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# Introduction

**"I wouldn't be here if it weren't for you!"** How often have we heard this from Spelling Bee (NSB) finalists in Washington, D.C.? *Many times*, and it always brings lumps to our throats. Equally rewarding are the hundreds of letters and calls received from school spelling champions throughout the nation giving us partial credit for their victories. Who are we, and how did we earn their gratitude?

First, like many of you, we are parents of spellers. Unlike other parents, however, we have reached beyond the coaching of our youngsters. This is neither a book based solely on reading others' research, nor is it only about our children's experiences. Our story mostly derives from our proven results gained in helping to coach literally thousands of young students involved in competitive spelling since 1982. You are invited to weigh these results before accepting our many specific suggestions and opinions about teaching youngsters to spell and to win spelling competitions.

Being computer systems engineers by training, we are only educators by choice. We have been blessed with three very hardworking, inquisitive daughters and the time to encourage their varied extracurricular academics. This definitely has included spelling. All three daughters have become finalists in The National Spelling Bee. As of 2008, HEXCO ACADEMIC's study materials have been used by **fourteen National Champions**, including **the last nine Champions in a row**, as well as thousands of school, regional, and state winners.

Competitive spelling has been most beneficial to all three of our children's educations, and the dividends still continue. In this book, we want to share with you the details of many of these benefits, and we hope you will gain an overall greater appreciation for the positive influences of championship spelling on your youngster.

Why hasn't someone else written this book? There has been a longtime need for this information, and the audience grows significantly each year. Currently, Scripps estimates that around ten million students participate in some level of their National Spelling Bee. We realize we don't know it all, and we sincerely encourage all reader contributions for consideration in future editions. However, we are some of the few individuals involved on a national scope. As for coaching skills, we think our credentials speak for themselves in the results our customers and daughters have achieved. There are certainly other coaches with more years of experience, but few with as many champions. What probably dictated that we write this book was our unique motivation. Most other experienced coaches have a natural interest in keeping their strategies and skills for their own competitors. We're sharing ours for the financial benefit of our children's education and for the fulfilling personal reward of helping so many spellers. This writing will contain commercial references to our several products (detailed descriptions in Chapter 13). You be the judge of whether they fit your speller's needs.

As we started helping our first youngster study for this exciting competition in 1981, we earnestly sought the most efficient coaching procedures. After finding the whole area of preparation lacking any technology or efficacy in its approach, we began to develop our own systems.

What originated as a desire by our first daughter to share her computer-generated study notes with other spellers, eventually led to a small family business owned by our children. The HEXCO ACADEMIC venture has developed several innovative spelling study aids, first tested on our children and then proven by champions throughout the nation. Also created were new products to assist teachers in conducting improved school bees with only a fraction of the work previously required. Finally, our products blossomed into extensive advanced study aids in etymology, spelling rules, and collections of old word lists. A later chapter will describe our daughters' entrepreneurial adventure which has spelled success not only for college expenses but also for countless spellers, teachers, and parents who have benefitted from their enterprise.

Our thanks go to those early supporting customers across the country who have made our children's business a success. Thanks also for sharing so many of your own experiences with us, enabling our education in this area to grow. We look forward to hearing from those of you who have comments, criticisms, stories to share, or questions to ask after you have read this book.

To the thousands of annual spellers and coaches already using the HEXCO products, we need no introduction. Welcome to this compendium of explanations, strategies, experiences, and advanced study words which so many of you have requested. To those of you new to this competitive arena or to our supplementary products, welcome to our 25 years of serious spelling education condensed in this short book.

A qualification here, HEXCO ACADEMIC and the products produced are in no way associated with Scripps or The National Spelling Bee, but are independent and unique bearing their own copyright protection.

Tom and Linda Tarrant  
parents of the Spelling Sisters  
Hunt, Texas 78024

September, 1990

Revised September, 2008

P. S. Tom was the primary author of this book, and his untimely death in 1992 delayed its original completion until 1997.

As you can see, some of the repeat winners have not had a recent winner. Some of the most competitive papers with multiple winners are owned by Scripps, including *Rocky Mountain News*, *El Paso Herald-Post*, and *Commercial Appeal* (2 wins). Needless to say, the above papers with multiple winners conduct very competitive bees.

**Current regional sponsors:** How do you locate your individual area sponsor? Scripps has a registration system on their website where a zip code can be entered to determine if a school in that area is registered. From there, one can select a school and find out the name of the sponsor and determine if a particular school is registered. Below is a list of recent sponsors, but this changes regularly with newspapers opting not to sponsor and others taking on the challenge.

