

Frequently Misspelled Word List – Middle School

Ms. Johnson’s Class List – with study hints

To help with spelling, it’s good to know some basic rules (on an attached sheet) – like “i” before “e” except after “c,” and so on. It helps me to pronounce some oddly spelled words in my mind in the way they are spelled. I say them out loud correctly, but when I spell them I say Wed nes day for instance, instead of Whenzday so I spell Wednesday correctly.

Also, learning some common prefixes and suffixes will help. Then you just need to learn the root word and add the rest.

Homophone awareness and recognizing contractions and knowing they need apostrophes will go a long way to helping you spell correctly.

1. a lot	a lot is a lot of words (ok, it’s only two, but it’s definitely more than one)
2. across	I don’t know, maybe remember “cross” is in the word
3. allowed	allow with ed suffix
4. aloud	This has to do with hearing, so, keep in mind that “loud” is part of the word.
5. almost	Just keep in mind that three consonants in a row is weird and unnecessary, hence, one “l” in all. This holds true for already altogether, and almighty, as well.
6. already	See note above
7. American	Be sure to capitalize this because it’s a proper noun (a particular person, place, or thing).
8. beautiful	Think like in “Bruce Almighty” when he says bee eee a u-tiful. If you can’t remember that, notice that it’s has three vowels in a row, which is unusual – eau
9. because	If you can spell cause, you can spell because
10. bin	This has a different definition than been. It’s actually spelled just as it sounds.
11. been	This one is pronounced as bin, which is often why it’s misspelled. Maybe pronounce it in your head like an English person and say beeen.
12. believe	It’s not be live. This one follows the “i before e” rule
13. brought	This is a word that you simply need to remember. Several words have the ough combination for the “ah” sound . Brought, bought, ought and thought are examples. Annoying, isn’t it? Ough can also have the “oh” sound or the “uff” sound, or even the “oo” sound (through).
14. buy	To purchase – as opposed to by (near), or ‘bye (short for goodbye)
15. calendar	I pronounce this in my head as calen DAR. If you pronounce it calen DER, you will likely spell it that way incorrectly.
16. can’t	This word requires an apostrophe. It’s short for can not, and the o has been removed. Apostrophes replace missing letters , and go above where the missing letters would be.
17. cannot	This words cannot be split into two words (or at least should not be).
18. carefully	Not CARfully. Spell care, then add the suffixes ful and ly
19. cents	It doesn’t make sense to spell cents with an s. Maybe remember that a C note is money and cents has to do with money.
20. certain	Just learn it.
21. Christmas	Christmas celebrates Christ’s birth (mas), and it’s a proper noun, so, capitalize it.
22. close	This word (shut) gets confused with clothes (what you wear)
23. clothes	Although clothes are made from cloth, it’s not cloths, but rather clothes
24. college	If you spell it collage, you are going to school on a paper filled with a variety of

	pictures pasted together.
25. complete	Just learn it.
26. could've	Please please, please remember it's a contraction for could HAVE, not could OF. It's pronounced like it's couldof, but it's written could've. This same problem occurs with would've, and should've
27. country	Spell count, then add ry
28. didn't	You might say dint, but it's a contraction for did not, hence didn't
29. different	Pronounce it diff er ent and you'll not accidentally spell it different
30. does	Just remember it
31. doesn't	After you remember "does," remember that doesn't is a contraction and requires an apostrophe
32. don't	Contract for do not, so it needs an apostrophe
33. earth	Capitalize it only if talking about the planet earth, not the ground earth. It's a weird word because it has the silent "a"
34. either	This is an exception to the i before e rule, either remember it or misspell it
35. embarrass	Two r's and two s's.
36. English	Proper noun so must be capitalized
37. enough	Ack! This word is just one of those to remember. Ough here sounds like uff instead of "ah" or "oh" as in other ough words. Rough and tough also have ough with the "uff" sound.
38. everything	Everything put together is one word.
39. favorite	I pronounce this one fav o rite instead of fav rit.
40. finally	No e and two l's
41. foreign	There are a few words with the word reign (meaning ruling a monarchy) in it. foreign and sovereign are two of them. Reign in this sense rhymes with rain. The difficulty with these words is two-fold. First there is the silent "g," and then there is the ei that doesn't follow the "i before e" rule.
42. found	I'm not sure why this one gets misspelled so often
43. government	If you pronounce this correctly you will spell it correctly. It's not gover ment, it's govern ment
44. guarantee	Another one to just memorize.
45. Halloween	Capitalize it because it's a proper noun, and remember two l's and two e's
46. here	Here is a place. Keep in mind that it's spelled like "there," also a place.
47. hear	This word has to do with sound and hearing. To remember it, notice the word "ear" is in it.
48. heavy	Just remember it
49. heard	Past tense of hear. It has to do with "ear" and hearing. Without the "a," it's a group of animals.
50. herd	This is a group of animals and doesn't mean sound
51. height	Since it's such a weird word (doesn't follow "i before e" and it has eigh for the "i" sound, maybe just remember it's h followed by the word "eight," that is, if you know how to spell the word eight.
52. high	This is how tall something is, not "high" as in hello
53. hour	Don't forget the "h" in hour, even though it is silent.
54. however	This is one word
55. I'll	Contraction for "I will" which is why it is capitalized. (The pronoun "I" is always capitalized because it stands for your name.) Don't forget the apostrophe either.
56. instead	One word, and I've no tricks for remembering it, I just do.

