Primary 4 Spelling and Vocabulary List

Primary 4 · English

The Singapore Syllabus

1 About this list

MOE does not publish a national spelling list, and each school sets its own weekly lists. This is TSS's own list for Primary 4, pitched to the level using the MOE English Language Syllabus 2020. Use it alongside your child's school list. Everything on this page, including the practice and answers, is in the free PDF from the button at the top, ready to print.

What the official documents say, and what this list is

Point	What it means for you
National spelling list	MOE does not publish a national spelling list. Schools set their own spelling lists, so the list your child brings home will be different from this one.
Your school's own list	Some schools post their weekly lists on the school website or class portal. Learn that list first, as the school test uses it.
Mother Tongue lists	Mother Tongue spelling lists, such as tingxie for Chinese, are set by schools too. This page covers English only.
MOE English Language Syllabus 2020	Vocabulary is one of the six areas of language learning in the syllabus. Pupils learn how words are formed, how words relate to one another and how they are used in context.
Marks from P3	From P3, schools hold no more than one weighted assessment per subject each term. Ask your child's teacher whether a spelling test counts towards a mark.
Standard or Foundation English in P5	At the end of P4, the school recommends a P5 subject combination based on the year-end exam results. A child who passes 3 or more subjects is offered English, Maths, Science and Mother Tongue at Standard level. Parents choose on an option form, and the school can adjust levels at the end of P5. This list is pitched at Standard English.
This list	TSS's own 160 words for Primary 4, in 16 themed lists of 10 across the four school terms, plus 10 challenge words. Every word has a short meaning and an example sentence written by TSS. MOE and SEAB did not issue this list.

- The list uses British spelling, such as colour, favourite and neighbour, as MOE's own syllabus documents do.

2 How vocabulary is tested in Primary 4

Each school sets its own P4 English tests and decides their format, and from P3 a school holds no more than one weighted assessment per subject each term. The skills are the same ones PSLE English tests at the end of P6, so the practice on this page uses the PSLE vocabulary item types: 5 multiple-choice questions and a 5-blank cloze in each set.

What each question type asks your child to do

Question type	What your child does	Practise it on this page
Vocabulary multiple choice	Reads a sentence and picks, from four options, the one closest in meaning to a given word.	Practice sets A and B, questions 1 to 5
Vocabulary cloze	Reads a short passage with blanks and picks the best of four words for each blank, using meaning, words that go together and grammar.	Practice sets A and B, blanks 1 to 5
Editing for spelling	Finds wrongly spelt words in a passage and writes them correctly.	The tricky spellings list and the weekly routine
Comprehension cloze	Fills each blank in a passage with one suitable word of their own.	Working out a new word from context
Writing	Uses exact, correctly spelt words in compositions and situational writing.	Using the words in a composition

Where vocabulary and spelling are tested in PSLE English (0001)

Paper and component	Item type	Items and marks
Paper 2, Booklet A: Vocabulary	Multiple choice	5 items, 5 marks
Paper 2, Booklet A: Vocabulary Cloze	Multiple choice	5 items, 5 marks
Paper 2, Booklet B: Editing for Spelling and Grammar	Open-ended	10 items, 10 marks
Paper 2, Booklet B: Comprehension Cloze	Open-ended	15 items, 15 marks
Paper 1: Situational Writing (14 marks) and Continuous Writing (36 marks)	Open-ended	Assessed on accurate and appropriate vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling

- Weightings: Paper 1 (Writing) 25%, Paper 2 (Language Use and Comprehension) 45%, Paper 3 (Listening Comprehension) 10% and Paper 4 (Oral Communication) 20%, out of 200 marks. Paper 2 lasts 1 h 50 min and has 25 multiple-choice and 50 open-ended questions. Source: SEAB PSLE English Language syllabus 0001, implemented from the Year of Examination 2025.
- SEAB does not publish a word list for these questions.

3 Term 1 words (lists 1 to 4)

40 words in 4 lists: character traits, emotions, ways of moving, places and buildings.

