Test yourself on commonly misspelled words

See if you can choose the correct words to fill the gaps in the following sentences.

1. Katie .......... bumped into her friend Sue.
   a. Accidentally      b. accidently
   a. Achieved          b. achieved
3. He needs to .......... some driving experience.
   a. Aquire          b. acquire
4. Sue often dresses in the most .......... fashions.
   a. Bizarre          b. bizarre
5. Try not to .......... your teacher when she's talking.
   a. interrupt        b. interrupt
6. She entered for an award in the under-tens age .......... .
   a. catagory          b. category
7. The weather has been very .......... today.
   a. changeable       b. changable
8. The criminal had .......... three offences on the same day.
   a. comitted          b. committed
9. I shall .......... be going to Sally's party.
   a. definitely       b. definately
10. The boy didn't have a very good .......... record.
    a. discipline       b. discipline
11. Children had a very miserable .......... working in the mines.
    a. existance        b. existence
12. Sammy has lots of .......... of working in a shop.
    a. experience       b. experiance
13. I've .......... made a decision about the decor.
    a. finaly          b. finally
14. We're going on a .......... holiday this year.
    a. foreign         b. forein
15. It took Flora .......... seconds to spot the answer.
    a. fourty          b. forty
16. The criminal complained that the officer had .......... him.
    a. harrassed       b. harassed
17. Sue is of medium .......... but looks taller.
    a. height          b. hight
18. My .......... of foreign languages became obvious during the trip.
    a. ignorance       b. ignorance
19. Masie has moved out of her parents' home and is now quite .......... .
    a. independent     b. independant
    a. indispensable   b. indispensible
21. Hugo showed a lot of .......... when tackling the problem.
    a. intelligence     b. intellignce
22. Dave was a .......... boy who was always playing pranks.
    a. mischievous     b. mischievious
23. She was early for school that day which was a very rare .......... .
    a. occurence       b. occurrence
    a. pastime        b. passtime
25. She keeps her most valuable .......... in a locked drawer.
    a. possessions      b. posessions
26. Mrs Atkins .......... the matter to her boss.
    a. refered         b. referred
27. Tick the .......... box for the right answer.
    a. revalent        b. relevant
28. We ate at an expensive .......... last night.
    a. restaurant      b. restaraunt
29. The lastest version .......... all previous models.
    a. supercedes      b. supersedes
30. My .......... of chemistry is very limited.
    a. knowledge       b. knowlege

ANSWER KEY ON BACK PAGE
Basic Rules For Better Spelling

1. **Short-Vowel Rule:** When one-syllable words have a vowel in the middle, the vowel usually has a short sound: Examples: cat, dog, man, hat, mom, dad, got. If the letter after the vowel is f, l, or s, this letter is often doubled. Examples: staff, ball, pass.

2. **Two-Vowels Together:** When two vowels are next to each other, the first vowel is usually long (the sound is the same as the sound of the letter) and the second vowel is silent. Examples: meat, seat, plain, rain, goat, road, lie, pie.

3. **"Vowel-Consonant- e" Pattern:** When a short word, or the last syllable of a longer word, ends in this pattern: vowel−consonant−e, the first vowel is usually long and the “e” is silent. Examples: place, cake, mice, vote, mute.

4. **Y as a long i:** The letter “y” makes the long sound of “i” when it comes at the end of a short word that has no other vowel. Examples: cry, try, my, fly, by, hi.

5. **Y as a long e:** When “y” or “ey” ends a word in an unaccented syllable, the “y” has the long sound of “e”. Examples: money, honey, many, key, funny.

6. **I before E:** Write “i” before “e” when the sound is long “e” except after the letter “c.” Examples: relieve, relief, reprieve. Notice the change when there is a “c” preceding the “ie”: receipt, receive, ceiling, deceive, conceive.

7. **E before I:** Write “e” before “i” when the sound is long “a”. Examples: weight, freight, reign.

8. **Oi or Oy:** Use “oi” in the middle of a word and use “oy” at the end of a word. Examples: boil, soil, toil, boy, toy.

9. **Ou or Ow:** Use “ou” in the middle of a word and use “ow” at the end of words other than those that end in “n” or “d.” Examples: mouse, house, found, mount, borrow, row, throw, crow.

10. **Double Consonants:** When b, d, g, m, n, or p appear after a short vowel in a word with two syllables, double the consonant: b, d, g, m, n, or p. Examples: rabbit, manner, dagger, banner, drummer.

