



Spelling Bee (A2 - Pre-Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. What are the most difficult aspects of the English language, in your opinion?
2. Do you ever find it difficult to remember the spelling of English words?
3. Did you know that in English-speaking countries children and even adults have that problem?
4. Is the spelling of your language difficult? Why (not)?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and choose the correct answer.

1. In the United States, spelling competitions take place in
a) elementary schools. b) middle schools. c) both of these.
2. Scripps National Spelling Bee is held
a) once a year. b) once every two years. c) twice a year.
3. The final competition can be seen on TV.
a) True. b) False. c) The article doesn't say.
4. In English,
a) there are more letters than sounds. b) there are more sounds than letters. c) there is a letter for each sound.
5. The first National Spelling Bee was organised by
a) the state of Kentucky. b) a newspaper. c) a university.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions..

1. What happens in a spelling bee if a contestant makes a mistake?
2. When did spelling bees first start in the United States?
3. What does the overall winner get besides money?
4. What did bee mean in the 18th century?
5. What other examples of bees are there in the article?
6. What possible reason is given for the popularity of spelling bees in the United States?
7. What final word did Frank Neuhauser have to spell to win the first competition in 1925?
8. Who was he able to meet as part of his prize?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from plural to singular.)

1. In my grandmother's day, schoolchildren said a _____ called 'grace' before school dinner.
2. That sports car isn't Jake's. He _____ it from his rich cousin.
3. This jacket feels like wool but I think it's made of some kind of synthetic _____.
4. You'll never succeed if you don't make an _____.
5. It's difficult to persuade people to follow rules if they don't understand the _____ of them.
6. Alice had two job offers to choose from. It was the _____ decision she had ever had to make.

E – Ready for the A2 KEY English Test? (Paper 1, Part 4)

Choose the best word for each space.

The spelling of modern English has developed 1_____ (from/around/over/while) many centuries. During this time there 2_____ (are/is/has/have) been several attempts to reform it. One of these was made by author and lexicographer Noah Webster, 3_____ (his/who-se/which/who's) first Dictionary of the English Language was published in 1806. He suggested spellings like center and color 4_____ (except/instead/against/in front) of the usual centre and colour. Many of Webster's proposals were adopted in the United States, but not in other countries like the United Kingdom. This is 5_____ (what/because/why/that) there are now some differences in spelling 6_____ (between/beside/among/through) American English and British English.

F – Check your pronunciation

One of the four words in each group has a different vowel sound. Which one?

1. bee compete each series
2. hundred fusing country accomplish
3. many national annual cash
4. worth word awarded first
5. trip live (adjective) which winner

G – Write about it

Write about a local or national competition for schoolchildren/students in your country.

Mention:

- the subject of the competition (e.g. Maths, Science, Writing Skills, etc.);
- where it takes place;
- how often;
- what the prizes are;
- who the latest winner was.

A Short History of After Eights (B1 - Lower Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you like chocolates?
2. If so, what are your favourite fillings?
3. Do you prefer dark chocolate or milk chocolate?
4. Have you ever tasted After Eights?
5. Are they popular in your country?

B – Listen and answer

Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and complete them.

1. The complete name of the chocolates is 'After Eight _____ Chocolate Mint Thins'.
2. Sales of After Eights are higher in the _____ than in other countries.
3. They were invented in the early _____ by Brian Sollitt.
4. At the time, Sollitt was working for the Rowntree Company in _____, England.
5. The elegant modern _____ of After Eights contributed to their success.
6. In 2012, Sollitt presented an After Eight weighing _____ kilograms to the British Parliament.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. How old was Brian Sollitt when he created After Eights?
2. Why was it difficult to buy chocolates and sweets when Brian was a child?

3. What part of the making of After Eights is still a secret?
4. Why were chocolate products considered a luxury before the 1960s?
5. On what occasions were After Eights usually served in the 1960s?
6. What kind of image do they have now?
7. How did the list of ingredients change when Nestlé bought the company?
8. What is Brian Sollitt's hobby at present?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense.)

