Primary 5 Spelling and Vocabulary List

Primary 5 · 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 5, 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	For P5 and P6, the syllabus asks pupils to apply spelling skills to frequently misspelled and multisyllabic words, and to build vocabulary by examining how words are formed, how they relate to one another and how they are used in context.
Foundation or Standard	In P5 and P6, English is taken at Foundation or Standard level, depending on P4 school exam results. This list is pitched at Standard English. A child taking Foundation English can start with the Primary 4 list and move up.
PSLE English	Spelling and vocabulary are assessed in Paper 1 (Writing) and Paper 2 (Language Use and Comprehension). The next section shows where.
This list	TSS's own 200 words for Primary 5, in 20 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 Vocabulary and spelling in PSLE English

PSLE English is sat at the end of Primary 6. Spelling and vocabulary carry marks in two of its four papers, so the words your child learns in P5 count too.

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.

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 often misspelt words lists
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

3 Term 1 words (lists 1 to 5)

50 words in 5 lists: character, strong feelings, ways of speaking, ways of moving, describing settings.

List 1: Character

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
determined	having decided firmly to do something	The determined runner kept going despite the rain.
compassionate	feeling sorry for others and wanting to help	The compassionate nurse held the old lady's hand.
arrogant	thinking you are better than others	The arrogant player refused to pass the ball.
diligent	working hard and carefully	The diligent pupil checked every answer.
timid	shy and easily frightened	The timid kitten hid under the bed.
optimistic	hopeful that good things will happen	Dad stayed optimistic even when it rained on our picnic.
reliable	able to be trusted to do what you say	Wei Ming is reliable, so the teacher made him class monitor.
cunning	clever at tricking people	The cunning fox tricked the crow into dropping its food.
sincere	honest and meaning what you say	Her apology was sincere.
gentle	kind and careful, not rough	The vet was gentle with the injured puppy.

List 2: Strong feelings

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
overjoyed	extremely happy	We were overjoyed when our team won.
devastated	extremely shocked and sad	He was devastated when his dog went missing.
frustrated	annoyed because you cannot do something	I was frustrated when the puzzle piece would not fit.
astonished	very surprised	The audience was astonished by the magic trick.
horrified	shocked and frightened	She was horrified to see a cockroach in her soup.
guilty	feeling bad because you did something wrong	I felt guilty for not helping my friend.
envious	wanting what someone else has	He was envious of his friend's new phone.
hesitant	unsure and slow to act	She was hesitant to raise her hand.
indignant	angry because something is unfair	Mei was indignant when she was blamed for the mess.
remorseful	very sorry for something you did	The remorseful boy offered to pay for the broken window.

List 3: Ways of speaking

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
murmur	to speak very quietly	She murmured a thank you and looked away.
stammer	to speak with pauses and repeated sounds, often because of nerves	He stammered when the principal spoke to him.
snap	to speak suddenly in an angry way	"Not now," Dad snapped.
plead	to beg someone strongly	The boy pleaded with his mother to let him stay up.
insist	to say firmly that something must happen or is true	Grandma insisted that we take more food.
retort	to reply quickly and sharply	"That is not fair," she retorted.
grumble	to complain in a low voice	My brother grumbled about doing the dishes.
remark	to say what you think about something	Mum remarked that the room looked tidy.
boast	to talk too proudly about yourself	He likes to boast about his high marks.
sob	to cry noisily	The lost girl began to sob.

List 4: Ways of moving

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
sprint	to run very fast for a short distance	I sprinted to the finishing line.
trudge	to walk slowly with heavy steps	We trudged home in the rain.
stagger	to walk unsteadily, nearly falling	The tired hiker staggered to the hut.
creep	to move slowly and quietly	The cat crept towards the bird.
dart	to move suddenly and quickly	A lizard darted across the wall.
plunge	to jump or fall into something suddenly	He plunged into the pool.
glide	to move smoothly and quietly	The eagle glided over the hills.
shuffle	to walk without lifting your feet much	Grandpa shuffled to the door in his slippers.
lunge	to move forward suddenly	The goalkeeper lunged for the ball.
clamber	to climb with difficulty, using your hands and feet	We clambered over the rocks.

