

Spelling Strategies

Children should be given **strategies** to help them learn to spell. Strategies could include:

- **Rhyme** - if they can spell mouse, they should be able to spell house
- Write the word with **different coloured pens** to break it into sections. This will help to teach the pupils to learn to spell in 'chunks' rather than 'letter by letter'
- Use **different coloured post-its**, one for each word. This will help pupils visualise the word when they are trying to recall it.
- Write the word in **sand, finger paint** etc -helps form memory hooks.
- Use **big paper and big felt pens** - not always a jotter.
- **Chant the syllables** eg Wed-nes-day, emphasising the tricky bit. Use actions for each syllable.
- **Draw a picture** to help with a word eg big elephants can always understand small elephants = because
- **Make the word into a picture** eg bed could be drawn to look like a bed

FUN Games to Play at Home!

1. FLASH CARDS

Pupils quickly write out words on flash cards making sure that they have the correct spellings. One person reads aloud from a card and the person writes the word on a whiteboard/piece of paper. This time when they say 'show me', one shows the correct spelling on the card and the other shows their attempt on the whiteboard. Take turns reading or spelling.

2. DEFINITIONS

Children are given one dictionary and work to find and write the definition of each word. By using a selection of dictionaries, children can then share and compare definitions.

3. SPELLING ALOUD

Using flashcards, as above, one child reads a word aloud. Their partner spells the word out loud. If they spell correctly, they 'win' the card. If they are incorrect, the card is put to the bottom of the pile. Children take turns and the 'winner' is the one who has most cards at the end of the game.

4. SPELLING TENNIS

Older children really enjoy this one as it can be quite challenging. Children work with someone at home. One takes on the role of both 'reader' and 'checker'. The other spells the word by saying alternative letters until the whole word is spelt. If a mistake is made, the checker stops the game and shows the correct spelling. The word is then spelt again and then put to the bottom of the pile. Correct words are discarded. Take turns to be the checker.

5. ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Children write out spelling list in alphabetical order. This activity is best used with children in the middle and upper stages. It is particularly effective at making them look closely at the spelling of words that begin with the same letter eg when learning common words.

6. MUDDLED LETTERS

Children rewrite each of the spelling words in a muddled up fashion eg 'beautiful' could be written 'befitualu'. It is better if they always put the initial letter in the correct place. This is a great activity, as children have to scrutinise each word to make sure they have got all the correct letters. These muddled lists are then swapped with someone and children have to rewrite each word correctly.

7. DICTIONARY RACE

Children need a dictionary. Take turns to call out one of the spelling words which is then hidden. The idea is to be the first to locate the word in the dictionary. This not only helps them to remember how to spell, it is also excellent for practising dictionary skills. You can turn it into a game by giving counters to win.

8. SYLLABLES

Children split their spelling words into syllables eg beau-ti-ful.

Again close attention to details is needed so it helps them to retain more difficult spellings.

9. WORDS WITHIN WORDS

Children try to find smaller words inside each of their spelling words without rearranging the letters. Eg using the word 'practising', you could find - 'act' 'sing' 'in' 'is'. Set a time limit, say 10 minutes, to find as many as possible using all their spelling words.

10. SILLY STORY

Children write a short story (about a paragraph) using as many of their spelling words as possible. Again, set a time limit of about 10 minutes. Stories can be brought to school and shared!

11. KIM's GAME

This game can be played in a small group. Spelling words are written on cards and laid out on the table. Children study the words. They then look away and a nominated person removes one of the cards. Children turn back, look at the remaining cards and have 2 minutes (use an egg timer) to write the missing word on a whiteboard which they keep hidden. All the guesses are then revealed at the same time. If they are correct, they win a point, but only if it is spelt correctly!

12. MAGNETIC LETTERS

Working together, younger pupils would first look at a word from their list or from a flash card, cover it and then make their word using magnetic letters. This would continue until all the words are displayed.

13. WORDSEARCH

Using squared paper, children make a wordsearch with their spelling words. Words are NOT written out underneath. They need to look really closely to make sure that they haven't made a mistake and that they have included all their words. Bring them to school to share!

14. MNEMONICS

Show the children an example of a mnemonic and explain why they are used eg **big elephants can always understand small elephants because**

Working together, try to make up a mnemonic for one or two of their trickiest spelling words. A time limit should be set - again about 10 minutes.

15. LUCKY DIP

Children take turns to pick out 12 plastic letters from a bag. They mustn't look into the bag, as it is 'lucky dip'. The picked letters are placed in front of them and the rest of the letters are left in the bag. The idea is to make one of their spelling words out of the letters. The children take turns to pick one new letter out of the bag and discard one that they don't want any more. This carries on until someone has the right letters to make one of their spelling words.

16. GUESS THE WORD

Work together, children choose one of their spelling words, and then write one letter on a whiteboard at a time. They can begin anywhere in the word - it does not have to be at the beginning. The other person tries to guess the word after each letter is added. If they guess correctly, they must spell the whole word to win the points. The fewer letters that have been given - the more points to be won.

17. CROSSWORD

Using squared paper, children make a crossword using their spelling words. Definitions are written below to form the clues.

18. DRAGON'S DINNER

Children have counters, one for each of their target words. They take turns in spelling. If they make a misspelling, they lose a counter to the dragon. The dragon can be someone with a list of the words and the dragon can be a picture/model. How much dinner does the dragon get?

19. FIND THE WORD

Children are given a highlighter pen and piece of text, for example a newspaper or advert. Children try to find one of spelling words and highlight it. They can then change colour and look for another word from their list.

INTERACTIVE WEBSITES

Interactive free website www.spellingcity.com this is a great website! Pupils type in the words they are learning. The site recognises any misspellings and asks them to check and re-enter. The pupils can choose whether to be taught how to spell the word or a choice of several games all using their own words! It's excellent!

Another interactive website is www.northwood.org.uk/literacy.htm

**Look, Say, Cover,
Write, Check!**

To learn my word I can look carefully at it, read it out loud, cover it and then check it. I then repeat that several times! Always make sure the word is spelt correctly in the first place. Use a dictionary for this.

Syllables

To learn my word I can listen to how many syllables there are so I can break it into smaller bits to remember (e.g. Sep-tem-ber, ba-by)

Root words

To learn my word I can find its root word (e.g. Smiling – root smile + ing)

Analogy

To learn my word I can use words that I already know to help me (e.g. could: would, should)

Mnemonics

To learn my word I can make up a sentence to help me remember it (e.g. could – O U Lucky Duck; people – people eat orange peel like elephants)

**Phoneme
Grapheme**

The smallest unit of sound
The written representation of a sound

Root word

The form of a word after all affixes are removed

Compound word

A word made up of two other words

Prefix

A morpheme added to the start of a root word

Suffix

A morpheme added to the end of a root word

Homophone

Words that sound the same but are spelt differently and have different meanings