

G pronouns

V learning languages

P sound-spelling relationships; understanding accents

1 SPELLING

- a 2.1 A recent survey found the ten most commonly misspelled words in English. Listen to sentences 1–10 and complete the missing words. How many did you spell correctly? What do many of the words have in common?

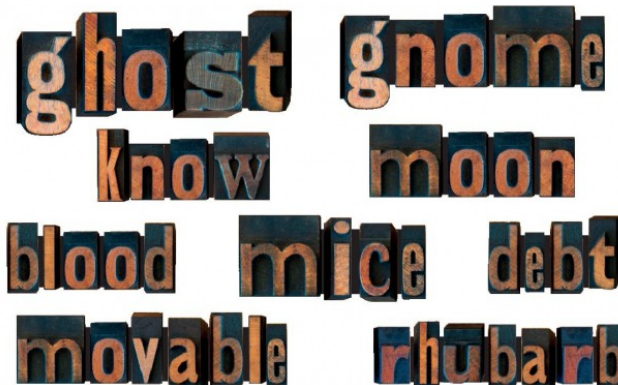
- 1 He always _____ to his father as "my old man."
- 2 I like all vegetables except _____.
- 3 The food was _____, but no more than that.
- 4 I think taking the dog with us is an _____ complication.
- 5 There was a _____ of opinion that the article should not be published.
- 6 It was a very strange _____.
- 7 Please don't _____ me by wearing that hat!
- 8 During your driver's test you will be asked to perform some standard _____.
- 9 We'll _____ be there by seven.
- 10 They married in 2016, but _____ two years later.

- b 2.2 Now listen to the following poem. Find nine spelling mistakes of a different kind. What is the message of the poem?

I have a spelling checker
 It came with my PC
 It plainly marks for my revue
 Mistakes I cannot sea
 I've run this poem threw it
 I'm sure your pleased to no
 It's letter-perfect in it's weigh
 My checker tolled me sew

2 READING & SPEAKING

- a With a partner, decide how to pronounce the following words. Do you know what they all mean?



- b Read the review on p.17 of *Spell It Out*, a book about the story of English spelling. What do you learn about the spelling and pronunciation of the words in a?

LEXIS IN CONTEXT

Making sense of whole phrases

Even when you understand the individual words in a text, you may still have problems understanding the meaning. When you read, focus on whole phrases or sentences, and refer to the surrounding context to figure out what the writer is saying.

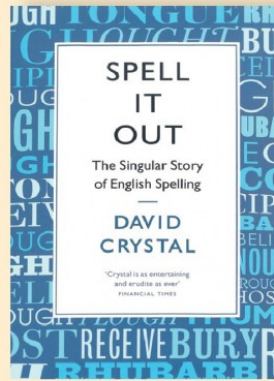
- c Read the review again and look at phrases 1–6 in context. In pairs, say what you think the reviewer means.
- 1 he was bewildered by the random nature of English spelling (lines 10–11)
 - 2 Fashion and snobbery have played as big a part in spelling as they have in other parts of English life. (lines 25–26)
 - 3 scribes looked to Latin for guidance (line 28)
 - 4 For a long time, there was no stigma attached to variant spellings. (line 32)
 - 5 Even today, spelling is more fluid than we might think. (line 39)
 - 6 the internet is the ultimate spelling democracy (line 41)
- d Answer the questions in small groups.

- 1 How do you think the reviewer feels towards students of English? Do you agree?
- 2 What modern example does she give of the damaging effects of bad spelling?
- 3 Are there any words in your language that people have particular problems spelling? Why (not)?
- 4 Do you think good spelling matters?

1 **H**ave you ever wondered why *ghost* is spelled with an *h*? Why isn't it "gost" or "goast" to rhyme with "most" or "toast"? Other words that begin with a hard *g*, such as

5 "golf," don't have an *h*. The answer, according to David Crystal's entertaining *Spell It Out*, is a result of the whim of a Flemish compositor, a man whose job it was in the late 15th century to arrange type for printing. His English wasn't good, and, like

10 many non-native speakers, he was bewildered by the random nature of English spelling. So when he saw the word "gost" (spelled "gheest" in Flemish), he decided to spell it the Flemish way, with an *h*.



The Flemish *h* in *ghost* is one of Crystal's many examples that show that the

15 development of English spelling has been both random and unsystematic. The original monks who tried to write down Anglo-Saxon English in a Latin alphabet, he says, did a pretty good job. Every word was pronounced phonetically—so the *g* in *gnome* would be pronounced, as would the *k* in *know*. But the alphabet they devised didn't have enough letters to represent all the sounds in spoken English and that

20 was where the problems started. Scribes started to double vowels to represent different sounds, such as double *o* for the long /u/ sound in *moon*, *food*, etc. But then in some words like *blood* and *flood*, the pronunciation changed in the south of England, shortening the vowel, so that now, as Crystal puts it, "these spellings represent the pronunciation of a thousand years ago."

