WORDS OF THE CHAMPIONS
YOUR KEY TO THE BEE
2020
GREETINGS, CHAMPIONS!

About this Study Guide
Do you dream of winning a school spelling bee, or even attending the Scripps National Spelling Bee? Words of the Champions is the official study resource of the Scripps National Spelling Bee, so you've found the perfect place to start. Prepare for a 2019 or 2020 classroom, grade-level, school, district, county, regional or state spelling bee with this list of 4,000 words.

All words in this book have been selected by the Scripps National Spelling Bee from our official dictionary, Merriam-Webster Unabridged (http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com).

Words of the Champions is divided into three difficulty levels, ranked One Bee (800 words), Two Bee (2,100 words) and Three Bee (1,200 words). These are great words to challenge you, whether you're just getting started in spelling bees or if you've already participated in several. At the beginning of each level, you'll find the School Spelling Bee Study List words. For any classroom, grade-level or school spelling bee, study the 125-word One Bee School Spelling Bee Study List, the 225-word Two Bee School Spelling Bee Study List and the 100-word Three Bee School Spelling Bee Study List: a total of 450 words.

Following the School Spelling Bee Study List in each level, you'll find pages marked “Words of the Champions.” Are you a school spelling bee champion or a speller advancing to compete beyond the school level? Study these pages to make sure you're prepared to do your best when these words are asked in the early rounds of competition. And remember, although spelling bees will start with words from this guide, they often end with words you haven't studied.

Each year, the Scripps National Spelling Bee will release a new version of Words of the Champions featuring 800 new words, including an all-new School Spelling Bee Study List.

Your spelling bee journey starts now, and taking the first step toward becoming a star athlete of the English language makes you a Champion. These Words are for you.

About the Scripps National Spelling Bee
The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. The purpose of the Scripps National Spelling Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all their lives. Visit spellingbee.com for more information about the Bee and to check if your school is enrolled. The Scripps National Spelling Bee is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL

ONE BEE
Great Words, Great Works Reading Program

Each year, the Scripps National Spelling Bee publishes its School Spelling Bee Study List to help students prepare for classroom and school-level spelling bees. These words come from a list of books carefully selected by the Bee’s editorial team. That list of books is called Great Words, Great Works. Find it at spellingbee.com/book-list.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL: ONE BEE

Words of the Champions

gradual  bedlam  gargantuan  gimmick  monopolize  target
ferocious  shortfall  salsa  flannel  water  angora
frequently  cowlick  chaotic  cucumber  marathon  snippet
permission  opinionated  shrimp  McMansion  omission  ascribe
slogan  turret  pigeon  lionize  spreadsheet  hodgepodge
towel  triumphant  satellite  headdress  badger
sundae  ornament  pigeon  system  fortification
organza  parentethic  favorite  pedigree  fashionista
towel  scold  parasite  ear  stubble
rooster  guardian  golden  carrot  boorish
garment  dwindled  orphan  golden  volcano
galaxy  curries 0R  *favorite  challenge  tarmac
tennis  tennis  OR  forefend  cascade  iteration
complaint _originate  dandelion  amulet
grumbling  rooster  golden  golden  nuance
fragile  fraught ambre  modesty  miracle
rice  sturdy  sunshine  system
slaughter  OR  forefend  OR  *favourite
ore  cascade  empty
ore  nail  IMG  system
reactionary  scruple  jealousy  freight
muscular  moxie  remedial  honeybee
drizzle  winnow  vouch  blemish
accurate  incentive  trivia  crumpet
pristine  shoulder  toadstool  bloop
accurate  admirer  shoulder  blizzard
studio  elegant  zeba  snowflake
illusionist 10R  *favorite  snowflake
emotional  primate  pilot  snowflake
visionary  evasive  zebra  snowflake
abstract  chia  butterscotch  harmonious
generator  tea  blanket  valiant
levity  raspberry  apron  lawyer
moisture  bogus  beagle  valiant
thoroughness  recoup  kidney  purse
peace  bookworm  wishful  raisin
astute  veteran  raven  trumpet
turtle  erase  fructose  bias
Pinkerton  handcuffs  Amazon  lettuce
fortune  spinal  companion  shamrock
sluggard  demolition  panorama  Americana

In Good Company

When it comes to spelling bee participants, the more the merrier! In fact, more than 11 million spellers participate in qualifying spelling bees throughout the country and around the world.

