

Gold or ClaroRead so that they can hear their errors at the same time as seeing them. Another method is to read the essay aloud.



GO to www.dnamatters.co.uk/resources/ and search for 'Text-to-Speech'

Additional information and resources for developing your grammar skills can be found on the Internet. Some useful examples include:

- The English Grammar Card by Joseph Donovan: <http://bit.ly/JDonovanEnglishGrammarCard>
- BBC Skillswise – grammar: www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic-group/sentence-grammar
- Grammarbook – grammar rules: www.grammarbook.com/english_rules.asp
- Quick and dirty tips – grammar girl: www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl

Spelling

Even if you have learnt many strategies for coping with your spelling, there will still be words that give you trouble. The aim of this section is to outline **some basic spelling strategies** that are helpful to most dyslexic students. The most important thing to remember is that you **can learn to spell words** that are **important to you**, and you should never become discouraged or give up. Remember that spelling is largely visual and that you can only be sure of the spelling of a word by looking at it.

Spelling strategies

Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check

One very helpful spelling strategy, which is multi-sensory and which has been used over many years, is the **Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check** method of learning to spell. It involves visual, auditory and kinaesthetic processing. There is a template for this method on the **Digital-Download**:



GO to **Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check Template**

You should select **6–12 words** to learn **each week**. These words should be the words **that you want to be able to spell correctly**. They will probably be taken from your subject area or from new areas of professional practice. The method relies on a **multi-sensory approach** (see Chapter 2) to the learning task and **regular practice**. On a template, write the words you wish to learn in the first column. The remaining columns should be used over the following week to practise the words at least every second day (see Table 9.12).

TABLE 9.12 A range of spelling strategies

Original Word	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Final Check
business					
separate					
necessary					
accommodation					
haphazard					
telephone					
doubtful					
circle					
carpenter					
solicitor					
genius					
ingenious					

Firstly, look carefully at the word you are trying to learn. In this first step, you will be actually using some of the other strategies mentioned below. You need to **look at the structure of the word**, to see if there are any **whole words within the word** or any **groups of letters** that you can remember as a unit. Another way of looking at the structure is to break the word into syllables.

Secondly, say the word aloud to yourself, **sounding out any sections** you wish to specially remember.

Thirdly, cover the word and then write it in the second column. Do not copy the word but cover it and write it. The aim is to put the words in the long-term memory so that they can be recalled correctly.

Finally, check the word against the original word in the first column. If you have made a mistake, cross it out and write it in full above the mistake.

Continue with this pattern until all columns are used. Do **NOT** try to learn any more than **12** words at one time. Some students prefer to learn only **4–6** at one time.

The words in Table 9.12 have been chosen specifically to demonstrate some of the strategies you might find useful.

Locating a whole word within a larger word

Many students find that if they can locate a **whole word or two within** a larger word, they can remember the larger word. The first two words in Table 9.12 are good examples of words that can be remembered by this strategy. In the word **'business'** there are two smaller words, **'bus'** and **'i'**. In the word **'separate'** there are also two, **'a'** and **'rat'**. Don't forget to use **bright colours or different-coloured highlighting** to identify whole words within words.

Using mnemonics to remember spelling

Mnemonics (a Greek word meaning memory trigger, and also difficult to spell) can also be used on the two words analysed above. One way of remembering **business** is the mnemonic: **'I catch the bus to business every day'**. This method combines both the **whole words in the word** with the **memory trick**. A way of remembering **separate** is the mnemonic: **'there is a rat in separate'**. Whatever method you choose, if it works, you have done yourself the favour of learning two commonly misspelt words. Mnemonics can also be used to learn the next two words in the list, which are again difficult and commonly misspelt words. A mnemonic for **necessary** is: **'it is necessary to wear one collar and two socks'**. Another for **accommodation** is that: **'good accommodation has two helpings of cake and two helpings of meat'**.

Breaking words into sections

'Haphazard' is a good example of a word that is best remembered by breaking it into sections. Otherwise you could be confused by the **'ph'** in the middle of the word, which invariably means that the sound **'f'** is indicated, as in **'telephone'**. The operative word to remember here is **hazard** with the prefix **'hap'** meaning chance. If you remember it like this, you will never make a mistake of mispronouncing or misspelling it.

