

Choices: Exploring Spelling

Here's your chance to step out of the grammar book and into the real world. You may not notice mechanics, but you and your friends use spelling every day. The following activities challenge you to find a connection between spelling and the world around you. Do the activity below that suits your personality best, and then share your discoveries with your class. Have fun!

COMPUTER GAMES

Anagrams and Crosswords

A number of computer programs create word games based on the words of your choice. If you have access to such a program, print out a word game for a list of words that you misspell most often. Give copies to your class.

HISTORY

A First Time for Everything

Once upon a time, dictionary entries were not written in alphabetical order. Yikes! Of course, that was a long time ago. By the way, when and where was the first dictionary written? The first English dictionary? The first American dictionary? Find out. While you're in the library and looking at a book about dictionaries, find out a little more about them. Make a time line that shows your classmates what you have discovered.

TECHNOLOGY

In the Spotlight

Certain letter combinations are known for causing spelling problems. Survey your classmates for the top twenty spelling errors. If you have access to a computer and printer, type in these words, formatting the troublesome letters in a larger font. For instance, the word *believe* might be printed in small letters except for the letters *ie*, which would be large. Pass out copies of your list to your classmates. If you don't have a printer, handwrite the list on poster board and hang it in the classroom.

GAME

Amaze Everyone

Create a maze game. The only way through the maze is to follow the correctly spelled words. Most of the words will be misspelled and will

lead nowhere. Use graph paper to compose your maze. Write the correct words first, and then anything goes! Words can go up, down, or sideways. When you've written in all the words, draw walls for your maze. Give copies to your classmates.

STUDY AID

Weigh Eight Beige Sleighs

You'll remember those *ei* and *ie* words more easily if you categorize them. You know how to spell *eight*, right? If you can pair *eight* with *weigh*, *beige*, and *sleigh* in your mind, you'll never misspell them. Look at a list of words that use, for instance, *ei*, and then make up a silly sentence that uses only these words. Write five such sentences on a poster, and ask to hang it in the classroom.

WRITING

You're the Tops

Ben Franklin, man of wide interests that he was, had more than a little to say about English spelling. Find and read Ben Franklin's suggestions. Then, write your own proposal for the reformation of English spelling and top his!

TECHNOLOGY

The Principal's Principles

Homonyms can cause problems for computers, as well as students. Type a paragraph that misuses several homonyms. Then, run a word processor's spellchecking program. How well did it do? Report your findings to the class.

Good Spelling Habits

You can improve your spelling by using the following methods.

- (1) Pronounce words correctly.
- (2) Spell by syllables.
- (3) Use a dictionary.
- (4) Keep a spelling notebook to list and review difficult words.
- (5) Proofread for careless spelling errors.

EXERCISE Cross out each misspelled word in the sentences below. Then, above the word, write it correctly. If a sentence contains no error, write C after the sentence. Use a dictionary if you need it.

Example 1. With her wise decision, Nilda proved she has great ~~strength~~^{strength} of character.

1. Germaine decided to write about South America insted of about factory strikes.
2. After he bilt his cabin in the woods, Henry David Thoreau tried to live a simple life.
3. That is eazy for an acrobat who is strong and flexible.
4. The fire cheif came to the school to review our fire emergency procedures.
5. Many wimen today have careers that their mothers would not have imagined.
6. At the last minit, the cavalry rode in and defended the fort.
7. The hotel simply could not accommodate any more guests for the holiday weekend.
8. Hidden above the ceeling in an old London townhouse was a dress covered with precious gems that had once belonged to a queen.
9. “Your reputation precedes you, sir,” said the major to the young officer.
10. After my first day skiing, there wasn’t a muscle in my body that wasn’t sor.
11. The wagon train leaders may have had to gess which route was the safest.
12. When Charlene was in the mountins, she saw a cougar.
13. Tho flavored yogurt tastes good, it has more calories than plain yogurt has.
14. Over seven thousand women soldeirs from the United States were in Vietnam during the war.
15. Lawrence of Arabia would tair across the desert sand, his robe whipping in the wind.
16. After a long airplane ride, you will probably be tired.
17. My mother wants to live in the contry, but Dad prefers city life.
18. A coff is the body’s way of clearing your lungs.
19. There is one more hour until the end of the year.
20. Four large juices will probly be enough for the group of friends.

*ie and ei***16a.** Write *ie* when the sound is long *e*, except after *c*.**EXAMPLES** belief, fierce, receipt**EXCEPTIONS** either, neither, leisure**16b.** Write *ei* when the sound is not long *e*, especially when the sound is long *a*.**EXAMPLES** neighbor, forfeit, weight**EXCEPTIONS** ancient, conscience, friend**EXERCISE A** Cross out the misspelled word in each sentence below. Then, above the crossed-out word, write the word correctly.**Example 1.** All the streets in this ~~neighborhood~~ ^{neighborhood} are named after U.S. presidents.

1. The nurse applied an elastic bandage to releive the pressure on the knee.
2. A viel of secrecy surrounded the plans for the ice carnival.
3. Some people practice deciet because they don't have much self-confidence.
4. The United States has spent about three billion dollars on foriegn aid this year.
5. A small peice of rock fell to the ground.
6. Sitting Bull was a Sioux cheif who united his people in a struggle for survival.
7. Feild mice eat grain, so farmers consider them pests.
8. Neither LaToya nor Shanique could find the reciept.
9. Each teacher nominated a student for the Outstanding Acheivment award.
10. The truck driver skillfully backed his rig into the recieving dock.

EXERCISE B The following paragraphs contain words with missing letters. Add the letters *ie* or *ei* to complete each word correctly.**Example [1]** How much does a cutter w ei gh?

A cutter is a type of horse-drawn [11] sl____ gh. In the 1800s in America, the cutter was an [12] effic____ nt means of travel across [13] f____ lds and roads in snowy weather. The cutter is [14] lightw____ ght and open in design, usually seating two people. Some cutters feature a second, removable seat for two additional [15] fr____ nds or family members.

Once travel by automobile was [16] ach____ ved, cutters gradually became less common. Today some people [17] bel____ ve cutters to be a fun alternative to the automobile. Some owners use [18] th____ r cutters to give old-fashioned cutter rides. They [19] rec____ ve additional income by selling tickets for rides in the cutter. You can probably imagine a cutter with bells jingling on the horse's [20] r____ ns during winter festivities.

–cede, –ceed, and –sede

- 16c.** In English, the only word ending in *–sede* is *supersede*. The only words ending in *–ceed* are *exceed*, *proceed*, and *succeed*. Most other words with this sound end in *–cede*.

