

# Here's an Instant Activity for December 1, 2003



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## STRATEGY FOR SPELLING SUCCESS

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For most learners, spelling well doesn't just happen. It is the result of a conscientious spelling curriculum that:

1. provides a menu of skill-building activities that range in sophistication to teach critical concepts at a student's own level,
2. uses assessment to gather information to target word study to the specific words each student has not learned from among all previously introduced words in the program, as well as to identify skills not yet mastered,
3. equips teachers with guidelines for spelling expectations in everyday writing that increase as students develop as writers, making the classroom a rehearsal for real-world writing, and
4. proposes multiple opportunities to engage parents in the acquisition of spelling skills with their child.

This Instant Activity helps teachers achieve item number 1 above—it complements the skill-building component in the SPELLING SOURCEBOOK Series, Second Edition.



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## LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

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Approximately Grade 8



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## PURPOSE

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There are words for which the British English spelling system is different from the American English spelling. This Instant Activity serves to heighten students' awareness of British spellings and American spellings, and to emphasize that for written work in the United States, the American spelling is preferred. (In Canada, either form is usually acceptable, or in some cases the British spelling is preferred.)

Skills: spelling awareness



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## SUGGESTED USE

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This Instant Activity can be used to complement activities that reinforce the section on British/American spelling issues of Build Skillful Writers in Unit 15 in Level 8 of the Spelling Sourcebook Series, Second Edition.



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## TEACHING DIRECTIONS

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Write on the chalkboard: *gray/grey, ax/axe*. Ask students to differentiate the sets of words. Conclude that they are two spellings for the same word—the first example is the American spelling and the second is the British spelling. Explain to students that they may see examples of British spellings, but when they write for an American audience, the American spelling is preferred.

- British spellings often double the final *l* of an unstressed syllable, while American spellings do not: *travelling/traveling*.

- British spellings often use *our*, while American spellings use *or*: *colour/color*.
- British spellings add a silent *e* to some words that American spellings drop: *axe/ax*.
- British spellings often spell the noun form and the verb form of the same word differently: *practice/practise*.
- British spellings often use *ise*, while American spellings use *ize*: *criticise/criticize*.
- British spellings often favor *re*, while American spellings use *er*: *theatre/theater*.

Print the Instant Activity and distribute a copy to each student. Ask students to silently read the directions, then explain to a partner what they think is expected. Answer questions regarding the directions, as needed.




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#### FOLLOW-UP

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Students may have fun exploring names that have different spellings, but are pronounced the same way. For example, all of these spellings refer to an identically pronounced name: *Christi, Christy, Christie, Kristi, Kristy, Kristie, Cristy*. Last names have various spellings, too. Remind students that it is important to spell a person's name the way the person spells it, because people are often sensitive about the spelling of their name.




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#### FOR MORE

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For more activities to teach all the essential skills and concepts, and to develop a total spelling and language-related program, use the Spelling Sourcebook for your grade level.

To learn about the revised Series:

Request our free, on-loan Overview Video by calling 888-WE-SPELL (888-937-7355). The video can also be ordered through our web site: [www.sittonspelling.com](http://www.sittonspelling.com).

To learn how to use the Spelling Sourcebook Series:

1. Attend a seminar that explains and demonstrates lessons that reflect the Spelling Sourcebook methodology. For more information, visit [www.sittonspelling.com](http://www.sittonspelling.com). Click on the Training tab at the top of the page, then click on Seminar Schedule.
2. Use the **NEW TUTOR ME** Training Video/CD-ROM for your grade level either on your own or in a small group. Rebecca Sitton guides you through a complete unit, tells you exactly what to do, and why. Set aside about two hours to acquire complete expertise, or learn about each part of a unit as you need it. Invite parents to discover how their child will be learning to spell with the Parent Introduction. Visit [www.sittonspelling.com](http://www.sittonspelling.com) for more information.

To order your SPELLING SOURCEBOOK:

Northwest Textbook Depository  
 P.O. Box 5608  
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# Build Skills and Word Experiences



Name \_\_\_\_\_, Super Speller

## British/American English Spellings

British spellings and the American equivalents are sometimes different. For each of the British spellings on the left, write the American spelling on the right.

grey \_\_\_\_\_

fibre \_\_\_\_\_

favour \_\_\_\_\_

sulphur \_\_\_\_\_

aeroplane \_\_\_\_\_

licence \_\_\_\_\_

aluminium \_\_\_\_\_

cheque \_\_\_\_\_

theatre \_\_\_\_\_

labour \_\_\_\_\_

defence \_\_\_\_\_

cancelled \_\_\_\_\_

vigour \_\_\_\_\_

centre \_\_\_\_\_

axe \_\_\_\_\_

practise \_\_\_\_\_

neighbour \_\_\_\_\_

travelling \_\_\_\_\_

analyse \_\_\_\_\_

catalogue \_\_\_\_\_

The American English spelling is preferred, please.