1. Our school football team has won five matches in a row. Our trainer said it's a great _____.
2. Fran didn't have a happy _____. Her parents often left her with relatives for long periods.
3. If you suffer from lactose intolerance, you should only eat food which is _____.
4. Dan thought the event would be interesting, but unfortunately it _____ really boring!
5. This cake has a _____ of jam and cream in the centre.
6. I found a recipe for ginger biscuits. I've just made some. Would you like to _____ one?

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 5)

Choose the correct word in brackets for each space.

There was a time when almost all the large chocolate companies in England belonged to members of the Protestant religious group 1_____ (called/known/named/considered) as Quakers. In the 19th century, Quakers began producing cocoa drinks in order to persuade people to stop 2_____ (drank/to drink/drinking/drunk) alcohol. At a time when water supplies were often contaminated, cocoa was considered healthy because you 3_____ (should/had/must/better) to boil water to make it.

Rowntree's of York, Fry's of Bristol and Cadbury's of Birmingham were all 4_____ (belonged/owed/found/owned) by Quaker families. They had a reputation for fairness and honesty and they were social reformers who looked 5_____ (for/to/after/over) their workers by building houses, schools, leisure facilities and parks for them. They were also among the first 6_____ (employers/employees/employed/employment) to provide pensions and healthcare.

Unfortunately, over the years, these companies have been bought by multinationals which are less worried about social and ethical matters.

F – Write about it

Write about your favourite treat or snack. Mention:

- what it's called;
- who it's made by;
- what it's made of;
- whether it's considered healthy/unhealthy;
- when/how often you eat it.

Arizona – The Next Frontier (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you ever watch cowboy films?
2. Which American states do you associate with cowboys?
3. Have you ever heard of the town of Tombstone and its famous lawman Wyatt Earp?
4. What do you know about the history of Arizona?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen to the introductory article (without reading) and complete them.

1. Arizona has been inhabited by Native Americans for over _____ years.
2. It was once part of _____, which became a province of New Spain in 1804.
3. Following the _____, the province became Mexican territory.
4. After the Mexican-American War, from _____ to _____, Arizona became part of the US.
5. In 1912, it became the _____ US state.
6. Today, Native American reservations make up _____ per cent of the state.

C – Read and answer

Read the introductory article and answer the questions.

1. Who were the first Europeans to encounter the Native Americans living in Arizona?
2. What other states belonged wholly or partly to Alta California besides Arizona?
3. For how long was Mexico part of New Spain?
4. In what year did Alta California become a Mexican Territory?
5. Where is the village of Oraibi situated?
6. Why is it special?

D – Listen to the interview (Optional)

N.B. This interview is graded as C1, so don't be discouraged if you find it difficult. Try to understand the main points. Read these statements. Then listen to the interview with Jaynie Adams, without reading, and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Jaynie Adams insists on telling students that studying history requires a lot of memorising.
2. Her ancestors were members of a Native American people, the Hohokam.
3. The Hohokam were good at building irrigation systems.
4. Archeologists found a structure named a Casa Grande, of which they don't know the purpose.
5. When Mexico ceded Arizona to the United States, New Mexico was part of Arizona.
6. During the Civil War, the Confederate States split Arizona and New Mexico vertically.
7. After the 1860s, the population of Arizona exploded with the arrival of large numbers of farmers.
8. These migrations caused conflict with the Apache people and their chief Geronimo.
9. Jaynie Adams says the American West, as shown in films of the 50s and 60s, never existed.
10. According to some experts, Wyatt Earp was really a fraud.

E – Listen, read and check your answers

Listen to the interview while reading the text. (If you did Exercise D, check your answers while reading.)

F – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense or change from plural to singular.)

