

Denbigh Spelling Bee

Booklet 2026



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1. Introduction to the Spelling Bee

Welcome to the world of competitive spelling! This booklet is designed to help you learn and master challenging words that may appear in the spelling bee. Work through each section at your own pace, starting with beginner and intermediate words and progressing through advanced and challenge words.

2. Tips for Learning Spellings

- **Break it Down:** Break difficult words into syllables.
 - **Use Mnemonics:** Create memory aids for tricky spellings.
 - **Learn Word Origins:** Knowing the root of a word can help with its spelling.
 - **Practice Daily:** Make spelling practice a regular habit.
 - **Use the Words:** Try to use new words in your daily writing and conversation.
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3. Beginner Words (Ages 11-13)

These words are for students starting out and focus on common but slightly tricky words.

Word	Definition	Example sentence	Word Origin
Achievement	A thing done successfully, typically by effort	Winning the race was a major achievement.	Old French
Audience	a group of people who have gathered to watch or listen to something	The audience clapped and cheered at the end of the play.	Old French
Bizarre	Very strange or unusual	The movie had a bizarre ending.	French
Courageous	Not deterred by danger or pain; brave	He was courageous enough to confront his fears.	Latin
Dilemma	A difficult situation or problem	She faced a dilemma about whether to move or stay.	Greek
Embarrass	Cause someone to feel awkward or self-conscious	The question embarrassed him in front of his peers.	French

Foreign	From a different country	She speaks several foreign languages.	Latin
Guarantee	A formal promise or assurance that certain conditions will be fulfilled	I guarantee you'll love this book.	French
Humorous	Funny or amusing	The book was full of humorous anecdotes.	Latin
Incredible	Extraordinary or difficult to believe	The magician's performance was incredible.	Latin
Juvenile	Childish or immature	His juvenile behaviour annoyed the adults.	Latin
Knack	A special talent or gift that feels effortless	She has a knack for telling interesting stories.	Low German
Knowledgeable	Well-informed	She is very knowledgeable about history.	Old English
Length	The measurement of something from end to end	The length of the table is six feet.	Old English
Necessary	Required or essential	It is necessary to bring your ID to the exam.	Latin
Occasion	A particular event	There was a special occasion at school today.	Latin
Parliament	A legislative body	The parliament debated the new law.	French
Queue	A line of people or vehicles	We waited in a queue for the concert tickets.	Latin
Rhythm	A strong, regular, repeated pattern of sound	The rhythm of the music was captivating.	Greek
Schedule	A plan for carrying out a process	My schedule is packed with meetings today.	Greek
Tomorrow	The day after today	We will finish the project by tomorrow.	Old English
Unusual	Not common, rare	It's unusual to see snow in April here.	Latin

Vinyl	A tough, flexible synthetic plastic	The kitchen was updated with easy-to-clean vinyl flooring.	Latin
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4. Intermediate Words (Ages 14-16)

Words in this section are more complex, involving common prefixes, suffixes, and word roots.

Word	Definition	Example sentence	Word Origin
Ambiguous	Open to more than one interpretation	His ambiguous answer confused everyone.	Latin
Absurd	Wildly unreasonable, illogical	His explanation for being late was absurd.	Latin
Benevolent	Well-meaning, kind	She was a benevolent leader who cared for her people.	Latin
Capricious	Given to sudden changes in mood	The capricious weather made planning difficult.	Italian
Conscientious	Wishing to do what is right	She is a conscientious student who always completes her work.	Latin
Debilitate	To make someone weak or less effective	The illness debilitated him for weeks.	Latin
Diffident	Modest or shy due to a lack of self-confidence	He was too diffident to speak up and share his ideas during the team meeting.	Latin
Eclectic	Deriving ideas from various sources	Her taste in music is eclectic.	Greek
Exaggerate	Represent something as larger or more important than it is	Don't exaggerate the details of the story.	Latin
Foresight	The ability to predict what will happen	His foresight saved the company from disaster.	Old English
Garrulous	Excessively talkative	The garrulous woman kept talking throughout the movie.	Latin

Hindrance	Something that provides resistance	The heavy rain was a hindrance to our progress.	Old English
Inevitable	Certain to happen, unavoidable	It was inevitable that they would find out the truth.	Latin
Juxtapose	Place close together for contrasting effect	The artist juxtaposed light and dark colours in the painting.	Latin
Kaleidoscope	A toy that creates changing patterns using mirrors and coloured pieces	The view through the kaleidoscope was fascinating.	Greek
Lamentable	Deplorably bad or unsatisfactory	The team's performance was lamentable in the finals.	Latin
Loquacious	Tending to talk a great deal; very talkative	"At the party, I was stuck talking to the loquacious woman everyone else was trying to avoid."	Latin
Meticulous	Showing great attention to detail	She was meticulous in her research, checking every source.	Latin
Notorious	Famous or well-known, typically for some bad quality	The notorious pirate was feared across the seas.	Latin
Obsolete	No longer produced or used; out of date	The obsolete machinery was replaced with modern equipment.	Latin
Phenomenon	An observable fact, event, or occurrence	The Northern Lights are a natural phenomenon.	Greek
Prestigious	Having a high status or reputation	She attended a prestigious university.	Latin

5. Advanced Words (Ages 17-18)

These words are for advanced spellers and include less common vocabulary, often with challenging pronunciations or spellings.