*chiefly British spelling
Cruising the Airwaves

The first broadcast of the Bee wasn't on television — it was on radio! It wasn't until 1946 that it was first televised. ESPN started airing the Scripps National Spelling Bee in 1994.

*chiefly British spelling
DIFFICULTY LEVEL: ONE BEE

Words of the Champions

The 93rd Scripps National Spelling Bee

Mark your calendar! The Scripps National Spelling Bee will take place from May 24-29, 2020, at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in Oxon Hill, Maryland, near Washington, D.C.
A Big Time Spellebrity

If you’ve watched the Bee on ESPN, you’ve probably seen his face. You’ve definitely heard his voice. We’re talking about the official pronouncer of the Bee, Dr. Jacques Bailly. He won the Scripps National Spelling Bee in 1980 and took up the role of pronouncer in 2003.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL
TWO BEE
Our Purpose
The purpose of the Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all their lives.
In 2019, eight spellers made Bee history and inspired a neologism: “Octochamps!” At about midnight on the night of the Finals, the dictionary admitted defeat to what the Bee declared “the most phenomenal assemblage of spellers in the history of this storied competition.” Rishik Gandhasri, Erin Howard, Saketh Sundar, Shruthika Padhy, Sohum Sukhatankar, Abhijay Kodali, Christopher Serrao and Rohan Raja ended the 2019 Bee in an eight-way tie.
hexagonal
litmus
seethe
antiquarian
phalanges
bachelorette
frontier
unctuous
fluoride
moorage
Minotaur
intermezzo
edification
vacuousness
epilepsy
importunate
recovery
recuperation
citroneilla
palliative
abhorrence
personnel
vexatious
faux
sophisticated
nebulous
genus
leagionnaire
sternutation
subcutaneous
alacrity
choreographer
leguminous
ceramics
mimetic
unabated
petrifying
specimen
interlocutor
machete
dulct
salubrious
rotisserie
paneer
**OR panir
omnibus
biscotti
calibrate
appellation
duodenum
valorous
isotopic
squander
prenuptial
suculent
bedraggled
rectitude
uranium
inundate
wunderkind
filial
wearisome
visage
fascinator
beaucoup
banal
seismologist
innovator
bursary
hallowed
apogee
hiatus
freesia
exoneration
duvet
turpitude
platitude
nobiliary
commerce
keratitis
honorific
kookaburra
napoleon
superlative
manifest
sarcophagus
surrogate
terabyte
uncouth
onerous
macrococ
macrocos
sarcophagus
macrococ
sarcophagus

Who Knew?
The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation’s largest and longest-running educational program.

**preferred spelling
elucidate  spatula  triglycerides  stalwart  bumptious  farcical  ghastly  parkour  fealty  perilous  steroid  gullibility  tarantula  cantankerous  vitriolic  crinoline  debris  armaments  versatile  subtlety  hangar  verbena  zirconium  ventriloquy  circumflex  calligram  eczema  theomachy  fibula  aberration  necrotic  eminent  demographics  Jurassic

myoglobin  frugal  achromatic  soprano  cutis  hyrax  truncheon  billabong  bariatrics  throughout  propulsion  assailant  charioteer  solicit  melismatic  spurious  tempeh  statistician  ibuprofen  injurious  anglophile  prominent  archetype  substitute  quiddity  karst  Brigadoon  vestibule  ballyhooed  arpeggio  lupine  resuscitate