List 5: Describing settings

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
deserted	empty, with no people	The park was deserted at night.
crowded	full of people	The train was crowded during the morning rush.
gloomy	dark and sad-looking	The old house looked gloomy.
spacious	having a lot of space	Our new flat has a spacious living room.
cramped	too small for the people or things in it	The tiny room felt cramped.
peaceful	calm and quiet	The garden was peaceful in the early morning.
chaotic	very messy and confused	The classroom was chaotic before the teacher arrived.
scenic	having beautiful views	We took a scenic walk along the coast.
bustling	busy and full of activity	The bustling market was full of shoppers.
eerie	strange and frightening	An eerie silence filled the empty hall.

4 Term 2 words (lists 6 to 10)

50 words in 5 lists: problems and solutions, community and helping, environment and nature, science and discovery, effort and achievement.

List 6: Problems and solutions

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
obstacle	something that blocks your way	The fallen tree was an obstacle on the path.
dilemma	a hard choice between two things	I faced a dilemma about whether to tell the teacher.
predicament	a difficult situation	We were in a predicament when we missed the last bus.
solution	the answer to a problem	We found a solution to the leaking tap.
consequence	a result of something you did	Losing the match was a consequence of skipping training.
conflict	a strong disagreement	The two neighbours had a conflict over the noise.
resolve	to settle a problem	The teacher helped us resolve our quarrel.
compromise	an agreement where each side gives up something	We reached a compromise and took turns.
crisis	a time of great danger or difficulty	The flood caused a crisis in the town.
overcome	to succeed in dealing with a problem	She overcame her fear of the water.

List 7: Community and helping

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
contribute	to give something to help	We contributed old books to the library.
donate	to give money or goods to help others	We donate clothes to charity every year.
charity	a group that helps people in need	The charity gives food to families who need it.
needy	not having enough money or food	The volunteers gave rice to needy families.
residents	people who live in a place	The residents held a party at the void deck.
welfare	the health and happiness of people	The nurse cares about the welfare of her patients.
cooperate	to work together	The two classes cooperated to clean the beach.
gratitude	the feeling of being thankful	She wrote a card to show her gratitude.
initiative	the ability to act without being told	He showed initiative by tidying the room.
assist	to help	Please assist the old man with his bags.

List 8: Environment and nature

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
conserve	to protect something so it is not wasted	We must conserve water.
endangered	at risk of dying out	The pangolin is an endangered animal.
extinct	no longer existing	The dodo is an extinct bird.
reduce	to make smaller or less	Reduce waste by using both sides of the paper.
reuse	to use again	Reuse glass jars to store buttons.
mangrove	a tree that grows in muddy salt water along coasts	Crabs hide among the mangrove roots.
reservoir	a large lake used to store water	We jogged around the reservoir.
wildlife	wild animals and plants	The nature reserve is home to much wildlife.
destroy	to damage something so badly that it cannot be used	The fire destroyed the forest.
sustainable	able to continue without harming the environment	Using less plastic is a sustainable habit.

List 9: Science and discovery

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
experiment	a test done to find something out	We did an experiment with magnets.
observe	to watch carefully	Observe how the plant grows each day.
predict	to say what you think will happen	Can you predict what will happen to the ice?
measure	to find the size or amount of something	Measure the length of the table.
evidence	facts that show something is true	The wet floor was evidence that someone had spilled water.
investigate	to find out the facts about something	The class will investigate which material floats.
invent	to make something new for the first time	Who invented the telephone?
microscope	a tool that makes tiny things look bigger	We looked at a leaf under the microscope.
laboratory	a room where scientists do experiments	The science laboratory has many sinks.
conclusion	what you decide after thinking about the facts	Our conclusion was that plants need light.