EXAMPLES *concede*, *intercede*, *precede*, *recede*

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, underline the word in parentheses that is spelled correctly.

Example 1. I (*conceed*, *concede*) that you are right.

1. The new sales strategy (*superseeds*, *supersedes*) the old one.
2. Some people wonder if any state will ever again (*seceed*, *secede*) from the union.
3. Nate (*conceded*, *conceed*) the winning point to Zeina.
4. A flash of lightning (*preceeds*, *precedes*) a crash of thunder.
5. Looking at his grandfather, Noel wondered if his own hairline would someday (*receed*, *recede*).
6. Some people say that to (*succeed*, *succede*) in life means to be happy with yourself.
7. After pausing to answer a question, Bettina (*proceed*, *prosecede*) with her speech.
8. “You have (*exceded*, *exceeded*) my highest expectations,” Ms. Khuu said to me.
9. Your guidance counselor can (*intercede*, *interceed*) on your behalf.
10. I have (*succeded*, *sucseded*) in earning the money I need for the trip!

EXERCISE B Most of the sentences below contain a misspelled word ending in *–cede*, *–ceed*, or *–sede*. Cross out any word that is misspelled. Then, above the crossed out word, write the word correctly. If the word ending in *–cede*, *–ceed*, or *–sede* is spelled correctly, write C above it.

Example 1. We will now ~~proceed~~^{proceed} to the playing field.

11. After the flood waters reseded, we could play again on the banks of the river.
12. “If you want to succede at the kickball game, listen to the rules,” said Esteban.
13. My new kickball game rules superceed the old ones.
14. If there is a dispute, I will interceed to resolve it.
15. The number of players on one team cannot exsede seven.
16. The assignment of a player to the position of kicker presedes all else.
17. No player is allowed to intercede when the kicker has the ball.
18. If you interrupt the kicker, you conceed a point to the opposing team.
19. The amount of time a ball is in play must exceed sixty seconds, or it is a “dead ball.”
20. When the teams have taken their places, we’ll prosede.

Prefixes

16d. When adding a prefix to a word, do not change the spelling of the word itself.

EXAMPLES im 1 prove 5 **improve** dis 1 solve 5 **dissolve**

EXERCISE A For each item below, add the prefix given to form a new word. Write the new word on the lines provided.

Example 1. mis 1 spell 5 misspell

1. mis 1 understand 5 _____
2. pre 1 wash 5 _____
3. im 1 possible 5 _____
4. over 1 cook 5 _____
5. in 1 appropriate 5 _____
6. over 1 run 5 _____
7. dis 1 cover 5 _____
8. il 1 legible 5 _____
9. un 1 natural 5 _____
10. re 1 new 5 _____

EXERCISE B On the line provided, write the word given in parentheses, adding the prefix given.

Example 1. Somsay carefully rearranged the glass figurines. (re 1 arranged)

11. At eight o'clock each morning, Somsay _____ the store's front door. (un 1 locks)
12. Somsay then _____ the list of tasks that the manager has left him. (re 1 views)
13. Today he must _____ the display in the front window. (dis 1 assemble)
14. After he _____ the old items, he will arrange a new display. (re 1 moves)
15. The new display will _____ upon the old one. (im 1 prove)
16. To _____ accuracy, he counts the cash for the register twice. (en 1 sure)
17. He arranges several turquoise rings in a _____ in a small glass case. (semi 1 circle)
18. Several pairs of earrings have been _____, and he rearranges them. (mis 1 matched)
19. During his morning break, Somsay _____ a sandwich to eat. (un 1 wraps)
20. He _____ the can of juice in the refrigerator, preferring water instead. (dis 1 regards)

Suffixes A

16e. When adding the suffix *-ly* or *-ness* to a word, do not change the spelling of the word itself.

EXAMPLES careful 1 ly 5 carefully calm 1 ness 5 calmness

EXCEPTIONS For words that end in *y* and have more than one syllable, change the *y* to *i* before adding *-ly* or *-ness*.

merry 1 ly 5 merrily busy 1 ness 5 business

EXERCISE A For each item below, add the suffix given to form a new word. Write the new word on the lines provided.

Examples 1. natural 1 ly 5 naturally

2. silly 1 ness 5 silliness

1. quick 1 ly 5 _____

2. open 1 ness 5 _____

3. rare 1 ly 5 _____

4. cheery 1 ly 5 _____

5. gritty 1 ness 5 _____

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain a misspelled word ending in *-ly* or *-ness*. Cross out each misspelled word. Then, above it, write the word correctly. If a sentence contains no error, write C after the sentence.

Example 1. The weary traveler ~~resolutly~~ ^{resolutely} put one foot before the other.

6. Was this trek through the desert an act of pure crazyness, the traveler wondered.

7. The vastness of the desert was almost overwhelming.

8. The barrenness of the land was evident in the brownish tinge of the few surviving plants.

9. The sun shone hottly from above, evaporating all traces of moisture.

10. The driness of the soil prohibited seeds from germinating.

11. Prickly thorns protruded from various kinds of cactuses.

12. The lone human traveler sought to ease his dizzyness with a few sips of precious water.

13. Lizards eyed the human intruder with waryness.

14. A far-off speck on the horizon gradually became clear as he approached it.

15. He could barly contain his happiness as he recognized the green of an oasis.

Suffixes B

16f. Drop the final silent *e* before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel.

EXAMPLES age 1 ing 5 **aging** freeze 1 able 5 **freezable**

EXCEPTIONS Keep the final silent *e* in a word ending in *ce* or *ge* before adding a suffix beginning with *a* or *o* (as in *traceable*) and in the words *dyeing* and *mileage*.

16g. Keep the final silent *e* before adding a suffix beginning with a consonant.

EXAMPLES place 1 ment 5 **placement** face 1 less 5 **faceless**

EXCEPTIONS **ninth, truly, awful, argument, judgment, wholly**

EXERCISE A For each item below, add the suffix given to form a new word. Write the new word on the lines provided.

Examples 1. move 1 able 5 movable

2. awe 1 ful 5 awful

1. grace 1 ful 5 _____

2. salvage 1 able 5 _____

3. dye 1 ing 5 _____

4. engage 1 ment 5 _____

5. saxophone 1 ist 5 _____

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain a misspelled word. Cross out each misspelled word. Then, above it, write the word correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. I listened in fascination to Natalie's ~~narrateion~~ ^{narration} of the events.