Identifying prefixes, suffixes and root words

Identifying commonly used **prefixes, suffixes** and **root words** can greatly assist in remembering their spelling. The word **'telephone'** referred to in the last paragraph is a good example of this. The **prefix 'tele'** means distance while the root word **'phone'** means sound. By recognising this **common prefix**, the spelling of many other common words, such as **'television'** and **'telegraph'**, becomes much easier. The recognition of the root word **'phone'**, meaning sound, helps with the spelling of many other common words such as **'phonic'** and **'phoneme'**. The **suffix 'ful'** is a good example of how early identification of the fact that it only has one **'l'** as a suffix, but is spelt with two **'l's** when used **as a word on its own**, helps with the spelling of many words such as **peaceful, helpful, doubtful** and **bountiful**. The PrefixSuffix website provides a list of commonly used prefixes, suffixes and root words: www.prefixsuffix.com/.

You may like to use these as a base for building some new words and learning their spelling.

Using word families

Many words can be grouped into word families for easy recognition. Once you have identified a word as belonging to a particular family you will always recognise it and remember how

to spell it. This is similar to the strategy mentioned previously, in that a **word family** can be identified by a particular prefix, suffix or root word.

The name of the study of the structure of words is known as **morphology**. Once you have recognised that the words '**cycle**' and '**circle**' are derived from the same Greek word, it makes them much easier to remember and spell. Many dyslexic students have problems with words ending in '**er**' or '**or**' such as **builder** and **doctor**. To help you remember these, you might like to put them into two families where most of the '**er**' words refer to **trades** such as '**carpenter**', '**plumber**' and '**carrier**' and most of the '**or**' words to **professions** such as '**doctor**', '**solicitor**' and '**professor**'. This categorisation may well upset a lot of people such as '**lecturers**' and '**teachers**', who certainly think they have professional roles, but like all spelling rules there are always exceptions and if grouping words into families helps you learn how to spell them, **that is all that is important**.

Word families also help you not to confuse two **different words, which sound similar** such as '**genius**' and '**ingenious**'. '**Genius**' comes from the **Latin** for '**creative principle**' and is in the word family with '**genus, genial, genital** and **genesis**'. On the other hand '**ingenious**' comes from the **Latin** for '**natural talent**'.

If you wish to create your own personalised word family lists, examples are available on the Digital-Download.

GO to Example of Personalised Word Family Lists



A spelling programme

If you feel that your spelling requires a more intensive programme, try any of the following:

- A Multisensory Spelling Programme for Priority Words (MUSP) appears on the accompanying website of *Making Dyslexia Work for You* by Vicki Goodwin and Bonita Thomson (2012): <http://bit.ly/MakingDyslexiaWorkMultiSensorySpelling>.
- A list of commonly mispronounced words is provided in the Digital-Download. Use one of the spelling strategies introduced above as part of a spelling programme.

GO to List of Commonly Mispronounced Words



- BBC Skillswise is an excellent Internet resource including games and activities to help you to develop your spelling skills: www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic-group/spelling.

Assistive technology for spelling and grammar

There are many spellcheckers, online dictionaries and smartphone/tablet Apps which students may find useful. A table listing excellent Assistive Software for spelling and grammar is included in the Digital Download.



GO to Assistive Software for Spelling and Grammar



GO to www.dnamatters.co.uk/resources/ and search for 'Proofreading' and 'Text-to-Speech'

CASE STUDY

Harry was a science graduate doing his PGCE. He struggled with his dyslexic difficulties but was both motivated and determined. He wanted to make sure that he could spell all the main words that he needed in his science lessons and also be able to mark out errors in his students' work. He made a list of all the words he wanted to learn, some of which were misspellings identified by his LexAble Global AutoCorrect software. He worked on learning about 10–12 of them a week with his dyslexia tutor, using the 'Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check' method. This involves a spelling test at the end of the week and a dictation, with the words in context, at the end of a fortnight. If they were in his long-term memory at the end of the fortnight he felt he knew them, but periodically checked to see if he could spell them. In this way, learning a new set of 10–12 words a week and putting ones he found difficult or had spelled incorrectly back into the learning list, he built up a repertoire of words he could spell and recognise competently and confidently.

As well as this he also wanted to improve his grammar. He used to read the newspaper on the train on the way to his dyslexia tutorial and started to mark out the content words – nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs – with different-coloured highlighters. He also used Grammarly software, where each suggested correction identifies a short explanation and examples.

Over the year his ability to differentiate between the different parts of speech improved dramatically. He is now a confident science teacher.

Punctuation

Instructing the jury Judge Rutter got to the crux of the matter with superb clarity when he said you have to determine where the line has to be drawn between the force expected in a rugby match in which a person taking part is deemed to consent and that to which he is not deemed to consent.

Try reading the passage above. It shows why punctuation is important. Punctuation helps the reader to understand the writer's intended meaning, and, furthermore, allows the writer to be precise in expression.

The use of correct punctuation has been popularised through Lynne Truss's book *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* (2009), which has become a bestseller. The title of the book is explained