11. **The "ch" sound:** At the beginning of a word, use "ch." At the end of a word, use "tch." When the "ch" sound is followed by "ure" or "ion," use “t.” Examples: choose, champ, watch, catch, picture, rapture.

12. **Take Your Words Apart:** Break down your words into their component parts. For example, look at the synonym for “rivalry,” which is “competition.” Why is it spelled “competition” rather than “compitition?”

   A “competition” is a petition of two or more people for the same thing; they seek the same objective. You get the correct spelling by dividing the word into its two parts: com-petition.

13. **Identify Prefixes:** A prefix is a letter or group of letters at the beginning of a word. When a word has a prefix, imagine that there is a hyphen between the word and the prefix, and you will generally see the correct spelling. “Dissolve” consists of dis-solve. “Disappear” consists of dis-appear. So, a word that is combined with the prefix dis is spelled with ss if the root word originally begins with s, but with a single s if it begins with any other letter. Examples: dis-satisfy, dis-similar, dis-appoint, dis-believe, dis-locate, dis-regard, mis-step,
mis-understand, over-rated, over-extend, un-natural, un-necessary, un-interesting, under-rate, under-estimate.

14. **Identify Suffixes**: When a word has a suffix (a letter or group of letters at the end), you can generally apply a test similar to the prefix test. Imagine a hyphen between the word and the suffix; double the letter if the word ends and the suffix begins with the same sound; but do not double when the two letters are different. Examples: actual-ly, drunken-ness, soul-less, sincere-ly, clever-ness, heart-less.

15. **Double Consonants Before Suffixes—Part 1**: When a monosyllable (a word of one syllable) ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, you double the consonant before adding “ing”, “ed”, “er”, “est.” Examples: star, star-ring; tap, tap-ped; wrap, wrap-per; big, big-gest.

16. **Double Consonants Before Suffixes—Part 2**: When a word of more than one syllable ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, and when the accent is on the last syllable, you double the consonant before adding ing, ed, er, est. Examples: concur, concur-ring; commit, commit-ted; forbid, forbid-den; compel, compel-ling.

If you remember Rules 14 and 15, you will see why the following words are spelled with a single instead of a double consonant: beat, beat-ing; heat, heat-er; conquer, conquer-ing, soft, soft-est. “Beat” and “hear” end in a single consonant, but the consonant follows two vowels instead of a single vowel; “conquer” does not have the accent on the last syllable; “soft” ends in two consonants.

17. **Drop the “E”**: When a word ends in a consonant followed by a silent “e”, drop the “e” before you add “ing.” Examples: bribe, brib-ing; drive, driv-ing; save, sav-ing; urge, urg-ing.

18. **Keep the “Y” Before Adding ING**: When a word ends in “y” preceded by a consonant, keep the “y” before adding ing, but change the “y” to “i” before adding “es” or “ed”. Examples: cry, cry-ing, cri-ies, cri-ed; reply, reply-ing, repl-ies, repl-ied.

19. **Know the “Sedes” and the “Ceeds”**: Only one words ends in sede: supersede. Only three words end in ceed: exceed, proceed, succeed. All other words ending with this pronunciation use cede; concede, precede, recede, etc.

20. **“ible” vs “able”**
   This rule can help you decide the correct spelling. It works most (but not all!) of the time. If you remove -able from a word, you are left with a complete word. If you remove -ible from a word, you are not left with a complete word (note that accessible, contemptible, digestible, flexible and suggestible above are among the exceptions to this rule).

21. **Learn Homophones**: Common homophones (words sounding the same) are listed below that are commonly misused. Learn their meanings.

<p>| accept—except | brewed—brood | dew—due | lean—lien |
| ail—ale | buy—bye | eight—ate | led—lead |
| aisle—isle | capital—capitol | elic-it—illicit | lint—lent |
| alter—altar | cash—cache | eye—I | loan—lone |
| bail—bale | ceiling—sealing | flour—flower | mail—male |
| be—bee | cent—sent | fore—four—for | might—mite |
| bear—bare | cereal—serial | forth—fourth | mint—meant |
| beaux—bow | choose—chews | herd—heard | naval—navel |
| been—bin | coarse—course | horse—hoarse | night—knight |
| blue—blew | colonel—kernel | hour—our | not—knot |
| born—borne | compliment—complement | in—in | one—won |
| bough—bow | council—counsel | lain—lane | ought—aught |</p>
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