

**Word of the Week**

**acquaint** (ə kwānt´) *v.*, to cause to know personally; to make familiar

*I wanted to acquaint myself with the schoolyard before my first day of class.*

It is easy to misspell the word *acquaint* by omitting the *c*. To avoid making this mistake, you might want to familiarize yourself with words that share this spelling pattern. These words include *acquaintance*, *acquiesce*, *acquire*, and *acquisition*.

**Tip**

The word *definite* is frequently misspelled as *definate* or *defanite*, while the word *definitely* is often misspelled as *definately*. To avoid making this mistake, remember that *definite* and *definitely* are related in meaning to the words *define* and *definition* and share the same spelling pattern.

**LESSON 6**

**Looking for Patterns**

**Understand the Concept**

Words may be related in three ways: in sound, spelling, and meaning.

- please, evil, scene, meal, grieve, teen (shared **sound**)
- bustle, cradle, pickle, noodle, cycle (shared **spelling**)
- add, calculate, divide, multiply, subtract (shared **meaning**)

Words that are related in sound may also be related in spelling. For example, the following words share the long-*e* sound and the spelling pattern *ea*.

- please, meal, bead (shared **sound** and **spelling**)

Many words that are related in spelling are also related in **meaning**. For example, look at the following group of words. Do you see the pattern?

- decide, decision, decisive, decisively

Sound, spelling, and meaning are all closely interconnected. Many words that are related in sound are also related in spelling and/or meaning. As you continue to study words, be aware of the different ways they can be related. You will become aware of patterns that will help with your spelling and pronunciation.

**Try It Yourself**

Look over each of the following word groups, looking for patterns in sound, spelling, and/or meaning. Tell what the words have in common; then, add a word of your own to the list.

1. cough, fluff, calf, off, laugh, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. ginger, journey, jagged, gelatin, gentle, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. silky, muddle, happen, bicker, occupy, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. achieve, achievable, overachiever, \_\_\_\_\_

Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

5. combative, massive, effective, \_\_\_\_\_

Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

Recognizing patterns in sound and spelling is what enables you to pronounce new words correctly. For example, suppose you were to encounter a new word beginning with *kn* (such as *knoll*). Your brain would automatically remind you of *know*, *kneel*, *knot*, and all the other words that share that pattern, allowing you to guess that the *k* is silent.

Recognizing patterns in spelling and meaning can help you avoid making common spelling mistakes. For example, you can remember how to spell the tricky word *relative* if you notice it is related in spelling and meaning to the words *relate* and *relationship*.

### Just for Fun

Circle the word that does not belong in each word group. Explain your selection on the lines provided.

1. buzzer, ripen, flatten, madder

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. biped, pedestal, ripped, pedestrian

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. character, chorus, child, chord

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. state, pine, wrote, grip

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. correlate, coauthor, cordial, collaborate

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Tip** If you forget how to spell the word *humorous*, think of the word *humor*.

**Tip** Imagine that you want to write the word *progressive*, but you can't remember if the word has one *s* or two. Think of other words you know that contain *gress*. You may remember how to spell *progress*, *aggressive*, or *Congress*. As you jot down the other words that contain *gress*, you see the pattern and realize that *progressive* is correct, not *progresive*.