

Helping Your Child with Spelling and Writing

This booklet contains tips and ideas to help your child to learn their spellings
and to write in a fun and purposeful way



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A brief overview of spelling

Spelling is more difficult than reading. **Why is that?** Learning to spell and learning to read are based on much of the same knowledge, but spelling requires additional skills that are unique to spelling.

Strategies for learning to spell

Children learn in different ways which is why teaching them means using a range of approaches. This will also help them when applying spelling because they will see the word in different contexts. Here are some spelling strategies:

- Listening for the sounds and breaking them down
- Breaking a word into syllables (clap them out, tap them out)
- Using rhymes, mnemonics and songs to remember
- Using visual approaches e.g. 'word shape', 'bubble writing'
- Being multi-sensory e.g. 'word painting'
- Using verbal and social e.g. 'spelling tennis'
- Kinaesthetic and physical e.g. 'spell jump'

Spelling is more difficult than reading for three reasons

- **Reading involves recognising words, while spelling involves reproducing words (recall).** Producing the spelling of a word is more difficult than recognising a word.
- **There are more possible spellings for most words than there are possible ways to read them.** In English, we have 26 letters, but we have 45 sounds and more than 250 ways to spell these sounds. For example, the sound of /j/ can be spelled J, G, and DGE.
- **Children spend less time spelling than they do reading. Less practice time equals more difficulty.** Since sounds can be spelled in many different ways, children need time to practise, along with learning spelling rules and patterns. In a school, more time is spent on teaching reading than teaching spelling. Lack of practice, together with the fact that spelling is TRICKY, means we have many children who struggle to spell.



A brief overview of writing

Writing is a really important skill. It is much more than just writing words down on a piece of paper. Writing is a way of communicating; it plays an important role in your child's life—both in and out of the classroom.

You can help your child to develop their writing skills by encouraging them to carry out writing activities which are simple and fun.

Writing should be seen as an enjoyable fun experience. Developing a child's mark making skills in the early years will allow them to learn to control a pencil in such a way that it becomes automatic.

Stages of writing development (this will differ slightly for every child):



First of all, children form lines and dots



Children then develop the ability to copy a mark made by others



Gradually curves and circles appear



Learning to draw circles anticlockwise is important when forming letters



Children then develop the ability to copy straight lines/curves



Finally they use straight lines and curves to form symbols

Your child will increasingly be able to form their letters with more control.

They can practise by writing for a purpose, such as writing out cards.

It is likely that they will naturally begin to use either their left or right hand more when writing.





Menu of spelling activities:

Use cooked spaghetti to form your spellings	Paint your spellings	Write your spellings with your eyes closed
Make your spellings out of plasticine/play dough	Use pipe cleaners to make your spelling words	Spell out your spellings and ask someone to write them down for you
Write your spellings on a whiteboard...then rub them off!	Use your iPad/tablet/laptop to write out your spellings	Write your spellings in the sand using your fingers



Menu of writing activities:

Write for two minutes - use a stop watch. Don't worry about spelling or punctuation!	Write a note to a family member...or a pet...or a favourite toy	Make a list of your favourite foods - animals...pop stars...etc.
Create a menu for your family dinner tonight!	Cut a picture from an old magazine and write a story about the picture	Find a really strange (but safe) place to write in
Forget about reading...just for tonight!	See if you can sneak in some writing without anyone noticing!	Write five words to describe you (or your mum/dad/pet)

Fun ways to practise your spellings!

Spelling Rainbows

Choose your 3 favourite crayons to rainbow write your spelling words. Write each word first in pencil. Then trace over each word three times. Use different colour crayons each time.



Silly Sentences

Write ten silly sentences using a spelling word in each sentence. Please underline your spelling words! Write your sentences neatly!

Example My dog wears a blue and purple dress when he takes a bath.



Backwards Words

Write your spelling words forwards and then backwards.

Examples:

where = erehw

colour = ruoloc

yeknom

Pyramid Writing

Pyramid write 10 of your spelling words.

When you are finished, draw a pyramid around your word.

h

h o

h o m

h o m e



ABC Order

Write your spelling words in alphabetical order.



Spelling Paragraph

Write a paragraph using ALL of your spelling words. Underline your spelling words.



Draw and Label

Draw and label ten of your spelling words neatly. You **must** colour your drawings and labels. Don't forget to add detail. Do your very best work!



Adding My Words

1. Choose ten spelling words.
2. Add up each spelling word.
3. Write them neatly.

***Consonants are worth 10**

***Vowels are worth 5**

Example

Said = 10 + 5 + 5 + 10 = 30

There = 10 + 10 + 5 + 10 + 5 = 40



Fun ways to practise your writing!

Sending a message

Leave notes on pillows, desks, mirrors for your family. Ask them to write you a note in return. A family chalkboard or message board is a great way to write messages.



Give your writing as a gift

For birthday presents or for other gifts, write a letter or a story instead of giving a present.



Journals

Ask your mum or dad for a special journal or notebook. Write in your journal as often as possible.



Mind maps

If you're finding writing tricky, use a mind map to record your ideas.



Make a Menu

Design and write the menu for a family dinner.

Ask for help with some of the tricky words if you need to.

Drink		Food Menu	
Soft Drink	Hot Drink	Salads	Hot

Spelling Paragraph

Write a paragraph using ALL of your spelling words. Be sure to underline your spelling words in your paragraph.

Don't forget a topic sentence and a concluding sentence.