approbatory  catalepsy  notoriety  subterranean  aubergine  attribution  platonism  assumption  entrepreneur  resplendence  aphasia  hermitage  permutation  conference  woebegone  placentation  Holstein  Galahad  jadeite  peripheral  elevator  chaperonage  frittata  vandalize  chancellors  pauper

macular  simpatico  adhesion  rennet  pinnacle  avalanche  candelabrum  vacillate  phenotype  trapanation  Holstein  tardigrade  varsity  scholarship  filbert  Holstein  Galahad  jadeite  peripheral  ladder  chaperonage

epoch  dumbwaiter  allergenic  vocabulary  vassal  panary  tangerine  pervasive  haphazard  shenanigans  inclusion  physicans  tempura  reggae  futility  untenable  feudalism  riveting  apothecary  summary  brogue  sue  koto  jingoes  satchel  evanescent  diversify  exemplar  marquis  trefoil  designer

leisure  vague  wharf  alternation  fraternity  cataclysmic  metatarsal  bereavement  carbohdrates  sesame  palatable  gratis  nonvolatile  juvenalia  fomentation  reprisal  astrobleme  sabotage  absolution  putabaga  espousal  virulence  allocable  effraction  limousine  drupiferous  organelle  osprey  elusive  disruptive  disproportionate

did you know?

In 2002, the Bee introduced the written test at the national finals for the first time. The vocabulary portion of the test came along in 2013.
From Around the World

Most spellers at the Scripps National Spelling Bee are from the United States, but spellers also come from American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Department of Defense Schools in Europe as well as the Bahamas, Canada, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan and South Korea.

**preferred spelling
The First Bee

In 1925, the first national spelling bee was organized by the Louisville Courier-Journal with a total of nine spellers. Frank Neuhauser won the championship title after correctly spelling "gladiolus."
Did You Know?
The Scripps National Spelling Bee was featured in the Academy Award-nominated documentary Spellbound.

**preferred spelling

**volary
OR volery
There's a First Time for Everything
Hugh Tosteson was the first winner from outside of the fifty U.S. states. He lived in Puerto Rico.

*chiefly British spelling
Older than Sliced Bread

The National Spelling Bee was first held in 1925. That makes us older than sliced bread, bubble gum and even trampolines.

**preferred spelling**

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**DIFFICULTY LEVEL: TWO BEE**

Words of the Champions

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- cabaret
- frivoulous
- eschew
- ventricle
- induction
- vanguard
- portrait
- tepidity
- meridian
- spontaneity
- platinum
- nonnegotiable
- disparate
- artifice
- cymbals
- nucleated
- exorbitant
- reparations
- constabulary
- speculate
- stratosphere
-noxious
- arbitrary
- quasar
- Podunk
- seize
- pathos
- equinox
- prosperous
- sclerosis
- ablaut
- anabolic
- jimberjawed
- toilsome
- tempestuous
- univocal
- avarice
- bouclé
- OR boucle
- thoroughbred
- potassium
- peculate
- treatise
- undergird
- oomphah
- adulation
- minuitia
- anticipatory
- chinook
- indigent
- merganser
- sternum
- par excellence
- thwartwise
- tae kwon do
- fenestrated
- lugubrious
- isosceles
- hoity-toity
- Mesopotamian
- Muzak
- vicinity
- merely
- abominable
- procedure
- limpid
- syllabus
- animus
- trillium
- Dalmatian
- ufology
- cholera
- **minuscule**
- OR miniscule
- OR minuscule
- jeepney
- volucrine
- populace
- vetiver
- parameters
- inflammable
- pyrotechnics
- mollify
- cohesive
- stigmata
- prolix
- mitochondria
- onomatopoeia
- lavender
- tensile
- gaudery
- luxuriate
- cavalcade
- gladiatorial
- machination
- pugnacious
- peruse
- alluvial
- epicurean
- derelict
- revelation
- arithmetic
- depredation
- ignominious
- auction
- assiduous
- diligence
- bodega
- bona fide
- gustatory
- obliterare
- legalese
- rudiments
- monitory
- roustabout
- trifle
- ambrosial
- simultaneity
- gastronome
- episteme
- encroach
- acacia
- tetanus
- scarlatina
- ciao
- genome
- inviolable
- contrite
- patrician
- patrician
- concite
- patrician
- enervate
- auricular
- settee
- legitimately
- inoculate
- ectoplasm
- olfactory
- en masse
- stroganoff
- procrastinate
- purification
- plantain
- aperture
- rhythmically
- dovecote
- bountiful
- pantheon
- marimba
- conduit
- bravado
- beneficent
- indist
- epitome
- annulment
- tresspass
- benefit
- venison
- besmirch
- surimi
- besmirch
- tresspass
- commandeer
- bonsai
- university
- celestial
- preposterous
- extend
- cogently
- settee
- artesan
- stratification
- tomatatowk
- artesian
- mendacious
- gubernatorial
- pungent
- billiards
- mandrill

