Next Friday was the big third-grade spelling bee. Frank was an outstanding speller. Last year, he was the second-grade champ, the king of spellers! But he didn’t want to be dethroned as king in the third grade. So he filled his pretest days with study!

But studying spelling words made Frank act strangely. He spelled words all the time! When he
looked outside the window, he spelled midwinter, midday, overcast, and overcoat.

Then all week at mealtimes Frank spelled cooking words such as precooked, overcook, preheat, and defrost.

Frank had fun with spelling too. Midway on the walk to school, he called his sister a biped and spelled it for her. That made her mad! She thought biped meant an animal. Frank said, “Allow me to decode that word for you. Biped means ‘Anything that walks on two feet.’”

On Friday, Frank sounded a bit overconfident about the spelling bee. Mom told him that might make him spell too quickly and misspell a word.

At midmorning, the spelling bee started. When it was Frank’s first turn, his teacher said, “Biplane. A biplane flew overhead.”

Frank smiled. This was easy. He quickly started to spell, “b-y-”.

Frank stopped midword. That wasn’t right! He started again, “b-i-p-l-a-n-e.”

That was right! And so was Mom. Frank had to overcome being overconfident if he wanted to stay the champ.