List 10: Effort and achievement

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
persevere	to keep trying even when it is hard	If you persevere, you will improve.
effort	hard work	She put a lot of effort into her project.
achieve	to succeed in doing something	He achieved his goal of swimming fifty metres.
accomplish	to finish something successfully	We accomplished the task before the bell rang.
progress	improvement over time	I have made progress in my reading.
ambition	a strong wish to do something	Her ambition is to be a pilot.
improve	to get better	My handwriting has improved this year.
dedicated	giving a lot of time and effort to something	The dedicated coach trained us every week.
failure	lack of success	One failure does not mean you should give up.
succeed	to do what you were trying to do	With practice, you will succeed.

5 Term 3 words (lists 11 to 15)

50 words in 5 lists: health and safety, media and technology, travel and culture, sports and competition, suspense.

List 11: Health and safety

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
hygiene	keeping yourself and your surroundings clean	Good hygiene helps stop germs spreading.
nutritious	full of things that keep your body healthy	Fruit is a nutritious snack.
emergency	a sudden dangerous situation that needs quick action	In an emergency, stay calm and call for help.
ambulance	a vehicle that takes sick or injured people to hospital	The ambulance raced to the accident.
symptom	a sign of an illness	A sore throat is a symptom of a cold.
infection	an illness caused by germs	The cut became red and swollen because of an infection.
precaution	something you do to stop something bad from happening	Wearing a helmet is a sensible precaution.
unconscious	not awake and not able to notice things	The man fainted and lay unconscious on the floor.
prescription	a doctor's note saying which medicine you need	The doctor wrote a prescription for cough syrup.
balanced	having the right amounts of different things	A balanced diet includes fruit and vegetables.

List 12: Media and technology

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
device	a tool or machine made for a purpose	Switch off your device before bed.
online	connected to the internet	We had online lessons that week.
digital	using computers and electronic technology	The library lends digital books.
information	facts about something	The brochure gives information about the museum.
website	a set of pages on the internet	The school website shows the holiday dates.
privacy	keeping your personal life to yourself	Protect your privacy by not sharing your address online.
advertisement	a notice or video that tries to sell something	The advertisement showed a new toy.
broadcast	a programme sent out on television or radio	We watched the live broadcast of the parade.
gadget	a small, useful machine	My uncle loves the latest gadgets.
signal	a sound, light or wave that sends a message	My phone has no signal in the lift.

List 13: Travel and culture

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
culture	the customs and way of life of a group of people	We learnt about each other's culture at the class celebration.
custom	something people usually do in their community	It is a custom to remove your shoes before entering some homes.
souvenir	something you buy to remember a place	I bought a keychain as a souvenir.
passport	a document that lets you travel to other countries	Keep your passport in a safe place.
foreign	from another country	She can speak two foreign languages.
destination	the place you are going to	Our destination was a small fishing village.
itinerary	a plan of a trip	The itinerary shows we will visit the castle on Monday.
landmark	a famous building or place that is easy to see	The tall tower is a well-known landmark.
heritage	the history and traditions of a place	The old shophouses are part of our heritage.
local	from the area where you live	We tried the local food on our trip.

List 14: Sports and competition

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
tournament	a competition with many matches	Our school won the chess tournament.
opponent	the person or team you play against	My opponent served the ball very hard.
victory	a win	The team celebrated their victory.
defeat	to beat someone in a game	We defeated last year's champions.
referee	the person who makes sure players follow the rules	The referee blew the whistle for a foul.
spectators	people who watch an event	The spectators cheered loudly.
stamina	the energy to keep going for a long time	Long runs build stamina.
sportsmanship	fair and kind behaviour in sport	Shaking hands after the game shows good sportsmanship.
qualify	to reach the standard needed to go to the next round	We qualified for the finals.
participate	to take part	Everyone may participate in the race.

List 15: Suspense

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
anxiously	in a worried way	We waited anxiously for news.
cautiously	carefully, to avoid danger	She cautiously opened the creaky door.
silence	complete quiet	A long silence followed the question.
pounding	beating hard and fast	My heart was pounding as I walked on stage.
trembling	shaking slightly, often from fear or cold	His hands were trembling as he held the letter.
petrified	so frightened that you cannot move	I was petrified when the dog growled.
ominous	giving a feeling that something bad will happen	The ominous rumble of thunder made us hurry home.
sinister	seeming evil or dangerous	A sinister figure stood at the gate.
startled	suddenly surprised or frightened	The loud bang startled the baby.
desperate	willing to try anything because the situation is very bad	The desperate kitten clung to the branch.

