-term and yours to keep!



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Boost

Twinkl Boost is a range of intervention resources, created to support and lift learning with children at every level. These include our easy-to-use SATs and Phonics Screening resources.



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imagine

Imagine resources are designed to help your children to think creatively, question and imagine. Every week, a new topic consisting of five photos, each with related activities, is created.



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ORIGINALS

Twinkl Originals are engaging stories written to inspire pupils from EYFS to KS2. Designed to encourage a love of reading and help curriculum-wide learning through accompanying resources.



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KIDS' TV

Twinkl Kids' TV is our wonderful YouTube channel dedicated to fun and informative video-style resources full of new and creative activities you can try at home!