

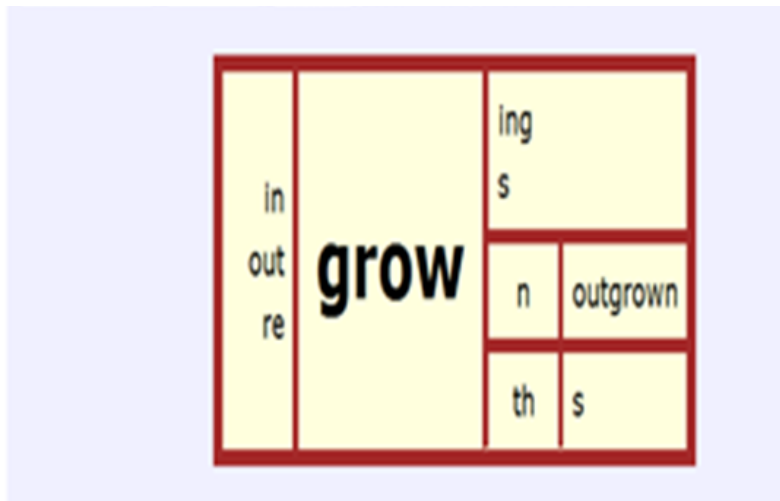
Misspelled Word(s) of the Day - Day 3

Reminder: The purpose of Misspelled Word of the Day is not to try to make everyone a perfect speller, the purpose is to learn from misspellings and then teach the student the misspelled word of the day while instilling an understanding of written language in general. The intention is not to teach students to spell every word in the English language, of which there are more than one million, the intention is to teach the student to think about words differently and learn to question, and understand word structure.

So, drum roll please....this week's misspelled word of the day is <*groth> for <growth>. This post is all about the travesty of omitting meaning from spelling instruction. Our written language (orthography) is meant to represent meaning first, then pronunciation. So, this student has been erroneously taught that we spell based on a sound/symbol correlation. Let's get started.

Once again, we start with a conversation about what <growth> means. If something has made growth then it grew, right? If it grew then we know that it can grow. So, the base is <grow> and that is a free base, meaning that it is a word all on its own. So, the <th> is a suffix. Let's look at all the words he or she can now spell because he or she understands that <grow> is a base that means:

<http://www.neilramsden.co.uk/spelling/matrix/>:



Let's take a look at all of the words the student just learned to read and spell with this new found reality:

grow + th --> growth
grow + n --> grown
re + grow + th --> regrowth
grow + ing --> growing

grow + s --> grows
in + grow + n --> ingrown
out + grow --> outgrow
out + grow + n + outgrown
grow + th + s --> growth

Ok, let's try a similar word. Try <health>. Take a moment to hypothesize what you think the base is of this word is. Write a word sum down. Remember to 1) Think about what the word means, 2) Look for any relatives (see <grow> for a refresher about word relatives that share the base) and 3) figure out the morphological parts of the word. Ok, ready for the answer?

What is <health>? We have health when we heal, right? So, we can agree that the base is <heal>. Do you hear what I hear? The way we pronounce <heal> changes when we add the suffix <th> but not the way it is spelled. A native speaker who already has the word <health> in their vocabulary will be able to make that connection quickly and will simultaneously understand why we spell <health> the way we do: heal + th → healthy. Now, they can also spell:

un + heal + th + y
heal + ed
heal + s
heal + th + ful + ness
heal + th + i + ly
heal + th + i + er
heal + ing
heal + er

Homework: If you have a student that misspells these words, do this exercise with them and report back!