AL	<i>Birmingham News</i>	BC	<i>Vancouver Sun</i> , British Columbia
AK	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	BC	<i>Times-Colonist</i> , Victoria, British Columbia
AK	<i>Daily News-Miner</i>	ON	<i>Windsor Star</i> , Ontario
AS	<i>Samoa News</i>	MB	<i>Winnipeg Free Press</i> , Manitoba
AZ	Arizona Educational Foundation, Scottsdale	CO	<i>Daily Camera</i> , Boulder
AZ	Navajo Times Publishing Co., Window Rock	CO	<i>Rocky Mountain News</i> , Denver
AR	<i>Arkansas Democrat Gazette</i> , Little Rock	CT	<i>News-Times</i> , Danbury
BA	<i>Nassau Guardian</i>	CT	<i>New Haven Register</i>
CA	<i>Bakersfield Californian</i>	CT	<i>Ridgefield Press</i>
CA	<i>Desert Dispatch</i> , Barstow	DC	<i>Washington Informer</i>
CA	<i>Ventura County Star</i> , Camarillo	EU	<i>Stars &amp; Stripes</i>
CA	<i>Imperial Valley Press</i> , El Centro	FL	Polk County School District, Bartow
CA	Sierra Tel/Mountain Home School, Oakhurst	FL	<i>Florida Times-Union</i> , Jacksonville
CA	Friends of Diamond Bar Library	FL	<i>Miami Herald</i>
CA	<i>Record Searchlight</i> , Redding	FL	<i>Naples Daily News</i>
CA	<i>Press-Enterprise</i> , Riverside	FL	<i>Bonita Daily News</i>
CA	Sacramento Bee	FL	<i>Orlando Sentinel</i>
CA	Monterey County Office, Education, Salinas	FL	<i>News Herald</i> , Panama City
CA	<i>San Diego Union-Tribune</i>	FL	<i>Stuart News</i>
CA	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	FL	<i>Tallahassee Democrat</i>
CA	<i>Orange County Register</i> , Santa Ana	FL	<i>Tampa Tribune</i>
CA	<i>Daily Press</i> , Victorville	FL	<i>Palm Beach Post</i> , West Palm Beach
CA	<i>Visalia Times-Delta/Tulare Advance-Register</i>	GA	<i>Augusta Chronicle</i>
CA	<i>Contra Costa Times</i> , Walnut Creek	GA	Georgia Association, Educators, Tucker
CA	<i>Daily News</i> , Los Angeles, Woodland Hills	GH	<i>Daily Express</i> , Accra
AB	<i>Calgary Herald</i> , Alberta	GU	<i>Pacific Daily News</i> , Agana
PE	<i>Guardian</i> , Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island	HI	<i>Honolulu Advertiser</i>
ON	<i>National Post</i> , Don Mills, Ontario	ID	<i>Coeur d'Alene Press</i>
AB	<i>Edmonton Journal</i> , Alberta	ID	<i>Lewiston Morning Tribune</i>
NS	<i>Metro</i> , Halifax, Nova Scotia	IL	<i>Pantagraph</i> , Bloomington
BC	<i>Daily News</i> , Kamloops, British Columbia	IL	Chicago Spelling Bee Collaborative
BC	<i>Kelowna Daily Courier</i> , British Columbia	IL	<i>Herald &amp; Review</i> , Decatur
AB	<i>Lethbridge Herald</i> , Alberta	IL	<i>Lake County Journals</i> , Elgin
QC	<i>Gazette</i> , Montreal, Quebec	IL	<i>Northwest Herald</i> , Elgin
ON	<i>Ottawa Citizen</i> , Ontario	IL	<i>Journal-Standard</i> , Freeport
BC	<i>Prince George Citizen</i> , British Columbia	IL	<i>Kane County Chronicle</i> , Geneva
SK	<i>Leader-Post</i> , Regina, Saskatchewan	IL	<i>Daily Journal</i> , Kankakee
NB	<i>Telegraph-Journal</i> , Saint John, New Brunswick	IL	Boone-Winnebago Reg Office, Educ, Loves Park
SK	<i>Star Phoenix</i> , Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	IL	<i>Dispatch and Rock Island Argus</i> , Moline
NB	<i>Telegram</i> , St John's, Newfndln and Labrador	IL	<i>Peoria Journal Star</i>
NS	<i>Cape Breton Post</i> , Sydney, Nova Scotia	IL	<i>State Journal-Register</i> , Springfield
ON	<i>Chronicle Journal</i> , Thunder Bay, Ontario	IL	<i>Daily Gazette</i> , Sterling
ON	<i>CHCH News</i> , Hamilton, Ontario	IL	<i>Telegraph</i> , Dixon

