



Advisory Teaching Service

Advice Sheet for Developing Spelling Skills

These strategies should be used following consultation with an Advisory Teacher – Further advice is available to settings on request.

Areas of Difficulty/ Barriers to learning:

- **Delayed phonological awareness**
- **Delayed reading skills**
- **Difficulties with phoneme/ grapheme correspondence.**
- **Poor working, visual or auditory memory**
- **Speech/ sound perception difficulties**
- **Over reliance on a single spelling strategy**
- **Visual fatigue/visual discrimination difficulties**
- **Difficulties with developing Motor Skills**

General Advice for Teaching Spelling:

- Follow a multi-sensory programme – auditory, visual and kinaesthetic.
- A little and often approach works best – at least 3 x weekly but daily if you can.
- Be flexible and imaginative and work to the student’s strengths – make it fun.
- Vary the method depending on the pupil and the spellings being taught, for example, a phonic approach is not helpful for learning ‘said’.
- Teach words that have alternative spellings separately to begin with e.g. their/there/their, too/two/to, hear/here etc.
- Build in regular opportunities for repetition and overlearning

Barriers:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed Phonological Awareness • Difficulties with phoneme/ grapheme correspondence • Delayed reading skills • Speech/ Sound perception difficulties 	
Strategies	Resources
Assess phonological awareness and spelling skills in order to look for specific gaps.	HAST- 2 (Helen Arkell Spelling Test).

In any focussed phonic work, get the child to both **read** and **spell** words containing the target sound to reinforce the reciprocal nature of reading and spelling. Do not expect children to learn to spell words that they cannot yet read. Practise oral blending and segmenting e.g.: “Robot speak”.

Play “I hear with my little ear a word that sounds like: c...a...t

Count the phonemes in your word. Write the word on a phoneme frame with 1 phoneme in each box.

Use your assessments as a baseline and use precision teaching methods to monitor progress. (Precision teaching training is available from ATS).

Use of a SPLD friendly dictionary. These allow pupils to locate spellings by writing the word phonetically, then looking that up to find correct spelling.

Work on developing Grapheme/ Phoneme correspondences until these become “automatic”. Secure phoneme /grapheme correspondence is essential to developing spelling skills.

Use a reading card programme with the letter on one side and a picture on the other.

Provide prompt cards on the table to reinforce graphemes/ words which are not yet secure

This Spelling Assessment can be used to provide a standardised score as well as analysis of skills.

Teacher assessment using “Letters and Sounds” phases can be a helpful tool to inform planning and use before and after a specific intervention. Use activity suggestions from Phase 1 aspect 7 of the Letters and Sounds publication or “I hear with my little ear” by LDA.

Use sound mats/ / sound buttons to reinforce visually.



Precision Teaching monitoring grids see www.johnandgwynne.co.uk

School Spelling Dictionary from Barrington Stoke www.barringtonstoke.co.uk



<p>Make sure all adults are using 'pure sounds' when teaching.</p> <p>Use lists and strategies associated with phonic reading books/schemes. Link key reading words to appropriate strategies to develop spelling.</p> <p>Use specialist programmes, games, apps and other online resources.</p> <p>Spending 10 minutes per day on one of these programmes during or after school will support a pupil's daily exposure to basic skills while still being enjoyable.</p>	<p>Mr Thorne: YouTube videos are helpful for demonstrating pure sounds: Mr Thorne Phonics</p> <p>Phonic Books and associated spelling lists For example: Dandelion Readers (age 4-7) Catch –up readers (ages 8-14+) High interest: low reading age books. There is also a printable baseline assessment and games which link to each level - see Phonic Books UK</p> <p>The Barrington Stoke books- designed for dyslexic readers but also for any child who struggles. Books can be selected by reading age AND chronological age: Discover Barrington Stoke Books Dyslexia Friendly Books for Children – Collins</p> <p>Launch the lifeboat to Read and Spell – www.robinswood.co.uk</p> <p>Trugs (Teaching Reading Using Games): Trugs are linked with the Letters and Sounds and have four games within each level. www.readsuccessfully.com/trugs-for-schools</p> <p>Bug Club Phonics – Pearson Education Ltd: Bug Club Phonics Books</p> <p>Nessy Reading and Spelling – www.nessy.com</p> <p>Wordshark - www.wordshark.co.uk enables you to personalise spelling lists and learn via interactive games</p>
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<p>Barrier: Over reliance of a single spelling strategy</p>	
<p>Strategies</p>	<p>Resources</p>

Trial different spelling methods to find out which is most effective. Teach different strategies and encourage learners to apply the method which is most appropriate to the type of word.