6. Natalie and her friends had gone scuba diveing in clear, warm water.
7. They had gone only about ninty feet out from the shoreline.
8. Underwater, they watched a graceful manta ray swim by.
9. They examined a lovly, multicolored coral reef and other underwater sea life.
10. Hovering in the water a short distance away, a whiteish cloud of objects appeared.
11. Natalie immediately launched an investigateion of the mysterious white cloud.
12. Trained divers, Natalie and her friends knew they should approach carfully.
13. Moving closer, they saw that the "white cloud" was a mass of clear, floating objects.
14. The round, clear shapes became recognizeable; they were jellyfish!
15. Natalie and her friends immediatly swam quickly in the opposite direction.

Suffixes C

- 16h.** For words ending in *y* preceded by a consonant, change the *y* to *i* before any suffix that does not begin with *i*.

EXAMPLES fancy 1 ful 5 fanc**iful** scurry 1 ing 5 scurry**ing**

- 16i.** For words ending in *y* preceded by a vowel, keep the *y* when adding a suffix.

EXAMPLES play 1 ing 5 play**ing** deploy 1 able 5 deploy**able**

EXCEPTIONS day 1 ly 5 daily pay 1 ed 5 paid
lay 1 ed 5 laid say 1 ed 5 said

EXERCISE A On each blank, write the word formed by joining the word and the prefix given in parentheses.

Example 1. My grandparents are opening a new business on State Street. (*busy* 1 *ness*)

- Grandpa helped install a _____ belt in the warehouse. (*convey* 1 *or*)
- The _____ is caused by the open warehouse doors. (*breezy* 1 *ness*)
- Grandma and Grandpa are _____ about their plans for the future. (*joy* 1 *ful*)
- Those trucks are _____ the first shipments of merchandise. (*carry* 1 *ing*)
- They approach the entire endeavor with great _____. (*enjoy* 1 *ment*)

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain a misspelled word. Cross out each misspelled word. Then, above it, write the word correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. Kylie arrived at the stables early; ~~tardyness~~ ^{tardiness} was not tolerated.

- Kylie easily found the grooming supplies in the tack room.
- She was paying for these horseback riding lessons herself.
- So far, she had enjoied every lesson with Cowboy, her assigned horse.
- Without hurrying, she combed Cowboy's coat with the currycombs.
- When she bent to pick Cowboy's hoof, she sayed firmly, "Hoof!"
- Cowboy lifted his foot dutyfully.
- After picking dirt and gravel from the hooves, Kylie layed a blanket across Cowboy's back.
- She carryed the saddle and bridle into the stall and put them on Cowboy as well.
- When she finally rode Cowboy outdoors, she felt as though she were fliing.
- Cowboy obeyed every command.

Suffixes D

- 16j.** Double the final consonant before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel if the word (1) has only one syllable or has the accent on the last syllable and (2) ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel.

EXAMPLES bat 1 ed 5 **batted** run 1 er 5 **runner** begin 1 ing 5 **beginning**

Otherwise, the final consonant is usually not doubled before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

EXAMPLES pitch 1 er 5 **pitcher** cheer 1 ed 5 **cheered** open 1 ing 5 **opening**

EXERCISE A For each item below, add the suffix given to form a new word. Write the new word on the lines provided.

Examples 1. trot 1 ed 5 trotted

2. sweep 1 ing 5 sweeping

1. inform 1 ed 5 _____

6. stun 1 ing 5 _____

2. slam 1 ing 5 _____

7. special 1 ist 5 _____

3. tap 1 ed 5 _____

8. forgot 1 en 5 _____

4. contort 1 ing 5 _____

9. horticultural 1 ist 5 _____

5. program 1 er 5 _____

10. step 1 ed 5 _____

EXERCISE B In each of the following sets of expressions, one expression contains a spelling error. On the line provided, write the letter of the expression containing the error. Then, write the expression correctly.

Example 1. a. reliving the memories b. sitting in the sun c. digging a ditch

c. digging a ditch

11. a. startting to go

b. humming a tune

c. relaxed by the lake

12. a. weeded the lawn

b. resubmitted the paper

c. plotted against them

13. a. dropped the ball

b. draining the pool

c. his thining hairline

14. a. stopping traffic

b. prefered customers

c. renewable prescription

15. a. forbidden fruit

b. a dimmer switch for the lights

c. centered on the page

Spelling Rules Review A

- 16a.** Write *ie* when the sound is long *e*, except after *c*.
- 16b.** Write *ei* when the sound is not long *e*, especially when the sound is long *a*.
- 16c.** In English, the only word ending in *–sede* is *supersede*. The only words ending in *–ceed* are *exceed*, *proceed*, and *succeed*. Most other words with this sound end in *–cede*.
- 16d.** When adding a prefix to a word, do not change the spelling of the word itself.
- 16e.** When adding the suffix *–ly* or *–ness* to a word, do not change the spelling of the word itself.

EXAMPLES field, weigh, concede, unnatural, joyfully, darkness

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, underline the word in parentheses that is spelled correctly.

Example 1. Do you (believe, beleive) in miracles?

1. The childcare worker's (*kindlyness*, *kindliness*) was soothing to the young child.
2. I am absolutely certain that I will (*succeed*, *succede*) at my goals.
3. That line of reasoning is (*illogical*, *ilogical*).
4. The (*cheif*, *chief*) of police met with the mayor.
5. The (*wetness*, *wettness*) of the weather prevented us from going outside.

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain a misspelled word. Cross out any misspelled word. Then, above it, write the word correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. Roberto will install the new ~~ceiling~~^{ceiling} fan.

6. The opposing team does not have enough players present; they will forfeit the game.
7. The lake has receeded several feet from the high-water mark.
8. The hikers carried thier own equipment for the week-long trek.
9. The ferociously barking dog unerved Esther.
10. I suffered shortness of breath after rushing across campus.
11. The wrist corsage that Tina is wearing is lovely.
12. Why don't we work on our science homework together?
13. This shipment excedes the weight limit and must be unloaded.
14. The toughness of the meat discouraged me from eating all of it.
15. Farid casualy said hello to Phoebe.

Spelling Rules Review B

- 16f.** Drop the final silent *e* before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel.
- 16g.** Keep the final silent *e* before adding a suffix beginning with a consonant.
- 16h.** For words ending in *y* preceded by a consonant, change the *y* to *i* before any suffix that does not begin with *i*.
- 16i.** For words ending in *y* preceded by a vowel, keep the *y* when adding a suffix.
- 16j.** Double the final consonant before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel if the word (1) has only one syllable or has the accent on the last syllable and (2) ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel.