**Awards banquet:** On Saturday evening, the formal awards banquet is held in the ballroom of the hotel, and it lasts approximately three hours. Spellers sit at small tables enjoying an exquisite meal followed by professional entertainment. The top eight or ten finalists enjoy seating at the head table and receive special prizes and recognition. Prizes are awarded at the banquet. Every speller receives at least \$50 as a cash prize. The top finalists receive between \$12,000 for the Champion to \$1,000 for the sixth place winner, and gradations drop for spellers below that. All spellers receive commemorative watches, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* on CD-ROM, plus various other prizes. The winner also receives an engraved trophy cup, a U.S. Savings Bond, either *Encyclopedia Britannica* or Great Books set, and other prizes. An engraved plaque and year's subscription to *Britannica Online School Edition* is given to a winner's school.

**Washington suggestions:** Bee Week is full of activities from Monday through Saturday. Many excellent restaurants may be reached by subway or taxi (our favorites: Hogate's and Clyde's), and the center of D.C. is extremely clean and beautifully landscaped for walking. We have also enjoyed an evening in Georgetown by cab and the National Zoo via the Metro subway. Obviously, the Smithsonian museums are extremely worthwhile. Hillwood, the fascinating mansion of the Post cereal heiress is a fascinating place to visit with extensive grounds, greenhouses, Russian collections, Faberge eggs, and extraordinary furnishings.

For those interested art, D.C. museums are delightful. Our personal favorites are the Phillips Museum and Corcoran. The Corcoran has a delightful lunch spot. The National Geographic building has delightful, frequently changed displays. The Russian Embassy now allows visitors inside, and it provides a bank of literature. Also interesting is the old Post Office Building which houses a food court and shops. The Library of Congress is our favorite, and one of our daughters was able to use these fine facilities for a school term paper. It was a most imposing atmosphere. Riding the Metro never ceased to be exciting for our youngsters since they were not city dwellers. We even took the long Metro ride to return to National Airport from the hotel one year.

**Hibernation by spellers in D.C.:** Even though there are repeated urgings not to continue studying during the week in Washington, some serious contenders do stay in their rooms, doing oral reviews of long lists of advanced study words with a parent or coach. At this contest, the luck of the draw causes many incredibly well-prepared spellers to be eliminated, despite their hours of studying. In an attempt to relieve some of the pressure of the week, organizers wisely stress that all the competitors are already winners. So the D.C. week should be for honoring each achiever, not for cramming.

**Grand Hyatt:** This is an excellent facility, and most spellers stay here. Previously, the Capitol Hilton housed the event for several years, and before that the Mayflower was center for these activities. The hotel certainly makes spellers feel welcome. There is some choice in hotel restaurants with a range of prices. The large lobby provides a "meeting place" for interchange with other spellers and their parents. For those who drive or rent a car for the week, convenient parking is attached to the hotel. However, an automobile is not necessary in Washington; the excellent Metro system is accessible from the lobby, and cabs are readily available.

Words that can be spelled with *-e-* or *-oe-* usually date back to a Latin spelling of *-oe-* which derives from the Greek spelling *-oi-* for most of these words. Words of this ilk include the following:

<i>dyspnea/dyspnoea</i>	<i>fetid/foetid</i>
<i>ecumenical/oecumenical</i>	<i>fetus/foetus</i>
<i>ecumenics/oecumenics</i>	<i>hyperpnea/hyperpnoea</i>
<i>edema/oedema</i>	<i>maneuver/manoeuvre/</i>
<i>esophagus/oesophagus</i>	<i>manoeuvre/manoeuver</i>
<i>enology/oenology</i>	<i>myxedema/myxoedema</i>
<i>estrogen/oestrogen</i>	<i>penology/poenology</i>
<i>estrus/oestrus</i>	<i>pharmacopeia/pharmacopoeia</i>
<i>eupnea/eupnoea</i>	<i>pyorrhea/pyorrhoea</i>
<i>fetal/foetal</i>	<i>sialorrhea/sialorrhoea</i>
	<i>subpoena/subpoena</i>

*American Heritage Dictionary* rejects all of the following spellings: *dyspnoea*, *eupnoea*, *hyperpnoea*, *maneuve/manoeuver*, *oecumenical*, *oecumenics*, and *subpena*. *Webster's Third* accepts all of the above variants, except *maneuve*, *myxoedema* and *poenology*. Also published by the Merriam Company, *Webster's Collegiate* does not accept the following variants: *hyperpnoea*, *maneuve/manoeuver*, *myxoedema*, *poenology*, *pyorrhoea*, and *subpoena*, and this dictionary does not accept either variant of *sialorrhea/sialorrhoea*.