**Older than Sliced Bread**

The National Spelling Bee was first held in 1925. That makes us older than sliced bread, bubble gum and even trampolines.

**preferred spelling**
DIFFICULTY LEVEL: TWO BEE

Words of the Champions

gibbous extracurricular punctuation nautilus thievery dragoon yuzu ritziness gazette continuum pachyderm symposium floribunda salience molasses classical fungible Gothamite affable dopamine pitiful ammunition pariah prodigious denominator prorogue fecond laceration nexus decor duchy pagoda establishment ruminate sympathy puniness lingua franca triforium **déjà vu extemporaneous impermeable trepidation collision scarab veganism humerus vagabonds variegated volition gossamer vincible factitious sculpture annuity quid pro quo curmudgeon cushion tutelage domiciled theorem OR décor accrual reticulated authenticate fiscal obligé logographic armistice cryogenic catalyst thespian submersible **chute arduous carnitas bulgogi fibromyalgia terrier captivated onus precursor mochi feign dementia voià viscount plague preferential bazooka complacency kraken stanzaic ungetatable unilaterally ordinance arsine unconscionable Pembroke liquefaction palazzo miasma concoct medicum javelin spoonerism complicit gyrocopter **medieval or mediaeval tarsier enunciate habanero licensure Francophone convivium atrium italicization preliminary echoed oriel pilgrimages profligate aloes aloes loquacious prosthetic compunction decumbiture OR voila OR mediaeval tarsier enunciate habanero licensure Francophone convivium atrium italicization preliminary echoed oriel pilgrimages profligate aloes aloes loquacious prosthetic compunction decumbiture

Find the Bee on Social Media

Connect with us! If you’re 13 or older, follow the Scripps National Spelling Bee on social media. You can find us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. Use #spellingbee.

**preferred spelling
**Bee's Bookshelf**

The Bee's Bookshelf is the official online book club of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. It's a place to explore the connection between stories and spelling. Each month, we read a new book together and share insights, so sign up to receive our monthly emails to find out which book is next. Visit spellingbee.com/bookshelf to learn more.

**preferred spelling**

comestibles
stenographer
mezzanine
lozenge
tedious
resonate
suspicion
repudiate
emporium
Victorian
forestallment
Iberian
fluency
invective
occur
claustrophobia
idyllic
coralline
abhenry
chromosome
braggart
relentlessly
opalescence
polyglot
velociraptor
puree
manticore
chronometer
cherubic
wherewithal
inquisitor
chemistry
quandary
equanimity

thermos
acrylics
imminent
**intransigent**
hieroglyphics
oculus
dubiously
mariposa
teleology
bowyer
infatuation
abyssal
chambray
rhombus
revendicate
jonquil
pensive
quarantine
schnittzel
rialto
delphinium
obelisk
diurnal
prejudice
bombastic
cistern
exquisite
epsilon
petroglyphs
specials
un快来来
binoculars
zodiac
artery
ornithology
apropos

pepsimum
amateurish
**intransigent**
pearlescent
tautology
misconstrue
sagacious
mammalian
draconian
trebuchet
ransom
iaonic
monocle
apocalypse
tombstone
un快来来
anticoagulant
euro
Gouda
endocrine
presumptuous
doubt
presumptuous