EXAMPLES removal, awesome, dutiful, payer, scrubbing

EXERCISE A For each item below, form a new word by joining the word and the prefix given.

Example 1. easy 1 ly 5 easily

1. spine 1 less 5 _____
2. pine 1 ing 5 _____
3. courage 1 ous 5 _____
4. pollute 1 ant 5 _____
5. begin 1 er 5 _____

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain a misspelled word. Cross out any misspelled word. Then, above it, write the word correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. Charles mended the ~~lining~~^{lining} of his formal suit coat.

6. One runner dropped out of the race because of a sprained ankle.
7. Several students are shareing a table during lunch.
8. The camp counselors planned numerous activities for the campers' amusment.
9. The chicken flapped its wings but did not fly.
10. Dad is frying fish; I already fryed the potatoes.
11. The eighth-graders are prepareing for the Eighth-Grade Picnic.
12. What is the scaryest movie you've ever seen?
13. Please use ink to fill out this application for employment.
14. I submited one of my poems to a poetry contest.
15. Carefully, I ensured that the poster was centered on the bulletin board.

Plurals A

16k. To form the plurals of most nouns in English, add *s*.

16l. For nouns ending in *s, x, z, ch, or sh*, add *es*.

SINGULAR	shoe	bow	Alcott	mix	lunch	Martinez
PLURAL	shoes	bows	Alcotts	mixes	lunches	Martinezes

16m. For nouns ending in *y* preceded by a vowel, add *s*.

16n. For nouns ending in *y* preceded by a consonant, change the *y* to *i* and add *es*.

SINGULAR	tray	boy	Farley	cherry	copy
PLURAL	trays	boys	Farleys	cherries	copies
EXCEPTIONS	For proper nouns, add <i>s</i> . Kennedy—Kennedys				

EXERCISE A Spell the plural form of each of the following words. Write on the line provided.

Example 1. history histories

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. ash _____ | 6. infirmary _____ |
| 2. bunny _____ | 7. Perry _____ |
| 3. Murry _____ | 8. cranberry _____ |
| 4. refrigerator _____ | 9. grass _____ |
| 5. box _____ | 10. locker _____ |

EXERCISE B Cross out each misspelled word in the following sentences. Then, above the misspelled word, write the word correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write *C* after it.

Example 1. Several of these statues were made by local ^{sculptors}~~sculptores~~.

- Our city is one of those citys that proudly display the artwork of their citizens.
- At school, art classes are usually packed with eager learners.
- The Rodriguezs enlisted the help of a high school student.
- The student painted colorful murals on their restaurant walles.
- Judges at the courthouse decorated the hallways with prints by local photographers.
- A few boxs of pottery were requested by the owners of a bank building.
- They created elegant displayes in both the front and the side lobbies.
- Even youngsteres are encouraged to contribute to the local art scene.
- The kids painted their own paving tiles using small brushs and waterproof paints.
- The tiles were used as borderes around the flower beds at their school.

Plurals B

16o. For some nouns ending in *f* or *fe*, add *s*. For others, change the *f* or *fe* to *v* and add *es*.

SINGULAR	staff	giraffe	wolf	leaf
PLURAL	staffs	giraffes	wolves	leaves

16p. For nouns ending in *o* preceded by a vowel, add *s*.

16q. For nouns ending in *o* preceded by a consonant, add *es*.

SINGULAR	patio	cameo	potato
PLURAL	patios	cameos	potatoes

EXCEPTIONS For musical terms and proper nouns, add *s*.
concerto—concertos Sakamoto—Sakamotos

EXERCISE A Spell the plural form of each of the following words. Write on the line provided.

Example 1. commando commandos

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. tomato _____ | 6. studio _____ |
| 2. alto _____ | 7. reef _____ |
| 3. shelf _____ | 8. soprano _____ |
| 4. mosquito _____ | 9. Scorpio _____ |
| 5. gaffe _____ | 10. tariff _____ |

EXERCISE B Cross out each misspelled word in the following sentences. Then, above the misspelled word, write the word correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. ~~Rooves~~ ^{Roofs} on houses in my neighborhood were damaged in the hailstorm.

- The electronics store has stereoes on sale this week.
- These igloos are made of packed snow.
- Rocky cliffes towered above the tiny, sandy beach.
- The major movie studioes are releasing some great new movies!
- Mom selected one of the carving knives for slicing the ham.
- Carefully, Stephen painted the torpedos that were part of the model ship.
- Most of the wives voted to include men in their homemakers' group.
- Jamaal likes people who don't take themselves too seriously.
- Carlito manages four chefs at an Italian restaurant.
- Which of these pianoes needs tuning?

Plurals C

16r. Some nouns have irregular plural forms.

16s. For most compound nouns, form the plural of the last word in the compound.

16t. For compound nouns in which one of the words is modified by the other word or words, form the plural of the word modified.

SINGULAR	child	shipwreck	sister-in-law
PLURAL	children	shipwrecks	sisters-in-law

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, underline the correct form of the plural in parentheses.

Example 1. Most of the old movie (drive-ins, drives-in) are closed now.

- Overnight we caught two (mouses, mice) in the traps.
- I'll add two more (spoonfuls, spoonsful) of vinegar to the salad dressing.
- Edith writes an advice column for newlyweds and their (parent-in-laws, parents-in-law).
- The (thirteen-year-olds, thirteen-years-old) must pay the adult admission price.
- (Womans, Women) enjoyed that film more than men did.
- Both lighthouses on the island sounded their (fogshorn, foghorns).
- Piranha have sharp (teeth, tooths) with which they devour their prey.
- From the hardware bin, I pulled out two (handfuls, handsful) of nails.
- Please hang your wet coats on one of the (coats rack, coat racks).
- We need a photo of all the class (vices-president, vice-presidents) for the yearbook.

EXERCISE B Each sentence below contains a spelling error. Draw a line through each error, and write the correctly spelled word above it.

Example 1. There are three blank ~~videotaps~~ ^{videotapes} in the cabinet.

- My foots ached after the exhausting hiking trip.
- There are so many teethbrushes to choose from at this grocery store!
- How many people will attend the spring conference for editor in chiefs?
- The waiter says there are two soup of the days; they both sound good.
- Did you see the large, active flock of geoses at the park?

Plurals D

16u. For some nouns, the singular and the plural forms are the same.

