

## DIFFICULTIES (II): SPELLING

### Activity 1

For questions 1-11, add a suffix to the word given in capitals at the end of each line to form a word that fits in the space in the same line. Watch out for spelling.

Suzy Stokes works for the (1) \_\_\_\_\_ department of a large MARKET  
company which makes (2) \_\_\_\_\_ garments. It was Suzy who KNIT  
introduced the idea of (3) \_\_\_\_\_ dog hair to the company, SPIN  
and she has been responsible for (4) \_\_\_\_\_ the technology DEVELOP  
needed to produce yarns for the material.

At the (5) \_\_\_\_\_, many people doubted that the idea would BEGIN  
take off, and only Suzy's (6) \_\_\_\_\_ approach prevented COMMIT  
the whole project from being (7) \_\_\_\_\_ . DROP

'It really hadn't (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to people that there could be a OCCUR  
market for the materials,' Suzy remembers, 'and that the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ TRANSFER  
of resources from other projects was really (10) \_\_\_\_\_ . PERMIT

Suzy's determination paid off: at a recent sales conference,  
dog-hair products were hailed as the company's largest growth area.

What rule of spelling are we concerned with here? Can you explain it?

### Activity 2

Add a suffix to make nouns from these words. Watch out for spelling.

- |          |       |            |       |
|----------|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. rely  | _____ | 6. lazy    | _____ |
| 2. deny  | _____ | 7. defy    | _____ |
| 3. apply | _____ | 8. bully   | _____ |
| 4. nasty | _____ | 9. dry     | _____ |
| 5. imply | _____ | 10. lovely | _____ |

### Activity 3

Make the following singular nouns plural. Watch out for spelling.

- |            |       |            |       |
|------------|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. toy     | _____ | 6. holiday | _____ |
| 2. trolley | _____ | 7. penny   | _____ |
| 3. quarry  | _____ | 8. display | _____ |
| 4. puppy   | _____ | 9. spy     | _____ |
| 5. highway | _____ | 10. fairy  | _____ |

What rule of spelling are we concerned with in activities 2 and 3? Can you explain it?

### Activity 4

Correct any errors in the following sentences. Some are correct.

1. The sunlight shining on my desk is really effecting my concentration. ....
2. It's not necessary to do anything at this stage. ....
3. The doctor recommended gargling with diluted aspirin. ....
4. I'm doing the stationary order now, if anyone's short of anything. ....
5. Mum and Dad went to see a marriage councillor. ....
6. The boxer was knocked unconscious. ....
7. My watch has a six-year garante. ....
8. Too much sun can cause premature ageing of the skin. ....

## KEY

### Activity 1

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. marketing  | 6. committed    |
| 2. knitting   | 7. dropped      |
| 3. spinning   | 8. occurred     |
| 4. developing | 9. transferring |
| 5. beginning  | 10. permitted   |

### Activity 2

- |                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. reliance/reliability  | 6. laziness    |
| 2. denial                | 7. defiance    |
| 3. application/appliance | 8. bullying    |
| 4. nastiness             | 9. dryness     |
| 5. implication           | 10. loneliness |

### Activity 3

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. toys     | 6. holidays |
| 2. trolleys | 7. pennies  |
| 3. quarries | 8. displays |
| 4. puppies  | 9. spies    |
| 5. highways | 10. fairies |

### Activity 4

Correct any errors in the following sentences. Some are correct.

1. The sunlight shining on my desk is really effecting my concentration. AFFECTING
2. It's not necessary to do anything at this stage. ✓
3. The doctor recommended gargling with diluted aspirin. ✓
4. I'm doing the stationary order now, if anyone's short of anything. STATIONERY
5. Mum and Dad went to see a marriage councillor. COUNSELLOR
6. The boxer was knocked unconscious. ✓
7. My watch has a six-year guarantee. GUARANTEE
8. Too much sun can cause premature ageing of the skin. ✓

**NOTE**

(Taken from *New Proficiency Passkey*)

**HELP WITH SPELLING 2: Double consonants**

- When a suffix is added to a word, especially a suffix beginning with a vowel, the consonant is often doubled.

This happens in words of one syllable where a single final consonant follows a single vowel:

set → **setting**  
 hot → **hotter**  
 knit → **knitted**

- It doesn't happen where words already have two consonants or two vowels together:

start → started  
 meet → meeting

- In two-syllable or longer words the stress is important. Where the stress falls on the final syllable, then single final consonants are doubled:

forget	→	forgetting	compare with:	benefit	→	benefited
admit	→	admittedly		open	→	opening
refer	→	referred		market	→	marketing

- Be careful with words where the stress changes when suffixes are added:

prefer → preferred → preference

- Words that end with silent *e* do not need double consonants when the *e* is dropped:

care → caring

- Remember these exceptions:

write → writing → written      develop → developing → developed

**Comentado [Office 1]: CONSONANT DOUBLING:**  
 Regarding the exceptions, none of them really are:

*Write:* for consonant doubling to take place, the word must in the first place end in a consonant (remember that here we are talking about spelling, not pronunciation). *Write* finishes in a vowel, so it can by no means double.

*Develop:* it should not double either because the stress does not fall on the last syllable.

Remember, the three necessary rules for consonant doubling to take place are: (1) that the word finishes in one single consonant (2) preceded by one single vowel and (3) the stress falls on the last (or only) syllable.

Two exceptions are indeed *travel* and *focus*, which double the vowel in BrE (though not in AmE):

*Travelled / travelling*  
*Focussed / focussing*

**TREATMENT OF -Y**

Except with the inflectional suffix *-ing*, *-y* may change to *-i* in plural formation, 3rd person singular *-s*, comparatives and superlatives. The rule is very straightforward: it changes when the preceding letter is a consonant. If it is a vowel, *-y* remains:

*Boy* - boys  
*Lady* - ladies

*Play* - plays  
*Study* - studies

We come up with two conflictive cases here: *dryness* and *shyness*, which should change to *-i*, just like *happiness*, *loveliness*, *laziness*, etc. The reason lies in the fact that they are monosyllables and that the sound is /aɪ/, not /i/.

**HELP WITH SPELLING 3: Words ending in y**

- You usually change a final *y* to *i* when adding a suffix:

marry	→	marriage	early	→	earlier
beauty	→	beautiful	day	→	daily
lonely	→	loneliness			

N.B. Do not change *y* when adding *-ing*:

marry → marrying      copy → copying

- You usually change *y* to *i* when forming plurals or adding the third person *s*:

try → tries      beauty → beauties

N.B. Do not change *y* if it is preceded by a single vowel:

boy → boys      pay → pays      valley → valleys



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