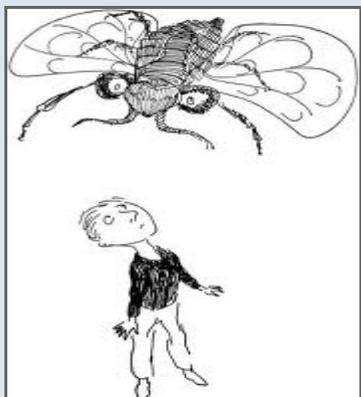


“Can you spell everything?”  
asked Milo admiringly.

“Just about,” replied the bee  
with a hint of pride in his voice.  
“You see years ago I was just an  
ordinary bee minding my own  
business, smelling flowers all  
day and occasionally picking up  
part-time work in people’s  
bonnets. Then one day I realised  
that I would never amount to  
anything without an education  
and, being naturally adept at  
spelling...”



Norton Juster

*The Phantom Tollbooth*

- Useful Points of Reference -

The Oxford School Spelling, Punctuation  
and Grammar Dictionary

[www.snappywords.com](http://www.snappywords.com)

[www.visuwords.com](http://www.visuwords.com)

ACE spelling dictionary

(recommended by The Dyslexia  
Awareness Campaign)

[www.dyslexiadictionary.com](http://www.dyslexiadictionary.com)

Enquiries can be directed to:

Northampton School *for boys*  
Billing Road  
Northampton  
NN1 5RT

☎ 01604 230240  
[nsb@nsb.northants.sch.uk](mailto:nsb@nsb.northants.sch.uk)

# Top Tips for Spelling



## Ten ways to develop secure spelling habits:

### 1. Read.

It doesn't matter what you read, rather that you do. Read with your children, alongside them, at the same time. Share audio books in the car or before bedtime; download podcasts from the BBC Radio4 extra website to encourage new books and authors.

### 2. Write.

Shopping lists, a thank you note, an email to a friend or relation... In fact, it doesn't matter what you write, rather that your child is picking up a pen. Sending a card by post? Get them to write the address.

### 3. Use reliable websites like...

[www.spellingcity.com](http://www.spellingcity.com): You can enter a list of words and select a variety of options such as hangman, matching games and word tests. There is also an audio option so users can hear the words.

[www.timesspellingbee.co.uk](http://www.timesspellingbee.co.uk): You don't have to enter the real-life competition to make use of the excellent games on the newspaper's website. The words are graded from easy, to medium then hard. You need sound to play along.

4. **Make labels** and display them around the house. This works really well for learning French or Spanish vocabulary too.

5. **Reward** with magazines or books.

6. Take trips to the **library**—it's free! There are often themed activities running at the weekend too.

7. Some students like **mnemonics** to learn words: **b**ig **e**lephants **c**an **a**lways **u**nderstand **s**mall **e**lephants or You **h**ear with your **e**ar...

8. **Encourage checking**. Make sure your child can use a dictionary. Bookmark a simple online dictionary too like [www.dict.org](http://www.dict.org) Having secure dictionary skills is fantastic—it means that you don't need to recall every spelling; you just need to know how to check the one you've chosen.

9. Point out **prefixes** at the start of a word (un-, in-, re-, pre-, im-...) and **suffixes** added at the end (-s, -es, -er, -ed, -est, -ing). If the word does not make sense when these are taken away then something has probably gone wrong! Take disappointment for example. If you split it apart into dis + appoint, you'll always spell it correctly. Make adverbs by adding "ly" at the end—quick+ly, smooth+ly, bizarre+ly!

10. And finally...

...**be positive** about spellings. They do matter; they are an important part of communicating clearly. But we don't need to know them all right now, all at once. Take it a word at a time—and give your child lots of praise when they crack a new piece of vocabulary.

### A word of caution about websites:

A general search engine enquiry will return a lot of USA-based websites with American spellings! Try adding "site:.uk" to the the search box to filter these out.