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Scripps National Spelling Bee

Vocabulary List for Eighth Graders

2016-2017

1. **marvelous or marvellous** (*adjective*) notably superior : excellent.
2. **vulpine** (*adjective*) marked by slyness or predatoriness : crafty.
3. **catastrophic** (*adjective*) of, relating to, resembling or resulting in disaster.
4. **quandary** (*noun*) a state of perplexity or doubt : dilemma.
5. **Honolulu** (*geographical entry*) the most populous city, port and capital of Hawaii.
6. **uranium** (*noun*) a silvery, heavy radioactive metallic element that is used primarily in atomic energy programs.
7. **collision** (*noun*) the action or an instance of two or more things striking forcefully together typically by accident.
8. **alpinist** (*noun*) a mountain climber specializing in high difficult climbs.
9. **mahogany** (*noun*) the durable yellowish brown to reddish brown wood of a West Indian tree that is widely used for cabinetwork and fine finish work.
10. **neutron** (*noun*) an elementary particle that has no electrical charge and that has a mass nearly equal to that of the proton.
11. **insulin** (*noun*) a protein pancreatic hormone that is essential especially for the metabolism of carbohydrates and which is used in the treatment and control of diabetes.
12. **allegiance** (*noun*) devotion or loyalty especially to a person, group or cause.
13. **Dantean** (*adjective*) of, relating to or characteristic of the Italian poet Dante or his writings.
14. **perpetrator** (*noun*) one that commits an offense or crime.
15. **avalanche** (*noun*) a large mass of snow, ice, dirt, rock or other material sliding swiftly down a mountainside.
16. **bedlam** (*noun*) a place or scene of wild mad uproar.
17. **Mylar** (*trademark*) – used for a polyester film.
18. **exquisite** (*adjective*) marked by flawless craftsmanship or by beautiful, delicate or elaborate execution.
19. **assailant** (*noun*) one who attacks with violence.
20. **functionary** (*noun*) one holding a paid position or office in a government or party : civil servant.
21. **inadvertent** (*adjective*) unintentional.



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This list includes 50 challenging eighth grade words and, to extend learning, 50 challenging ninth grade words. If you learn the spellings and meanings of these 100 words, you will be well prepared for an eighth grade classroom bee. If you would like to be well prepared for a school spelling bee, ask your teacher for the 450-word School Spelling Bee Study List.

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----------------------|--|
| 22. | Mandarin | <i>(noun)</i> | the main dialect of Chinese spoken in China. |
| 23. | physicists | <i>(plural noun)</i> | specialists in the science of matter and energy and their interactions. |
| 24. | Einstein | <i>(noun)</i> | a mathematical genius. |
| 25. | tremulous | <i>(adjective)</i> | quivering : shaking. |
| 26. | aperture | <i>(noun)</i> | the opening in a photographic lens that admits the light passing through. |
| 27. | prodigious | <i>(adjective)</i> | enormous, immense. |
| 28. | Stilton | <i>(noun)</i> | a blue-veined cheese with wrinkled rind made of whole cows' milk enriched with cream and usually aged two years. |
| 29. | unscrupulous | <i>(adjective)</i> | lacking or exhibiting a lack of moral principles. |
| 30. | concussion | <i>(noun)</i> | a jarring injury of the brain resulting in disturbance of cerebral function and sometimes marked by permanent damage. |
| 31. | legitimately | <i>(adverb)</i> | according to law or rules. |
| 32. | vagabonds | <i>(plural noun)</i> | individuals who wander about from place to place. |
| 33. | affectionately | <i>(adverb)</i> | in a loving or fond manner. |
| 34. | habanero | <i>(noun)</i> | a very hot roundish chili pepper that is usually orange when mature. |
| 35. | overweening | <i>(adjective)</i> | excessive, exaggerated, unrestrained. |
| 36. | vengeance | <i>(noun)</i> | infliction of punishment in return for an injury or offense. |
| 37. | gladiatorial | <i>(adjective)</i> | of, relating to or suggestive of persons in ancient Rome who fought against other people or wild animals for the entertainment of the public. |
| 38. | semaphore | <i>(noun)</i> | a system of visual signaling (as between ships) in which the sender holds a flag in each hand and moves his or her arms to different positions according to a code alphabet. |
| 39. | inconceivable | <i>(adjective)</i> | falling outside the limit of what can be comprehended, accepted as true or tolerated. |
| 40. | pilgrimages | <i>(plural noun)</i> | trips taken to visit a place of historic or sentimental interest or to participate in a specific event or for a definite purpose. |
| 41. | Holocaust | <i>(noun)</i> | the mass slaughter of European civilians and especially Jews by the Nazis during World War II. |
| 42. | nuisance | <i>(noun)</i> | something that is disagreeable or troublesome : an annoyance. |
| 43. | enervating | <i>(verb)</i> | lessening the nerve, vitality or strength of. |
| 44. | sanctum sanctorum | <i>(noun)</i> | a study, office or place of retreat where one is free from intrusion. |
| 45. | undulating | <i>(adjective)</i> | rising and falling in waves : fluctuating. |
| 46. | Jacobean | <i>(adjective)</i> | of or relating to James I of England, his reign or his times. |
| 47. | hypotenuse | <i>(noun)</i> | the side of a right-angled triangle that is opposite the right angle. |
| 48. | machete | <i>(noun)</i> | a large, heavy knife usually made with a blade often two or three feet in length. |
| 49. | silhouetted | <i>(verb)</i> | projected upon a background like an outline of a person or thing. |