These three dictionaries were compared because they are used as the authority in spelling competitions in which we have participated. *The American Heritage* is used by UIL for their high school contests; *Webster's Collegiate* and *Webster's Intermediate* are used by the Private School Interscholastic Association (PSIA) contests and by UIL lower grade competitions; and *Webster's Third* is the last word for The National Bee. Any dictionary will have some different spellings that are accepted. *The Oxford English Dictionary* is most likely to have all the variant spellings and even more that date farther back in the English language.

This review of variant spellings is intended to emphasize that a speller needs to work with the dictionary authority for the specific bee in which he or she is involved. The discrepancies among the acceptable spellings and the words included for different dictionaries are significant. In selecting a dictionary for general use, as opposed to competitive spelling use, any of the collegiate dictionaries are suitable. We personally like the definitions found in the *Random House* and in the *American Heritage*. For scholarly work, the *Oxford English Dictionary* is unsurpassed, and it is an affordable option when purchased on CD-ROM (about \$350). The 20-volume hardback set is about \$850 and too cumbersome for regular usage.

**Alternate spellings of simple words:** Researching words for the UIL lower-grade lists, we have found surprising alternate spellings of some common words. Many fairly common words have alternate spellings in all three of the dictionaries that we compared extensively, and some are listed here:

<i>although/altho</i>	<i>hiccup/hiccough</i>	<i>queasy/queazy</i>
<i>annex/annexe</i>	<i>inquire/enquire</i>	<i>quintet/quintette</i>
<i>brusque/brusk</i>	<i>insure/ensure</i>	<i>reinforce/reenforce</i>
<i>caldron/cauldron</i>	<i>judgment/judgement</i>	<i>sergeant/serjeant</i>
<i>clerestory/clearstory</i>	<i>junkie/junky</i>	<i>sheik/sheikh</i>
<i>curtsy/curtsey</i>	<i>karat/carat</i>	<i>shellac/shellack</i>
<i>descendant/descendent</i>	<i>lasagna/lasagne</i>	<i>skillful/skilful</i>
<i>doughnut/donut</i>	<i>lollipop/lollypop</i>	<i>sylvan/silvan</i>
<i>dowse/douse</i>	<i>looney/loony/luny</i>	<i>syrup/sirup</i>
<i>drought/drouth</i>	<i>loth/loath</i>	<i>terrain/terrane</i>
<i>erie/eery</i>	<i>omelet/omelette</i>	<i>through/thru</i>
<i>fondue/fondu</i>	<i>mustache/moustache</i>	<i>tormentor/tormenter</i>
<i>frenetic/phrenetic</i>	<i>organdy/organie</i>	<i>vermillion/vermilion</i>
<i>gaiety/gayety</i>	<i>peddler/pedlar</i>	<i>wobble/wabble</i>
<i>gelatin/gelatine</i>	<i>phantasm/fantasm</i>	<i>yogurt/yoghurt</i>
<i>grisly/grizzly</i>	<i>phantom/fantom</i>	<i>zombie/zombi</i>
<i>guild/gild</i>	<i>propellor/propeller</i>	

Many other words had alternate spellings in one or two of the dictionaries studied, such as *accessory & accessary*, *ecstasy & ecstacy*, *gerbil & gerbille*, *gruesome & grewsome*, *guerilla & guerrilla*, *gullible & gullable*, *height & hight*, *hindrance & hinderance*, *hullabaloo & hullaballoo*, *igloo & iglu*, *jalopy & jallopy & jaloppy*, *mannequin & mannikin & manikin*, *Neanderthal & Neandertal*, *stymie & stymy*, *parakeet & parrakeet*, *phantasy & fantasy*, and *shellac & shellack*, and many, many more.

The above illustrations demonstrate how surprising even a collegiate level dictionary can sometimes be for instructing younger students. Many alternate spellings are "listed separately" in *Webster's Collegiate*. Looking at a word, one has no way of knowing that an alternate exists. The alternate itself must be looked up alphabetically to learn that it is an acceptable spelling. For some variant spellings, this alternate option is only a few entries apart, such as for *civilization* and *civilisation*. However, *phantom* is 450 pages away from *fantom*. The National Spelling Bee has only recently incorporated in their rules the acknowledgment that if more than a single spelling is listed for a word, any will be accepted as correct. The rules do qualify that variant spellings at separate locations in the dictionary marked as archaic, obsolete, or regional are not acceptable.

All three dictionaries include the use of either a single or double consonant in adding *-ed* or *-ing* to a verb when the consonant is preceded by a vowel and the accent is on the first syllable. For example, the following are acceptable: *benefitted & benefited & benefitting & benefiting*, *labelled & labeled & labelling & labeling*, *modelled & modeled & modelling & modeling*, and many others.