6 Term 4 words (lists 16 to 20)

50 words in 5 lists: prefixes, suffixes, often misspelt words, words for situational writing, words for reflection.

List 16: Prefixes: mis-, pre-, im-, in-, over-

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
mislead	to make someone believe something untrue	The old sign may mislead visitors.
misplace	to put something in the wrong place and lose it	I often misplace my house keys.
preview	a look at something before others see it	We watched a preview of the new film.
prehistoric	from a time long ago, before history was written down	Prehistoric people made tools from stone.
impatient	not able to wait calmly	The impatient driver honked his horn.
impossible	not able to happen or be done	It is impossible to be in two places at once.
incorrect	wrong	Cross out the incorrect answer.
invisible	not able to be seen	Air is invisible.
overcrowded	with too many people	The overcrowded lift could not close its doors.
overflow	to spill over the edge	The bath water began to overflow.

List 17: Suffixes: -tion, -sion, -ness, -able, -ous

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
celebration	a party or event for a special occasion	The celebration lasted until midnight.
decision	a choice you make	It was a hard decision to leave the team.
kindness	being kind	Thank you for your kindness.
darkness	the state of being dark	The room was in total darkness.
comfortable	relaxing and pleasant	This sofa is very comfortable.
enjoyable	giving pleasure	The trip was very enjoyable.
dangerous	likely to cause harm	It is dangerous to play near the road.
famous	known by many people	The famous singer waved to her fans.
nervousness	the feeling of being nervous	His nervousness faded once he started singing.
courageous	very brave	The courageous girl pulled her brother out of the water.

List 18: Often misspelt words

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
accommodation	a place to stay	The hotel offered cheap accommodation.
embarrass	to make someone feel shy or silly	Please do not embarrass me in front of my friends.
definitely	certainly	I will definitely come to your party.
occasion	a special event	A wedding is a happy occasion.
disappoint	to make someone sad by not doing what they hoped	I did not want to disappoint my parents.
immediately	at once	Come here immediately.
beginning	the start	The beginning of the story is exciting.
surprise	something you did not expect	The party was a surprise.
committee	a group of people chosen to plan or decide things	The class committee planned the party.
especially	more than usual, particularly	I love fruit, especially mangoes.

List 19: Words for situational writing

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
inform	to tell someone facts	I am writing to inform you about the lost item.
request	to ask politely for something	I would like to request a new library card.
enquire	to ask for information	I am writing to enquire about the swimming lessons.
apology	a statement saying sorry	Please accept my apology for the late reply.
appreciate	to be thankful for something	I appreciate your quick reply.
inconvenience	trouble or difficulty caused to someone	We are sorry for any inconvenience caused.
details	small facts about something	Please send me the details of the event.
venue	the place where an event happens	The venue for the concert is the school hall.
registration	putting your name on a list to join something	Registration closes on Friday.
sincerely	honestly and truly	She sincerely thanked the volunteers.

List 20: Words for reflection

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
realise	to suddenly understand something	I realised that I had left my bag on the bus.
regret	to feel sorry about something you did	I regret shouting at my sister.
valuable	very useful or important	I learnt a valuable lesson that day.
mistake	something done wrong	Everyone makes a mistake sometimes.
responsibility	a duty to look after something	Feeding the dog is my responsibility.
appreciation	thankfulness and respect	We gave our teacher a card to show our appreciation.
resolution	a firm decision to do something	My resolution is to read every night.
experience	something that happens to you	Camping was a new experience for me.
reflect	to think carefully about something	I reflected on what I could have done better.
memorable	worth remembering	The trip was a memorable one.

