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Spelling Bee Toolbox

Instructions

Students in elementary grades may have never before participated in a spelling bee, so make sure you give them a positive first experience! Read through all the instructions and choose the resources that best fit your students. In order to gain the maximum benefit from the tools in this eBook, please refer to the instructions for each section.

Guidelines for Three Kinds of Spelling Bees
The set of rules you choose to follow will depend on:
• The setting of your spelling bee
• The number of spellers who are participating
• The number of people involved in conducting the bee
• The time that’s available for the bee

I recommend you read through the guidelines for all the types of bees listed here, and then pick and choose the features that will work best for your situation. (Please note the spelling games on page 21 which are good introductory activities for young spellers.) Once you’ve decided on the rules you’ll use, be certain to make the rules clear to all the students, parents and teachers who will be involved in the activity. Then be sure to follow the rules consistently during the contest.

Organizing a Spelling Bee
Use this checklist to get organized and stay organized. Adjust the list as needed for your situation. If you are responsible for a large bee, please don’t ignore this tool!

Personnel Chart
Here’s a place to record everyone’s name and phone number who is involved in your big bee. You may not need to fill every position, and you may need to add some that are not listed. Once you’ve filled out this page, make copies for others as needed.

Recorder’s Chart
The recorder (or one of the judges) can use this helpful tool to keep track of which spellers are in and out of the competition. It’s important to note the round on which each one is eliminated, the misspelled word, and the misspelling in case of disputes later. The first page is numbered for the first twenty students in the first 8 rounds. The second page can be photocopied as needed for subsequent rounds and additional spellers.
Spelling Bee Toolbox

All-School (or Large) Spelling Bee

For this type of spelling bee, you’ll need several officials: a pronouncer, at least one judge, a recorder and, optionally, a timekeeper. See list on page 14.

The spelling bee coordinator should select officials for these positions who speak clearly, listen carefully and who will follow the guidelines you present to them.

**Advance preparation needed by the spelling bee officials:**

**Judges**
Read the rules and the word list. Select and secure a large dictionary to use on the day of the bee. Designate one person as the head judge who will make the final decisions on the correct or incorrect spelling of a word.

**Pronouncer**
Read through the word list in advance. Look up the correct pronunciation of any unfamiliar words in the designated dictionary. Learn the rules for the bee.

**Recorder**
Read the rules and word list in advance. Review the recorder’s chart.

**Timekeeper** (Optional)
During the bee, the timekeeper uses a stopwatch to keep track of the amount of time the speller uses to complete the spelling of each word. The time limit must be decided in advance and announced to all participants. A limit of 30 - 40 seconds is recommended, depending on the age of the students, the difficulty of the words, and the available time for the bee.

**Spelling bee coordinator**
Be sure to meet with the spelling bee officials prior to the bee to make sure all the rules and procedures are clear.

**Immediately before the bee begins:**

(For a more complete checklist, see page 12.)

1. Decide the order in which the students will participate. Seat them in order on stage, or at the front of the room.

2. Arrange a table for the judges and recorder.

3. Be sure all members of the audience are seated and quiet.
Spelling Bee Toolbox

Spelling Rules for Elementary Grades

Go over the spelling rules you’ve already learned before any competition. Also review words that are exceptions to the rules. These rules may help you figure out how to spell new words in a spelling bee. Here are 14 rules and exceptions to review.

1. Compound Words
Keep both words whole. Don’t drop the last letter of the first word or the first letter of the last word. Examples: roommate, bookkeeper, sidewalk, withhold.

2. Contractions
First make sure to spell the correct word. For example, listen to the sentence to know if you should spell they’re, their or there and who’s or whose. Then be sure to include the apostrophe in place of the missing letter.

3. Words spelled with ie or ei
Use i before e except after c or when sounded like a as in neighbor and weigh.
Examples: friend, believe, ceiling, receive, eight, vein. There are many exceptions to this rule, including: neither, science, their, weird, and others. Memorize these.

Forming Plurals

4. Words that end in s,x,z, ch, or sh
To make these word plural, add es. Examples: boxes, churches, bushes, glasses.

5. Words that end in y
A) If a noun ends in a consonant followed by a y, change the y to i and add es.
Examples: babies, stories

B) If a noun ends in a vowel followed by a y, add s.
Examples: chimneys, turkeys

6. Words that end in f or fe
A) Most nouns ending in f or fe form the plural by changing the f or fe to v and adding -es.
Examples: knife/knives, hoof/hooves, loaf/loaves
Exception: roof/roofs

B) For a double f, just add s. Examples: puff/puffs, cliff/cliffs.
Smelly Scents?