List 1: Character traits

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
generous	happy to give or share	My generous uncle bought ice cream for everyone.
selfish	caring only about yourself	It was selfish of him to eat all the biscuits.
responsible	able to be trusted to do the right thing	She is responsible for feeding the class fish.
confident	sure of yourself	He gave his speech in a confident voice.
patient	able to wait without getting upset	Be patient, as the bus will come soon.
stubborn	not willing to change your mind	My stubborn brother refused to wear his jacket.
mischievous	playful in a slightly naughty way	The mischievous boy hid his sister's shoes.
considerate	thinking about other people's feelings	It was considerate of you to keep your voice down.
hardworking	putting a lot of effort into your work	The hardworking pupil revised every evening.
humble	not boasting about yourself	Even after winning, Jun Wei stayed humble.

List 2: Emotions

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
anxious	worried and nervous	I felt anxious while waiting for my results.
delighted	very pleased	Grandma was delighted with her birthday card.
furious	very angry	The farmer was furious when the goats ate his crops.
terrified	very frightened	The kitten was terrified of the vacuum cleaner.
disappointed	sad because something was not as good as you hoped	We were disappointed when the trip was cancelled.
relieved	glad that a worry is over	I was relieved to find my wallet.
ashamed	feeling bad about something wrong you did	He felt ashamed after telling a lie.
curious	wanting to know about something	The curious cat sniffed the box.
miserable	very unhappy	I felt miserable when I was sick on my birthday.
thrilled	very excited and happy	She was thrilled to be chosen for the team.

List 3: Ways of moving

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
dash	to run somewhere quickly	I had to dash to the gate before it closed.
stroll	to walk slowly and calmly	We stroll along the beach after dinner.
tiptoe	to walk quietly on your toes	I tiptoed past my sleeping baby sister.
stumble	to trip and almost fall	He stumbled over a stone on the path.
march	to walk with firm, regular steps	The scouts marched across the field.
wander	to walk around without a plan	We wandered around the market for an hour.
leap	to jump high or far	The cat leapt onto the wall.
limp	to walk unevenly because one leg is hurt	He limped off the field after the fall.
scramble	to move quickly and clumsily, often using your hands	We scrambled up the muddy slope.
rush	to go somewhere very fast	Everyone rushed to the window to see the rainbow.

List 4: Places and buildings

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
auditorium	a large hall where people gather to watch or listen	The whole school gathered in the auditorium for the concert.
gallery	a building or room where art is shown	We saw paintings by local artists at the gallery.
aquarium	a building where fish and other sea creatures are kept for people to see	We watched the stingrays glide past at the aquarium.
pavilion	a shelter in a park, often with a roof and open sides	We had our picnic lunch in the pavilion when it rained.
monument	a statue or building put up to remember a person or event	The class laid flowers at the monument.
factory	a building where things are made by machines	The biscuits are baked in a factory.
harbour	a place where ships and boats stay safely near land	Fishing boats were tied up in the harbour.
stadium	a large place with seats around a field for sports	The stadium was full of fans.
temple	a building where some people go to pray	We visited a temple during the holidays.
theatre	a building where people watch plays and shows	We watched a musical at the theatre.

4 Term 2 words (lists 5 to 8)

40 words in 4 lists: the environment, the body and health, technology, money and shopping.

List 5: The environment

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
environment	the world around us, including the land, air and water	We must protect the environment.
pollution	harmful things that make air, water or land dirty	Smoke from cars causes air pollution.
recycle	to use materials again to make new things	We recycle paper, cans and bottles.
landfill	a place where rubbish is buried under the ground	Less waste means less rubbish sent to the landfill.
litter	rubbish left lying on the ground	Picking up litter keeps the park clean.
species	a group of animals or plants of the same kind	Many species of birds visit the wetland reserve.
energy	the power that makes things work	Switch off the fan to save energy.
protect	to keep safe from harm	Wear a cap to protect your face from the sun.
waste	to use more than you need	Do not waste water when you brush your teeth.
habitat	the natural home of an animal or plant	The mangrove swamp is the habitat of many crabs.

