

Dear Poor Speller:

You can begin using this system to help you memorize the spelling of words that have given you difficulty in the past. It is not a “course” and will not make you a Master Speller in 30 days or less. It is, however, a method that has proven as effective as any known. This system will help you learn to spell difficult words with little work and no study.

First, keep a notebook, or target list of words you have trouble spelling. You should include words:

- marked as errors on returned papers
- you avoid using because of your doubt
- you have trouble finding in the dictionary
- you stumble over in writing lecture notes
- you spell several different ways
- you misunderstand while reading

Then:

- Choose about five to ten words from your target list.
- Ask someone to read the words aloud to you. He or she should read each word alone, then repeat it aloud.
- Write the word once.
- Have your friend spell each word once, letter by letter. As he/she spells, follow the word as you have it written with your pencil or finger, noticing each letter as it is read. Mark your word right or wrong. Tally total errors.
- Have your friend repeat the test exactly as in Step 2, but in reverse order. Again, tally errors. Notice your reduced errors this time.

That’s it! All the words you misspelled both times should remain on the target list. Review the words you got incorrect in two weeks and again in a month to see that you’ve retained your knowledge. If you haven’t, return them to the target list.

Good luck!

The Spelling Police

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P.S.: If you want other spelling improvement methods (such as spelling rules, phonics instruction, or a kinesthetic approach), please ask the lab instructor or advisor

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