1. Until 1923, Istanbul, _____ called Constantinople, was the capital of Turkey.
2. The main summer _____ grown in this area is strawberries.
3. Everyone knows this product is rubbish. It has _____ negative online reviews.
4. We managed to finish the project _____ having very little time to work on it.
5. The café didn't have many customers at first, but now it has really _____.
6. It's time the government _____ a law banning astrologers and mediums from advertising.

G – Ready for the FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 4)

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. Use between 2 and 5 words including the word given.

Example:	North American history didn't just begin in the 16th century.
LONG	North American history began long before the 16th century.
1.	The fictional history of Arizona isn't half as interesting as its real history.
LOT	Arizona's real history is _____ its fictional history.
2.	Adams says she finds it difficult to memorise things.
GOOD	Adams says, "I _____ things."
3.	People began to live here at least ten thousand years ago.
LIVING	People _____ ten thousand years, at least.
4.	Arizona's fate was changed by the Civil War, as was its shape.
BOTH	The Civil War _____ Arizona's shape.
5.	With the railroad, you can move troops, as well as goods and people.
ONLY	Not _____ and people, but also troops.
6.	Those other stories are no less important to understanding the present situation.
JUST	Those other stories are _____ to understanding the present situation.

H – Write about it

Write about a region of your country with an interesting history. Include information about:

- its location;
- its first inhabitants;
- who ruled it;
- what there is to see there;
- what else it's famous for.

The Secrets of Mrs. B (C1 - Advanced)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Have you ever had a summer job? If so, when? What did you have to do?
2. Do you like listening to people talking about their lives? Why (not)?
3. Have you ever thought of writing a novel? If so, what kind?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. During the summer the author worked as a nurse looking after elderly people.
2. Mrs. B was well known in the neighbourhood.
3. Mrs. B's son was an attractive man with a happy-looking face.
4. Mrs. B was a bit overweight.
5. She enjoyed having her husband's poems read to her.
6. Mrs. B hadn't been faithful to her husband.
7. She died the following winter.
8. The key she had given the author opened the antique wooden box.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why did the author make notes of some of the things she was told by the elderly people?
2. What was Mrs. B pretending to do when the author first saw her?
3. Why was she pleased when she heard that her son had left?
4. Why did the author find it difficult to understand Mrs. B at first?
5. Who did Mrs. B get her cigarettes from?
6. What kind of life had Mrs. B led when she was younger?
7. What did the author find in the box that Mrs. B left her?
8. How did she feel about it?

D – Listen to the interview (Optional)

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense.)

1. Tom had never spoken in public before, so he felt rather _____.
2. We don't have to _____. There's plenty of time before the train leaves.
3. My sister's always _____ me for anything that goes wrong.
4. Granddad's hurt his head. He _____ to tie his shoelaces and lost his balance.
5. If you're going upstairs, could you _____ my mobile, please? I left it in the bedroom.
6. Everyone likes our new boss. She's always so _____ and optimistic.

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test? (Reading and Use of English, Part 4)

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. Use between 3 and 6 words including the word given.

Example: Mrs. B had worked a lot for charity in her local area.

WORK Mrs. B had done a lot of charitable/charity work in her local area.

1. "You won't have to do much," Hector said.

FOR "There won't _____," Hector said.

2. "Do you have a cigarette, by any chance?" Mrs. B asked.

GOT You _____ you?" Mrs. B asked.

3. Her voice wasn't very clear without her teeth in.

MUCH Her voice was _____ in.

4. Whenever I opened the bottom drawer, my eye fell on the inlaid box.

SIGHT Whenever I opened the bottom drawer, I _____ the inlaid box.

5. Mrs. B laughed loudly through her nose when I said I wanted to be a novelist.

WITH Mrs. B snorted _____ her I wanted to be a novelist.

6. "The key is something that will remind you of me," Mrs. B said.

REMEMBER "The key is _____," said Mrs. B.

F – Talk about it

In pairs or groups.

1. Do you like reading biographies or autobiographies? If so, which ones have you read?
2. Have you ever kept a diary? If so, for how long? What kind of things do/did you write in it?
3. Do you think diaries are useful? Why (not)?
4. Do you think people usually write them for themselves or for others?
5. Can you name any famous historical diaries?