EXAMPLES Japanese, sheep, aircraft

16v. For numerals, letters, symbols, and words used as words, add an apostrophe and s.

EXAMPLES 9's, A's, %'s, hello's

EXERCISE On each line provided, write the plural form of the word, numeral, letter, or symbol given in parentheses.

Examples 1. How many B's have you gotten in math this semester? (B)

2. Both male and female reindeer have antlers. (reindeer)

1. The full-color book contained photographs of various _____. (spacecraft)
2. I typed a line of _____ to separate two sections of my e-mail message. (*)
3. I practiced my oral presentation, trying to stop using so many _____. (um)
4. Sandy writes _____ with a curly flourish. (2)
5. Ms. Matson could not discern whether Alejandro had written _____ or zeros. (O)
6. He put the salmon in a basket with the other _____ he had caught. (salmon)
7. "In your formal writing," wrote Mr. Polaski, "Do not use _____." (&)
8. Some people believe that _____ are lucky. (7)
9. I used a function on the computer to find all the _____ in my paper. (very)
10. Hannah writes _____ before apartment numbers in addresses. (#)
11. "How many _____ are in the word?" asked the game show host. (e)
12. My phone number contains four _____. (3)
13. Simon is fascinated with _____, and he plans to become a pilot. (aircraft)
14. The culture of the _____ is both ancient and intriguing. (Chinese)
15. The cartoonist wrote three _____ in the speech bubble. (?)
16. Did any of the gymnasts score _____ at the competition? (10)
17. I heard a few _____ as I climbed across people's feet to get to my seat. (ouch)
18. My friend Irma pronounces her _____ differently than I do. (r)
19. There are only two red _____ on my test! (X)
20. Several _____ cautiously approached the water hole. (moose)

Numbers

16w. Spell out a number that begins a sentence.

EXAMPLE Two hundred fifty teenagers have jobs at the amusement park.

16x. In a sentence, spell out numbers that can be written in one or two words. Use numerals for other numbers.

EXAMPLES At the amusement park, two hundred teenagers have jobs.
At the amusement park, 475 people have jobs.

16y. Spell out numbers used to indicate order.

EXAMPLE The Bottomless Roller Coaster is the second [not 2nd] most popular ride.

EXERCISE A Each of the following sentences contains an error in writing a number. Cross out each error. Then, above the error, write the number correctly.

Example 1. Our school has an enrollment of over ^{two thousand}~~2,000~~ students.

1. There are four-hundred fifty people in our class this year.
2. 300 students were in last year's graduating class.
3. The girl who spoke at graduation was 1st in the class academically.
4. There were 1,000 people in attendance at the ceremony.
5. My cousin's school has fewer than one hundred seventy-five students.

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain an error in writing a number. Cross out each error. Then, above the error, write the number correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. An adult llama is about ^{four}~~4~~ feet tall at the shoulder.

6. In South America, many people's 1st choice among pack animals is the llama.
7. A llama can carry a load weighing up to 60 kilos.
8. An adult llama usually weighs around 113 kilos.
9. Another pack animal, the Bactrian camel, measures about 7 feet at the top of its two humps.
10. 30 miles of travel in a day is not uncommon for this camel, which lives in Central Asia.
11. The one-humped camel, called the Arabian camel, stands about seven feet tall at the shoulder.
12. The Arabian camel can carry a rider while traveling at up to 10 miles per hour.
13. 18 hours of travel at this speed would be possible.
14. The Arabian camel was imported to Australia around one hundred fifty years ago.
15. Today, about 25,000 camels roam wild in the Australian outback.

Plurals and Numbers

- 16r.** Some nouns have irregular plural forms.
- 16s.** For most compound nouns, form the plural of the last word in the compound.
- 16t.** For compound nouns in which one of the words is modified by the other word or words, form the plural of the word modified.
- 16u.** For some nouns, the singular and the plural forms are the same.
- 16v.** For numerals, letters, symbols, and words used as words, add an apostrophe and *s*.
- 16w.** Spell out a number that begins a sentence.
- 16x.** In a sentence, spell out numbers that can be written in one or two words. Use numerals for other numbers.
- 16y.** Spell out numbers used to indicate order.

EXAMPLES children, push-ups, sisters-in-law, deer, 5's, C's, &'s, and's

Fifty people attended the late movie, but **one hundred** attended the **first** showing.

EXERCISE A On the lines provided, spell the plural form of each of the following words, numerals, letters, and symbols.

Example 1. *hello* hello's

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. goose _____ | 6. <i>very</i> _____ |
| 2. \$ _____ | 7. <i>F</i> _____ |
| 3. aircraft _____ | 8. maid of honor _____ |
| 4. 14 _____ | 9. Sioux _____ |
| 5. bucketful _____ | 10. eighth-grader _____ |

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain an error in writing a number. Cross out each error. Then, above the error, write the number correctly. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. The cafeteria needs ~~one hundred twenty five~~¹²⁵ more hamburger buns.

- I'll take the 2nd menu option, Salisbury steak.
- 47 students voted for more vegetarian menu options.
- The head cook promised to offer five or six vegetarian dishes during the next two weeks.
- All four hundred fifty students said they would eat coleslaw at least once a week.
- Only 25 students said they would not eat tofu.

Words Often Confused A

Review the Words Often Confused covered on pages 380–381 of your textbook for information on the correct spelling and usage of the following terms.

*accept, except**all ready, already**all together, altogether**advice, advise**all right**brake, break**affect, effect**altar, alter*

EXERCISE A Underline the word or word group in parentheses that correctly completes each sentence .

Example 1. I am (*all together, altogether*) pleased with the results of my experiment.

1. When the school bus driver applied her air (*brake, break*), she heard a hissing noise.
2. Will you (*accept, except*) my sincere apology?
3. The bride wanted yellow flowers on the (*altar, alter*) on her wedding day.
4. My hockey gear is finally (*all together, altogether*), and we can go now.
5. In ancient times, a person would (*break, brake*) bread with others to show trust and friendship.
6. After crashing into Frank on my skateboard, I asked, “Are you (*all right, alright*)?”
7. My (*advice, advise*) is that you wear protective gloves when using bleach.
8. To separate an egg, you (*break, brake*) the egg in the center and spill the white into a cup.
9. Did Coach Crowe (*advice, advise*) the players to drink water during the game?
10. The (*affects, effects*) of the fire were catastrophic.

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain an error in word usage. Cross out each error, and write the correct word above it. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. If we ~~altar~~^{alter} the sleeves, this shirt will fit you.