List 6: The body and health

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
muscle	a part of the body that helps you move	Running makes your leg muscles stronger.
fracture	a crack or break in a bone	The X-ray showed a fracture in his wrist.
allergic	becoming ill when you eat or touch a certain thing	My cousin is allergic to peanuts, so she checks every label.
wound	an injury where the skin is cut or torn	The nurse cleaned the wound before putting on a plaster.
injury	harm done to the body	He has a knee injury from the match.
bandage	a strip of cloth tied around a wound	The nurse wrapped a bandage around my ankle.
contagious	able to spread from one person to another	Chickenpox is contagious, so she stayed at home for a week.
remedy	something that treats an illness or solves a problem	Warm honey water is Grandma's remedy for a sore throat.
germs	tiny living things that can make you ill	Washing your hands gets rid of germs.
recover	to get well again	She took a week to recover from the flu.

List 7: Technology

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
invention	something new that someone has made or thought of for the first time	The telephone was an invention that changed the world.
browse	to look through things, such as websites or books, without a fixed plan	We browsed the library catalogue for books about space.
password	a secret word you type to use something	Never share your password with strangers.
virtual	made to seem real by a computer	Our class took a virtual tour of a museum in Paris.
internet	the network that links computers around the world	We searched the internet for facts about bees.
download	to copy a file from the internet onto a device	Ask a parent before you download a game.
charge	to fill a battery with power	Charge the tablet before school.
battery	something that stores power for a device	The torch needs a new battery.
automatic	working by itself without a person controlling it	The automatic doors slid open as we walked up.
operate	to make a machine work	Only an adult should operate the lawnmower.

List 8: Money and shopping

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
vendor	a person who sells things, often at a stall	The vendor sold fresh coconuts by the roadside.
afford	to have enough money to pay for something	We could not afford the concert tickets, so we watched it online.
expensive	costing a lot of money	That bicycle is too expensive.
change	the money you get back when you pay more than the price	The cashier gave me twenty cents in change.
allowance	money given to you regularly, such as pocket money	I save half of my weekly allowance.
refund	money given back when you return something	The shop gave me a refund for the faulty headphones.
budget	a plan for how much money you can spend	My budget for the book fair was fifteen dollars.
receipt	a paper that shows what you paid	Keep the receipt in case we need to return the shoes.
discount	an amount taken off the usual price	The shoes had a discount of ten dollars.
bargain	something bought for less than its usual price	This bag was a bargain at five dollars.

5 Term 3 words (lists 9 to 12)

40 words in 4 lists: adventure, mystery, friendship and getting along, weather and climate.

List 9: Adventure

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
adventure	an exciting experience	Camping in the forest was a real adventure.
explore	to travel around a place to find out about it	Let us explore the island.
discover	to find something for the first time	We discovered a cave behind the waterfall.
treasure	a collection of valuable things like gold	The pirates buried the treasure on the beach.
treacherous	very dangerous, often in a way that is hard to see	The muddy path was treacherous after the storm.
expedition	a long journey made for a special purpose, such as exploring	The scouts set off on an expedition to map the island.
venture	to go somewhere that is new, unknown or risky	We ventured deeper into the forest.
escape	to get away from a place or danger	The bird escaped from its cage.
courage	the ability to do something that frightens you	It took courage to jump into the deep end of the pool.
rescue	to save someone from danger	The lifeguard rescued the swimmer.

List 10: Mystery

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
mystery	something strange that cannot be explained easily	The missing cake was a mystery.
clue	something that helps you solve a problem	The muddy footprint was a clue.
detective	a person who finds out who did a crime	The detective looked for fingerprints.
footprint	a mark left by a foot or shoe	We followed the footprints in the sand.
peculiar	strange or unusual	There was a peculiar smell coming from the storeroom.
shadow	a dark shape made when something blocks light	A shadow moved across the wall.
suspect	to think someone may have done something wrong	I suspect the dog ate my sandwich.
creak	to make a long squeaking sound	The old door began to creak.
culprit	the person who did something wrong	The culprit who ate the cake left crumbs on the sofa.
solve	to find the answer to a problem	We worked together to solve the puzzle.

