

Teaching Spelling and Phonics

A Handbook for Teachers

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Why children need to learn to spell correctly?

*This section is based on material from **Spelling it Right** at <http://www.spelling.hemscott.net>.*

- Poor spelling creates a bad impression - it's one of the first things a reader notices
- Examiners, teachers, prospective employers, often place a lot of weight on spelling
- Anxiety about spelling inhibits a child's writing, especially their choice of words
- Even in these days of word processors there are still times when we need to write

To improve and develop their spelling children need to:

- Develop an interest in words
- Feel safe about trying new words, not just words they're sure about
- Learn about, the way words are built up using syllables
- Know about the basic spelling patterns of English
- Have a range of memorizing strategies
- Explore the meanings of words
- Understand prefixes and suffixes
- Write for their own enjoyment, without the fear that they will be criticized
- Read for pleasure

What are the expectations of how spelling and phonics should be taught at XXX school?

- *In Foundation and Year 1, there should be a daily phonics lesson*
- *In Year 2, there should be a discrete phonics and/or spelling lesson at least 3 times a week.*
- *In Key Stage 2, there should be a discrete spelling lesson one a week, with planned opportunities at least 3 times a week for consolidation and re-enforcement*

How should phonics and spelling should be taught?

- *Teaching should be focussed and pacy*
- *There needs to be clear continuity and progression – teaching should be based on children's strengths and weaknesses rather than their age or year group, and objectives should be drawn from the school schemes of work.*
- *A variety of groupings should be used including whole class teaching, group work and paired work.*
- *Children could work in ability groups, being set across a year group, if this would contribute to effective teaching and learning*
- *A variety of teaching methods should be used including direct exposition, games and investigation of spelling rules and patterns.*
- *Children should be taught methods to enable them to learn new spellings*

Useful memorising strategies

When you come across a new word ALWAYS use the LOOK - THINK - COVER - WRITE - CHECK method to memorize it.

LOOK carefully at the new word. How can you break it into smaller bits? Do any of the smaller bits remind you of the patterns of letters from other words?

THINK about the parts of the words, which might cause problems - double letters for instance, or a vowel that isn't pronounced as you would expect.

COVER the word and close your eyes. Try to see it in your mind's eye.

WRITE the word down without looking back.

CHECK to see if you're right. If not, look carefully at where you went wrong and try again.

More Hot Tips

* Whenever you have to copy a new word from the whiteboard, from a book, or from the dictionary, always try to write the whole word in one go. Don't keep looking back after every few letters.

* Try finger-writing: while you're THINKing about the word, pretend to write it with your finger, on your desk or on your hand.

Mnemonics are useful for particularly tricky words, or for key spelling patterns:

- Ould – **Oh, you, lucky duck** (should, could, would)
- Ound – **Oh you naughty duck** (ground, found)
- Laugh – **Laugh At Ugly Goat Hair**
- Because – **Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants**
- Island – an island **is land** surrounded by water
- Necessary – 1 **collar** and 2 **sleeves** are **necessary**
- Piece – a **piece** of **pie**
- Parliament – **Liam** went to the Houses of **parliament**
- Separate – there is **a rat** in **separate**
- Secretary – a good **secretary** can keep a **secret**
- Terrible – **Ribs** feel **terrible**
- Business – going by **bus** is good **business**
- Rhythm – **rhythm** gets your **2 hips** moving
- Accommodation – **2 cats, 2 mice, 1 dog** - **accommodation**
- Soldier – **soldiers** sometimes **die** in battle
- Quiet – keep **quiet** about my **diet**
- Guitar – I only play **guitar** when I'm drinking **fruit juice**

Key spelling patterns

This section is based on material from Spelling it Right at <http://www.spelling.hemscott.net>.

Children need to be taught useful spelling patterns and rules. One good technique is to begin by giving children a list of words to sort. Then ask them to look carefully at how they sorted the words, and see if they can spot the spelling rule. Finish by explaining the rule, giving further words, and see if the children can use the rule to sort the words more quickly.

If you are sending home spellings that follow a pattern, it's a good idea to make that pattern explicit, so that parents can help their children to learn their spellings.

The Importance of Syllables in Spelling

All good spellers are skilful at breaking words up into syllables.

care-ful

hos-pit-al

u-ni-ver-si-ty

Breaking a word into syllables makes it easier to deal with one small bit at a time.

Prefixes as an aid to spelling

A prefix is a group of letters placed at the start of a root word to change its meaning. Some complicated words are less difficult to spell if you are familiar with prefixes.

