

Spelling – years 5 and 6

In Years 5 & 6, your child will be working on spelling words using the following sounds, rules and patterns:

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)	
1. Endings which sound like /ʃəs/ spelt –cious or –tious	<p>Not many common words end like this.</p> <p>If the root word ends in –ce, the /ʃ/ sound is usually spelt as c – e.g. <i>vice</i> – <i>vicious</i>, <i>grace</i> – <i>gracious</i>, <i>space</i> – <i>spacious</i>, <i>malice</i> – <i>malicious</i>.</p> <p>Exception: <i>anxious</i>.</p>	vicious precious conscious delicious malicious suspicious suspicious unconscious conscious precious	ambitious cautious fictitious infectious nutritious ambitious superstitious nutritious surreptitious
2. Endings which sound like /ʃəl/	<p>–cial is common after a vowel letter and –tial after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions.</p> <p>Exceptions: <i>initial</i>, <i>financial</i>, <i>commercial</i>, <i>provincial</i> (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to <i>finance</i>, <i>commerce</i> and <i>province</i>).</p>	official special artificial beneficial commercial crucial facial glacial	social partial confidential essential initial partial essential potential
3. Words ending in –ant, –ance/–ancy, –ent, –ence/–ency	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>There are many words, however, where the above guidance does not help. These words just have to be learnt.</p>	observant observance observ <u>ation</u> expectant expect <u>ation</u> hesitant hesitancy hesit <u>ation</u> tolerant tolerance toler <u>ation</u> substance subst <u>ant</u> ial innocent innocence frequent	frequency agency agent decent decency frequent frequency confident confidence confidential assistant assistance obedient obedience independent independence
Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)	
4. Words	The –able/–ably endings are far more common than the –ible/–ibly endings.	adorable adorably	reasonable enjoyable

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)	
ending in -able and -ible Words ending in -ably and -ibly	<p>As with -ant and -ance/-ancy, the -able ending is used if there is a related word ending in -ation.</p> <p>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 <i>cap</i> and <i>gap</i>) before the a of the -able ending.</p> <p>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 <i>reliable</i>, the complete word <i>rely</i> is heard, but the y changes to i in accordance with the rule.</p> <p>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 <i>can</i> be heard (e.g. <i>sensible</i>).</p>	adoration applicable applicably application considerable considerably consideration tolerable tolerably toleration changeable noticeable dependable comfortable understandable	forcible legible reliable possible possibly horrible horribly terrible terribly visible visibly incredible incredibly sensible sensibly
5. Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in -fer	<p>The r is doubled if the -fer is still stressed when the ending is added.</p> <p>The r is not doubled if the -fer is no longer stressed.</p>	referring referred referral preferring preferred transferring	transferred reference referee preference transference
6. Use of the hyphen	<p>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.</p>	co-ordinate co-operate co-own re-enter re-elect re-educate cross-reference cross-section ex-boyfriend	ex-convict all-inclusive self-addressed non-refundable non-toxic self-esteem self-portrait mid-February mid-Atlantic

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)	
7. Words with the /i:/ sound spelt ei after c	<p>The 'i before e except after c' rule applies to words where the sound spelt by ei is /i:/.</p> <p>Exceptions: <i>protein</i>, <i>caffeine</i>, <i>seize</i> (and <i>either</i> and <i>neither</i> if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).</p>	conceit ceiling deceive perceive receipt deceit conceive receive	
8. Words	ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English	enough	although

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)	
containing the letter-string ough	– it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.	rough tough ought bought thought brought fought nought though	dough through thorough borough plough bough cough
9. 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 <i>knight</i> , there was a /k/ sound before the /n/, and the gh used to represent the sound that 'ch' now represents in the Scottish word <i>loch</i> . (words with silent 'w's are in Year 2 spellings)	doubt lamb lamb limb tomb knight island solemn thistle	whistle listen plumber gnome gnat gnash foreign sign column

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)	
<p>10. Homophones and other words that are often confused</p>	<p>In the pairs of words opposite, nouns end -ce and verbs end -se. <i>Advice</i> and <i>advise</i> provide a useful clue as the word <i>advise</i> (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt c.</p>	<p>advice/advise device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy</p> <p>aisle/isle aloud/allowed affect/effect alter/altar ascent/assent bridal/bridle cereal/serial compliment/complement farther /father</p>	<p>guessed/guest heard/herd lead/led morning/mourning past/passed precede/proceed descent/dissent desert/dessert draft/draught principal/principle profit/prophet stationary/stationery steal/steel wary/weary who's/whose</p>