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
bite off more than you can chew	to try to do more than you can manage	I bit off more than I could chew when I joined four CCAs.
a drop in the ocean	a very small amount compared with what is needed	Our ten dollars was a drop in the ocean, but every bit helped.
beat around the bush	to avoid saying something directly	Stop beating around the bush and tell me what happened.
get cold feet	to become too nervous to do something you planned	He got cold feet just before his solo.
on the tip of my tongue	almost able to remember something	Her name is on the tip of my tongue.
see eye to eye	to agree with someone	My brother and I seldom see eye to eye on games.
the last straw	the final problem that makes you lose patience	When the printer jammed again, it was the last straw.
in the nick of time	just in time	We reached the platform in the nick of time.
turn over a new leaf	to start behaving in a better way	After the warning, he turned over a new leaf.
with flying colours	very successfully	She passed her swimming test with flying colours.

Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verb	Meaning	Example sentence
come up with	to think of an idea or a plan	We came up with a plan to raise money for the shelter.
put up with	to accept something annoying without complaining	I cannot put up with the noise any longer.
look down on	to think you are better than someone	Never look down on anyone for being slow.
make up	to become friends again after a quarrel	The twins made up after their argument.
stand up for	to support or defend someone	She stood up for the new boy when others teased him.
bring up	to mention a subject	He brought up the problem at the class meeting.
cut down on	to do or use less of something	Dad is cutting down on sugar.
go through	to experience something difficult	The family went through a hard time after the fire.
back out	to decide not to do something you agreed to	Two players backed out at the last minute.
take after	to look or behave like an older family member	Mei takes after her mother.

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 5)

Words	The difference	Examples
spectators, audience	Spectators watch a sport or event. An audience watches or listens to a show, a talk or a concert.	The spectators cheered the swimmers. The audience clapped after the play.
astonished, horrified	Astonished means very surprised. Horrified means shocked and frightened by something terrible.	I was astonished by the magic trick. We were horrified to see the accident.
trudge, stagger, stumble	Trudge is walking slowly with heavy steps, often when tired. Stagger is walking unsteadily, almost falling. Stumble is tripping and almost falling.	We trudged home after the hike. The injured man staggered to a bench. I stumbled on the stairs.
murmur, mumble	Murmur is speaking softly and gently. Mumble is speaking so unclearly that people cannot understand.	Mum murmured goodnight. Do not mumble your answer.
deserted, bustling	Deserted means empty of people. Bustling means busy and full of activity.	The beach was deserted at dawn. By noon, it was bustling.
diligent, determined	Diligent is about working hard and carefully. Determined is about not giving up on a goal.	The diligent pupil checked every answer. The determined runner finished despite the pain.

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 fit the meaning, the grammar or the word that comes next.
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 DILIGENT pupil revised every evening.	(1) working hard and carefully (2) clever (3) neat (4) obedient	(1) working hard and carefully
2. The hikers TRUDGED up the hill in the heat.	(1) hurried (2) walked slowly with heavy steps (3) wandered (4) marched	(2) walked slowly with heavy steps
3. Ali was HESITANT to jump into the deep pool.	(1) eager (2) frightened (3) unsure and slow to act (4) embarrassed	(3) unsure and slow to act
4. The market was BUSTLING on Sunday morning.	(1) noisy (2) busy and full of activity (3) dirty (4) colourful	(2) busy and full of activity
5. The firefighter showed great STAMINA during the long rescue.	(1) courage (2) skill (3) speed (4) the energy to keep going for a long time	(4) the energy to keep going for a long time

Set A, vocabulary cloze: The charity fair. Choose the best word for each blank

Passage	Options	Answer and why
Our class decided to (1) _____ to a charity that helps elderly residents.	(1) contribute (2) destroy (3) mislead (4) boast	(1) contribute. To give something to help is to contribute.
On the day of the fair, the hall was so (2) _____ that we could hardly move.	(1) deserted (2) spacious (3) crowded (4) gloomy	(3) crowded. We could hardly move because it was full of people.
We had to (3) _____ with one another to keep the stalls running.	(1) overflow (2) cooperate (3) stagger (4) retort	(2) cooperate. Keeping stalls running needs people to work together.
The residents wrote us a card to express their (4) _____.	(1) failure (2) predicament (3) symptom (4) gratitude	(4) gratitude. A thank-you card expresses gratitude.
It was a (5) _____ day for all of us.	(1) memorable (2) impossible (3) invisible (4) prehistoric	(1) memorable. A happy, special day is worth remembering.