Here are some common examples in the following list:

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLES
anti-	against or opposite to	anticlockwise, antibiotic
auto-	self	autobiography, automat
dis-	not, or away	dissimilar, disconnect
in-	not	insane, inhuman
il-	not	illogical, illegal
im-	not	immature, improbable
ir-	not	irrelevant, irregular
inter-	between	international, intermarry
mis-	wrong	misunderstand, misspell
post-	after	postnatal, postscript
pre-	before	prenatal, prehistoric
pro-	for, or forward	propose, pro-British
re-	again, or back	rewrite, reconsider
sub-	under	submarine, substandard
super-	above	supervisor, superhuman
trans-	across	transport, transplant
un-	not, or in reverse	unfinished, unarmed

Suffixes - their importance in spelling

A suffix is simply an ending that's added to a base word to form a new word.
A key thing to know about a suffix is whether it starts with a consonant or a vowel.

Adding a suffix to “magic e” words

When you add a consonant suffix the base word doesn't change.

When you add a vowel suffix, drop the silent e. Remember to drop the e when adding a vowel suffix. (Note that y is regarded as a vowel suffix, so laze + y = lazy)

Base word	+consonant suffix	Base word	+vowel suffix
hope	hopeless	note	notable
state	statement	calculate	calculation
spite	spiteful	reserve	reservation
late	lately	late	latest
extreme	extremely	expense	expensive

Adding suffixes to words ending -ce and -ge

There are exceptions to the above “magic e” rule – which is why it's probably better to call it a pattern rather than a rule.

Here's the main one:

Where the base word ends in -ce or -ge, then you keep the silent e before -able and -ous.

So:

enforce + able	=	enforceable
notice + able	=	noticeable
service + able	=	serviceable
courage + ous	=	courageous
outrage + ous	=	outrageous

When should you doubling consonants when adding a suffix?

Luckily there's a very useful pattern to help us.

If the base word has:

- one syllable
- one short vowel
- one consonant at the end

you double the final consonant when you add a vowel suffix

bed + ing	= bedding,	flat + est	= flattest
fun + y	= funny	hot + er	= hotter

If the base word has:

- one syllable
- one short vowel
- one consonant at the end

you keep the base word the same when you add a consonant suffix

bag + ful = bagful, wet + ness = wetness

Suffixes and Stressed Syllables

If the stress is on the first syllable the base word doesn't change:

Profit - profitable **Enter** - entered **Order** - ordering

If the stress is on the last syllable, **double** the final consonant before adding a vowel suffix.
No change if a consonant suffix is added.

Begin - beginning	Equip - equipped	Regret - regretful	Commit - commitment
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Adding a suffix to words ending y

There are two important patterns to learn:

* If the word ends in a vowel +y, the base word doesn't change:

- delay + ed = delayed
- employ + ment = employment

* If the word ends in a consonant +y, when you add any suffix except -ing, then change the y to i:

- reply + ed = replied
- busy + ness = business
- pity + ful = pitiful
- but reply + ing = replying

Spelling words ending ic and ick

Same sound but two spellings. However there is a simple way to spot the difference.

The words with only one syllable end in -ick.

The words having more than one syllable end in -ic.

There are only a few exceptions to this pattern and these usually happen where two words are joined together as in homesick and candlestick.

Words ending -er, -or, and -ar

There are lots of words in English which end with the -er sound. But when you listen to these words you can't be sure whether the sound is made by -er, -or or -ar.

There's no easy rule but there are a few helpful word patterns:

- There are more than ten times as many words ending with -er than -or and -ar together.
So, if you guess -er then there's a good chance that you'll be right!
- Verbs ending in a silent e usually change to nouns by ending -er:
dive/diver wade/wader write/writer avenge/avenger
- -er is also the most common way of ending a word for someone carrying out an action:

Action	Person carrying out the action
reporting	reporter
playing	player
fighting	fighter

- -or is used when the base word ends in -ate, -ct, -it :

calculate	calculator	create	creator
contract	contractor	reflect	reflector
visit	visitor	exhibit	exhibitor

- There is no especially useful pattern to recognise words that end in -ar except to say that many of them finish with -lar:
regular popular similar pillar
But other than that it's just a matter of memorizing the -ar words as you come across them. Mispronouncing the ending so that it rhymes with the -ar- in market is a handy memory trick.

Words ending ical, icle and acle

Adjectives all end with -ical, and the nouns end with -acle or -icle.

Handy Tip: Nearly all the words that end with this sound will be adjectives and will therefore end with -ical.

Any more spelling patterns? Check with KS2 book.