Teach children to use the materials available in class to support their spelling skills

Teach spelling within the context of other learning which is taking place in class.

Once a spelling is mastered, encourage the pupil to write the target word in a short sentence; this would encourage him/her to apply learning and hopefully transfer it to class work.

Highlight, teach and practise using subject-specific key words or those linked to current topics or activities. Display them around the room with supporting images.

Articulation – use clear crisp sounds

Artificial articulation – wed – nes – day

Syllabification – helps avoid inaccurate contractions – re –mem – ber

Fernald – tracing over the letters while saying it out loud

Word Strings – relating words to other known words – night, flight, light, sight

Highlighting the tricky part of the word

Roots – reinforce the root of the word as it is articulated. **Bi** cycle, **tri** angle, **mono** poly

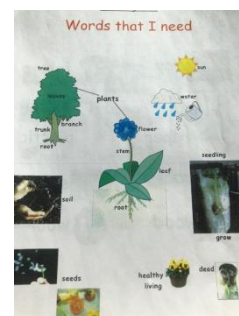
Words within words – **rat** in separate

Mnemonics – use the letters from a given word to make up a phrase to help remember the order of the letters – because

Rules – When a suffix is added to a y word , change the y to an i e.g. carry/carried; baby/babies

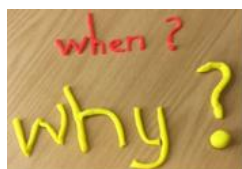
Origin- find out where the word originates, micro=small, bio=life

- Spelling lists/ spelling walls displayed in class.
- Provide age specific phoneme mats



- Target spellings/key vocabulary attached to the inside of the exercise book on a treasury tag. This can be discreetly flipped out as required to support the writing process.
- Use colour to highlight/reinforce common patterns. **shop** **boil**

Provide opportunities to use all four sensory channels when learning spellings; say, look, listen and write simultaneously.



shoe soil
wish coin

- Identify any hidden little words within longer words eg. **Several**
- Identify the tricky bit in your word. Write that bit in a different colour eg. **Separate**
- Use Alphabet Arcs to lay out letters.
- Use magnetic boards with letters for making and breaking words or magic gel boards for repeated writing.
- Widgit: "Communicate in Print" can be a helpful tool to support many of the visual strategies described.

Examples of multi-sensory approaches:

- Write in sand or foam.
- Make the words from play dough, blu-tac or putty.
- Art and craft activities e.g. use PVA glue to squirt the word and cover in a variety of tactile materials – sequins, fluffy pipe cleaners or coloured sand.
- Sky writing: Adult and pupil 'skywrite' the word in the air using large arm movements, again saying the name of each letter as it is formed.
- Tracing on sand paper letters or carpet tiles; in glitter, corn flour, baked beans, sand, washing up liquid and shaving foam. The gooier the better!
- Writing with eyes closed
- Write one of your words a letter at a time on your partners back for them to identify.
- Make the word using playdough- make an image to go with the word: photograph this – keep in a book of images.
- Standing up, the pupil writes the word several times on a flipchart or whiteboard on a vertical surface. The pupil writes the word as above, but this time with eyes shut. This is to encourage automaticity, i.e. automatic recall from kinaesthetic memory.
- Word tiles such as in Scrabble or Bananagrams or wooden/plastic letters can provide opportunities to reinforce target spellings. Specific activities could include...spell as many words as you can with this group of letters... containing the



Simultaneous Oral Spelling

digraph /ow/... write out the words or take a photo to be stored for future reference.

- Write huge versions in chalk on the playground; squirt the word on the playground using washing up liquid bottles filled with water.
- Stepping stones – the pupil jumps from one stone to the next calling out the letters.
- Torch Tracking: Use the torch to write the target word on the wall. The pupil can track the word with their eyes and then with their finger repeating the letter names as they spell it. They could then use the torch themselves to spell the word remembering to use the letter names whilst spelling.
- Jumping Jacks: Read the target word from a label, name the letters and repeat the word. Do the same again this time carrying out an action (jumping, hopping, clapping, jumping jacks).
- Lowercase Lacing Alphabet www.learningresources.co.uk. These are multi coloured alphabet letters for making words by lacing on to a string.

The Simultaneous Oral Spelling approach can be helpful for learning irregular words that cannot be built up phonetically. This is an extension of the frequently used look, say, cover, write, check strategy. Ask AT for further advice on using this approach or see the HAST 2 spelling assessment manual.

