This is our second spelling quiz. Like its predecessor, it is so difficult that even a university professor of English couldn’t possibly get a perfect score on it. For the benefit of new readers, we are repeating the instructions for working on it.

We have selected 25 English words, names, or terms. For each one, we have given you the pronunciation (respelling the word or name rather grotesquely for that purpose) and the meaning. All you need to do is to write down the correct spelling. Score yourself as follows: 15 or more correct, very good; 20 or more correct, superior; 25 correct, utterly impossible! You will find the correct answers on page 125 of this issue.

To pass the test, you must, naturally, know the letters with which the words are spelled, but that is not enough. There are four other factors for you to weigh in each case:

(1) This quiz does not arbitrarily limit itself to ordinary words. Included are some of the proper names that surround us on all sides. Proper names are generally capitalized. Therefore, consider whether or not the word facing you is supposed to be capitalized. If you slip up, in either direction, score yourself wrong.

(2) Most spelling quizzes restrict themselves to words written in solid form ("touchstone," for instance). They carefully avoid hyphenated words such as "hubble-bubble" and compound terms such as "clock watcher." There are no such exclusions here. For each term, you must decide whether it should be written solidly, or with a hyphen, or in the form of separate words. Any error of judgment on your part, and you are wrong!

(3) Some words must be adorned with apostrophes, accent marks, circumflexes, umlauts, cedillas, and other diacritical marks, to be written correctly. You will encounter such words in this quiz. You cannot take credit for spelling a word correctly unless you get any needed adornments just right. For example, if a word needs an acute accent (‘) and you provide it with a grave accent (¨), that counts as a mistake. Nothing short of absolute correctness will do.

(4) Some words may be spelled in more than one way. In the case of such words, we have consulted three leading American dictionary authorities of the 1960's:

WORD WAYS

1. MIRRE
2. RRAY-ZZ
3. BRAW-SS
4. COCK-SE
5. OH-BHO
6. DEEH-VA
7. UH-KAY
8. NOOH-SJ
9. HOE-HE
10. AYTH
11. LESS-EIG
12. SPIGHT-
13. AKK-U
14. SOHN-FI
15. ROU-MA
16. BURRDE
17. KEH-DH
18. BHOAR
19. SEKK-RK
20. NAHLL
21. KEE-ZEE
22. FEE-BEE
23. KEE
24. THH-W
25. KOE-HO
Super-Quiz No. 2

Super-Quiz No. 2

Instructions for working terms. For each one, we must decide whether it is correct, very good, or name rather grotesque. What you do is to write down the spelling with which the words are written correctly. You make credit for spelling words that you see in at least one of the authorities. Where the three authorities differ in regard to the preferred spelling, you must not count yourself as correct unless you have duplicated the spellings we have listed. Again, if alternate spellings of a word are so common that different leading dictionaries exercise different judgments as to which one is preferred, you should be familiar with the alternatives.

The three dictionaries listed above have also been consulted for the spellings of all other words, and for meaning and pronunciation. In a few instances, other authorities were checked for corroborating evidence. For instance, Webster’s omits most proper names; for such names, an additional authority was examined to provide a three-way check.

The quiz follows. Egad!

Super-Quiz No. 2

(a) Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language (1961)
(b) Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary (1965)
(c) The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (1966)

Where all three of these authorities agree on the preferred spelling, that is the only spelling qualifying as correct for the purposes of this quiz. We feel there is no justification for your use of a spelling downgraded by all major dictionaries. Where the three authorities differ in regard to the preferred spelling, all spellings shown as preferred in at least one of the authorities have been included in our answers, and you must not count yourself as correct unless you have duplicated the spellings we have listed. Again, we feel that if alternate spellings of a word are so common that different leading dictionaries exercise different judgments as to which one is preferred, you should be familiar with the alternatives.

The three dictionaries listed above have also been consulted for the spellings of all other words, and for meaning and pronunciation. In a few instances, other authorities were checked for corroborating evidence. For instance, Webster’s omits most proper names; for such names, an additional authority was examined to provide a three-way check.

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Term

Meaning

1. MIRRE
A bitter gum resin used for incense and perfumes.
2. RRAY-ZOHN-DEH-TR
Reston or justification for being.
3. BBAH-SSAH-KNOW-VVAA
A popular dance of Brazilian origin.
4. COCK-SENN
The steersman of a racing shell.
5. OH-BHOI
An oole.
6. DEEH-VAHLL-KY-REHH
A music drama by Richard Wagner.
7. UH-KAY-ZHUN-ULL
A soft, white, French cheese.
8. NOOH-SSHEH-TELLH
A borough in northeastern New Jersey.
9. HOE HOH-GUSS
Being one of 8 equal parts.
10. AYTH
Governmental noninterference in economic affairs.
11. LESS-EIGH-PHARE
A channel in New York City connecting the Hudson and Harlem rivers.
12. SPIGH-T-N-DIE-VVULL
A comic opera by Mozart.
13. AKKK-UHMM-MMOWED-EYT
A Russian beet soup.
14. SOHN-FRWAH
To oblig, to do a favor for.
15. ROU-MAY-NYAH
Calmness amid trying circumstances.
16. BURRD-ZIICH
A country in southeastern Europe.
17. KEH-DHOAR SSEH
Seen from above; panoramic.
18. BHOARSHTT
The French Foreign Office.
19. SEKK-REH-LIDGE-USS
A Russian beet soup.
20. NAHLL-PRAHSS
Guilty of violating something holy.
21. KOE-ZEE-PHAHN-TOO-TEH
To discontinue a legal action.
22. FEE-BEE
A wharf or landing place.
23. KEE
A wharf or landing place.
24. TSHI-WAH-OUA
A small, smooth-coated dog.
25. KOE-HOONN
A surname of the British gentry and nobility.