Practising Spellings At Home

If you are sending spellings home, you may want to suggest ways in which parents could help their children. You could send home a sheet with a bank of ideas, or send a different one home each week with the new spelling list.

A variety of games should help to keep both children and parents interested and motivated. The games below have been designed for home learning, but you could also use them in the classroom.

1) Word Search

Create your own word searches using your spelling words. Or use this link to get your computer to do it for you.

<http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/WordSearchSetupForm.asp>

2) Draw your words on Lite-Brite.

<http://www.sfp.com/animation/liteBrite.html#%7CHERE>

3) Air spelling:

Choose a spelling word. With your index finger write the word in the air slowly, say each letter. Your parent needs to remind you that you need to be able to 'see' the letters you have written in the air. When you have finished writing the word underline it and say the word again. Now get your parents to ask you questions about the word. For example they could ask 'What is the first letter?' 'What is the last letter?' 'How many letters are there?' ect.

4) Media Search:

Using a newspaper or magazine you have 15 minutes to look for your spelling words. Circle them in different coloured crayon. Which of your spellings words was used the most times?

5) Shaving Cream Practice:

An easy way to clean those dirty tables is to finger paint on them with shaving cream. Squirt some on the table (with your parents permission and supervision!) and then practice spelling your words by writing them with your finger in the shaving cream.

6) Salt Box Spelling:

Ask your parents pour salt into a shallow box or tray (about 3cm deep) and then practice writing your spellings in it with your finger.

7) Scrabble Spelling:

Find the letters you need to spell your words and then mix them up in the bag. Get your parents to time you unscrambling your letters. For extra maths practice you could find out the value of each of your words.

8) Pyramid Power:

Sort your words into a list from easiest to hardest. Write the easiest word at the top of the page near the middle. Write the next easiest word twice underneath. Write the third word three times underneath again until you have built your pyramid

9) Ransom Note:

Cut the letters needed to for your words from a newspaper or magazine and glue them down to spell the words.

10) Spell It With Beans:

Use Lima beans (or any dried beans or lentils) to spell out your words. If you glue them onto separate pieces of card then you made a great set of flash cards to practice with for the rest of the week.

11) Pipe Cleaners Or Tooth Picks:

These are just a couple of suggestions of things you could use to for your spelling words.

12) Tasty Words:

Just like above but this time try and find tasty things to spell your words with, like raisins. Then when you spell them right you get to eat them!

13) Design A Word:

Pick one word and write it in bubble letters. Colour in each letter in a different pattern.

14) Sign Your Word:

Practice spelling your words by signing each letter. To see the New Zealand Sign Language Alphabet <http://www.nzsign.co.nz/Downloads/fingerspelling.pdf>

15) Water wash:

Use a paintbrush and water to write your words outside on concrete or pavements.

16) ABC Order:

Write your words out in alphabetical order. Then write them in reverse alphabetical order.

17) Story Time:

Write a short story using all your words. Don't forget to check your punctuation!

18) Simple Sentence:

Write a sentence for each of your words. Remember each sentence must start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

19) Colourful Words:

Use two different coloured pens to write your words. One to write the consonants and one to write the vowels. Do this a couple of times then write the whole word in one colour.

20) Memory Game:

Make pairs of word cards. Turn them all over and mix them up. flip over two cards, if they match you get to keep them, if not you have to turn them over again. Try and match all the pairs.

21) Finger Tracing:

Use your finger to spell out each of your words on your mum or dad's back. Then it's their turn to write the words on your back for your to feel and spell.

22) Spelling Steps:

Write your words as if they were steps, adding one letter each time. (It's much easier doing this on squared paper)

23) Scrambled Words:

Write your words then write them again with all the letters mixed up.

24) X-Words:

Find two of your spelling words with the same letter in and write them so they criss cross.

25) Ambidextrous:

Swap your pen into the hand that you don't normally write with. Now try writing out your spellings with that hand.

26) Telephone Words:

Translate your words into numbers from the telephone keypad.

27) Secret Agent:

Write out the alphabet, then give each letter a different number from 1 to 26. (a = 1, b = 2, c = 3 ect.) Now you can spell out your words in secret code.

28) Missing Letters:

Ask your mum or dad to write out one of your words loads of times on piece of paper, but each time they have to miss out a letter or two. Then you have to fill in the missing letters. After you have checked them all try it again with another word.

29) Listen Carefully:

Ask your parents to spell out one of your words then you have to say what the word is they've spelt out.

30) Acrostic:

Use words that start with each letter in you spelling word. Your more likely to remember it if it makes sense!

