



Scripps National Spelling Bee Study Words for Eighth Graders 2014–2015 School Year

This list includes 50 challenging eighth grade words and, to extend learning, 50 challenging ninth grade words. If you learn the spellings and meanings of these 100 words, you will be well prepared for a eighth grade classroom bee. If you would like to be well prepared for a school spelling bee, ask your teacher for the 450-word School Spelling Bee Study List.

1. **spoonerism** (noun) a transposition of usually initial sounds of two or more words that generally creates a comic effect.
2. **firmament** (noun) the vault or arch of the sky : the heavens.
3. **aardvark** (noun) a burrowing nocturnal African mammal that feeds on ants and termites, and has a long snout, a snakelike tongue, large ears and a heavy tapering tail.
4. **pantomime** (noun) a sequence of movements or actions not accompanied by speech or seen from beyond earshot.
5. **dinero** (noun) money.
6. **marsupial** (noun) any of an order of mammals having a pouch for carrying the young and including kangaroos, wombats, bandicoots and opossums.
7. **savvy** (adjective) characterized by shrewdness and practical grasp.
8. **terra-cotta** (noun) an object (as a bowl or figurine) of a usually low-fired and typically reddish unglazed ceramic material.
9. **palliative** (adjective) serving to cause to lessen or abate.
10. **epoch** (noun) an extended period of time usually characterized by a distinctive development or by a memorable series of events
11. **abysmal** (adjective) immeasurably low or wretched.
12. **hirsute** (adjective) hairy, shaggy.
13. **noctambulist** (noun) one who walks at night especially in his sleep.
14. **ballyhoo** (noun) publicity characterized by exaggeration, unmitigated flamboyant display, or excessive sensationalism.
15. **gaffe** (noun) a social or diplomatic blunder or clumsy mistake.
16. **obfuscate** (verb) make unnecessarily complex usually to the point of confusion.
17. **maize** (noun) corn with hard kernels of various colors (as reddish brown, dark purple, and yellow) that is typically used for ornamental purposes.
18. **benison** (noun) blessing.
19. **dementia** (noun) a condition of deteriorated mentality characterized by marked decline from the individual's former intellectual level and often by emotional apathy.
20. **slalom** (noun) skiing in a zigzag or wavy course between upright obstacles (as flags).
21. **quotidian** (adjective) commonplace, ordinary.
22. **hummock** (noun) a small hill or knoll that is rounded or conical : a slight rise of ground above a level surface.
23. **centenary** (noun) commemoration or celebration of an event that occurred 100 years before.
24. **shebang** (noun) establishment, affair, thing.



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online quizzes and audio pronunciations.*

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25.	grandeur	(<i>noun</i>)	the quality of being majestic, magnificent, splendid, or stately especially to the view.
26.	hydroponic	(<i>adjective</i>)	of or relating to the growing of plants in nutrient solutions in water with or without sand, gravel, or other inert medium to provide mechanical support.
27.	eschew	(<i>verb</i>)	to abstain from (as something wrong, inappropriate, distasteful, or harmful) : shun.
28.	sabbatical	(<i>noun</i>)	a leave with pay granted to one holding an administrative or professional position (as college professor) for rest, travel, or research.
29.	noxious	(<i>adjective</i>)	harmful or destructive to humans or to other organisms.
30.	largesses	(<i>plural noun</i>)	aid, support, or other valuables received as or as if as a gift or through the benevolence of another.
31.	flambé	(<i>adjective</i>)	(of a food) dressed or served covered with flaming brandy or other flaming liquor.
32.	tawdry	(<i>adjective</i>)	cheap and gaudy in appearance or quality : tastelessly showy.
33.	catalyst	(<i>noun</i>)	an agent that provokes or precipitates an action or reaction between two or more persons or forces.
34.	wherewithal	(<i>noun</i>)	means or resources for purchasing or doing something.
35.	anathema	(<i>noun</i>)	one or something that is intensely disliked or loathed.
36.	exoneration	(<i>noun</i>)	the act of discharging, or freeing morally or legally (as from a charge, duty, obligation, or responsibility).
37.	ukulele* or ukelele	(<i>noun</i>)	a small guitar of Portuguese origin popularized in Hawaii in the 1880s, strung typically with four strings that are plucked or strummed with the fingers, and used especially in accompanying songs or dances.
38.	dromedary	(<i>noun</i>)	a camel of unusual speed, having a single large hump on the back and bred and trained especially for riding.
39.	El Niño	(<i>noun</i>)	an irregularly occurring flow of unusually warm surface water along the western coast of South America that is accompanied by abnormally high rainfall in usually dry areas.
40.	laudable	(<i>adjective</i>)	worthy of praise : commendable.
41.	ochre or ocher	(<i>noun</i>)	a moderate orange yellow.
42.	ingratiate	(<i>verb</i>)	to make agreeable to someone.
43.	ragout	(<i>noun</i>)	meat and vegetables well seasoned in a thick rich usually brown sauce.
44.	prima donna	(<i>noun</i>)	a person who finds it difficult to work under direction or as part of a team : one who is impatient of restraint or criticism.
45.	ancillary	(<i>adjective</i>)	serving to aid or assist : auxiliary : supplementary.
46.	epicurean	(<i>adjective</i>)	stimulating and satisfying to the senses.
47.	farrago	(<i>noun</i>)	a confused, disordered, or irrational collection (as of words or ideas).
48.	ad nauseam	(<i>adverb</i>)	to a sickening degree : so as to disgust.
49.	counterfeit	(<i>adjective</i>)	made fraudulently in imitation of government-issued legal tender.
50.	prescient	(<i>adjective</i>)	having foreknowledge : characterized by foresight.
51.	technocrat	(<i>noun</i>)	an expert in a specialized field that exercises managerial authority.
52.	billabong	(<i>noun</i>)	a backwater caused by overflow from a river and forming a stagnant pool.