Answers (Spelling Bee A2 - Pre-Intermediate)

B – Listen and answer

1. c 2. a 3. a 4. b 5. b

C – Read and answer

1. The contestant is eliminated. 2. They started about a hundred years ago. 3. He or she also gets \$400 worth of the Encyclopedia Britannica. 4. It meant a gathering of people who unite to accomplish a task. 5. The article mentions apple bees and quilting bees. 6. The article says it's perhaps because the US was historically a melting pot fusing many nationalities. 7. He had to spell 'gladiolus'. 8. He was able to meet US President Calvin Coolidge.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. prayer 2. borrowed 3. fabric 4. effort 5. purpose 6. toughest

E – Ready for the A2 KEY English Test?

1. over 2. have 3. whose 4. instead 5. why 6. between

F – Check your pronunciation

1. series 2. fusing 3. many 4. awarded 5. live (adjective)

Answers (A Short History of After Eights B1 - Lower Intermediate)

B – Listen and answer

1. Dark 2. United Kingdom 3. 1960s 4. York 5. packaging 6. three

C – Read and answer

1. He was in his twenties. 2. Because there was wartime rationing. 3. How to prevent the liquid fondant from oozing out. 4. Because they needed to be kept cool and before the 1960s few people had a refrigerator. 5. They were served at dinner parties. 6. Now their image is that of a rather old-fashioned treat. 7. Butterfat was added to the mixture. 8. He collects After Eight memorabilia.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. achievement 2. childhood 3. dairy free 4. turned out 5. layer 6. try

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. known 2. drinking 3. had 4. owned 5. after 6. employers

Answers (Arizona – The Next Frontier B2 - Upper Intermediate)

B – Listen and answer

1. ten thousand 2. Alta California 3. Mexican War of Independence 4. 1846 – 1848 5. 48th 6. 25

C – Read and answer

1. They were the members of a Spanish expedition led by French missionary Marcos de Niza in 1539. 2. The other states were California, Nevada and Utah, and parts of New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming. 3. For 300 years. 4. In 1822. 5. It's on the Hopi Reservation in Navajo county. 6. It's the oldest continuously-inhabited settlement in North America.

E – Listen, read and check your answers

1. F – She says that's not what history is. 2. T 3. T 4. T 5. F – Arizona was part of New Mexico. 6. F – They split them horizontally. 7. F – It exploded with the arrival of large numbers of miners. 8. T 9. T 10. T

F – Learn it! Use it!

1. formerly 2. crop 3. countless 4. despite 5. taken off 6. passed

G – Ready for the FIRST Certificate in English?

1. a lot more interesting than 2. am not good at memorising 3. have been living here for 4. changed both Arizona's fate and 5. only can you move goods 6. just as important

Answers (The Secrets of Mrs. B C1 - Advanced)

B – Listen and answer

1. F – She worked as a home help for the elderly. (Nothing medical.) 2. T 3. F – He was balding and had long melancholic features. 4. F – She was skeletal. 5. F – She thought they were rubbish. 6. T 7. F – She died the following autumn. 8. T

C – Read and answer

1. Because she thought their anecdotes might provide material for a novel. 2. She was pretending to be fast asleep. 3. Because she wanted to have a cigarette. 4. Because she didn't have her teeth in, so her voice sounded thick. 5. She got them from her cleaner. 6. She had led an exciting life travelling all over the world and had had tempestuous love affairs. 7. She found the volume of poems written by Mrs. B's husband. 8. At first she was very disappointed, but then she found it amusing that Mrs. B had tricked her.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. self-conscious 2. rush 3. blaming 4. bent down 5. fetch 6. cheerful

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test?

1. be much for you to do 2. haven't got a cigarette, have 3. much clearer with her teeth
4. caught sight of 5. with laughter when I told 6. something to remember me by

