



Fun Spelling  
facts

## **What words are commonly misspelled?**

The word 'misspell' was recently featured in a list of the 100 most frequently misspelled words.

### ***Challenge:***

Find out what other words are commonly misspelled. Write down at least 5 of them, but make sure you spell them correctly!

## What words can be read upside down?

The word 'SWIMS' is an example of a word that can be read upside down, and keep the same meaning! It's what is known as an 'ambigram', meaning you can read the word and understand what it says even if you look at it the other way round!

### ***Challenge:***

Can you think of any other words that you can still read upside down? Try writing some down!

## How many words are in the dictionary?

There are over 600,000 English words recorded by the Oxford English Dictionary, and we use just 26 letters to make every single one of them!

The first ever single-language English dictionary was published in 1604, and was designed to help readers understand the most difficult words in English at the time. It included just 3,000 words.

### ***Challenge:***

Can you guess what the first word in the dictionary is? Read out the definition.

Can you guess what the last word in the dictionary is? Read out the definition.

## What is a contronym?

A 'contronym' is a complicated way of referring to words that are written the same, even sound the same when you say them, but have completely opposite meanings. Here's a quick list of some everyday contronyms:

- **Oversight:** This word can mean 'watching over something' and also 'not noticing something'
- **Screen:** This word can mean 'showing something to others' or 'hiding it from others'
- **Cleave:** This word can mean 'cutting something up' but also 'stick closely to something'

### ***Challenge:***

Can you think of other contronyms?

## How many words does 'therein' contain?

Therein is a word which means 'within a particular place or thing'. It isn't really very interesting when you put it like that. But when you break it up and take it apart, you discover that the word 'therein' includes ten recognizable words!

The longest words as part of 'therein' are 'herein' and 'therein'. Which are very similar words.

### ***Challenge:***

Can you find the other eight words?

Sources:

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