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

Question	Options	Answer
1. The ARROGANT player refused to shake hands with his opponent.	(1) rude (2) thinking he was better than others (3) jealous (4) unfriendly	(2) thinking he was better than others
2. "That is not true," Mei RETORTED.	(1) whispered (2) admitted (3) replied quickly and sharply (4) complained	(3) replied quickly and sharply
3. They faced a DILEMMA: help the lost child or catch their bus.	(1) a hard choice between two things (2) a problem with no answer (3) an argument (4) an emergency	(1) a hard choice between two things
4. The rangers protect the ENDANGERED birds on the island.	(1) rare and colourful (2) protected by law (3) found only there (4) at risk of dying out	(4) at risk of dying out
5. The empty house looked EERIE in the moonlight.	(1) old (2) strange and frightening (3) silent (4) gloomy	(2) strange and frightening

Set B, vocabulary cloze: Footsteps in the corridor. Choose the best word for each blank

Passage	Options	Answer and why
It was past midnight and the corridor was completely (1) _____.	(1) bustling (2) crowded (3) deserted (4) scenic	(3) deserted. Past midnight, there was no one in the corridor.
Jun heard footsteps behind him and his heart was (2) _____.	(1) pounding (2) overflowing (3) boasting (4) donating	(1) pounding. A frightened person's heart beats hard and fast.
He walked (3) _____ towards the lift, looking over his shoulder.	(1) dangerous (2) cautiously (3) famous (4) comfortable	(2) cautiously. Only an adverb fits after walked, and he was being careful.
Suddenly, a hand touched his arm. He was so (4) _____ that he could not move.	(1) overjoyed (2) optimistic (3) petrified (4) diligent	(3) petrified. Too frightened to move is petrified.
It was only his neighbour, who felt (5) _____ about frightening him.	(1) remorseful (2) envious (3) indignant (4) timid	(1) remorseful. The neighbour was sorry for what he did.

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
On Sports Day, I ran in the race.	On Sports Day, I was determined to win the 400-metre race.	determined
I ran fast at the start.	When the whistle blew, I sprinted ahead of the others.	sprint
I got tired halfway.	Halfway round, my legs ached and my stamina was running low.	stamina
People were cheering.	The spectators in the stands cheered my name.	spectators
I kept going and came in second. I was happy.	I chose to persevere and finished second, overjoyed with my best time ever.	persevere, overjoyed

- Each better sentence swaps a general word (ran, tired, happy, people) for an exact one from the lists. In a composition, these words do most work in the high point of the story, where the reader needs to feel what the character feels.

12 Challenge words

For a child who finds the Primary 5 lists easy. Use these, then move on to the Primary 6 list.

10 challenge words

Word	Meaning	Example sentence
ingenious	clever and new	She had an ingenious idea to reuse old bottles.
indifferent	not caring either way	He was indifferent to the result of the game.
perplexed	puzzled and unsure	The perplexed tourist stared at the map.
eloquent	speaking clearly and well	The eloquent speaker held everyone's attention.
meagre	very small in amount	The stray cat survived on meagre scraps.
prudent	careful and sensible	It is prudent to save some of your pocket money.
tenacious	not giving up easily	The tenacious climber reached the summit on her third try.
vigilant	watchful and alert to danger	Stay vigilant when crossing busy roads.
futile	having no chance of success	It was futile to chase the bus once it had left.
inevitable	certain to happen	After weeks of no rain, a water shortage seemed inevitable.

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 "ac-com-mo-da-tion".
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 6 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 4 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 5

Term	2027 dates	Lists	Holiday after
Term 1	Mon 4 Jan to Fri 12 Mar	Lists 1 to 5	13 to 21 Mar
Term 2	Mon 22 Mar to Fri 28 May	Lists 6 to 10	29 May to 27 Jun
Term 3	Mon 28 Jun to Fri 3 Sep	Lists 11 to 15	4 to 12 Sep
Term 4	Mon 13 Sep to Fri 19 Nov	Lists 16 to 20	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).