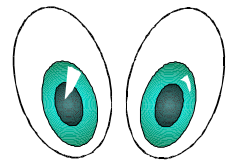
31) spell – a – doodle

Create a picture and use yor spelling words to fill in the detail. Each word must be written three times. e.g. a picture of clouds would have the lines formed with spelling words. You can add to the challenge by giving specific picture topics.

Learning how to spell

SUS

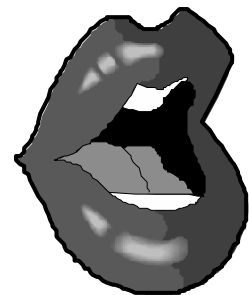
Study the word



Underline the

difficult part(s)

Say the word



carefully

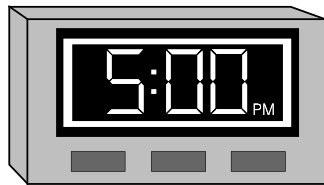
Learning how to spell

**"Writing the
word"**

- On someone's back
- On your desk (large)
- With your eyes

Learning how to spell

Speed Writing



*How often can you
write the word
correctly in one
minute?*



Learning how to spell

Mnemonics

Making up a "*story*" to help spell a word

was - was auntie sad?



Learning how to spell

Syllables/Chunks

Breaking the words
into parts / clapping
the sounds



going

go/ing

running

run/ning

returned

re turn ed

Learning how to spell

Look for
small words

inside the word

about - a, out, bout

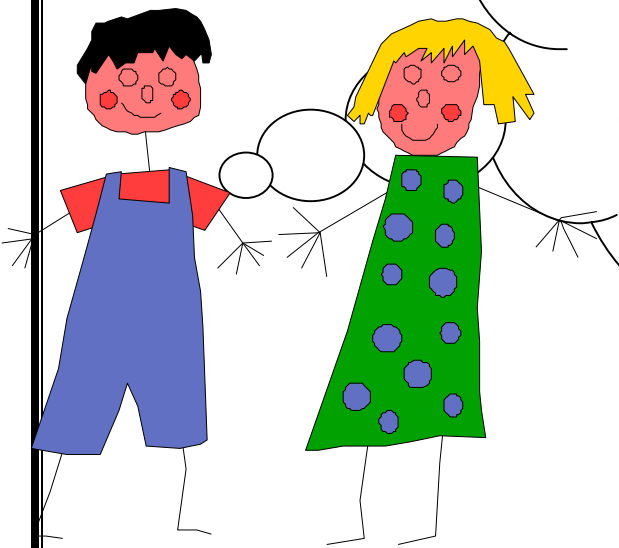
teacher - tea, each,

her, ache

Learning how to spell

Be **positive**

We shall
try our
best



Learning how to spell

Words that
look the same

Think

back is like ...
pack and sack

Learning how to spell

Use of
colours

Use a different
colour for each
Letter

Learning how to spell

Odd one out

- Work with others
- From a list of three words, think of reasons why each word is different

going green big

Learning how to spell

Different
sizes of
letters

woman - WoMaN

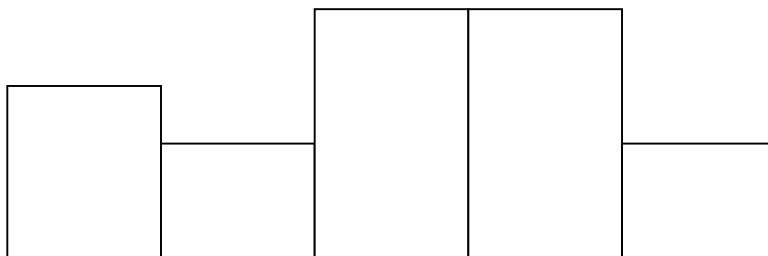
returning - ReTuRnInG

Learning how to spell

Shapes of words

Draw the shape of
the word

table



Learning how to spell

Making words with letters

- Put all the letters in an arc
- Listen to word
- Place letters in

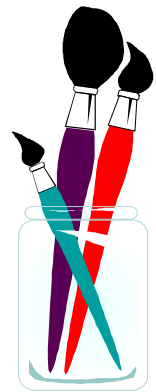
boxes

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Learning how to spell

In sand

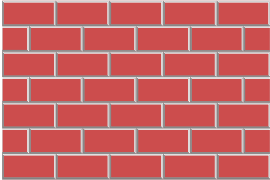
- or using different materials (paint)



- different textures (sandpaper)

Learning how to spell

Visualising

- Look at your word
- "Throw" it at the wall 
- Can you still "see" it?
- Spell it aloud