11. A tuxedo jacket with tails creates a very formal affect.
12. On the wall of the tuxedo store hung a portrait of a bride and groom standing before an alter.
13. I like all of these tuxedos accept the pale blue one.
14. The type of cummerbund you choose effects the overall look of the tuxedo.
15. Will my black dress shoes look all right with a gray tuxedo?
16. The store clerk advised me to rent shoes in the same color as the tuxedo.
17. Thea and I will accept your and Keisha’s offer to share a ride to the dance.
18. Thea has all ready gotten her Dad’s permission.
19. It will be nice to arrive altogether instead of one by one.
20. Thea and Keisha will be altogether impressed when they see us in our tuxedos.

Words Often Confused B

Review the Words Often Confused covered on pages 382–384 of your textbook for information on the correct spelling and usage of the following terms.

<i>capital, capitol</i>	<i>complement, compliment</i>
<i>choose, chose</i>	<i>consul, council, counsel</i>
<i>clothes, cloths</i>	<i>councilor, counselor</i>
<i>coarse, course</i>	

EXERCISE A Underline the word in parentheses that correctly completes each sentence.

Example 1. A pale shade of blue will (complement, compliment) your eye color.

1. The dome on the (*capital, capitol*) was painted black instead of gold during World War II.
2. When I came to the fork in the path, I (*choose, chose*) the path on the left.
3. The (*coarse, course*) pink sand sparkled against the dark blue water.
4. Jonathon waxed the sports car using clean, soft (*clothes, cloths*).
5. The (*capital, capitol*) of Bulgaria is the ancient city of Sofia.
6. Columbus plotted a (*coarse, course*) west across the Atlantic.
7. My favorite (*coarse, course*) in history taught me about the ancient Greeks.
8. Becca often (*complements, compliments*) her friends on their best qualities.
9. Several of the (*councilors, counselors*) were late to the important council meeting.
10. My guidance (*councilor, counselor*) helped me find an English tutor.

EXERCISE B Using the list at the top of this page, write a word that sensibly completes each sentence.

Example 1. Dr. Patras wrapped the wound with sterile white cloths.

11. A dinner will be held for the German _____ and other government personnel.
12. If you follow through with this _____ of action, you should succeed.
13. Lawyers are sometimes called _____ because they give legal advice.
14. Which city is the _____ of your state?
15. The city parks planning _____ will meet tomorrow.
16. Each team captain will _____ his or her team members.
17. Martin works as a janitor in the _____.
18. I can't wear any of these _____ because they are all wrinkled.
19. _____ language is a turn-off to most of my friends.
20. The school nurse can give you valuable _____ regarding sports injuries.

Words Often Confused C

Review the Words Often Confused covered on pages 384–387 of your textbook for information on the correct spelling and usage of the following terms.

<i>desert, desert, dessert</i>	<i>lead, led, lead</i>
<i>formally, formerly</i>	<i>loose, lose</i>
<i>hear, here</i>	<i>passed, past</i>
<i>its, it's</i>	

EXERCISE Underline the word in parentheses that correctly completes the meaning of each sentence below.

Example 1. The caterer served fruit and cheese for (*desert, dessert*).

1. “There’s no changing the (*passed, past*),” the aging general said with a sigh.
2. The smallest horse (*passed, past*) the others in the last few seconds of the Kentucky Derby.
3. At the reception, Rod was (*formally, formerly*) introduced to the mayor.
4. We can study at your house, or you can come over (*hear, here*).
5. Most house paint used to have (*lead, led*) in it, but then scientists discovered that the metal could poison people.
6. Every time I (*lose, loose*) my glasses, I get so annoyed with myself.
7. When it’s nighttime in the (*desert, dessert*), the air temperature can drop forty degrees.
8. The Tungs (*formerly, formally*) lived in Tampa, but now they live in Albuquerque.
9. During times of peace our memories of (*passed, past*) wars sometimes grow dim.
10. Animals that live in the (*dessert, desert*) need protection from intense heat and cold.
11. Climbing out of the lake, the dog shook water from (*its, it's*) thick coat.
12. Mr. Castillo was (*formerly, formally*) a professional basketball player, and now he’s our coach.
13. The stallion (*led, lead*) the mares through the rushing stream.
14. Check to make sure that your seat belt is not too (*lose, loose*).
15. I would never (*desert, dessert*) a friend who needed my help or moral support.
16. Morton couldn’t (*hear, here*) the park ranger’s shouts over the roar of the waterfall.
17. Don’t go near a dog or wild animal if (*its, it's*) foaming at the mouth.
18. In our country’s (*past, passed*) there have been many challenges.
19. One cheerleader, Andrea, will (*lead, led*) all of the cheers during this game.
20. Our family hardly ever eats (*desert, dessert*) after dinner.

Words Often Confused D

Review the Words Often Confused covered on pages 387–389 of your textbook for information on the correct spelling and usage of the following terms.

*peace, piece**quiet, quite**than, then**plain, plane**shone, shown**their, there, they're**principal, principle**stationary, stationery*

EXERCISE A Underline the word in parentheses that correctly completes each sentence below.

Example 1. I can see a great distance across the (plain, plane).

1. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, (*peace, piece*) has replaced the cold war.
2. Whitney has strong (*principals, principles*); he won't gossip.
3. The children were so (*quiet, quite*) that Ms. Robles wondered what they were doing.
4. Ramona uses sheets of (*stationary, stationery*) that have her initials embossed at the top.
5. You'll find the Boy Scout uniforms on those racks over (*their, there, they're*).
6. The security guard had (*shone, shown*) us what to do in an emergency.
7. I can't believe you have grown taller (*than, then*) your father!
8. Ms. Nguyen, our (*principal, principle*), knows most of us by name.
9. Enrico has never flown in a (*plain, plane*), but he will do so on Saturday.
10. Randy was (*quite, quiet*) secretive about his plans for the party.

EXERCISE B On the blank in each of the following sentences, write a word to complete the sentence correctly. Choose a word from the list at the top of this page.

Example 1. I used a compass to measure the angles of the planes.

11. Some wars have been fought on the basis of _____ such as freedom.
12. We placed a _____ of old carpet in Rex's doghouse.
13. If you become lost, remain _____ rather than wandering aimlessly.
14. In history class, _____ reading *The Red Badge of Courage*.
15. Marguerite's eyes _____ with happiness.
16. Should I wear a _____ sweater, or should I wear something fancier?
17. I was _____ sincere when I said I would not play basketball this year.
18. Stretch your muscles and _____ begin your workout.
19. The Zellers said I could stay at _____ house while Mom is out of town.
20. Your _____ duties are clearing the tables and wiping the counters.