List 11: Friendship and getting along

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
argue	to disagree in an angry way	My cousins argue about which show to watch.
apologise	to say sorry	I apologised for breaking her pencil.
trust	to believe someone is honest	I trust my best friend with my secrets.
loyal	always supporting a friend	A loyal friend stands by you.
include	to let someone be part of a group	Let us include the new girl in our game.
tease	to make fun of someone	It is unkind to tease people about their looks.
bully	someone who hurts or frightens others again and again	Tell a teacher if a bully troubles you.
comfort	to make someone feel better when they are sad	I hugged my sister to comfort her.
encourage	to give someone hope and confidence	My friends encouraged me to try again.
misunderstand	to get the wrong idea	I misunderstood and went to the wrong room.

List 12: Weather and climate

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
climate	the usual weather of a place over many years	Singapore has a hot and wet climate.
tropical	belonging to the hot, wet parts of the world near the equator	Durians and mangosteens are tropical fruits.
downpour	a sudden, heavy fall of rain	We sheltered at the bus stop during the downpour.
scorching	very hot	The scorching sun made the playground too hot to play in.
forecast	a report saying what the weather will be	The forecast said there would be thundery showers.
monsoon	a season of heavy rain and strong winds	The monsoon brought weeks of heavy rain.
temperature	how hot or cold something is	The nurse took my temperature.
flood	a lot of water covering land that is usually dry	The heavy rain caused a flood on the road.
drought	a long time with little or no rain	The plants died during the drought.
haze	smoky air that makes it hard to see far	The haze made the sky grey.

6 Term 4 words (lists 13 to 16)

40 words in 4 lists: prefixes, suffixes, saying words, tricky spellings.

List 13: Prefixes: un-, dis-, re-

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
unbearable	too unpleasant or painful to put up with	The noise from the drilling next door was unbearable.
uncertain	not sure	I was uncertain which answer was correct, so I checked again.
unusual	not usual, strange	It is unusual to see snow in Singapore.
disagree	to have a different opinion	I disagree with you about the film.
disobey	to refuse to do what you are told	The puppy disobeyed and ran onto the road.
disappear	to go out of sight	The magician made the coin disappear.
rewrite	to write again	Please rewrite this sentence neatly.
reunite	to bring people together again after time apart	The lost boy was reunited with his parents at the information counter.
reconsider	to think again about a decision	Please reconsider your answer before you hand in the paper.
rebuild	to build something again after it has been damaged	The villagers worked together to rebuild their homes after the storm.

List 14: Suffixes: -ful, -less, -ly, -ment

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
careful	taking care not to make mistakes or get hurt	Be careful with the scissors.
graceful	moving in a smooth and beautiful way	The graceful dancer glided across the stage.
reckless	not caring about danger	The reckless cyclist weaved between the moving cars.
fearless	not afraid of anything	The fearless climber reached the top.
boastful	often talking proudly about yourself	The boastful boy kept talking about his trophies.
restless	unable to keep still or relax	The restless pupils fidgeted during the long assembly.
gently	in a soft, careful way	Hold the kitten gently.
movement	the act of moving	I saw a movement in the bushes.
enjoyment	the pleasure you get from doing something	Reading gives my grandfather a lot of enjoyment.
excitement	a feeling of being very excited	The children shouted with excitement.

List 15: Saying words

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
chuckle	to laugh quietly	Grandpa chuckled as he read the comic strip.
explain	to make something clear	Can you explain how to do this sum?
complain	to say you are not happy about something	The customer complained about the cold food.
suggest	to give an idea	I suggest we meet at the library.
announce	to tell many people something officially	The principal will announce the winners.
exclaim	to say something suddenly with strong feeling	"It is snowing," she exclaimed.
mumble	to speak quietly so it is hard to understand	Do not mumble when you read aloud.
shriek	to give a sudden, loud, high cry	The children shrieked when the lizard ran across the floor.
describe	to say what something is like	Describe your favourite toy.
admit	to agree that something is true, often something bad	He admitted that he broke the vase.

