

Spelling Assessment Framework



ICAS – Spelling is an independent spelling assessment developed in partnership with Macquarie Dictionary. It assesses and reports students' skills at spelling words in four different contexts: dictation, applying rules and conventions, proofreading, and error correction (except for the Introductory Paper). The words tested range from frequently used/common words with simple spelling patterns to less frequently used/less common and technical words with difficult or unusual spelling patterns. These words can be organised under four types of spelling knowledge: visual, phonological, morphemic and etymological.

The level of difficulty of the words assessed are listed below. Each table provides examples of the kinds of words that may be assessed in each paper. The papers will contain some words that are easy to spell for students at the year level, some that are of medium difficulty and some that are quite challenging.

For all papers except the Introductory Paper, ICAS – Spelling assesses and reports the spelling knowledge and ability in four contexts: **Dictation, Rules & Conventions, Proofreading and Error Correction**. For the Introductory Paper, ICAS – Spelling does not assess or report in the context of Error Correction.

INTRODUCTORY PAPER	Easy (approx. 12 items)	Medium (approx. 20 items)	Hard (approx. 8 items)
Visual knowledge (using memory of the visual features of a word) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammatical words eg prepositions, pronouns Sight words Homophones and commonly confused words Words with silent letters 	for eye to/two know	that some saw/sore/soar hour	above children quite/quiet wrap
Phonological knowledge (using sound-letter relationships) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vowel/vowel digraphs eg ai, ea, ee, oo, ou, ie/ei Vowel/consonant digraphs eg ow, ay, ar, er, qu Vowel/consonant trigraphs eg ear, our, air, igh Long vowel sounds with silent 'e' Consonant/consonant digraphs eg sh, ch, th, ph, wh Two-letter consonant blends eg gr, pr, bl, cl, st, ct, nt, nd Consonant trigraphs and three-letter consonant blends eg thr, spr, scr, tch Confusion between c/s/ss, g/j/dge Confusion between single and double consonants 	rain star hair sore cheek grin split germ happy	scream shadow fright shave whose please itch judge sudden	aloud quarrel journey conclude elephant attract stretch success disease
Morphological knowledge (using parts of words to build word families) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding suffixes eg s/es, ed, ing, ion, ous, ment, ful, ence/ance, ible/able. Rules and conventions which may be tested include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing when to retain and when to drop silent 'e' Doubling the final consonant Changing 'y' to 'i' Changing 'd' to 's' or 't' Adding prefixes eg un, in, dis, mis Adding multiple affixes 	aces funny flies unhappy unkindly	caring swimming laziness dislike usefully	completion admitted reliable misbehave impatiently
Etymological knowledge (using word origins and derivations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign words Word elements derived from foreign words, including subject-specific or technical terms 	cent	pizza quarter	garage bicycle
PAPER A	Easy (approx. 12 items)	Medium (approx. 20 items)	Hard (approx. 8 items)
Visual knowledge (using memory of the visual features of a word) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammatical words eg prepositions, pronouns Sight words Homophones and commonly confused words Words with silent letters 	over said saw/sore/soar know	who children past/passed lamb	through beautiful quite/quiet bristle
Phonological knowledge (using sound-letter relationships) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vowel/vowel digraphs eg ai, ea, ee, oo, ou, ie/ei Vowel/consonant digraphs eg ow, ay, ar, er, qu Vowel/consonant trigraphs eg ear, our, air, igh Long vowel sounds with silent 'e' Consonant/consonant digraphs eg sh, ch, th, ph, wh Two-letter consonant blends eg gr, pr, bl, cl, st, ct, nt, nd Consonant trigraphs and three-letter consonant blends eg thr, spr, scr, tch Confusion between c/s/ss, g/j/dge Confusion between single and double consonants 	green show pair stare chain help scream germ happy	please turn search alive thousand slippery stretch badge swallow	believe quantity frighten attitude trophy pleasant shred exciting disease
Morphological knowledge (using parts of words to build word families) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding suffixes eg s/es, ed, ing, ion, ous, ment, ful, ence/ance, ible/able. Rules and conventions which may be tested include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing when to retain and when to drop silent 'e' Doubling the final consonant Changing 'y' to 'i' Changing 'd' to 's' or 't' Adding prefixes eg un, in, dis, mis Adding multiple affixes 	houses sunny flies unhappy unkindly	caring hopping happiness mistreat usefully	argument admitted reliable attention disappear unpopularity