**Spelling checkers on computers:** These present problems for youngsters using personal computers and working with word spellings from a specific dictionary. Confusion is inevitable. And they definitely have limitations in our line of work. If we have committed the unpardonable sin in a book about spelling, namely misspelling something, please judge us with moderation. No computerized spelling checker will handle the word selections included in our materials!

**Merriam-Webster Dictionaries:** The National Spelling Bee cites *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged*, (475,000 entries) as their final dictionary authority. Know that using another dictionary, such as *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (160,000), will not necessarily match alternate spellings and pronunciations for all words. Merriam-Webster has several different abridgements of their largest work. Note that in addition to *Webster's Third* and *Webster's Collegiate*, Merriam-Webster also publishes *Merriam-Webster's Basic English Dictionary* (32,000), *Merriam-Webster's Elementary Dictionary* (33,000), *Merriam-Webster's Compact Dictionary* (38,000), *Merriam-Webster's Desk Dictionary* (60,000), *Merriam-Webster's Intermediate Dictionary* (65,000), *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (70,000), *Merriam-Webster's Pocket Dictionary* (70,000), *Merriam-Webster's School Dictionary* (85,000), and many other dictionaries of synonyms, legal terms, medical terms, crossword puzzle words, and more. Their dictionaries range from \$3.95 for paperback versions to over \$100 for editions of *Webster's Third*. The most popular two are described below.

#### *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*

Probably the most popular of the Merriam products, this dictionary is their collegiate abridgement containing a healthy 160,000 entries, and it sells for under \$25. It is available in more than one type size, and the larger size is easy to read. *Webster's Collegiate* uses a less complicated pronunciation scheme than does *Webster's Third*. Regional dialects are seldom represented as acceptable pronunciations, and about 75% of the 1990 NSB competitive spelling words are found listed. Normally there are not discrepancies between spellings and pronunciations listed in *Webster's Collegiate* and in *Webster's Third*, but some do exist, as were illustrated in our previous sections entitled "Different Spellings" and "Alternate Spellings of Simple Words." Many bees can use this edition rather than *Webster's Third*, if they carefully select their words.

#### *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged*

*Webster's Third* is Merriam's complete unabridged work with 475,000 entries. This large dictionary costs around \$100 or is available on CD-ROM for less, or an online version may be accessed by subscribing. Schools and participants in The National Bee need this reference to research every word in their contests. Originally copyrighted in 1961 with no addenda, there has been a new copyright date approximately every 5 to 10 years since then, each with a larger addenda section. The 1966 edition added 8 pages of addenda; the 1971 included 16 pages; the 1976 contained 32; the 1981 expanded to 48; the 1986 covered 56 pages; the 1993 has 66 pages; and 2002 (the most recent version as of 2008) has 2,816 pages. Some hardbound addenda supplements have been published as *6,000 Words* in 1982, *9,000 Words* in 1983, and *12,000 Words* in 1986, but to date we have not seen a new version for the 1993 or 2002 copyright dated dictionary.