infarction
cedar
udon
gourd
verbatim
joule
niacin
courage
arabesque
tepha
lackadaisical
silhouette
dismal
consortium
tuition
multifarious
unanimous
soporific
tupelo

interim
definiendum
rhubarb
neutron
epigram
marmoset
panache
lucrative
bardolatry
scrimshaw
ardolatry
nimbostatus
vertebral
racial
acronymy
acrimony
certitude
mimeograph
territory
ultimatum
ambidexterity
mortgage
exhaust
baroque
strong
strengthen
ostacism
nachtily
tincture
ospoag
foliage

**DIFFICULTY LEVEL: TWO BEE**

Words of the Champions

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cedar
udon
gourd
verbatim
joule
niacin
courage
arabesque
tepha
lackadaisical
silhouette
dismal
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tincture
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foliage

**preferred spelling**
**DIFFICULTY LEVEL: TWO BEE**

Words of the Champions

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<td>sequester</td>
<td>hyacinth</td>
<td>OR baklava</td>
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<td>sufficiency</td>
<td>segmentate</td>
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<td>salinity</td>
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**Did You Know?**


**preferred spelling**
DIFFICULTY LEVEL

THREE BEE
Our Namesake

Although the first national spelling bee occurred in 1925, it wasn’t until 1941 that Scripps-Howard Newspapers, now known as The E.W. Scripps Company, assumed leadership of the program.

*chiefly British spelling
**preferred spelling
On a Global Scale

At just 12 years old, Jody-Anne Maxwell, from Kingston, Jamaica, was our first international champion. She won the Bee in 1998.

*chiefly British spelling  
**preferred spelling
Want a new way to study? The Word Club app, launching in October 2019 in the App Store and the Google Play Store, will make mastering **Words of the Champions** fun! Choose from multiple different quiz and study options for both spelling and vocabulary, all with expert audio pronunciations from the Bee’s official pronouncer, Dr. Jacques Bailly.

**preferred spelling

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: THREE BEE

**Words of the Champions**

exaugural
gaiardia
caryatid
helical
schefflera
contrapposto
temblor
insouciance
catarrh
quattrocento
millegrain
canaille
verisimilitude
Keynesian
akaryote
azulejo
hauberk
bouillon
tarpaulin
cephalopod
pulchritude
pekoe
patois
Rubicon
bourgeois
aerophilatelic
ankh
contumelious
vicissitudes
lilliputian
Sbrinz
kathakali
cozen
oxalis
myeloma
lebensraum
mufti
dirigible
sурcease
ascetic
oolite
revanche
megrim
podagra
palaver
luthier
yttriferous
vermeil
Ouagadougou
bibliopegist
plagiarism
holobenthic
boutonniere
anodyne
saccharide
boulevardier
quokka
lidocaine
contretemps
a posteriori
scabulous
angalphy
recoignonter
OR reconnoiter
realpolitik
colloque
onychorrhexis
paraffin
vigneron
tannined
spiedini
anthinga
jai alai
Rastafarian
succussion
avifauna
joropo
toxicosis
colporteur
OR colporter
agitprop
Achernar
cassock
meringue
mackinaw
sambal
yuloh
hermeneutics
tikkun
macaque
lassitude
oeuvre
altazimuth
Castilian
trichinosis
ecclesiology
teppanyaki
 cicatriz
somnolent
intonaco
realia
grison
phulkari
garrulous
paroxysm
communiqué
Chantilly
jacquard
sorghum
guilloche
appositive
dirndl
latke
martinet
asterion
hypallage
solenoid
veridical
threnody
Jacobean
ballotage
ocotillo
dubitante
disciform
mizuna
trichotillomania
huipil
mustelid
prestidigitation
soupçon
diphtheria
bdelloid
nugatory
commoriens
immiscible
toroidal
bialy
appurtenances
corsair
zabaglione
velamen
sporran
clematis
kente
raine
riparian
**accoutrement
OR accouterment
radicchio
dudgeon
nitzid
Basenji
concinnate
Stradivarius
synecdoche
tulsi
sebaceous
papeterie
litigious
phytphilous
meunière
hilum
fanfaronade
malachite
urticaria
capsaicin
ptosis
pejerrey
horologist
speleothem
euripus
samarium
variscite
bolide
vervain
chanoyu
hamadryad
calumnus
escabeche
ad hominem
oubliette
béchamel
repoussage
otacoustic
naranjilla
elegiac
pâtissier
OR patissier
Yeatsian
surfeit
limicolous
girandole
googol
étagère
anechoic
leonine
laulau
Gruyère
propiroceptive
oppugn
macropterous
euphonious
retinoscopy
**DIFFICULTY LEVEL: THREE BEE**