List 16: Tricky spellings

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
necessary	needed	It is necessary to bring an umbrella today.
separate	apart, not together	Keep the paper and plastic in separate bins.
government	the group of people who run a country	The government builds new schools.
knowledge	what you know	Reading adds to your knowledge.
neighbourhood	the area around where you live	There is a new park in our neighbourhood.
absence	being away from a place	During her absence, I fed her goldfish.
height	how tall something is	The nurse measured my height.
weight	how heavy something is	The weight of the bag hurt my shoulder.
vehicle	a machine such as a car, bus or lorry that carries people or goods	No vehicles are allowed in the park.
calendar	a chart showing the days, weeks and months of a year	I marked the holiday on the calendar.

7 Idioms and phrasal verbs

An idiom means something different from its words, so learn it as a whole. A phrasal verb is a verb with a small word such as up, out or off, and the small word changes the meaning. Both turn up in vocabulary questions and make compositions sound natural.

Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example sentence
all ears	listening carefully	Tell me what happened, I am all ears.
on cloud nine	extremely happy	She was on cloud nine after winning the art contest.
a blessing in disguise	something that seems bad at first but turns out well	Missing the bus was a blessing in disguise, as I met my old teacher at the stop.
hit the sack	to go to bed	I was so tired that I hit the sack at eight.
in the same boat	in the same difficult situation as others	We all forgot our homework, so we were in the same boat.
pull someone's leg	to tease someone in a joking way	Relax, I am only pulling your leg.
the apple of someone's eye	a person who is loved very much	My baby sister is the apple of Grandpa's eye.
feel blue	to feel sad	I felt blue when my best friend moved away.
learn the ropes	to learn how to do a new job or task	The new class monitor took a week to learn the ropes.
lend a hand	to help	Could you lend a hand with these boxes?

Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verb	Meaning	Example sentence
look after	to take care of	I look after my hamster when my sister is away.
give up	to stop trying	Do not give up when a sum is hard.
find out	to discover a fact	I want to find out how bees make honey.
pick up	to lift something, or to collect someone	Dad will pick me up after school.
call off	to cancel	The match was called off because of the lightning.
get along	to be friendly with someone	I get along well with my cousin.
turn up	to arrive, often when not expected	Only five pupils turned up for the practice.
put out	to stop a fire from burning	The firefighters put out the fire quickly.
look forward to	to feel happy about something that is coming	I look forward to the school holidays.
run into	to meet someone by chance	I ran into my teacher at the market.

8 Words with close meanings

Vocabulary questions often give options that mean nearly the same thing. Only one fits the sentence exactly. These pairs and groups are easy to mix up.

Telling close meanings apart (Primary 4)

Words	The difference	Examples
spectators, onlookers, witnesses	Spectators came to watch an event, such as a match. Onlookers happen to watch something as it happens. Witnesses saw something important, such as an accident, and can say what happened.	The spectators cheered the runners. A crowd of onlookers watched the crane. The police spoke to two witnesses.
troop, troupe	A troop is a group of soldiers, scouts or animals. A troupe is a group of performers.	A troop of monkeys crossed the road. The dance troupe performed at the concert.
stroll, wander, march	Stroll is walking slowly for pleasure. Wander is walking with no plan. March is walking with firm, even steps.	We strolled by the river. We wandered around the market. The band marched past.
anxious, terrified	Anxious means worried and nervous. Terrified means very frightened.	I was anxious before the spelling test. The kitten was terrified of the thunder.
discount, refund, bargain	A discount is money taken off the price before you pay. A refund is money given back after you return something. A bargain is something bought for less than its usual price.	The shoes had a discount of ten dollars. The shop gave me a refund for the torn shirt. The bag was a bargain at half price.
explain, describe	Explain is to make something clear, often how or why. Describe is to say what something is like.	Explain how you got the answer. Describe your new school.