57. it's	It's and its are often confused. The only time you use an apostrophe is if it's the contraction form of "it is." Although possessives (belonging to) usually require an apostrophe, that is not the case with pronouns like "it."
58. its	This is the possessive form of it. It means something belongs to "it." Its fur was matted, not it's fur was matted – which would mean it is fur was matted.
59. jewelry	Another word that if pronounced correctly will be spelled correctly. It's jewelry, not jewel ery. It's made from jewels after all.
60. knew	A form of know or knowledge. The "k" is silent. But then, you probably knew that.
61. know	Think of the word knowledge, or else pronounce it in your head as k-know if that helps.
62. let's	Let's don't forget that it's a contraction for "let us."
63. library	Pronunciation is the key. It's not a li berry, it's a li BRary
64. light	Watch out for the ight words. Don't spell them as ite words. (Light, blight, fight, might, night, right, sight, and tight are all ight words.)
65. loose	This means not tight. Don't spell it lose, which means to not win or to not be able to find something.
66. lose	This is to not win or to not find something. If you lose it, it's lost. If you loose it, it's not loost.
67. maybe	This is one word and means perhaps or possibly. It is sometimes written correctly as two words (may be), to mean might be.
68. might	Another ight word. See "light." A mite is a small bug or a small amount
69. misspell	Ironic, isn't it. The word requires 2 s's and 2 l's
70. neighbor	This word is an exception to the "i before e" rule and has the added difficulty of the gh combination. I guess if you know how to spell neigh (the sound a horse makes), just add "bor" to the end. If your neighbor made horse noises, you might be bored. And now I'm wondering what sound a hoarse horse would make.
71. new	This means not old. Many words have the ew combination (blew, chew, dew, few, etc.)
72. now	This means currently. Many words have the ow combination (cow, how, wow, etc.)
73. off	If it's not on, it's off (not of)
74. once	This means one time. It has the word "one" in it if that helps
75. our	As opposed to hour. This means it belongs to us; it's ours.
76. outside	One word (just like inside is one word)
77. people	Just remember this one
78. perhaps	Just like it sounds
79. physical	Sometimes "ph" makes the "f" sound, and sometimes "y" takes the place of "i" Why it's not spelled fisikal, I don't know. Fonix indeed.
80. peace	Think of peace on earth because they both have ea in them. The other piece means a portion.
81. piece	This means a portion of something, instead of the other peace which is an absence of conflict. At least it follows the "i before e" rule.
82. principal	This is the person in charge of a school. Keep in mind it ends in "pal" and the principal is supposed to be your pal.
83. principle	This is any other kind of principle – like a rule or law
84. probably	If you pronounce this correctly, you will probably spell it correctly. If you mispronounce it, you probly will misspell it also.
85. really	This word has the word "real" in it, with the suffix "ly"
86. receive	This word follows the "i before e" rule.