Words Often Confused E

Review the Words Often Confused covered on pages 389–391 of your textbook for information on the correct spelling and usage of the following terms.

<i>threw, through</i>	<i>weak, week</i>	<i>who's, whose</i>
<i>to, too, two</i>	<i>weather, whether</i>	<i>your, you're</i>
<i>waist, waste</i>		

EXERCISE A Underline the word in parentheses that correctly completes each sentence below.

Example 1. We were (*to, too, two*) late; the bus had already departed.

- Frankie Jean couldn't decide (*whether, weather*) to watch the scary movie.
- Mai-Lei wrapped a colorful sash around her (*waist, waste*).
- Your muscles may be (*weak, week*) now, but they'll become stronger as you work out.
- (*Who's, Whose*) the vice president of the United States?
- Vivian wondered (*whether, weather*) it would rain this weekend.
- "(*Your, You're*) kidding, right?" I said to Thanh.
- Domingo accidentally (*threw, through*) away Karma's phone number.
- Are you hungry enough (*to, too, two*) eat one of these huge bran muffins?
- The (*whether, weather*) is perfect for playing volleyball on the beach.
- I wasn't sure (*who's, whose*) science book it was, so I gave it to Mr. Reddick.

EXERCISE B Most of the following sentences contain an error in word usage. Cross out each error, and write the correct word above it. If a sentence is already correct, write C after it.

Example 1. In the 1800's, many women wore corsets to create a tiny ~~waste~~ ^{waist}.

- Your invited to a masquerade party.
- Dress so that no one will know whose inside your costume.
- I've been designing my costume for a weak.
- If the whether is nice, we will dance and eat outdoors.
- My parents will be there through the entire evening.
- The party will be next week on Friday night.
- If you need a ride too my house, just call me.
- Please RSVP so that we don't waste food by buying too much.
- If your not sure about a costume, ask me for ideas.
- I have too extra costumes that I can lend to people.

Review A: Spelling Rules

EXERCISE A In each sentence below, add the letters needed to spell the words correctly.

Example 1. I have confidence that your plan will suc ceed.

1. The anc _____ nt bones told the scientist a story.
2. The waves re _____ de as the tide goes out.
3. Mr. Valdez is a good n _____ ghbor; he's friendly and considerate.
4. The homecoming float broke loose on the hill and began to exc _____ d the speed limit.
5. Laverne felt that she had ach _____ ved independence when her mother let her do the family grocery shopping.

EXERCISE B For each item below, write a new word as indicated.

Examples 1. beauty 1 ful 5 beautiful

2. plural of A 5 A's

6. plural of 55 _____
7. un 1 likely 5 _____
8. plural of donkey 5 _____
9. silly 1 ness 5 _____
10. set 1 ing 5 _____
11. plural of goose 5 _____
12. trouble 1 some 5 _____
13. plural of kitty 5 _____
14. mis 1 place 5 _____
15. seam 1 less 5 _____
16. plural of brother-in-law 5 _____
17. dye 1 ing 5 _____
18. plural of beach 5 _____
19. race 1 ed 5 _____
20. plural of piano 5 _____

Review B: Words Often Confused

EXERCISE Underline the word or word group in parentheses that correctly completes the meaning of each sentence below.

Example 1. The players are (all ready, already) for the game.

1. The quarterback's argument did not (*affect*, *effect*) the referee's decision.
2. Roy enjoys playing all sports (*accept*, *except*) golf.
3. Each year, a statewide track meet is held in the (*capital*, *capitol*).
4. Coach Novinger will (*complement*, *compliment*) a player who deserves it.
5. For several days before the big game, none of the players ate (*desert*, *dessert*).
6. If the volleyball is low on air, (*its*, *it's*) of no use to us.
7. The Fighting Muskrats are determined not to (*loose*, *lose*) to the Laughing Hyenas.
8. Since Angela (*passed*, *past*) all her classes, she can play in the next game.
9. Our school (*principal*, *principle*) attends all of the home games.
10. The fans in the bleachers grew (*quiet*, *quite*) as Debra prepared for a free throw.
11. We will jog three miles; (*than*, *then*), we will practice lay-ups.
12. Coach Rogers told us to go to the tennis courts, and she will meet us (*their*, *there*, *they're*).
13. Because of the rain, I don't know (*weather*, *whether*) the golfers will be able to play.
14. "Who is (*your*, *you're*) best server?" asked a volleyball player on the other team.
15. During practice Coach often shouts, "Keep moving! Don't (*waist*, *waste*) your time!"
16. Carlos's pitches are (*to*, *too*, *two*) fast for most batters to hit.
17. (*Who's*, *Whose*) going to fill in for the injured player?
18. Going into the game, I felt a sense of (*peace*, *piece*) about the outcome.
19. Bryan (*formally*, *formerly*) played for a school across town.
20. The school (*consul*, *council*, *counsel*) has agreed to create a soccer field beside the gym.

Review C: Spelling Rules and Words Often Confused

EXERCISE Underline the correct word or number in parentheses to complete each of the sentences below.

Example 1. Mount Everest's peak is over (29,000, twenty-nine thousand) feet high.

1. Winston Churchill (*led, lead*) the British through World War II.
2. Two (*armies, armys*) met on the battlefield.
3. There will be a (*breif, brief*) intermission after the second act of the play.
4. If I (*break, brake*) last year's record, I will be the fastest swimmer in the county.
5. (*Eleven, 11*) chefs graduated from the Chinese cooking school last week.
6. The artist has skillfully captured the glow of sunlight on (*sheafs, sheaves*) of wheat.
7. Ms. Raign suggested I use fewer (*reallys, really's*) in my writing.
8. Some scientists (*believe, beleive*) that the earth's atmosphere is getting warmer because of pollution.
9. Doug's (*carefullness, carefulness*) with dangerous tools is commendable.
10. There were (5,000, *five thousand*) people at the Italian festival last night.
11. (*Twenty thousand, 20,000*) years ago, there were people living on the American continents.
12. After December 2000, we (*proceeded, proceded*) to the twenty-first century.
13. New York City is the most populous city in the state of New York, but Albany is the (*capitol, capital*).
14. After the marathon, I massaged my aching (*feet, feets*).
15. A horse's (*hieght, height*) is measured in hands rather than in inches and feet.
16. There are more than (600, *six hundred*) islands in the Micronesian chain.
17. Sometimes we have cheese and fruit for (*dessert, desert*).
18. (*Whether, Weather*) the senator is reelected is up to the voters of our state.
19. "I will not (*concede, conceed*) defeat," declared the losing candidate.
20. Why does medicine usually taste (*aweful, awful*)?