Word	Definition	Example sentence	Word Origin
Antithesis	A person or thing that is the direct opposite of something	His actions are the antithesis of his words.	Greek
Belligerent	Hostile and aggressive	The belligerent nation refused to negotiate.	Latin
Circumlocution	The use of many words where fewer would do	He used circumlocution to avoid answering directly.	Latin
Discombobulate	To confuse or disconcert	The confusing directions left the tourists discombobulated.	American English
Ebullient	Cheerful and full of energy	The ebullient crowd cheered for hours.	Latin
Flabbergasted	Extremely surprised or shocked	I was flabbergasted by the unexpected announcement.	British English
Garrulity	Excessive talkativeness	His garrulity annoyed everyone in the room.	Latin
Hubris	Excessive pride or self-confidence	His hubris led to his downfall.	Greek
Impetuous	Acting quickly without thought	His impetuous decision to quit surprised everyone.	Latin
Inconsequential	Not important or significant	His opinion was inconsequential to the decision.	Latin
Juxtaposition	The fact of two things being seen or placed together for contrasting effect	The juxtaposition of poverty and wealth was stark.	Latin
Kinetic	Relating to motion	Kinetic energy is the energy possessed by an object in motion.	Greek

Lugubrious	Looking or sounding sad and dismal	His lugubrious speech cast a sombre mood over the funeral.	Latin
Magnanimous	Generous or forgiving	He was magnanimous in defeat, praising his opponent.	Latin
Nefarious	Wicked or criminal	The villain's nefarious plan was uncovered by the hero.	Latin
Obfuscate	To deliberately make something unclear	The politician's answer only served to obfuscate the issue.	Latin
Perfunctory	Carried out with minimum effort or reflection	His perfunctory response showed he didn't care.	Latin
Quixotic	Exceedingly idealistic, unrealistic	His quixotic dream of flying to space was admirable but impractical.	Spanish
Reverberate	To be repeated as an echo	The sound of the explosion reverberated through the valley.	Latin
Surreptitious	Kept secret, especially because it would not be approved of	They had a surreptitious meeting late at night.	Latin

6. Challenge Words (Mixed Ages)

These words are challenging and may test even the most accomplished spellers. They come from a variety of languages and involve unusual spellings or pronunciations.

Word	Definition	Example sentence	Word Origin
Acquiesce	Accept something reluctantly but without protest	She acquiesced to the committee's decision.	Latin
Cacophony	A harsh, discordant mixture of sounds	The cacophony from the construction site was unbearable.	Greek

Chiaroscuro	The treatment of light and shade in drawing and painting	The chiaroscuro in the painting was stunning.	Italian
Connoisseur	An expert judge in matters of taste, especially in the arts, food, or drink	She is a connoisseur of abstract art.	Old French
Ephemeral	Lasting for a very short time	Their love was ephemeral, lasting only a summer.	Greek
Evanescent	Soon passing out of sight, memory, or existence	The evanescent rainbow disappeared after a few moments.	Latin
Grandiloquent	Pompous or extravagant in language, style, or manner	His grandiloquent speech was full of big words but little substance.	Latin
Intransigent	Unwilling to change one's views	The intransigent leader refused to negotiate with the opposition.	Latin
Lassitude	A state of physical or mental weariness	After the marathon, she was overcome with lassitude.	Latin
Mellifluous	Pleasant to hear	Her mellifluous voice soothed the crowd.	Latin
Obsequious	Obedient or attentive to an excessive degree	His obsequious behaviour annoyed his colleagues.	Latin
Pernicious	Having a harmful effect	The pernicious influence of social media on teens was discussed.	Latin
Quintessential	Representing the most perfect example of something	He is the quintessential gentleman.	Latin
Scintillating	Brilliantly lively, witty, or intellectually exciting	Her scintillating performance dazzled the audience.	Latin
Sesquipedalian	(of a word) polysyllabic; long	His sesquipedalian vocabulary impressed the crowd but confused many.	Latin

Soliloquy	A speech in which a character speaks their thoughts aloud while alone on stage	Hamlet's soliloquy is one of Shakespeare's most famous passages.	Latin
Taciturn	Reserved or uncommunicative in speech	His taciturn demeanour made him seem mysterious.	Latin
Ubiquitous	Present, appearing, or found everywhere	Smartphones are now ubiquitous in modern society.	Latin
Vicissitude	A change of circumstances or fortune, typically one that is unwelcome	They were subject to the vicissitudes of life on the road.	Latin
Xenophobia	Dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries	The government condemned xenophobia in all its forms.	Greek
Zephyr	A soft, gentle breeze	A zephyr blew through the open window.	Greek

7. Word Origins and Patterns

Understanding the origins of words can help in mastering spellings. Below are common language patterns:

- **Latin Roots:** Words from Latin often have "tion," "ent," or "ous" endings (e.g., **conscientious**, **ambiguous**).
 - **Greek Roots:** Look for "ph" for "f" sounds or "y" in place of "i" (e.g., **phenomenon**, **zephyr**).
 - **French Influence:** Many French-origin words end in "ique" or "ine" (e.g., **bizarre**, **unique**).
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8. Frequently Misspelled Words

Here is a list of common words that are often misspelled. Watch out for them!

- Absence
 - Accommodate
 - Bureaucracy
 - Calendar
 - Conscience
 - Convenience
 - Definitely
 - Desperate
 - Disastrous
 - Embarrass
 - Exaggerate
 - Fulfil
 - Guarantee
 - Independent
 - Licence
 - Medieval
 - Mischievous
 - Necessary
 - Occurrence
 - Privilege
 - Receive
 - Recommend
 - Restaurant
 - Separate
 - Supersede
 - Underrate
 - Vacuum
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