<i>chameleon/cameleon</i>	<i>hyperpnea/hyperpnoea</i>	<i>piquant/piquante</i>
<i>cirrus/cirrhus</i>	<i>ideological/ideological</i>	<i>piranha/pirana</i>
<i>cocklebur/cockleburr</i>	<i>idiosyncrasy/idiosyncracy</i>	<i>plebeian/plebian</i>
<i>coconut/cocoanut</i>	<i>incommunicado/incomunicado</i>	<i>pliers/plyers</i>
<i>cognizance/cognisance</i>	<i>indispensable/indispensible</i>	<i>potlatch/potlach</i>
<i>complexion/complection</i>	<i>innuendo/inuendo</i>	<i>proletariat/proletariate</i>
<i>cuspidor/cuspadore</i>	<i>jalopy/jallopy/jaloppy</i>	<i>pseudonym/pseudonyme</i>
<i>debatable/debateable</i>	<i>jasmine/jasmin</i>	<i>pardah/pardah</i>
<i>debonair/debonaire</i>	<i>kayak/kaiak/kyak/ cayak/kajak</i>	<i>questionnaire/questionnaire</i>
<i>develop/developpe,</i>	<i>khaki/khakee</i>	<i>rampageous/rampagious</i>
<i>dollop/dallop</i>	<i>kilogram/kilogramme</i>	<i>reconnaissance/reconnaissance</i>
<i>ecstasy/ecstasy</i>	<i>kiosk/kiosquekitchenette/kitch</i>	<i>riposte/repost</i>
<i>enigma/aenigma</i>	<i>enet</i>	<i>salient/saliant</i>
<i>enterprise/enterprize</i>	<i>lackey/lacquey</i>	<i>salmagundi/salmagundy</i>
<i>entrenchment/intrenchment</i>	<i>lacquer/lacker</i>	<i>sauerkraut/sourkrout/sourcroust</i>
<i>escutcheon/escucheon</i>	<i>lagoon/lagune</i>	<i>septicemia/septicaemia</i>
<i>fillip/filip</i>	<i>leprechaun/leprcaun/leprehaun</i>	<i>shellac/shellack</i>
<i>finagle/fenagle</i>	<i>margarine/margarin</i>	<i>spicy/spicey</i>
<i>finicky/finnicky</i>	<i>matador/matadore</i>	<i>spinach/spinage</i>
<i>frankfurter/frankforter</i>	<i>maugre/mauger</i>	<i>subpoena/subpena</i>
<i>gallivant/gallavant</i>	<i>meander/maeander</i>	<i>svelte/svelt</i>
<i>gazebo/gazeebo</i>	<i>metallic/metalic</i>	<i>tattoo/tatoo</i>
<i>goulash/gulash</i>	<i>moccasin/mocassin</i>	<i>tease/teaze</i>
<i>guacamole/guachamole</i>	<i>paean/pean</i>	<i>tessellate/tesselate</i>
<i>hajj/haj</i>	<i>palomino/palamino</i>	<i>toupee/toupet</i>
<i>height/hight</i>	<i>papaya/papaia</i>	<i>troubadour/troubador</i>
<i>heroin(drug)/heroine</i>	<i>paraffin/paraffine</i>	<i>varmint/varment</i>
<i>hindrance/hinderance</i>	<i>parsimonious/parcimonious</i>	<i>visitor/visiter</i>
<i>hocus-pocus/hokus-pokus</i>	<i>pedagogy/paedagogy</i>	<i>vitamin/vitamine</i>
<i>hornswoggle/hornswaggle</i>	<i>persnickety/persnickity</i>	<i>werewolf/werwolf</i>
<i>hullabaloo/hullaballoo</i>		<i>wolverine/wolverene</i>

There are some words that have an alternate spelling acceptable in *Webster's Collegiate*, which are not also included in the *Third*. This list incorporates *pastrami/pastromi*, *whodunit/whodunnit*, and others. Most of the British variant spellings are acceptable in the smaller dictionary, and many are excluded in the major work, such as *parlor/parlour*, *savory/savoury*, *honorable/honourable*, *emphasize/emphasise*, *fantasize/fantasise*, and others of this type. These are by no means a complete list of variances but rather an indication of the typical differences between the two dictionaries both produced by the same publisher.

**Next major revision:** The Merriam Company reportedly has a successor to the *Third* on their company agenda, but a release date has not been announced. Based on life-spans of editions of the unabridged Merriam dictionary, we would expect to see possibly a *Merriam-Webster Fourth New International, Unabridged*, printed in the next 5-7 years in lieu of their periodic revision with an ever-increasing addenda section. There were 19 years between *Webster's International Dictionary* and *Webster's New International Dictionary*. Between that tome and

Beginning in 1971 *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* was published in two volumes, plus a supplement. These sets cost about \$100 but require a magnifying glass to read, which is actually furnished! The OED2 is not available in a compact edition, but it is on CD-ROM.

**Word use illustrations:** We have used the new OED on CD-ROM and the compact OED as a reference for better understanding of many of the obscure words in The National Bee and the UIL study lists, for which *Webster's Third* and the *American Heritage* offer only sketchy information. The OED has truly remarkable background information for its massive collection of words.

One exception to our normally successful practice was the researching of the word *tignum* which appeared in the *Words of the Champions*, Final Round from 1983-88. Defined merely as "building material," it is a Latin word. *Webster's Third* refers to "stake" for more etymology, but nothing more is learned there about the use of *tignum*. We thus have a Latin word for building material or beam with no modern English usage shown. We wondered why it was even included in *Webster's Third*, and understand its being omitted from OED. Not surprisingly, this word was never selected for the *Regional Word List*, where a meaningful sentence would be required. We composed the following weak illustration for our products: "Built of wooden stakes and tignum, the Roman structures were crudely finished." This was one of the words we have worked with in *Webster's Third* which was not included in the OED. We submitted this word to the Oxford Word & Language Service at Oxford University ("OWLS" service) requesting more information on it, and their answer was quite complete. They explained that the word had been in *Webster's New International, Second Edition*, with a designation that suggested it pertained to "Civil Law." This was omitted from *Webster's Third*. They elaborated that *tignum* was included in *Wharton's Law-Lexicon* and *Dictionary of English Law* by Earl Jowitt. They had no context for their citations in either English or legal Latin, and the definition was *any building material* in all dictionaries. They further noted that the Latin phrase *tigni immittendi* referred to the right to insert a supporting beam into the wall of a neighboring house. Our conclusion was that it is difficult to write an authoritative sentence with *tignum* since the word has little or no precedence in English.