Review D: Spelling Rules and Words Often Confused

EXERCISE A For each item below, write a new word as indicated.

Example 1. plural of thirteen-year-old 5 thirteen-year-olds

1. cry 1 ing 5 _____
2. re 1 view 5 _____
3. plural of father-in-law 5 _____
4. save 1 ing 5 _____
5. plural of *hello* 5 _____
6. plural of tooth 5 _____
7. semi 1 circle 5 _____
8. plural of \$ 5 _____
9. state 1 ment 5 _____
10. plural of & 5 _____
11. plural of jetty 5 _____
12. plural of knife 5 _____
13. plural of @ 5 _____
14. mis 1 fortune 5 _____
15. begin 1 ing 5 _____
16. cheery 1 ly 5 _____
17. plural of *r* 5 _____
18. plural of couch 5 _____
19. plural of tomato 5 _____
20. begin 1 er 5 _____

EXERCISE B Underline the correct item in parentheses to complete each of the sentences below.

Example 1. (550, Five hundred fifty) houses were without electricity during the storm.

21. The library allows patrons to check out up to (*fifteen*, 15) books at one time.
22. Lance finished the hundred-yard dash in (*third*, 3rd) place.
23. This history book covers the past (1,500, *one thousand and five hundred*) years of history.
24. (24, *Twenty-four*) cats and dogs await adoption at the pet shelter.
25. May I trade this dollar for (4, *four*) quarters?

Proofreading Application: Public Notice

Good writers are generally good proofreaders. Readers tend to admire and trust writing that is error-free. Make sure that you correct all errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation in your writing. Your readers will have more confidence in your words if you have done your best to proofread carefully.

Sooner or later, you will write a classified ad, a poster, or some other type of notice that the public will see. When you write a public notice and misspell words, your readers may doubt the worth of your service, product, or event. Help your readers trust your words; proofread carefully.

PROOFREADING ACTIVITY

Find and correct the spelling errors in the public notice below. Use proofreading symbols to make your corrections.

Example What's more fun ^{than}~~then~~ a barrel of ^{monkeys}~~monkies~~?

Family Fall Festival

Its time for the Family Fall Festival! Bring the whole family too share the fun! You'll have your pick of over thirty boothes right here at Kennedy Junior High School. Fish in our pond, get your face painted, or run our obstacle course.

We'll have music, good food, and many activitys. One of our coachs, Tom McAndry, will follow through on his promise to sit in the dunking booth! For the kids, we'll even have a peting zoo with goats, donkies, lambs, ponies, and rabbits.

All procedes from the event will go to the purchase of new books for the library's shelves. Be their on Saturday, October 10, from 11:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. It's all happening here at Kennedy Junior High School at 95 Palmer Avenue.

Literary Model: Folk Tale

Back in the days when the animals could talk, there lived ol' Brer Possum. He was a fine feller. Why, he never liked to see no critters in trouble. He was always helpin' out, a-doin' somethin' for others. . . .

One mornin', as he walked, he come to a big hole in the middle of the road. Now, ol' Brer Possum was kind and gentle, but he was also nosy, so he went over to the hole and looked in. All at once, he stepped back, 'cause layin' in the bottom of that hole was ol' Brer Snake with a brick on his back.

Brer Possum said to 'imself, "I best git on outa here, 'cause ol' Brer Snake is mean and evil and lowdown, and . . . he jist might git to bitin' me." . . .

Brer Snake looked up and said, "I've been here in this hole for a mighty long time with this brick on my back. Won't you help me git it offa me?"

Brer Possum thought. . . .

He climbed into the tree, broke off the limb, and with that ol' stick, pushed that brick offa Brer Snake's back. Then he took off down the road.

—*"Brer Possum's Dilemma,"* retold by Jackie Torrence

EXERCISE A After reading the excerpt aloud, write four words that the writer has spelled using nonstandard spelling conventions. Do not include words in which an apostrophe indicates that a letter has been left out.

EXERCISE B The author deliberately used some nonstandard spelling conventions in the folk tale. Why do you think she did so?

Writing Application: Spelling Handbook

Whenever you use a word processor to write, you can take advantage of its spellchecker. Even so, it is important to remember that *you* must make the final decision about correct spelling. If you type “four” when you meant to type “for,” the spellchecker will not see the error, since both spellings are in its dictionary.

Also, the spellchecker may suggest a spelling that does not fit your sentence. Only you, the thinking writer, can decide which suggestions to follow. For example, you might instruct readers who have just had their wisdom teeth removed to rinse with “the plastic surenge from the manilla envelope.” The spellchecker might change the misspelled words so that readers are told to rinse with “the plastic surgeon from the vanilla envelope.” It does not recognize the nonsense of such a statement—but you do. Check your work carefully, reading every sentence aloud to listen for errors that your eyes might miss.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Working with all the other students in your English class, assemble for publication a handbook of spelling tips you have picked up over the years. Do you remember the difference between *principle* and *principal* by telling yourself that the principal is your “pal”? What memory helpers do you know? For the class spelling handbook, each student will submit two hints for spelling words correctly.

PREWRITING You may have to spend some time thinking back to rhymes, riddles, or other word games that have helped you spell tricky words in the past. Your part of the class’s project is to contribute two such spelling helpers. List as many as you can remember; then, pick your two favorites.

WRITING Write out your two spelling hints, using wording that makes your hints clear and easy to remember. If your hints help you with the spellings of more than one word, give examples of as many of these words as possible. If you can recall the circumstances under which you learned each hint, report these circumstances to your readers.

REVISING Spelling is hardly a favorite subject with most students, so try to counter this resistance by turning spelling problems into a little game. Word choice and tone can either encourage students to play along or make drudgery of potential fun.

PUBLISHING Check your contributions for errors in spelling and punctuation. Then, combine them with the other students’ contributions. With your teacher’s permission, publish and distribute your handbook. You could also create a bulletin board with spelling tips.

EXTENDING YOUR WRITING

If you enjoyed this exercise, you could extend it into a longer writing project. Sometimes it is easier to remember a word’s spelling if you know its history. For an English class, choose a word that you have trouble spelling and research its history in a good dictionary. Write up your findings, and comment on how you can use what you learned to help you spell the word correctly.