9 Working out a new word from context

Your child will meet words that are not on any list. The rest of the sentence usually gives a clue. Teach these five kinds of clue, then use the steps when answering a cloze or multiple-choice question.

Five kinds of context clue, with worked examples

Clue	Example sentence	How the clue helps
Meaning given	The arid land, which gets almost no rain, could not grow rice.	The words after the comma explain it. Arid means very dry.
Same meaning nearby	Her room was tidy, and every shelf was orderly too.	Too links it to tidy. Orderly means neat.
Opposite meaning nearby	Unlike his boisterous brother, Ken was quiet and calm.	Unlike signals the opposite of quiet and calm. Boisterous means noisy and lively.
Examples given	Citrus fruits, such as oranges, limes and lemons, are sour and juicy.	The examples show what the group is. Citrus fruits are fruits like these.
Cause and effect	The soup was so scalding that Mei waited ten minutes before she could sip it.	She had to wait, so it must be very hot. Scalding means very hot.

Steps for a vocabulary cloze or multiple-choice question

Step	What to do
1	Read the whole sentence, and for a cloze the sentences before and after it, before looking at the options.
2	Say in your own words what kind of word should go in the blank: a feeling, an action or a thing.
3	Look for a clue word such as but, unlike, because, so or such as.
4	Try each option in the blank. Cross out any that do not make sense.
5	Choose the best option and read the sentence again with it.

10 Practice: vocabulary MCQ and vocabulary cloze

TSS's own practice, using words from this list. There are 2 sets, 20 questions in all. Each set has 5 multiple-choice questions and a 5-blank cloze passage, the two vocabulary item types in Booklet A of PSLE English Paper 2. Read each cloze passage from top to bottom first. Cover the answer column while your child works, then go through the reasons together.

Set A, vocabulary MCQ: choose the option closest in meaning to the word in capitals

Question	Options	Answer
1. The boy was RECKLESS on his new bicycle and nearly hit a lamp post.	(1) proud of himself (2) not caring about danger (3) unsure of the way (4) slow and clumsy	(2) not caring about danger
2. Mei felt UNCERTAIN about which bus to take home.	(1) upset (2) not sure (3) eager (4) impatient	(2) not sure
3. The hikers had to SCRAMBLE up the rocky slope.	(1) climb carefully with ropes (2) walk steadily in a line (3) move quickly and clumsily, using their hands (4) crawl slowly on their knees	(3) move quickly and clumsily, using their hands
4. The CONSIDERATE boy lowered his voice in the library.	(1) polite to teachers (2) thinking about other people's feelings (3) afraid of being scolded (4) keen to follow rules	(2) thinking about other people's feelings
5. The fever was CONTAGIOUS, so Ravi stayed at home.	(1) very serious (2) able to spread from one person to another (3) lasting a long time (4) hard to cure	(2) able to spread from one person to another

Set A, vocabulary cloze: A trip to the nature reserve. Choose the best word for each blank

Passage	Options	Answer and why
Ming had looked forward to the trip for weeks, so he was (1) _____ when the bus finally pulled up at the gate.	(1) thrilled (2) ashamed (3) furious (4) miserable	(1) thrilled. He had waited for weeks, so he was very excited and happy.
The guide pointed to a (2) _____ in the mud and said a wild boar had passed by.	(1) shadow (2) monument (3) footprint (4) habitat	(3) footprint. A wild boar walking through mud leaves a footprint.
Ming rushed ahead for a closer look and (3) _____ over a tree root.	(1) wandered (2) stumbled (3) tiptoed (4) limped	(2) stumbled. Rushing makes you trip and almost fall over a root. The other words describe walking, not tripping.
The guide reminded everyone to keep to the path, so as not to damage the animals' (4) _____.	(1) habitat (2) harbour (3) pavilion (4) climate	(1) habitat. The natural home of the animals is their habitat. People cannot damage a climate by leaving a path.
After a sudden downpour, the steep path became (5) _____, so everyone held the railing.	(1) scorching (2) tropical (3) peculiar (4) treacherous	(4) treacherous. A wet, steep path is dangerous in a way that is hard to see, so holding the railing makes sense.

