

Why Change English Spelling?

The following facts are disturbing evidence that something needs to be done about the way the English language is written. English spelling is identified as a chief culprit.

- =English spelling is too difficult for most people. Even after 11 years at school barely half of all English speakers become confident spellers. English is full of unpredictable, irregularly spelled words which must be individually memorized at great cost in time spent.
- =Italian children can spell accurately after just 2 years at school. Italy has only half as many dyslexics as UK. Unlike English, Italian spelling is very regular. Other European nations have all updated their spellings to make them more regular. English has never been regularized.
- =Around 7 million British adults and 40 million US adults are functionally illiterate, i.e. about 10%...& rising.
- =The difficulty in English shows up not only in writing the language but also in reading it. English speaking adults always come near the bottom in international studies on reading comprehension.

OPOSITION: *There are basically six arguments given by those who oppose the updating of English spelling. They wish to retain the traditional spelling ["TS"] as it is, with its inconsistencies, on one or more of the following grounds:*

- =1) **the etymological argument** (the spelling makes it easier to identify the word's origin)
- =2) **the discipline argument** (memorizing hundreds of irregular spellings is good for children)
- =3) **the elitist argument** (I can spell and you can't- hahaha!)
- =4) **the chaos argument** (changing the spelling system would just cause more confusion; - esp. it would be very "hard for me to change" to a new way of spelling)

- =5) **the esthetic argument** (the extra letters make the words look nicer)
- =6) **the cost argument** (all the old books wud hav to be republishd in the new sistem, wich wud cost too much)
- =7) **the “my job” argument** (I make my living teaching remeedial TS & if it wer made easy it mite cost me my job)

> **#1, the etimological argument.** This is unjustified. Only linguists and other specialists nowadays need or want to care about the origin of words. How meny peepel today kno enuf latin to cherish the original /filius=son/ meaning of the word /filial/? And wy shud they, since it's likely to be mixd up with the greek word philos-, originaly meaning luvver, or offen gay luvver?

Also in meny cases the current spelling distorts the root word. If the word "dungeon" was spelled "dunjin" wud it be easier or harder to tel that the word originates from the Middle French word donjon?

> **#2, the dissiplin argument,** doesn't hold up very well either. Isn't one ov the main purposes ov education to teach children how to think? But in order to spel today's TS, logic and consistency must be tossd aside. Meny boys rebel agenst this senseless drudgery, they leav scool in anger, & they gro up as non-readers, with a lak of respect - based on their scool expeerience - for wot adults think is “rite”.

> **#3, the eleetist argument,** is the domain of class-concius types who seek to gain & maintain hy status in society by mastering a spelling code wich is very dificult to lern, cannot be reason to & in most cases cannot be lernd by foreners or the children of illiterat parents. Is this fair? We spelling reformers think not.

> **#4, the caos argument.** Adults scoold in the old way cud indeed expect to hav sum trubble adjusting to a new sistem. A modrat change, such as u ar reading now, has an advantage over mor radical change, in that it is easy to read.

A little loosening of the rules wud also help, permitting varius plausible ways of riting the vowels...ee or ea for the “ee” sound, for example. This mercy, along with the removal of superfluous letters that make no sense in today's workaday world, wud reduce the danger to an individual of being marginalized as a “poor speller”. This is the way things wer in Shakespeare's time, mor permissiv.

40 million American adults can't read a newspaper or the words on a prescription, or fil out an aplication Spelling revision is needed!

#5, the esthetic argument, is subjectiv. Spellings have changed meny times over the years. At wot point in history did the words aquire just the rite number of extra letters? Wot's butiful about an irrational, never edited hodgepodge? Much of the so-calld buty about the spelling itself actualy

amounts to fashionable leftovers, such as redundant final e, from the conquest of England by the Norman French in 1066.

>#6, the **cost argument**. As to reprinting the old books, that is not difficult nowadays, & printers wud not suffer doing it - they wud make munny.

>#7, the **“my job” argument**. It's tru thare wud be less need for remedial reading teachers, spel checkers & spelling bees. But the transition to new spelling cud employ thees same people in guiding the transition, for example teaching children & foreners to read a dictionary code, & to transit from the whole-word lerning method, wich did not prove successful, to the original & now improved fonics aproach, wich works wel.

If yu're stil not convinced, heer ar sum mor reasons to simplify spelling:

>

- =1. Simplifyd spelling wud graitley reduce illiteracy, wich in turn wud lower crime and unemployment.
- =2. The cost of continuing to liv with our outdated spelling is estimated to be in the meny millions of dollars annualy:
 - a) remedial education
 - b) time spent in training & in correcting errors in the worlds of bisness & publishing, [spelcheckers ar ofn rong]
 - c) loss of otherwise employable but spelling-challenged applicants
 - d) medical errors
 - e) cost of crime & of running the groing prison sitem.
- =3. A simplifyd spelling sitem wud free up mor time to teach other subjects in school.
- =4. Simplifying English spelling wud make it easier to teach as a foren language.. English is in an exelent posicion to be a universal language. It has:
 - a) a large number of nativ speakers
 - b) a welth ov litrature and other meedia
 - c) simpler grammar than meny other languages
 - d) uses the latin alfabet, the world's moast widespred riting sitem.

→ See our booklet for sale, TEN DAYS TO IMPROVED SPELLING.
Easy to lern, understandable, easy to read.