Learning how to spell

Writing the
word in fancy
letters

- Bubble writing
- Cursive
- Italics

Learning how to spell

Use a **spelling** **rule**

- "i" before "e"
except after "c"
- change the "y" to "i"
and add "es"

Learning how to spell

Look-



Say-



Cover-



Write-



Check-



Learning how to spell

Using post-its



- place post-its in suitable places at eye level

Learning how to spell

Recording

your own

voice

- say the word
- spell the word
- listen
- echo



Learning how to spell

Three Times

Write the word 3
times in different
colours

three three three

Learning how to spell

Pyramid Writing

Write your word in
the shape of a
pyramid

w

wa

was

Learning how to spell

Consonant Circles

a ○ e ○ i ○

Write the word then
circle all the
consonants

Learning how to spell

Blue vowels

a e i o u

Write the word then
go over each vowel in
blue

because

Learning how to spell

Words without vowels

b _ c _ _ s _

Write each word with a line instead of each vowel.

Go back later and fill in the missing vowels

Phonic and Spelling Games

A bank of ideas to aid the teaching of phonics and spelling.

Sound Jump **Aim: grapheme identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards, - one for each child

Game

- Children sit in circle, give every child a card which is placed on the floor in front of them.
- Each child identifies their phoneme (sound), with help from others if necessary.
- Teacher calls out a phoneme and the child with corresponding grapheme (letter) jumps up quickly
- Meanwhile the rest of the class has to try to point to that grapheme before its owner has jumped up!

Box of sounds **Aim: grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards, - one for each child, objects with initial sounds to match cards

Game

- Children sit in circle.
- Look at the objects and identify initial sounds. Place objects in centre of circle.
- Pass a box grapheme cards around the circle singing “Box of sounds, pass it round, pass it round, pass it round. Box of sounds pass it round, what sound is it?” (“London bridge is falling down” tune)
- Child holding box at the end of the song takes out the top card, identifies sound and places it next to corresponding object.

Bag of objects **Aim: grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards, objects with initial sounds to match cards, bag for objects

Game

- Children sit in circle.
- Look at grapheme cards, identify sounds and arrange in centre of circle
- Pass a bag of objects around the circle singing “Bag of objects, pass it round, pass it round, pass it round. Bag of objects pass it round, what’s in the bag?” (London bridge is falling down” tune)
- Child holding bag at the end of the song takes out an object, identifies it and its initial sound, then places it next to the corresponding card.

Alliteration (initial sound) match **Aim: grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards, - one for each child, alliteration cards

Game

- Children sit in circle, give every child a card which is placed on the floor in front of them.
- Each child identifies their phoneme (sound), with help from others if necessary.
- Teacher looks at an alliteration card and calls out the subjects (e.g. whales in the water)

- Child with corresponding grapheme card calls out the sound and holds up their card.

Noughts and crosses Aim: **grapheme identification**

Equipment: whiteboard, 3 coloured markers

Game

- Divide class into 2 groups (e.g. name them 2 different colours), and sit them apart.
- In black, draw a noughts & crosses grid and write in 9 graphemes/digraphs.
- A member from first team calls out a phoneme from the square he wants to go first.
- Someone else from his team has to call out a word with a corresponding initial sound.
- Teacher then rubs out the grapheme and replaces it with a smiley face in that team's colour.
- Continue with other team until either team win by winning 3 smiley faces in a row.

Stepping Stones Aim: **grapheme identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards

Game

- Place cards in a large circle
- Children step from card to card while singing "walk around and find a sound, What will I stop on?"
- Going round the circle, each child jumps back off their card and immediately calls out the sound.

S.M.

Say a sound Aim: **grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: alliteration cards

Game

- Hold up alliteration card while children sing the rhyme
- Starting with the adult, everyone has to think of something beginning with the sound on the card

S.M.

Find a sound Aim: **grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards in a box

Game

- Children sit in a circle
- The box of cards are passed around the circle while singing: "pass the sound box round and round etc what can you find?"
- Child identifies the phoneme and then finds something in the room beginning with that sound and places the card next to the object/ brings it back to the circle

S.M.

Who can cross the river? Aim: **grapheme identification & cvc blending**

Equipment: white board, marker pens

Game

- Draw a river across the board. Write 3 letters at the top (ones which make up a cvc word)
- Draw a crocodile in the river and a child's name next to the cvc word
- Sing "who can cross the river, who can cross the river, who can cross the river and reach the other side?"
- Child has to identify sounds and blend to make the cvc word

- When child is successful, then sing “.....has crossed the river and reached the other side”. Write child’s name on other side of river.
- **ALTERNATIVE VERSION:** lay out 2 ropes to represent river. Place 3 carpet squares as stepping stones across the river, place 3 grapheme cards - one on each carpet square.
- Child sounds out the phonemes as s/he steps across the river, then blends the sounds together to hear the word.