Set B, vocabulary MCQ: choose the option closest in meaning to the word in capitals

Question	Options	Answer
1. The STUBBORN goat would not move off the path.	(1) not willing to change its mind (2) too frightened to move (3) too tired to walk (4) unable to hear	(1) not willing to change its mind
2. The children WANDERED around the night market.	(1) hurried from stall to stall (2) walked around without a plan (3) pushed their way through (4) queued for food	(2) walked around without a plan
3. Grandpa took a month to RECOVER from his fall.	(1) get used to (2) get well again (3) get over the shock of (4) get help for	(2) get well again
4. The CULPRIT left muddy footprints all over the kitchen floor.	(1) the person who did something wrong (2) a person who saw what happened (3) the person who found the mess (4) a person who cleans	(1) the person who did something wrong
5. After the long talk, the pupils grew RESTLESS.	(1) sleepy and bored (2) cross and rude (3) unable to keep still (4) quiet and thoughtful	(3) unable to keep still

Set B, vocabulary cloze: Caught in the rain. Choose the best word for each blank

Passage	Options	Answer and why
During the (1) _____ season, it rained heavily every afternoon.	(1) drought (2) haze (3) monsoon (4) forecast	(3) monsoon. Heavy rain every afternoon comes with the monsoon. A drought and haze both come with dry weather.
One day, the water rose so quickly that it caused a (2) _____ on the road outside our block.	(1) flood (2) downpour (3) drought (4) climate	(1) flood. Rising water that covers a road is a flood. A downpour is the rain itself, which causes the flood.
My mother was (3) _____ because my brother was still on his way home.	(1) relieved (2) anxious (3) delighted (4) ashamed	(2) anxious. He was still out in the storm, so she was worried. She could only feel relieved once he was home.
When he finally walked in, soaked but safe, she hugged him to (4) _____ him.	(1) include (2) reunite (3) tease (4) comfort	(4) comfort. A hug makes someone who has had a fright feel better. You reunite people with someone, not on their own.
He admitted it had been (5) _____ to walk home through the storm, and promised to check the forecast next time.	(1) reckless (2) graceful (3) necessary (4) humble	(1) reckless. He admits a mistake and promises to be careful, so walking through the storm was not caring about danger.

11 Using the words in a composition

Knowing a word is not enough. Your child also needs to use it in writing. This worked example rewrites a plain paragraph with words from the lists.

From plain to precise: a worked example

Plain sentence	Better sentence	List words used
I was very scared.	I felt terrified as I tiptoed into the dark room.	terrified, tiptoe
I heard a noise.	Suddenly, the old door began to creak.	creak
I saw something on the wall.	A peculiar shadow moved slowly across the wall.	peculiar, shadow
I was brave and switched on the light.	I gathered all my courage and switched on the light.	courage
It was my cat.	It was only my mischievous cat, curled up on my bed.	mischievous

- The plain sentences tell the reader what happened. The better sentences show it, using exact words from the lists: a feeling (terrified), a way of moving (tiptoe), a sound (creak), an unusual sight (peculiar) and a character trait (mischievous). Aim for two or three list words in each paragraph, not in every sentence.

12 Challenge words

For a child who finds the Primary 4 lists easy. Use these, then move on to the Primary 5 list.

10 challenge words

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
thorough	careful to check everything	The nurse gave me a thorough check-up.
enormous	very big	An enormous ship sailed into the harbour.
extraordinary	very unusual and surprising	The magician did an extraordinary trick.
fascinating	very interesting	The talk about sharks was fascinating.
magnificent	very beautiful and grand	The fireworks were magnificent.
fortunate	lucky	We were fortunate to find seats on the train.
sympathy	feeling sorry for someone who is sad or hurt	I felt sympathy for the boy who lost his dog.
permission	being allowed to do something	Ask your teacher for permission to leave the room.
temporary	lasting only a short time	The library is in a temporary building while the old one is repaired.
rehearse	to practise a show or a speech before doing it for real	Our class will rehearse the play on Friday.