87. rhythm	What a crazy word. Just memorize it. One vowel with 5 consonants, and the vowel is a “y.” It sort of sounds the way it is spelled.
88. right	Opposite of left, or correct; not write.
89. said	Just remember it
90. sense	This is any kind of sense except the money kind. One other possible confusion is scents (slightly different pronunciation) that has to do with fragrance. It takes a sense of smell to recognize a scent.
91. separate	I remember this by thinking See pa (dad) rate. Se pa rate. If you think of it the way it is pronounced, you’ll spell it incorrectly as Se PER ate
92. several	Just practice and remember this one.
93. should	This is one of the old words (could, should, would) Get to know them all.
94. since	Not “sense”. If you pronounce it right, you will spell it right.
95. something	One word
96. special	I pronounce this word in my head in three syllables as “spec i al” Isn’t that speshul?
97. success	To spell this word successfully you will need two c’s and two s’s.
98. than	Than is used when comparing things (better than). Then has to do with time or sequence. Fist this, then that. Again, correct pronunciation is the key.
99. that’s	Contraction for that is
100. then	Sometimes confused with “than”
101. their	This belongs to them. If you keep in mind that an heir is one who inherits from their Dad, you’ll see that the word “heir” is in “their.”
102. there	This has to do with place. Notice that the word “here” is in the word “there.”
103. they’re	Of the three homophones, this is the one most often misspelled. “They’re” is a contraction for “they are.” It should be pronounced slightly differently too, and that will help you spell it correctly.
104. there’s	Contraction for “there is.”
105. though	It has the same spelling but different pronunciation of other “ough” words. This one sounds like an “oh,” but other words have it as an “ah” “ew” or “uff” sound. Dough is another word with “ough” that sounds like “oh”
106. thought	See #9 (brought) above
107. threw	This is the past tense of throw. It’s not the same as finished or doing through something.
108. through	This means finished or going through something. It’s not when you’ve thrown something.
109. to	This word is a preposition (showing direction). It’s the form most often used.
110. too	This form means “also” (may I go too?) or to an excessive degree (too much)
111. two	The number after one and before three.
112. tomorrow	Just memorize this one.
113. toward	Just remember it
114. truly	Even though it’s from the word “true,” drop the “e” before the ly
115. TV	Notice there are no periods with this abbreviation. It’s different than most
116. together	I think of this as “to get her”
117. United States	Be sure to capitalize both words
118. until	Only one “t”
119. usually	Usually this word is misspelled because it’s pronounced usally. If you pronounce it us u ally, you will spell it correctly as well.
120. we’re	This is a contraction of “we are.” Without the apostrophe it’s a form of the “be” verb (are, is, was, were, etc.) It should be pronounced slightly differently

	than “were”
121. wear	This is clothing you put on or wear, not to be confused with “where” which indicates place (notice the word “here” in “where”).
122. weather	This has to do with climate.
123. whether	This word has to do with choices. It should be pronounced slightly differently than “weather,” but it usually isn’t.
124. weird	Weird is a weird word because it doesn’t follow the “i before e” rule.
125. were	This does not mean “we are,” but rather it’s a verb form of the be verb. Were you there?
126. where	This indicates place (notice the word “here” in it). It’s not the clothes you have on.
127. witch	This is the person type of witch, typically depicted with a black hat and broom
128. which	This has to do with choice. It actually should be pronounced slightly differently than “witch.”
129. while	Pronounce it with the wh beginning sound and you’ll likely spell it correctly. It means during. “Wile” means the use of tricks.
130. Wednesday	Pronounce it Wed nes day when you spell it.
131. without	This is one word without a space
132. would’ve	Contraction for would have, <i>not</i> would of
133. write	This is what you do when you take pen or pencil to paper. The other right has to do with direction or correctness.
134. you’re	Similar to “they’re” in that it’s a contraction that is often mispronounced and therefore, misspelled. It means “you are” as opposed to belonging to you (your).
135. your	Belonging to you
136. occasionally	If you can spell occasion, just add ally to the end. If not, just memorize it.
137. allergies	No trick, just learn it
138. asthma	It sounds like it should be asma or azma, but it’s asthma
139. all right	It’s either all right or all wrong.
140. accommodate	To make something fit or work. Two c’s and 2 m’s
141. desperate	I pronounce this one in my head as des per ate
142. persuade	Not like it sounds at all. Per is normal, suade isn’t. Just practice and memorize.
143. belief	Not believe. You believe a belief. A belief is what you believe in.
144. accept	Means to receive willingly or hold as true. It’s often mispronounced as “except”
145. except	This means not included.
146. affect	This means to have an effect on.
147. effect	This is the outcome or a symptom.
148. angel	This is a heavenly being. You don’t have 90 degree angels
149. angle	This is a mathematical word for distance between lines.
150. of	Not off as it is sometimes misspelled.

Ough words on this list:

Brought “ah”
 Enough “uff”
 Though “oh”
 Thought “ah”
 Through “ew”