25 Fashion and snobbery have played as big a part in spelling as they have in other parts of English life. After the Norman invasion, Anglo-Saxon spellings were replaced by French ones: *servis* became *service*, *mys* became *mice*, for instance. During the Renaissance, scribes looked to Latin for guidance—take the word *debt*. In the 13th century this could be spelled *det*, *dett*, *dette*, or *deytt*. But 16th-century

30 writers looked to the Latin word *debitum*, and inserted a silent *b*—linking the word to its Latin counterpart, but making it much harder to spell.

For a long time, there was no stigma attached to variant spellings. Shakespeare famously wrote his name several ways (Shaksper, Shakspeare, Shakspeare), but, by the 18th century, an English aristocrat was writing to his son that "orthography...is

35 so absolutely necessary for a man of letters, or a gentleman, that one false spelling may fix a ridicule upon him for the rest of his life." Dan Quayle, the former US vice-president, never recovered from spelling *potato* with an *e* on the end when he corrected a pupil's writing in front of the cameras at a junior school in 1992.

Even today, spelling is more fluid than we might think. *Moveable*, for example—*The Times* style guide keeps the *e*, *The Guardian* prefers *movable*. And online there are no guides—the internet is the ultimate spelling democracy. Take *rhubarb*, with its pesky silent *h*: in 2006 there were just a few hundred instances of *rubarb* in the Google database; they have now passed the million mark. 'If it carries on like this,' Crystal notes, "*rubarb* will overtake *rhubarb* as the commonest online spelling..."

40 And where the online orthographic world goes in one decade, I suspect the offline world will go in the next."

Reading this book made me thankful that English is my native language; the spelling must make it so fiendishly hard to learn!

By Daisy Goodwin in the Sunday Times

Glossary

Flemish /ˈflemɪʃ/ from Flanders, the northern part of present-day Belgium

monk /mʌŋk/ a member of a religious group of men who often live apart from other people in a monastery

scribe /skraɪb/ a person who made copies of written documents before printing was invented

the Norman Invasion the occupation of England in 1066 by the Normans, who came from northern France

orthography /ɔːrˈθɒɡrəfi/ (formal) the system of spelling in a language

junior school (NAfE elementary school) a school for children between the ages of 5 and 12

3 PRONUNCIATION

sound–spelling relationships

Learning spelling rules or patterns
Although many people think that English pronunciation has no rules, especially regarding sounds and spelling, estimates suggest that around 80% of words are pronounced according to a rule or pattern, e.g., the letter *h* before a vowel is almost always pronounced /h/.

- a With a partner, say each group of words aloud. How are the pink letters pronounced? Circle the different word if there is one.
- 1 /h/ hurt dishonest inherit heart himself
 - 2 /ou/ throw elbow lower power grow
 - 3 /aɪ/ compromise despite river write quite
 - 4 /w/ whenever why whose where which
 - 5 /dʒ/ jealous journalist reject job enjoy
 - 6 /tʃ/ challenging achieve chorus catch charge
 - 7 /s/ sense seem sympathetic synonym sure
 - 8 /ɔ/ awful raw flaw drawback law
 - 9 /ɔr/ short corner work ignore reporter
 - 10 /ɜr/ firm dirty third T-shirt birth
- b 2.3 Listen and check. What's the pronunciation rule for each spelling? Can you think of any more exceptions?
- c Think about the spelling patterns in a. How do you think these words are probably pronounced? Check their pronunciation and meaning with your teacher or with a dictionary.

chime howl jaw whirl worm

4 GRAMMAR

pronouns

- a 2.4 Look at the phonetics for a word that is often misspelled, but never corrected by spell checkers. How is it pronounced? Listen and check.
- /ðɛr/
- b Now fill in the blanks with three different spellings of the word in a.
- 1 _____ pronoun + contracted verb
 - 2 _____ adverb
 - 3 _____ possessive adjective
- c p.144 Grammar Bank 2A Learn more about pronouns, and practice them.

5 VOCABULARY learning languages

a Look at the section headings 1–4 in *Working With Words*. With a partner, say what they mean.

b Do the exercises in *Working With Words*. Then compare with a partner.

Working With Words

1 Collocations

Complete with *say, speak, talk, or tell*.