Choose the correct homonym in to complete each sentence. Write the word in the blank.

scents/cents
1. If your coins fell into the garbage, you might have smelly ______________.

2. If you didn’t like your mom’s perfumes, you’d say she had smelly ______________.

ants/aunts
3. If you like to eat chocolate covered insects, you’d say you’re having ____________ for dinner.

4. If your father’s sisters are coming to visit, you’d say you’re having your ____________ over for dinner.

dear/deer
5. If your grandma is very fond of you, she’d call you her ___________ grandchild.

6. If she spotted an animal outside the window, she’d say, “Come look at the ___________ my grandchild!”

meat/meet
7. If you need to buy something to eat, you’d go out to buy some ____________.

8. If you want to see a friend, you’d go out to ____________ him.

their/there/they’re
9. If you thought your friends left some games at your house, you’d ask if ____________ missing some games.

10. If they can’t find the games, they might ask you if they left ___________ games at your house.

Whose/Who’s
11. If you wonder why part of your lunch is missing, you might ask, “___________ been eating my lunch?”

12. If you found someone else’s lunch, you might ask, “___________ lunch is this?”

On the back of this page, write sentences for these homonym sets:

nose/knows wait/weight rain/rein/reign
504. forgiveness – Shelly asked for Tom’s forgiveness for the unkind words she said.
505. forgetting – I keep forgetting where I put my keys.
506. concentration – Glassblowers must work with great concentration.
507. addresses – We need addresses for everyone we want to invite to the party.
508. altogether – Three of us spent $100 altogether at the electronics store.
509. cradle – Jack made a beautiful cradle for his newborn baby.
510. exploration – There has been limited exploration for oil in some regions.
511. creative – Emily makes creative gifts every year for her friends.
512. prevention - The crime prevention officer teaches classes on safety.
513. collapse – If we build this house of cards any taller, I’m sure it will collapse.
514. amphibian – A frog is an amphibian because it lives both in and out of water.
515. conclude – This meeting will conclude at 8 P.M.
516. automobile – The automobile is probably the most popular form of transportation.
517. invitation – We received an invitation to my cousin’s graduation party.
518. assignment – The math assignment is due tomorrow.
519. confuse – It’s easy to confuse words like then and than.
520. prairie – We saw hundreds of cattle grazing on the prairie.
521. potato – We planted six potato plants in our garden.
522. enormous – The blue whale is the most enormous mammal of all.
523. exchange – Mom went back to the store to exchange the sweater.
524. forecast – The weather forecast calls for sunshine tomorrow.
525. gracious – Eve is very gracious, even when she loses a game.
526. insert – You must insert only quarters in this vending machine.
182. written – Your report must be written in ink.
183. beggar – The beggar was cold and hungry.
184. healthy – The new parents were thankful for their healthy baby.
185. library – I go to the library once a week.
186. useful – A can opener is a very useful gadget.
187. January – We often get snow in January.
188. except – My little brother likes all vegetables except spinach.
189. sixty – Sixty is the sum of twenty and forty.
190. nickel – A nickel is worth five cents.
191. earth – The earth revolves around the sun once a year.
192. mirror – I looked in the mirror to check my hair.
193. soften – The recipe says to soften the bread crumbs in milk.
   Sample pages from Spelling-Words-Well.com
194. usually – We usually go to my grandma’s house on Sunday.
195. squirt – The leaky hose will squirt water until it is repaired.
196. imagine – Let’s imagine a beautiful day at the beach.
197. honor – The dinner was held in honor of her birthday.
198. seventy – My grandfather will be seventy years old next month.
199. wherever – Wherever you go on vacation, I’m sure you’ll have a great time.
200. interested – Sheila is interested in taking computer classes.
201. can’t – I can’t find my glasses.
202. quiet – It’s always quiet at the library.
203. chose – He chose the blue shirt, not the brown shirt.
204. crayon – I like to color with a sharpened crayon.
Thank You

to

for taking part in the

Sample pages from Spelling-Words-Well.com

Spelling Bee

____, 20____

Signed ____________________________

Title ____________________________

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In appreciation to

for your participation in the

Spelling Bee

Sample pages from Spelling-Words-Well.com

held on ________, 20____

at

Thank you!

Principal

Teacher

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