S.M.

Pairs **Aim: grapheme identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards - 2 sets (select no more than 5- 8 different letters)

Game

- Sit children in horse shoe in front of you
- Identify phonemes with group as you hold up the cards, then place them upside down in a grid pattern in centre of horse shoe facing the children.
- Facing into the horse shoe so the group can all see, let each child turn over 3 cards, identifying phonemes as each card is turned over. Ensure cards are replaced in same position if not “won”.
- Winning cards are placed in front of successful children.

“Sound jump” game could be played at end of game.

Pick a letter **Aim: grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards, - one for each child, in a box

Game

- Sit children in a circle and give first child the box.
- Child picks a card from the box, identifies phoneme (sound) and thinks of something beginning with that phoneme.
- Pass box to next child and repeat. Try to keep the pace fast.

I spy with my little eye **Aim: grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards in a box, and objects/pictures with initial sounds to match graphemes.

Game

- Sit children in a circle and place objects in centre.
- Give first child the box.
- Child picks a card from the box, and says, “I spy with my little eye something beginning with (says sound on card) and looks for a corresponding object. Collects object and places it with card in front of him.
- Continue game round circle.

Medial Vowels **Aim: grapheme & medial sound identification**

Equipment: objects -with cvc construction (in basket), the 5 vowel grapheme cards

Game

- Sit children in horse shoe in front of you
- Identify vowel graphemes and place in horse shoe, facing children
- Pass basket of objects while singing abcdefg etc. Child holding basket on “z”, chooses an object, says its name then segments its sounds to identify its middle sound. The child then places the object underneath the correct vowel. Repeat until all objects have been placed.
- This game could be ended by writing the spelling of an object on board and asking a child to read the word by blending the sounds then collecting the object and placing it back in the basket.

This game could also be adapted to focus on initial or final sounds.

Initial Sound Bingo **Aim: grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment : selection of objects with different initial sounds, A4 boards divided into 3 columns, basket, grapheme cards to match object's initial sounds

Game

- Each child has a board on which they place any 3 grapheme cards in the 3 columns. Each child identifies their graphemes
- Teacher holds up an object for the children to name it and identify its initial sound. Child with corresponding card claims object and places it next to its letter.
- First child with 3 objects is the winner..... but who will be second, third etc?

Initial Sound Jump Up **Aim: grapheme & initial sound identification**

Equipment: grapheme cards

Give each child a grapheme card. You say a word and the child with the grapheme representing the initial sound must jump up before the other children point to it. If the children seem receptive to continuing, repeat with different selection of graphemes.

Alliteration Generation **Aim: generation of alliteration words**

Equipment: selection of objects to pass around circle and grapheme cards to match initial sounds, basket

- Lay objects in centre of circle and explain that the first child will pick a card from a pile handed to him (in a basket) identify the sound, then find the object which begins with the same sound. Encourage the group to call out other words, which begin with same sound.
- The object will then be passed around the circle with each child saying".....(cat) begins with cer and(child thinks of another word which begins with the same sound) collar begins with cer. "
- The next child begins by repeating "cat begins with cer and (adds his own word)". Words can be repeated.
- Repeat game with another object.

Initial letters/sounds Basketball

(A fun way to revise letters and sounds!)

Need – a soft ball, a bin or hoop to throw the ball through

Divide the class into 2 teams. Each team sends a player to the front and the teacher says a letter or a sound. The first of the 2 players to say a word that starts with the letter or sound gets to have a throw. If they get the ball in the goal (the bin or hoop) the team scores a point.

VARIATIONS

Basketball Final letters/sounds

Played as above but students must give a word that ends with the letter or sound.

Basketball Antonyms

Played as above but students must give an antonym for the word given by the teacher.

Basketball Synonyms

Played as above but students must give a synonym for the word given by the teacher.

Beat the Buzzer Aim: spelling game

Equipment – a soft ball

Players sit in a circle. One player starts by throwing the ball to another player and calling out a 3 letter word, e.g. HAT.

The player with the ball has to say 3 words beginning with the 3 letters of the word, e.g. horse, apple, tower.

This has to be done before the player who threw the ball counts to 12 and then says buzz, i.e. 1, 2,11, 12, BUZZ.

A player is out if he doesn't Beat the Buzzer.

As the game progresses the counting can be shortened to 10 or even 8.

Older players can be given a 4, 5 or 6 letter word instead of a 3 letter word.