**Words of the Champions**

<table>
<thead>
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*chiefly British spelling  
**preferred spelling*
We often get questions about why we use words that may not appear to be English. Most words in the English language are words that we borrowed from other languages. We borrowed them, used them, and now call them our own.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL: THREE BEE

Words of the Champions

demulcent  embolus  cabocho  après  syzygy  diamanté

goosander  caveola  zydeco  consanguine  tatterdemalion  sphygmometer

kwashiorkor  farina  heurisch  bibimbap  susurrus  **kibitzer

lecithin  heuristic  zydeco  consanguine  tatterdemalion  **kibitzer

ceology  nudibranch  aquiclude  bibimbap  susurrus  **kibitzer

plenipotentiary  triquetra  demitasse  potwalloper  OR bienvenu  auteur

foudroyant  paramahamsa  demitasse  potwalloper  OR bienvenu  labefaction

sesquipedalian  duello  tomalley  kaffeeklatsch  estival

exupgnable  fied  bouffant  peregriination  OR aestival  dulcinea

proficity  tomography  bas-relief  paraquat  loup-garou  nainsook

yosenabe  effleugre  rhizome  prana  empennag  querida

funori  chastushka  Wensleydale  abattoir  lysozyme  paillard

piloncillo  bergère  erubescen  glosseptae  grimthorpe  gazoz

xiphias  Erewhonian  estovers  glossopetrae  thaumaturge  Glaswegian

étouffée  rhyot  rembrandt  diktat  pinioned  stannum

OR etouffe  orogeny  bonspiel  llanero  fouveret

degauss  Pepsian  hackamore  Machiavellian  vennenate  tralatitious

tussock  esplanade  blancmange  glaucomatous  badinage  denouement

lanolated  gesellschaf  simularum  haori  saccadic  hortatory

linnet  tamari  cnidarian  rheostat  mignonette  maquette

embouchure  arenaceous  capotasto  harioation  coadjutor  obliscence

plangency  panettone  Panagia  thylacine  chifonade  autophagy

apocryphal  tmesis  nockerl  cenote  haricot  Airedale

tamarack  clerihew  rhabdoid  griffonage  Luddite  potager

puerilely  tsukupin  apodyterium  fossiliferous  wickiup  malleolus

obloquy  kowataka  apoplexy  calefacient  nisse  impugn

dhole  Parmentier  verdure  obdurate  brouillon  derecho

**budgerigar  rugose  fait accompli  nunchaku  brouillon  solipsist

OR budgereegah  brume  dreikanter  senryu  sinophile

OR budgerygah  hiortdahlti  penicillin  cormorant  solarmon  sinophile

étrou  extravasate  pendeloque  gnonon  harmanatt  **incarnadine

ululate  incunabula  beelzebub  pinetum  harmanatt  **incarnadine

sororal  cordiller  rhinorrhagia  brucellosis  wastewir

epideictic  zazen  Foley  wastewier  OR encarnadine

One Dictionary to Rule them All
The only source for the Scripps National Spelling Bee is the Merriam-Webster Unabridged Online Dictionary.
(http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/)

**preferred spelling