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

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	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.	happily, angrily
	(2) If the root word ends with **–le**, the **–le** is changed to **–ly**.	gently, simply, humbly, nobly
	(3) If the root word ends with **–ic**, **–ally** is added rather than just **–ly**, except in the word *publicly*.	basically, frantically, dramatically
	(4) The words *truly*, *duly*, *wholly.*	
Words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/	The ending sounding like /ʒə/ is always spelt **–sure**.	measure, treasure, pleasure, enclosure
	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.*	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.	poisonous, dangerous, mountainous, famous, various
	Sometimes there is no obvious root word.	tremendous, enormous, jealous
	–our is changed to **–or** before **–ous** is added.	humorous, glamorous, vigorous
	A final 'e' of the root word must be kept if the /dʒ/ sound of 'g' is to be kept.	courageous, outrageous
	If there is an /i:/ sound before the **–ous** ending, it is usually spelt as **i**, but a few words have **e**.	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, –ssion, –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**.