For those wishing to sample a modern volume from the foremost publishing authority on current English, consider *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*. Now completely up-to-date (containing "computer virus" and "glasnost"), the 120,000 entries and 190,000 definitions are easily read in larger print and offer a sampling of the Oxford University Press for less than \$30.

**Different dictionary approaches:** Beyond the number of entries and thoroughness of presentation, dictionary publishers may also somewhat differ in their goals. Some would say *prescriptive* versus *descriptive* to denote whether the dictionary is prescribing correct usage or describing current practice. The adjective usually relied on in describing contemporary usage is the use by "educated" people. Some people take issue with modern dictionaries' unwillingness to make more judgments about proper usage. According to an informative article on dictionary descriptions in the *Random House Encyclopedia*, the Random House dictionary reportedly first

complain	concentrated	conditioner	congealment	consent	contagion	contrive	copen	corporate
complainant	concentration	condolatory	congelation	consentaneous	contagiosity	contrived	copepod	corporation
complaint	concentric	condole	congelative	consequence	contagious	contriver	Copernican	corporeal
complaisance	concentus	condolence	congelifract	consequent	contagium	control	copstone	corporeity
complaisant	concept	condolences	congener	consequential	container	controllable	copilot	corporify
complanate	conception	condominium	congenial	consequently	containing	controlled	copious	corpasant
complement	conceptual	condonable	congeniality	conservation	containment	controller	copolymer	corps
complementary	conceptualize	condonation	congenital	conservatism	contaminant	controversial	copper	corpse
complete	concern	condone	congeree	conservative	contaminate	controversy	coppernose	corpseman
completely	concert	condor	congeries	conservatory	contamination	controvert	coppersmith	corpulence
complex	concerted	condottiere	congestion	conserve	conte	contumacious	coppie	corpulent
complexion	concerti	condottiero	congiary	consider	contemn	contumacy	coprophagous	corpuscle
complexity	concertina	conducibile	conglobate	considerable	contemned	contumelious	copse	corpuscles
complexus	concerto	conductive	conglome	considerate	contemplete	contumely	Coptic	corpuscled
compliance	concertos	conduct	conglomerate	consideration	contemplated	cutuse	copyist	corrade
compliant	concessible	conductor	conglomeration	considered	contemporaneou s	cutusion	copyright	corral
complicacy	concession	conduit	conglutinant	consign	contemporaries	conundrum	copyrightable	corralled
complicate	concessionary	conelrad	congratulate	consignation	contemporary	conundrums	coquet	correct
complicated	concessism	conepate	congratulations	consigned	contempt	conurbation	coquetry	correction
complications	conchetto	Conestoga	congratulatory	consignment	contemptibility	conusable	coquette	correctional
complicity	conch	Confabulation	congregate	consilient	contemptible	convalesce	coquettish	correctitude
compliment	conche	confection	congregation	consist	contemptuous	convalescence	coquettishly	correlate
complimentary	conchiferous	confectioner	congress	consistency	contemptuously	convalescent	coquillage	correlated
comply	conchiform	confectionery	congrio	consistent	contend	convection	coquille	correlation
component	conchitic	confederacy	congruence	consistory	content	convenable	coquina	correlative
comport	concho	confederal	congruency	consolation	contented	convene	coracle	correlativity
comportment	conchoid	confederate	congruent	consolatory	contention	convenience	coracobrachialis	correspond
Compositae	conchoidal	confederation	congruity	consolidate	contention	convenient	coral	correspondence
composite	conchologist	confer	conical	consolidationist	contentious	conventicle	coralene	corrida
composition	conchologize	conferee	conicity	consolidator	contents	convention	coralline	corridor
compositor	conchology	conference	conifer	consoling	context	conventional	corban	corrigenda
possibility	conchylium	confencier	coniferous	consomme	contextual	conventionally	corbel	corrigendum
compost	concierge	confederal	coniform	consonance	conticent	converge	corbiestep	corrigible
composure	conciagerie	conferral	conjector	consonant	contiguity	convergence	cord	corroborate
computation	conciatiate	conferrd	conjecture	consonants	contiguous	convergent	cordage	corroborated
compotator	conciliating	confess	conjoin	consort	continence	converging	cordaites	corroborating
