

Glossary of spelling terms Key Stage 2

Term	Definition
Breve	A mark often used to show a short vowel sound e.g. <i>ă ě ĭ ǒ ů</i>
Compound word	Two words joined together to form a new word e.g. <i>seasick topspin hotspot lighthouse paperwork</i>
Consonants	The letters: <i>b c d f g h j k l m n p q r s t v w x y z</i>
Consonant blend	Note: the letter <i>y</i> can be a vowel or a consonant, depending on its sound: <i>y</i> in <i>yellow</i> is a consonant When two consonants blend together e.g. Consonant digraph <i>spit stop snap list sand sent</i> When two consonants together make a different sound e.g. <i>shop check think phone</i>
Contraction	A word formed by shortening (contracting) two other words e.g. <i>did not > didn't they are > they're it is > it's</i>
Homophones	Words which sound the same but have different meanings and different spellings e.g. <i>meet - meat piece - peace current - currant</i> These words are called <i>homophones</i> from the Greek words: <i>homo</i> : the same and <i>phonos</i> : sound.
Macron	A mark often used to show a long vowel sound e.g. <i>ā ē ī ō ū</i>
Mnemonic	A device to help the memory: inventing mnemonics can help you remember difficult spellings e.g. a <i>piece</i> of <i>pie</i> . (The word mnemonic starts with a silent <i>m</i> . It comes from an ancient Greek word <i>mnemonikos</i> , meaning 'mindful').
Prefix	Letters added at the start of a word to affect the meaning e.g. <i>disagree incorrect preview</i>
Root word (or base word)	The main part of a word, without a prefix or suffix e.g. <i>landed camping hopeless</i> <i>return unhappy misprint</i>

Schwa sound The very weak **vowel** sound often found in an **unstressed syllable** e.g.

dis - tant pa - per station com - pan - y

(The word *schwa* is pronounced 'shwar', to rhyme with 'car'. It's a Hebrew word meaning 'empty'.)

Suffix Letters added on the end of a word to affect the meaning e.g.

hand + *ed* = handed camp + *ing* = camping hope + *less* = topless

Vowel suffix A suffix that begins with a vowel e.g. *-ed -er -est -ing -able -y*

Consonant suffix A suffix that begins with a consonant e.g. *-less -ful -ment -ly*

Syllables The number of beats in a word e.g. tax-i: 2 syllables, bi-cy-cle: 3 syllables, hel-i-cop-ter : 4 syllables Each syllable has one **vowel** sound e.g. Manchester hippopotamus teacher courageous

Stressed syllables In longer words, the syllables are not all pronounced with the same strength. Usually one syllable will be stronger than the rest; this is the *stressed* syllable e.g.

ladder pilot hospital dictionary assist attract collect
Atlantic computer independent

Unstressed syllables A syllable which is *not* stressed e.g. Si - mon dis - tant pa - per pi - lot
Often this syllable will have a very weak vowel sound, called the **schwa**.

Vowels The letters *a e i o u*

Long vowels Note: the letter *y* can be a vowel or a **consonant**, depending on its sound:

Short vowels

- *y* in *spy* is a vowel
- *y* in *happy* is a vowel

Vowel digraphs The long sound of a vowel is the same as the name of the letter e.g

age even icon oval uniform

These are examples of short vowel sounds:

ash egg insect office upset

Where two vowels, or a vowel and a consonant are used together to make one vowel sound e.g.

train stay hb shirt horse coat room

new shout crown tie sweet head toy

