The 'shus' sound: answers and notes

What your child practised: choosing –cious or –tious using clues from related words, and learning the words with no clue (Years 5–6 spelling, English appendix 1).

Page 1 · Warm up

gracious · cautious · spacious · ambitious

Page 2 · 'Shus' word hunt

Answers will vary. Check the ending matches the clue word: –ce or –cion → –cious; –tion → –tious.

Page 2 · A. Clue words

grace → **gracious** · caution → **cautious** · vice → **vicious**
ambition → **ambitious** · malice → **malicious** · fiction → **fictitious**

Page 3 · B. Correct spelling

1. **spacious** · 2. **nutritious** · 3. **cautious** · 4. **infectious** · 5. **suspicious**

Page 3 · C. Sort

–cious: vicious, conscious, precious, malicious
–tious: ambitious, nutritious, fictitious, infectious

Page 3 · D. Sentences

Answers will vary. Check the spelling and that the word is used to describe a noun, for example "an **ambitious** plan".

Challenge: No, Leo isn't right. The root word is **grace**, which ends in –ce, so the 'shus' ending is spelt with a c: **gracious**. –tious is used when there's a related –tion word, like caution → cautious.

Watch out for

- **Swapping –cious and –tious** (gratious, nutricious). Ask, "What's a word in the same family?" and look at its ending.
- **Spelling by sound alone.** Both endings sound the same, so the ear can't help: the clue word can.
- **Words with no clue** (precious, delicious, conscious) and the exception **anxious**. Learn these: look, say, cover, write, check.

Going further (5 minutes, no paper)

- **Family ping-pong:** say a noun (space, infection, caution); your child says the 'shus' adjective and spells the ending.
- **Describe dinner:** use 'shus' words about a meal, then spell one aloud.
- **In the game:** Chapter 2, –ant and –ance or –ent and –ence, uses related words as clues again.