compote	conciliation	confession	conjugal	consortium	continent	conversance	cordate	corroborating
compound	conciliatory	confetti	conjugate	conspicuous	contingencies	conversant	corde	corroborative
comprador	concinnate	confidant	conjunction	conspicuous	contingency	conversation	cordial	corroboratory
comprehend	concinnity	confidante	conjunctiva	conspiracy	continual	conversazione	cordiality	corroborate
comprehensible	conciise	confide	conjunctivitis	conspirator	continuance	version	cordially	corrode
comprehension	concision	confidence	conjuncture	conspirators	continuation	convert	cordiform	corrodible
comprehensive	conclamant	confident	conjuraction	conspire	continue	convertible	cordillera	corrosion
compress	conclave	confiding	conjure	constable	continuity	convex	cordite	corrosive
compressed	conclude	configuration	conjury	constabulary	continuo	convey	cordon	corrugate
comprimario	conclusive	configure	connate	constant	continuous	conveyance	cordonazo	corrugated
comprise	concoct	confine	connatural	constantly	continuum	conveyancing	cordovan	corrupt
compromis	concoction	confined	connect	constellation	contort	convict	corduroy	corruptible
compromise	concomitance	confinement	Connecticut	consternation	contortion	conviction	corduroys	corruption
compulsion	concomitant	confirmable	connective	constipation	contortionist	convictive	cordwainery	corsage
compulsory	concord	confirmation	connector	constituency	contortions	convince	cordwinder	corsair
compunction	concordance	confirmed	conniption	constituent	contours	convincing	coreopsis	corsepresent
compunctious	concordat	confiscable	connivance	constitute	contraband	convivial	coriaceous	corte
compurgation	concourse	confiscate	connive	constitution	contrabass	conviviality	coriander	cortege
compurgator	concrecence	confiscator	connived	constitutional	contract	convivially	corinne	cortex
computable	concrete	confiscatory	connivent	constraint	contraction	convocation	orkage	corticoid
compute	concretion	confiture	connivery	constraint	contractor	convolve	orkscrew	corticoline
computer	concupinage	conflagration	conniving	constrict	contradict	convoluted	orky	ortile
computernik	concupiscence	conflate	connoisseur	constrictor	contradicted	convolucional	cormorant	ortisone
comradeliness	concupiscent	conflict	connotation	constringe	contradiction	convolve	cornea	ortundum
comradery	concur	conflicting	connotations	construct	contradictory	convoy	corneal	ortuscant
comradeship	concurrance	conflucion	connote	constructive	contrail	convulse	corneitis	ortuscate
comstockery	concurrency	confluence	connubial	construe	contraindication	convulsion	cornerstone	ortuscated
contemptible	concurrent	confluent	conquer	construed	contralto	convulsively	cornetist	ortuscation
contemptuous	concurson	conform	conqueror	consuetude	contraltos	coolant	cornhusking	ortvette
contism	concussion	conformable	conquian	consuetudinal	contrapposto	coolness	cornice	ortvine
conacaste	concussive	conformity	conquistador	consuetudinary	contraption	coocan	cornichon	ortybantes
conatus	condemn	confound	consanguineous	consul	contrapuntal	coonskin	corniculate	ortybantic
concameration	condemnable	confre	consanguinity	consular	contrariety	coony	corniform	ortydora
concatenate	condemnation	confre	consience	consulate	contrariwise	cooper	cornmeal	ortymb
concatenation	condemnatory	confratation	conscientious	consultant	contrary	cooperage	cornucopia	ortyphaeus
concave	condensation	Confucian	consconable	consultation	contrast	cooperate	cornupete	ortyphoe
conceal	condense	Confucianism	conscious	consulting	contrasuggestibl e	cooperation	corolla	ortyza
concealment	condensed	Confucianist	consciousness	consultor	contravallation	cooperative	corollary	ortzinomanicy
concede	condescend	confusable	conscriptio	consumable	contravene	coordinate	coromandel	ortseismal
conceit	condescended	confuse	consecrate	consume	contravention	coordinative	corona	ortsignatory
conceited	condescendent	confusing	consecrated	consumer	contrecoup	coordinator	coronach	ortsinage
conceitedness	condescending	confusion	consecration	consummate	contretemps	coossify	coronal	ortsine
conceivable	condescension	confute	consecratory	consummation	contribute	coot	coronary	ortsmecology
conceivably	condign	conga	consecutive	consummator	contribute	copacetic	coronated	ortsmetic
conceive	condiment	conge	consensence	consumption	contrite	coparcenary	coronation	ortsmetician
concento	condiments	congeal	consensual	consumptive	contrition	coparcener	coroner	ortsmetologist
concentrate	condition	congealed	consensus	contact	contrivance	copartner	coronet	ortsmic

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