- I can _____ three languages fluently: English, French, and German.
- _____ me the truth. Did you really do this yourself?
- This situation can't go on. We need to _____.
- What did you _____? I couldn't hear you because of the noise.
- Did you _____ Mark about the party next week?
- Hi. Could I _____ to Maria, please? It's Jennifer.
- You could learn the basics in, let's _____, six months.
- Sorry, I can't _____ now. I'm in a meeting.



2 Phrasal verbs

Match the phrasal verbs in 1–5 to their meanings A–E.

- ☐ I spent a month in Florence and I was able to **pick up** quite a bit of Italian.
- ☐ I'll need to **brush up** on my Spanish before we go to Mexico. I haven't spoken it since college!
- ☐ **A** How will you manage in Japan if you don't speak the language?
B I think I'll be able to **get by**. I can speak a little Japanese and most people speak some English.
- ☐ Your pronunciation is fantastic. You could almost **pass for** a local!
- ☐ Even though my English is fluent, I found it hard to **take in** what my boss said in the meeting because he spoke so fast.



- A be accepted as somebody / something
- B to quickly improve a skill, especially when you haven't used it for a long time
- C to absorb, understand
- D to learn a new skill or language by practicing it rather than being taught
- E to manage to live or do a particular thing using the money, knowledge, equipment, etc. that you have

3 Synonyms and register



a Match the words or expressions 1–5 to synonyms A–E.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 error | A respond to somebody |
| 2 answer somebody | B language |
| 3 request somebody to | C vocabulary |
| 4 tongue | D mistake |
| 5 lexis | E ask somebody to |

b Which word is more formal in each pair?

4 Idioms



Match sentences 1–5 to A–E.

- ☐ I think we're talking **at cross purposes**.
- ☐ The word's **on the tip of my tongue**.
- ☐ When I talk to my boss, I'm going to **speak my mind**.
- ☐ I just can't **get my tongue around** this word.
- ☐ I can't **get my head around** this definition.

- A I'm going to tell her my honest feelings.
- B It's really hard for me to pronounce.
- C It's too complicated and I can't understand it.
- D I can't remember it right now, but I'm sure I will soon.
- E When you said "lunch on Sunday" I thought you meant this Sunday, not next Sunday.

6 PRONUNCIATION understanding accents

Received Pronunciation and General American English

There are many different native-speaker accents in English. Received Pronunciation, or RP, is defined in the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* as "the standard accent of English as spoken in the south of England" and General American is defined as "a form of US speech without marked dialectal or regional characteristics". However, only a small percentage of native-speakers have these standard British and American accents, so it is important to be able to understand different ones as well.

- a **2.5** Listen to six people talking with different native-speaker accents. Can you match any of the accents?



1

Mairi



2

Justin



3

Jerry



4

Andrea



5

Lily



6

Paul

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Australia | <input type="checkbox"/> Scotland |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada | <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> England | <input type="checkbox"/> the US |

- b **2.6** Listen and check. Are you familiar with any of these accents? Which ones, and why?

7 LISTENING

- a You're going to hear Cristina from Romania, who has lived in the US for several years, answering some questions about her experiences of being a non-native speaker of English. Before you listen, check that you understand the words in the glossary.



Glossary

hit it out of the park meet a goal even more than was expected. This expression comes from baseball, when the ball is hit so far that it flies outside of the ballpark or stadium.

slam dunk something that is achieved easily. This expression comes from basketball, when a player jumps above the basket and "dunks" it in the hoop without opposition.



Cristina in Hollywood, California

- b Before you listen, answer questions 1–2 with a partner.
- Do you find it easier to understand native or non-native speakers of English?
 - How do you feel about having your English corrected?
- c **2.7** Now listen to Cristina. How does she answer the questions? How easy do you find it to understand her accent?
- d Listen again. What does she say about...?
- regional US accents
 - talking on the phone
 - what happens when she's tired
- e Answer questions 3–4 with a partner.
- Do you have any funny or embarrassing stories related to misunderstanding someone?
 - Is there anything you still find difficult about English?
- f **2.8** Now listen to Cristina. How does she answer the questions?
- g Listen again. What does she say about...?
- the word *hideout*
 - baseball, basketball, and American football
 - the difference between Romanian spelling and English spelling
- h Were any of Cristina's answers the same as yours? What else did she say that you identified with?

- 1 You can learn a language faster if you go to live in a country where it is spoken.
- 2 One tends to have problems understanding very strong accents.
- 3 When we talk about an accent, we must not confuse this with pronunciation.
- 4 They always say that it's never too late to learn a new language.
They should make it a requirement for people to learn two foreign languages at school.
- 5 If someone goes to live in a foreign country, they will have to get used to a different way of life.
Could the person who left their bag in the library please come and see me?

