Year 5 & 6 Spelling Rules

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| Rule | Guidance | Examples |
| Words ending -cious or -tious | If the root words ends in -ce, the ending sound is **usually** spelt as -cious. E.g. vice🡪vicious, grace 🡪 gracious.  *Exception: anxious.* | Vicious, precious, conscious, cautious, fictitious, infectious. |
| Words ending -cial or -tial | -cial is common after a vowel letter and -tial is common after a consonant letter but there are some exceptions.  *Exception: initial, financial, commercial, provincial.* | Official, special, artificial, partial, confidential, essential. |
| Words ending in -ant, -ance/-ancy, ent,  -ence/-ency | Use -ent and -ence/-ency after a soft c sound, soft g sound or qu.  The ending -ation give us a clue to some words e.g. observant (observation)  *There are some word where these guidelines don’t apply and just have to be learned e.g. assistant, obedient, independent.* | Observant, observance, expectant, expectancy, innocent, innocence, frequent, frequency. |
| Words ending in -able/-ably and -ible/  -ibly | -able ending used if there is a related word ending -ation, it is usually used if a complete root word can be heard before it.  -ible is often used if a complete root word cannot be heard with some exceptions (sensible). | Adorable/adorably, considerable/considerably.  Changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible.  Dependable, comfortable, understandable.  Possible/possibly, horrible/horribly, incredible/incredibly. |
| Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters ending in -fer | The r is doubled if the -fer sound is still stressed after adding the ending.  The r is not doubled if the -fer is no longer stressed. | Referring, referred, referral, preferring, preferred, transferring.  Reference, referee, preference, transference. |
| Use of the hyphen | Used to join a prefix to a root word in some cases, usually when the prefix ends with a vowel letter and the root word starts with one. | Co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own. |
| Words spelt with an *ei* after *c* | The I before e except after c rule applies when the ei sounds like ee.  *Exceptions: protein, caffeine, seize.* | Deceive, conceive, receive, perceive, ceiling. |
| Words containing -ough- | The trickiest spelling as it can be used to spell a number of different sounds. | Ought, rough, cough, though, through, thorough, plough. |
| Words with silent letters. | Some letter which we don’t sound out were sounded out hundreds of years ago. | Doubt, island, lamb, knight, solemn, thistle. |
| Homophones | Some words sound the same but have different spellings and meanings, it is important to consider the context to identify which one you intend to use. | Licence, license, practice, practise, stationary, stationery, heard, herd, guessed, guest, missed, mist, passed, past, led, lead. |