



# Rule 20: ous, ious



# Teacher information

- This teaching resource is organised into four sections: **1)** Explanation of the rule **2)** Examples of key words that fit the rule **3)** Opportunities to practise **4)** Further examples of commonly used words following the rule & some notable exceptions.
- These slides are intended as a starting point for teaching this rule. The lists of words given at the end might be used for card sorting exercises or a variety of spelling games.
- Some words end in **'ious'** as part of the **'tious'** or **'cious'** spelling of the **'shus'** sound. These are covered in **Rule 25**.

# 1) Rule 20: Explanation

Where **'ous'** is added to a root word, normal rules for adding vowel suffixes apply (see Rule 21).

*E.g. 'e' at the end of a root word is often removed.*

The **'ee'** sound before **'ous'** is often spelt **'i'**.

famous enormous humorous

serious glorious previous

**NOTE:** If the root word ends in **'our'**, this is usually changed to **'or'** when **'ous'** is added.

## 2) Rule 20: Examples

Which words have an obvious root word?  
Has the root word changed? How? Why?

poison**ous**

curi**ous**

gener**ous**

obvi**ous**

vigor**ous**

glamor**ous**

nerv**ous**

continu**ous**

vari**ous**

**THINK:** Which words had root words ending in 'our'?  
How have they changed when 'ous' was added?

## 3) Rule 20: Practice

Add 'ous'. Watch out: the root word may need to change!

### Starter

danger

poison

vary

mountain

hazard

### Challenge 1

fame

glamour

nerve

fury

humour

### Challenge 2

glory

vigour

continue

mystery

ridicule

**THINK**: Which other words ending in 'ous' can you think of that **don't** have an obvious root word?

## 4) Rule 20: Further examples

### 'ous'

famous  
dangerous  
enormous  
numerous  
nervous  
humorous  
continuous  
generous  
tremendous  
glamorous  
ridiculous  
marvellous  
vigorous  
jealous

### 'ious'

various  
serious  
previous  
obvious  
furious  
mysterious

### Exceptions

Some words with the 'ee' sound before 'ous' at the end are spelt 'eous'.

hideous  
courteous  
spontaneous

### Other exceptions

The 'e' at the end of a root word must be kept if the root word ends in a 'soft' 'g' ('j' sound).

gorgeeous  
courageeous  
outrageeous

The 'ious' ending at the end of '**religious**' makes sense when linked to the root word '**religion**'.

Be aware of '**disastrous**' (not 'disasterous').