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| 50. | conflagration | <i>(noun)</i> | a large disastrous fire involving many buildings. |
| 51. | churlish | <i>(adjective)</i> | rude. |
| 52. | mandrill | <i>(noun)</i> | a large, fierce baboon of western Africa with the male having blue ridges on each side of the red-bridged nose. |
| 53. | ascetic | <i>(adjective)</i> | self-denying : austere. |
| 54. | pugnacious | <i>(adjective)</i> | having an assertive, hostile or combative nature : aggressive. |
| 55. | gesticulations | <i>(plural noun)</i> | expressive motions of the body or limbs. |
| 56. | interminableness | <i>(noun)</i> | the state or quality of having no end or being drawn out to the point of boredom. |
| 57. | potentialities | <i>(plural noun)</i> | things that have a possibility for changing or developing into a state of reality. |
| 58. | decrepitude | <i>(noun)</i> | a state of decay or ruin. |
| 59. | promulgate | <i>(verb)</i> | to make widely known through speech or writing : announce. |
| 60. | constabulary | <i>(noun)</i> | a body of police officers (as of a particular town, district, country). |
| 61. | recusant | <i>(adjective)</i> | refusing to submit to authority. |
| 62. | Patagonia | <i>(geographical entry)</i> | a region of South America in southern Argentina and southern Chile that is a barren, broad, level, elevated area between the Andes Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. |
| 63. | syncope | <i>(noun)</i> | loss of consciousness resulting from arrest of the blood supply to the brain : faint. |
| 64. | pirouetted | <i>(verb)</i> | performed a full turn on the toe or ball of one foot in ballet. |
| 65. | crustaceans | <i>(plural noun)</i> | animals belonging to a large class of invertebrates comprising the majority of the marine or freshwater arthropods (as lobsters, shrimps, crabs and barnacles) and some terrestrial forms (as the wood lice). |
| 66. | eucalyptus | <i>(noun)</i> | an evergreen tree or shrub mostly native to western Australia that provides wood, oil and other products. |
| 67. | moiety | <i>(noun)</i> | one of the portions into which something is divided : component, part. |
| 68. | remonstrance | <i>(noun)</i> | an act or instance of saying or pleading in protest or opposition. |
| 69. | prestidigitation | <i>(noun)</i> | the practice of magic or trickery usually involving manual dexterity. |
| 70. | tetanus | <i>(noun)</i> | an acute infectious disease characterized by prolonged spasms of voluntary muscles and especially of the jaw muscles. |
| 71. | Cotswold | <i>(noun)</i> | a sheep of an English breed of large long-wooled sheep. |
| 72. | pertinacity | <i>(noun)</i> | the quality or state of being stubbornly unshakable. |
| 73. | cayenne | <i>(noun)</i> | a very hot powder made by drying and grinding the whole fruits or the seeds of several hot peppers. |
| 74. | Lilliput | <i>(adjective)</i> | extremely small. |
| 75. | patronymic | <i>(noun)</i> | a name derived from that of the father or his ancestor usually by the addition of a prefix or suffix. |