[SOS - A Technique to Save Spelling - Orton Gillingham for All](#)



Barrier:
Poor working, visual or auditory memory
Visual fatigue/visual discrimination difficulties

Strategies	Resources
<p>Frequent opportunities for overlearning</p> <p>Precision teaching (Contact AT for training)</p> <p> Analyse the shape of the word</p> <p></p> <p>Teach spelling words in groups with similar spelling patterns. This lessens the memory load and enables a number of words to be spelled by just changing the initial phoneme.</p> <p>Chunking: Break down words into chunks or syllables to support working memory e.g. el-e-phant, Sun-day, wed-nes-day. Limit the size of each chunk to two or three letters.</p> <p>Mnemonics: Use the letters from a given word to make up a phrase to help remember the order of the letters e.g. for said – “silly ants in dresses” Using a visual representation for the mnemonic may help too. It is also a good idea to ask the</p>	<p>Graphic representations of words can make them more memorable and support recall for spelling</p> <p></p> <p>Provide visual prompts on desks and carry out visual tracking exercises.</p> <p>Present a few lines of repeated letters or words to scan across and circle or highlight all of the 'ds' or all the 'likes', for example. You may wish to begin with a single line and build up as appropriate. See Ann Arbor Letter and Word Tracking materials: Ann Arbor Letter Tracking Example</p> <p></p> <p></p>

pupil to make up their own phrase (mnemonic) for difficult words.

Using Word Boxes can help to prompt appropriate spelling by providing a model for recalling the sound/ name/ shape of each letter of the word

Grouping similar spellings for example Dicey Spelling Approach.

Using onset and rime strategies can reduce the working memory load for spelling. This can be a useful strategy for encoding longer multisyllabic words by focussing on each syllable separately.

Onset and rime are components of syllables in phonics:

- **Onset:** The initial consonant or consonant cluster of a syllable.
- **Rime:** The vowel and any following consonants in a one-syllable word or in the same syllable of a multisyllabic word. For example, in the word 'cat,' the onset is 'c' and the rime is 'at'.

[Lidia Stanton Books | 200 Tricky Spellings in Cartoons](#)

Box dictations- Cross Bow Education: [Box Dictations](#)

Dicey Spelling Approach works on the principle that actively engaging with/doing something with the word helps to embed it in long term memory (please ask for guidance if required).

The Phonological Awareness Training programme - P.A.T uses this approach. Ask AT for examples.

brain	drain
gain	main
pain	rain
vain	chain
stain	train
again	strain



Difficulties with motor skills:

Strategies

Use ICT to support recording skills and assist with spelling.

Resources

Clicker Apps designed specifically for the Ipad has an easy to use keyboard with both word and text prediction to support those with spelling difficulties.

<p>Use Word Grids to support spelling: Word grids can be set up to show pictures with the words.</p> <p>Predictive word processors also show a bank of words which may be appropriate for the pupil to choose from as they are typing.</p> <p>To facilitate word processing, consider a touch typing programme as appropriate and allow regular opportunities to practise.</p> <p>Extend motor skills through structured activities.</p>	<p>Some programs have a grid at the bottom of the screen that shows key vocabulary and clicking on the word will put them into a word document. Clicker 8 or Communicate SymWriter both also have the facility to read words out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doorway Online: www.doorwayonline.org.uk • Dance Mat Typing: Dance Mat Typing for 7 - 11 year olds - BBC Bitesize • Typesy: www.typesy.com • Nessy Fingers Touch Typing: www.nessy.com • Fast Typer 2 – www.rapidtyping.com <p>ATS Hands On, Hands on Early or Hands Off programmes provide ideas for how to develop fine motor skills.</p> <p>Consider access to supporting resources for fine motor skills (See ATS Writing Advice Sheet).</p>
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Having fun with Spelling..! More Ideas	
<p>Ideas for Younger Pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Magic Words: Write each spelling word with a white crayon and then colour over it with a marker to make the words magically appear. - Secret Code: Use a picture code to spell each word. This adds an element of mystery and fun. - Roll a Spelling Word: Roll a dice to determine how to practice the spelling words (e.g., in crayon, with squiggles, in bubble letters). - Word Illustrations: Draw illustrations for selected spelling words and write sentences to go with the pictures. - Trace Words: Trace each spelling word using different writing tools like pencils, crayons, or markers. - Emoji Spelling: Use an emoji picture code to spell each word.