Etymological knowledge (using word origins and derivations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign words Word elements derived from foreign words, including subject-specific or technical terms 	cent	chef bicycle	garage parallel
PAPERS B & C	Easy (approx. 15 items)	Medium (approx. 20 items)	Hard (approx. 10 items)
Visual knowledge (using memory of the visual features of a word) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammatical words eg prepositions, pronouns Sight words Homophones and commonly confused words Words with silent letters 	who children past/passed lamb	through beautiful quite/quiet bristle	themselves grammar lightning/lightening autumn
Phonological knowledge (using sound-letter relationships) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vowel/vowel digraphs eg ai, ea, ee, oo, ou, ie/ei Vowel/consonant digraphs eg ow, ay, ar, er, qu Vowel/consonant trigraphs eg ear, our, air, igh Long vowel sounds with silent 'e' Consonant/consonant digraphs eg sh, ch, th, ph, wh Two-letter consonant blends eg gr, pr, bl, cl, st, ct, nt, nd Consonant trigraphs and three-letter consonant blends eg thr, spr, scr, tch Confusion between c/s/ss, g/j/dge Confusion between single and double consonants 	please turn search alive thousand slippery stretch badge bottom	believe quantity frighten attitude trophy complain scrawny issue tomorrow	threaten preserve encourage participate physical estimate throughout original disappear
Morphological knowledge (using parts of words to build word families) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding suffixes eg s/es, ed, ing, ion, ous, ment, ful, ence/ance, ible/able. Rules and conventions which may be tested include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing when to retain and when to drop silent 'e' Doubling the final consonant Changing 'y' to 'i' Changing 'd' to 's' or 't' Adding prefixes eg un, in, dis, mis Adding multiple affixes 	caring hopping happiness mistreat usefully	argument admitted reliable attention disappear unpopularity	continuous rebellion studious decision unusual insignificance
Etymological knowledge (using word origins and derivations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign words Word elements derived from foreign words, including subject-specific or technical terms 	chef bicycle	garage parallel	restaurant symphony
PAPERS D & E	Easy (approx. 15 items)	Medium (approx. 25 items)	Hard (approx. 10 items)
Visual knowledge (using memory of the visual features of a word) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammatical words eg prepositions, pronouns Sight words Homophones and commonly confused words Words with silent letters 	through beautiful quite/quiet bristle	themselves grammar autumn	although rhythm stationary/stationery subtle
Phonological knowledge (using sound-letter relationships) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vowel/vowel digraphs eg ai, ea, ee, oo, ou, ie/ei Vowel/consonant digraphs eg ow, ay, ar, er, qu Vowel/consonant trigraphs eg ear, our, air, igh Long vowel sounds with silent 'e' Consonant/consonant digraphs eg sh, ch, th, ph, wh Two-letter consonant blends eg gr, pr, bl, cl, st, ct, nt, nd Consonant trigraphs and three-letter consonant blends eg thr, spr, scr, tch Confusion between c/s/ss, g/j/dge Confusion between single and double consonants 	believe quantity frighten attitude trophy complain scrawny issue tomorrow	threaten preserve encourage participate physical estimate throughout original disappear	maintenance turbulent courageous compromise chemistry spectacular synchronise fascination accommodation
Morphological knowledge (using parts of words to build word families) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding suffixes eg s/es, ed, ing, ion, ous, ment, ful, ence/ance, ible/able. Rules and conventions which may be tested include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing when to retain and when to drop silent 'e' Doubling the final consonant Changing 'y' to 'i' Changing 'd' to 's' or 't' Adding prefixes eg un, in, dis, mis Adding multiple affixes 	argument admitted reliable attention disappear unpopularity	continuous rebellion studious decision unusual insignificance	achievement referred apologise contention independent confidentiality
Etymological knowledge (using word origins and derivations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign words Word elements derived from foreign words, including subject-specific or technical terms 	garage oxygen	restaurant parallel	bazaar circumference