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| 76. | castellated | <i>(adjective)</i> | built or formed like a castle. |
| 77. | ebullience | <i>(noun)</i> | high spirits : enthusiasm. |
| 78. | Hebrides | <i>(geographical entry)</i> | islands of western Scotland in the Atlantic. |
| 79. | phosphine | <i>(noun)</i> | a colorless very poisonous gaseous compound that may ignite spontaneously when mixed with air or oxygen and that is a weaker base than ammonia. |
| 80. | nautilus | <i>(noun)</i> | any of several cephalopod mollusks of the southern Pacific and Indian Oceans with a spiral chambered shell that is pearly on the inside. |
| 81. | outré | <i>(adjective)</i> | not conforming to conventional behavior, custom or style : bizarre, extravagant. |
| 82. | pterodactyl | <i>(noun)</i> | any of numerous extinct flying reptiles having no feathers, a wing membrane, and a tail usually rather short but sometimes expanded and resembling a rudder. |
| 83. | aspidistra | <i>(noun)</i> | any plant of a genus of Asian herbs with large pointed leaves and flowers in sets of four borne close to the ground. |
| 84. | chevalier | <i>(noun)</i> | a member of the lowest rank of a French order of merit. |
| 85. | toccata | <i>(noun)</i> | a brilliant musical composition usually for pipe organ or harpsichord, in free fantasia style, and usually with many equal-timed notes in rapid movement. |
| 86. | rheumatic | <i>(adjective)</i> | of or relating to any of numerous conditions characterized by inflammation or pain in muscles, joints or fibrous tissue. |
| 87. | tumulus | <i>(noun)</i> | a small artificial hill or mound (as over a grave). |
| 88. | gendarme | <i>(noun)</i> | a European police officer, especially one from France. |
| 89. | malacca | <i>(noun)</i> | the often spotted, slender woody stem of an Asian rattan palm used especially for walking sticks and umbrella handles. |
| 90. | Huguenot | <i>(noun)</i> | a French Protestant in the 16th and 17th centuries. |
| 91. | hors de combat | <i>(adjective)</i> | out of action : in a disabled condition. |
| 92. | phrenologists | <i>(plural noun)</i> | those versed in the study of the shape of the skull based on the belief that it indicates a person's mental faculties and character. |
| 93. | reveille | <i>(noun)</i> | a signal usually sounded by bugle at about sunrise summoning soldiers or sailors to the day's duties. |
| 94. | ague | <i>(noun)</i> | a fever resembling malaria marked by sudden attacks of chills, fever and sweating that recur at regular intervals. |
| 95. | netsuke | <i>(noun)</i> | a small object carved in wood or ivory or made of metal used by the Japanese as a toggle to fasten a small pouch or purse to the kimono sash. |
| 96. | recherché | <i>(adjective)</i> | of highest quality : exquisite. |
| 97. | supererogation | <i>(noun)</i> | the act of performing more than is necessary to complete an undertaking. |



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|------|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 98. | au fait | <i>(adjective)</i> | familiar : fully informed : in touch. |
| 99. | wallah or walla | <i>(noun)</i> | a person who is associated with a particular type of work or who performs a specific duty or service. |
| 100. | a posteriori | <i>(adjective)</i> | of or relating to what cannot be known except from experience : proved by induction from facts obtained by observation or experiment. |