13 How to use this list

Each list has ten words, about right for one week. If a list is too much, split it over two weeks. A few minutes every day works better than one long session.

A weekly spelling routine you can run at home

Day	What to do	Time
Day 1	Read the list together. Say each word clearly, talk about what it means and read the example sentence aloud.	10 to 15 minutes
Day 2	Look, say, cover, write, check for every word (see the next table). Circle the tricky part of any word your child got wrong.	15 minutes
Day 3	Your child writes a new sentence for five of the words. Check the spelling and the meaning together.	15 minutes
Day 4	A practice test. Read each word in a random order, then read it in its sentence. Mark it together and redo any word that was wrong.	10 minutes
Day 5	Check only the words missed on Day 4. Add any word that is still wrong to next week's list.	5 to 10 minutes

Look, say, cover, write, check

Step	What your child does
Look	Look closely at the word. Notice its letters, any double letters and the tricky part.
Say	Say the word aloud, then spell it letter by letter. Break a long word into parts, for example "dis-ap-pear".
Cover	Cover the word with a hand or a card.
Write	Write the word from memory.
Check	Uncover the word and compare letter by letter. If it is wrong, start again from Look.

How school spelling tests often work

What to expect	What to do at home
The list usually comes home some days before the test.	Check the test day with your child or the teacher and start the routine early in the week.
Some tests read out single words. Others, often called dictation, read out a sentence or a short passage for your child to write in full.	Practise both. Read out a word on its own, then read out its example sentence for your child to write.
In a dictation, capital letters and punctuation may be checked as well as spelling.	Remind your child to start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.
Each school decides the format, the number of words and whether a test counts towards a mark.	Ask the teacher if you are unsure. Use the school list first and this list for extra practice.

Is this list the right level? A five-minute check

Result	What it means	What to do
9 or 10 right	The level is easy for your child.	Use the challenge words, then try lists from the Primary 5 list.
5 to 8 right	The level is about right.	Work through the lists in order, one a week.
Fewer than 5 right	The level is too hard for now.	Start with the Primary 3 list, or split each list into two weeks of five words.

- How to check: pick 10 words from different lists. Read each one aloud for your child to spell, then ask what it means. Count a word as right only if it is spelt correctly and the meaning is roughly right.

If your child finds spelling hard

What you notice	What to try
Most words are wrong every week.	Cut the list to five words a week and learn the school list first. Small wins build confidence.
Words are right on test day but forgotten a week later.	Keep a list of words still being learnt and test them again a week later, then a month later.
Letters come out in the wrong order.	Clap the syllables, write the word in parts, and write the tricky part in a different colour.
The spelling is right but the meaning is not known.	Ask your child to say a new sentence with the word before writing it.
Your child is upset by practice or avoids it.	Keep sessions to ten minutes, praise effort, and make it a game: spell words aloud in the car or on the way to school.
It is still hard after a whole term.	Talk to your child's English teacher, who sees your child's work every day and can suggest the next step in school.

14 2027 school terms and which lists to use

The lists follow the four school terms. This table gives the 2027 term dates from MOE and the lists for each term. It is the only part of this page that changes from year to year.

2027 school terms for Primary 4

Term	2027 dates	Lists	Holiday after
Term 1	Mon 4 Jan to Fri 12 Mar	Lists 1 to 4	13 to 21 Mar
Term 2	Mon 22 Mar to Fri 28 May	Lists 5 to 8	29 May to 27 Jun
Term 3	Mon 28 Jun to Fri 3 Sep	Lists 9 to 12	4 to 12 Sep
Term 4	Mon 13 Sep to Fri 19 Nov	Lists 13 to 16	20 Nov to 31 Dec

- Primary 1 starts on Monday 4 January 2027. Primary 2 to 6 start on Tuesday 5 January 2027.
- Source: MOE, School terms and holidays for 2027 (14 July 2026).