Down the Ladder Aim: study common letter patterns

Students can work in teams or individually. Each team or student needs a ladder to write in (a page with a ladder drawn on it) The letter pattern is written on the top step of the ladder.

Teams then race to be the first to 'Climb Down the Ladder' by filling the ladder with words that rhyme. Teams either have one person as the recorder or pass the ladder around so each person writes a word.

Simple letter patterns, e.g. at, ill, am, ug, en, op.

More difficult letter patterns, e.g. ight, atch, unch, ound.

Flash Words Aim: revise spelling words

Equipment – a set of cards with the letters of the alphabet on them.

Each child is given a card with a letter of the alphabet. (If there are fewer than 26 students, some students may be given 2 cards.)

When the teacher calls out a word, students who have a letter in the word race to the front of the room and arrange themselves into the correct spelling order.

Obviously words that contain 2 or more of the same letter can't be used.

HINT – Have students swap cards after each word, so some students aren't stuck with uncommon letters like 'z'.

Leave out a Letter Bingo Aim: revise spelling words

(Each student can use their own spelling words!)

Each student makes their own Bingo card by listing 8 words each with a letter missing and replaced by a dash.

Students can use spelling words or words being studied in class, e.g. theme words, words with prefix or suffix being studied. Teacher then calls out letters of the alphabet and if a student has that letter missing in one of their words, it is written into the word. Only one letter can be written in at a time.

Teacher keeps a record of letters called.

First child to complete all of their words calls "Bingo" and is the winner. Teacher checks that all the letters were called and spelling is correct.

Password

(A challenging game that can be adapted to the level of the students!)

Think of a word to be the "Password". Write it on a piece of paper.

Students have to guess what the word is but the only clue that they are given is the first and last letters and the number of letters in between, e.g. p _ _ _ t.

Students write down as many words as they can that fit the pattern. Students score 1 point for each word and 5 points if they have the password.

For older students choose a longer word.

Students can be divided into teams or pairs for this game.

Pineapples Aim: revise spelling words

Children stand in a circle. Teacher gives a word for the children to spell and nominates the person to start. Children give one letter at a time going in a clockwise direction. The child who is after the person who says the last letter says 'Pineapples'. The next child is out and sits down. If a child says a wrong letter, he is out and sits down also. Next person must give the correct letter.

When the word is completed, teacher then gives the next word and play continues around the circle. Last child standing is the winner.

Poison Letters Aim: revise spelling words

Children stand in a circle or stand behind their seats. A letter is nominated to be the poison letter. (A vowel or a common letter like 't', 's' or 'n' makes the game go faster. Teacher gives a word for the children to spell and nominates the person to start. Students go around the circle or the class giving one letter at a time. When a person says the Poison Letter, they sit down as they are out. If a student says an incorrect letter he is also out and sits down. Continue around the circle with the teacher giving more words. Last person standing is the winner.

HINT – To make the game more interesting, nominate 2 or 3 Poison Letters.

Stepping Race

(Makes students think about words, sounds and letters!)

Equipment: A word card or picture card for each student.

Students stand in a row about 57 yards away from a finish line. (Class could be divided into teams and one student from each team could play.)

Each student is given a card (word card or picture card)

Students are asked to take a step forward if their word (or name or the name of their picture) has a certain quality, e.g. Take a step forward if your word has a 'th' sound. Take a step forward if your word has the letter 'e'. Take a step forward if your word has 2 syllables. Take a step forward if your word is a noun.

The first student to reach the line is the winner.

Where's the Sound?

(Students identify the position of a sound in a word)

Teacher tells the sound that students are to listen for, e.g. sh.

Teacher says a word containing the sound, e.g. shell, fishing or wash.

Students close their eyes and put their hands

on their head if the sound is at the start of the word

on their waist if the sound is in the middle of the word

on their bottom if the sound is at the end of the word.

Repeat for more words with the same sound or for a new sound.

Word Chain

(A simple but challenging game that practices Spelling Skills!)

First player says a word, e.g. baseball. Next player must give a word that begins with the last letter of this word, e.g. little. baseball, little, egg, giant, table.

No word is allowed to be repeated. Children can make written Word Chains also. See who can make the one with the most words.

Variation Word Chain Categories

A more difficult version!

Played as above but this time words must belong to a specific category, e.g. fruits and vegetables tomato, orange, eggplant, turnip.

This makes the game more difficult and certainly makes children think.

Children can make written Word Chains also.