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53.	vacuousness	(<i>noun</i>)	the quality or state of being marked by or indicative of mental emptiness or lack of ideas or intelligence.
54.	cordillera	(<i>noun</i>)	a group of mountain ranges forming a mountain system of great linear extent.
55.	harbinger	(<i>noun</i>)	something that presages or foreshadows what is to come.
56.	adumbrate	(<i>verb</i>)	give a sketchy representation of : outline broadly.
57.	tautology	(<i>noun</i>)	an instance of needless or meaningless repetition in close succession of an idea, statement, or word.
58.	dilapidated	(<i>adjective</i>)	decayed, deteriorated, injured, or fallen into partial ruin especially because of neglect or misuse.
59.	kraken	(<i>noun</i>)	a fabulous Scandinavian sea monster perhaps imagined on the basis of chance sightings of giant squids.
60.	panacea	(<i>noun</i>)	a remedy for all ills or difficulties : a cure-all.
61.	ignominious	(<i>adjective</i>)	marked by, full of, or characterized by disgrace or shame.
62.	chintzy	(<i>adjective</i>)	gaudy, cheap.
63.	surfeit	(<i>noun</i>)	an overabundant supply, yield, or amount of something : an excess.
64.	domiciled	(<i>adjective</i>)	having an established place of residence.
65.	wahine	(<i>noun</i>)	a girl surfer.
66.	doubloons	(<i>plural noun</i>)	old gold coins of Spain and Spanish America worth 16 pieces of eight.
67.	hyacinth	(<i>noun</i>)	a common garden flower widely grown for its beauty and fragrance.
68.	circumflex	(<i>noun</i>)	a diacritical mark originally used in languages to mark length, contraction, or a falling-rising tone.
69.	inchoate	(<i>adjective</i>)	imperfectly formed or formulated : disordered.
70.	steppe	(<i>noun</i>)	one of the vast tracts in southeastern Europe or Asia that are usually level and without forests.
71.	neophyte	(<i>noun</i>)	a young or inexperienced practitioner or student : a beginner.
72.	umami	(<i>noun</i>)	a taste sensation that is meaty or savory and is produced by several amino acids and nucleotides (as glutamate and aspartate).
73.	loquacious	(<i>adjective</i>)	given to excessive talking : garrulous.
74.	apocryphal	(<i>adjective</i>)	of doubtful authenticity : fictitious.
75.	milieu	(<i>noun</i>)	environment, setting.
76.	appurtenances	(<i>plural noun</i>)	subordinate parts, adjuncts or accessories.
77.	carte blanche	(<i>noun</i>)	full discretionary power : unlimited delegated authority.
78.	pusillanimous	(<i>adjective</i>)	lacking or showing a lack of courage, strength, and resolution : marked by mean-spirited and contemptible timidity.
79.	obstreperous	(<i>adjective</i>)	stubbornly defiant : resisting control or restraint often with a show of noisy disorder.
80.	latke	(<i>noun</i>)	a griddle cake; especially : one made from grated raw potato.
81.	bas-relief	(<i>noun</i>)	a mode of sculpture in which the projection from the surrounding surface is slight and no part of the modeled form is undercut.
82.	mellifluous	(<i>adjective</i>)	sweetly flowing : smooth : honeyed.

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83.	cygnet	(<i>noun</i>)	a young swan.
84.	heuristic	(<i>adjective</i>)	of or relating to exploratory problem-solving techniques that utilize self-educating strategies (as the evaluation of feedback) to improve performance.
85.	Rorschach	(<i>noun</i>)	a psychological test of personality and intelligence using inkblot designs.
86.	quintessential	(<i>adjective</i>)	purest of its kind.
87.	nihilism	(<i>noun</i>)	a viewpoint that all traditional values and beliefs are unfounded and that all existence is consequently senseless and useless.
88.	épée	(<i>noun</i>)	the art or practice of fencing with a sword that weighs more than a foil or saber and that has a bowl-shaped guard and a rigid blade that has no cutting edge and that tapers to a sharp point which is blunted with a metal stop for fencing.
89.	Naugahyde	(<i>trademark</i>)	— used for vinyl-coated fabrics.
90.	whippoorwill	(<i>noun</i>)	a nocturnal bird of the eastern United States and Canada that is seldom seen although its call is often heard at nightfall or just before dawn.
91.	Sisyphean or Sisyphian	(<i>adjective</i>)	requiring continual and often ineffective effort.
92.	reconnoiter* or reconnoitre	(<i>verb</i>)	to make an exploratory or preliminary survey, inspection, or examination of.
93.	Sahel	(<i>noun</i>)	a savanna or steppe region bordering a desert and especially the Sahara desert.
94.	wunderkind	(<i>noun</i>)	one who succeeds in a competitive or highly difficult field or profession at an early age.
95.	souchong	(<i>noun</i>)	any of several Chinese black teas made from large leaves.
96.	bhangra	(<i>noun</i>)	popular music originating chiefly in England and marked by features of traditional Punjabi music and disco.
97.	vis-à-vis	(<i>preposition</i>)	in comparison with.
98.	Machiavellian	(<i>adjective</i>)	of or relating to an Italian philosopher or his political doctrine that any means however lawless or unscrupulous may be justifiably employed by a ruler in order to establish and maintain a strong central government.
99.	zeitgeist	(<i>noun</i>)	the spirit of the time : the general intellectual and moral state or the trend of culture and taste characteristic of an era.
100.	synecdoche	(<i>noun</i>)	a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole or vice versa.