- **Pattern Block Spelling:** Use pattern blocks to build the spelling words.
- **Vowels and Consonants:** Colour the vowels in one colour and the consonants in another for each spelling word.
- **Scrabble Spelling:** Use Scrabble tiles to spell out the words and add up the points for each word.
- **Spin It, Spell It:** Create a spinner with paper clips and spell the word that corresponds to the number spun.
- **Spelling Maze:** Navigate through a maze and check off spelling words as you pass them.
- **Spelling Spiral:** Write each spelling word in a spiral pattern until you reach the middle.
- **Silly Writing:** Write spelling words upside down, with eyes closed, or in other silly ways.
- **Pyramid Spelling:** Build spelling words pyramid style, starting with one letter and adding one more letter with each line.
- **Spelling Rhymes:** Think of words that rhyme with each spelling word.
- **Word Search:** Create a word search puzzle with the spelling words.
- **Word Art:** Decorate and colour in the spelling words creatively.
- **Create a Story:** Write a short story using as many spelling words as possible.
- **Keyboard Words:** Practice typing the spelling words on a computer keyboard.
- **Stamping Spelling Words:** Use letter stamps to spell out the words.
- **Sign Language Spelling:** Learn to spell the words using sign language.
- **Tic-Tac-Toe Spelling:** Play tic-tac-toe using spelling words.
- **Play Dough Activities:** Create letters and words using play dough.
- **Clothespins:** Use clothespins with letters written on them to spell words.
- **Spelling Strings:** String letters together to form words using beads or tiles.
- **Egg Hunt Mix Up:** Hide letters in plastic eggs and have students find and spell words.
- **Graffiti Wall:** Write spelling words in a graffiti style on a large piece of paper.
- **Lego "Build A Word":** Use Lego blocks with letters to build words.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hopscotch Grid: Create a hopscotch grid with letters and spell words by hopping on the letters. - Flashlight Spelling: Use flashlights to trace and write words in the dark. - Spelling Memory Game: Create a memory game with spelling words. - Spelling Relay Races: Have students race to spell words using letter tiles. - Yoga Spelling: Combine spelling with yoga poses for a fun, active learning experience. - Dot Paint: Use cotton buds or bingo dabbers to paint spelling words. <p>See also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 Spelling Activities for ANY List of Words Education to the Core - 25 Hands On Spelling Activities for Any List - 40 Effective Spelling Activities for Kids
Ideas for Older Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crossword Puzzles: Create or use online tools to generate crossword puzzles using spelling words. This helps with both spelling and vocabulary. - Word Scramble: Provide scrambled letters of spelling words and have students unscramble them to form the correct words. - Spelling in Context: Have students write short stories or essays using a list of spelling words. This helps them understand how to use the words in context. - Spelling Relay: Organize a relay race where students spell words correctly to advance to the next stage. - Hangman: Play hangman using spelling words. This classic game is a fun way to reinforce spelling. - Word Search: Create word search puzzles with spelling words. This can be done using online tools or by hand. - Spelling Journals: Have students keep a spelling journal where they write down new words they encounter, along with their definitions and usage in sentences. - Flashcards: Create flashcards with spelling words on one side and definitions or sentences on the other. Use these for study sessions or games. - Spelling Apps: Use educational apps like Quizlet: Digital Flashcards & Revision Cards for Students Quizlet, or

	<p>Kahoot!: - Kahoot! to make spelling practice interactive and fun.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mnemonic Devices: Teach students to create mnemonic devices to remember tricky spelling words. - Spelling Bingo: Create bingo cards with spelling words and play bingo to reinforce spelling practice. - Dictionary Skills: Have students look up spelling words in the dictionary, write the definitions, and use the words in sentences. - Word Ladders: Create word ladders where students change one letter at a time to form new words, starting from a base word. - Etymology Exploration: Explore the origins of words and how their meanings and spellings have evolved over time. - Spelling Board Games: Use board games like Scrabble or Boggle to make spelling practice fun and competitive. - Interactive Whiteboard Activities: Use interactive whiteboards for spelling games and activities, such as matching words to definitions or filling in missing letters. - Peer Quizzes: Have students create quizzes for each other using their spelling words. - Spelling Poems: Write acrostic or rhyming poems using spelling words. - Spelling Challenges: Set weekly spelling challenges where students compete to spell the most difficult words correctly. - Online Spelling Games: Use websites like Spelling Training: Free Online Spelling Training (Be aware of American spellings.) - Spelling Detective: Give students a passage with misspelled words and have them find and correct the errors. - Spelling Art: Create visual art projects where students incorporate spelling words into their designs.
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