- 1 We often use you to mean people in general.
- 2 We can also use one + third person singular of the verb to mean people in general. one is much more formal than you and rarely used in spoken English.
- We can also use one's as a possessive adjective, e.g., When confronted with danger, one's first reaction is often to freeze.
- 3 we can also be used to make a general statement of opinion that includes the reader / listener.
- 4 In informal English, we often use they to talk about other people in general, or people in authority, e.g., They always say... (They = people in general); They should make it compulsory... (They = the government).
- 5 We use they, them, and their to refer to one person who may be male or female, instead of using he or she, his or her, etc.

reflexive and reciprocal pronouns

- 1 You need to take care of yourself with that cold.
He's very egocentric. He always talks about himself.
- 2 I managed to complete the crossword puzzle! I was really proud of myself.
- 3 We decorated the house ourselves.
There's no way I'm going to do it for you. Do it yourself!
- 4 I don't feel very comfortable going to the movies by myself.
- 5 My ex-husband and I don't talk to each other anymore.
My mother and sister don't understand one another at all.

- 1 We often use reflexive pronouns when the subject and object of a verb are the same person.
- We don't usually use reflexive pronouns with some verbs that may be reflexive in other languages, e.g., wash, shave, etc. NOT He got up, shaved himself, and...
• enjoy is always used with a reflexive pronoun when not followed by another object, e.g., Enjoy your meal! BUT Did you enjoy yourself last night?
- 2 We can also use reflexive pronouns after most prepositions when the complement is the same as the subject.

Object pronouns after prepositions of place

After prepositions of place, we use object pronouns, not reflexive pronouns, e.g., She put the bag next to her on the seat. NOT next to herself

- 3 We can use reflexive pronouns to emphasize the subject, e.g., We decorated the house ourselves. (= we did it, not professional decorators)
- 4 by + reflexive pronoun = alone, on your / her, etc., own.
- 5 We use each other or one another for reciprocal actions, i.e., A does the action to B and B does the action to A.

it and there

- 1 It's 10 o'clock. It's 30 degrees today. It's five miles to the coast.
- 2 It was great to hear that you and Martina are getting married!
It used to be difficult to buy fresh pasta here, but now you can get it everywhere.
- 3 There have been a lot of storms recently.
There used to be a movie theater on that street.

- 1 We use it + be to talk about time, temperature, and distance.
- 2 We also use, e.g., it + be as a "preparatory" subject before adjectives. It was great to hear from you. NOT To hear from you was great.
- 3 We use there + be + noun to say if people and things are present or exist (or not). You cannot use It... here. NOT It used to be a movie theater on that street.

- a Circle the right pronoun. Check (✓) if both are possible.
They helped one/another/ themselves to prepare for the exam.

- 1 One / You can often tell where people are from by the way they speak.
- 2 Can you put my suitcase on the rack above yourself / you?
- 3 Emma and her sister look incredibly like each other / one another. Are they twins?
- 4 Steve's a really private person and he rarely talks about him / himself.
- 5 Either Suzie or Mark has left her / their bag behind, because there's only one in the back of the car.
- 6 When a person goes to live abroad, it may take them / him a while to pick up the language.
- 7 They / One say that eating tomatoes can help protect the body against certain diseases.

b Complete with a pronoun.

Don't tell him how to spell it. Let him figure it out by himself.

- 1 If anyone has not yet paid _____ tuition, _____ should go to registration immediately.
- 2 Isabel is very hot-tempered. She finds it very hard to control _____.
- 3 I wouldn't stay in that hotel—_____ say the rooms are tiny and the service is awful.
- 4 There is a total lack of communication between them. They don't understand _____ at all.
- 5 Did they enjoy _____ at the festival?
- 6 Are you going to have the apartment repainted or will you and Jo do it _____?
- 7 It's always the same with taxis. _____ can never find one when _____ need one!

c Complete with it or there.

There was a very interesting article about language learning in The Times yesterday.

- 1 _____'s illegal to text while you're driving. _____ used to be a lot of accidents caused by that.
- 2 Look. _____'s a spelling mistake in this word. _____ should be j, not g.
- 3 How many miles is _____ to San Diego from here?
- 4 _____'s scorching today. _____ must be at least 95 degrees.
- 5 _____'s no need to hurry. The train doesn't leave for a while.
- 6 _____'s not worth buying the paper today. _____'s absolutely nothing interesting in it.