Co-operative Spelling Games

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Guess the Error	Pupils write 3 words or 3 sentences. One word or sentence contains a spelling error. Another group has to agree which is the error, giving an explanation and the correct response.	Class and Team building. PSD activity; finding out more about individuals in the class. Assessing in a curricular area.	Agreeing with group. Discussion in pairs (if Inner – Outer circle format is used. Accepting other opinions and sharing own ideas.	Reading – use as comprehension; pupils or teacher make up the errors. Would be appropriate in any topic / subject area.

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Corners	Pupils move to corners of the room to show their response to a topic / question; then they share their ideas with others and learn from each other before making a final decision. Use either closed or open ended questions (the latter is better): What is the best spelling strategy to use for a particular word? Which is the correct spelling of ...? How many letters in the word ...? How many words can you spell with ...?	Communication, Class building and Information sharing. Can be affected by peer pressure; children can note their response first before moving.	Making a decision. Willingness to listen and change an opinion. Justification of ideas.	Can be used in all areas: maths – answers to a problem moral questions knowledge based questions predictive / evaluative questions.

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Find Someone Who	Use a recording sheet with questions. Pupils move around the room to find others who can answer – recording their ideas – asking them to sign it as evidence. Examples: find someone who can spell ... who knows 5 spelling strategies ... who checks their spelling	Mastery. This can be used as a warm up personal / social activity; involves movement. Sheets could be coloured coded so that pupils have to work with others, not just friends or pupils can only have the same person once on their recording sheet.	Communicating with anyone / everyone. Learning something new about people; learning about people new to the group.	Could be totally random or topic linked; for example Homework – find someone who is: organised, has an in / out tray, works before school, gets an adult to check their work etc. In maths, for instance, when pupils work well, this becomes a learning exercise as they gain knowledge and share it.

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Inside / Outside Circle	Pupils discuss with different partners. Put the pupils into two equal groups, an inner circle facing out and the outer facing in (everyone has a partner). Discuss the question with partner. Teacher calls out a number and the outer circle pupils rotate to new partner. Spell particular words ... explain a strategy ... spell words with a pattern ... list words with a letter pattern.	Class building and Communication. Encourages everyone talking to anyone not just those in their group or their friends.	Turn taking. Willingness to listen to and learn from others. Accepting the rules of moving and talking with anyone.	Any context or topic that would benefit from discussion so that everyone is involved all the time. Could be linked with Corners to provide an opportunity to discuss before final choice.

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Mix, Freeze, Group	<p>A movement activity to encourage co operation.</p> <p>Mix – pupils move around the room.</p> <p>Freeze – listen to instruction / question which is always has a number response answer.</p> <p>Group – pupils go into groups of that number.</p> <p>How many letters in ... how many vowels in ...how many syllables in ...?</p>	<p>Class building.</p> <p>Enables pupils to randomly mix which can be used to create teams for future team activities.</p> <p>Easier to start with smaller numbers and increase.</p>	<p>Co operating to form groups.</p> <p>Working quickly, sharing ideas.</p>	<p>Question exemplars:</p> <p>How many syllables are in ...?</p> <p>How many countries are there in Great Britain?</p> <p>How many primary colours are there?</p>

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Place Mat	<p>Groups plan and record together on a worksheet that is sub divided into 4 parts with the title written in the centre.</p> <p>When recording, use the coloured pencil technique to monitor each pupil's contribution.</p> <p>Spelling: choose a blend / letter pattern. Sub - headings to detail the numbers of letters in the words made up.</p>	<p>Thinking and Information sharing.</p> <p>Everyone contributes for the benefit of the group.</p> <p>Use with Give One, Get One to enable groups to help each other</p>	<p>Turn taking.</p> <p>Supporting / helping others.</p>	<p>Writing: plan a story given the title. Sub - headings could be characters, setting, action, ending.</p> <p>Maths – number calculations using the four rules.</p>

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Fan and Pick	<p>Group members play a card game to answer questions.</p> <p>Each person has a role to play that rotates with each new question.</p> <p>Pupil 1 fans the cards</p> <p>Pupil 2 picks and reads</p> <p>Pupil 3 answers</p> <p>Pupil 4 tutors or praises</p> <p>Use any list of words or letter patterns</p>	<p>Team building.</p> <p>Encourages a group to be supportive of each other.</p> <p>The roles could be more sophisticated with older pupils: questioner, clarifier, builder,</p>	<p>Talking turns in being in a different role.</p>	<p>Reading – teacher or pupils can produce the cards based on text.</p> <p>Can be used in maths, topic work, language.</p>

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Give One: Get One	When individuals, pairs or groups have finished a task they share with others. A "group" can give an idea / answer to another in return for getting one they do not have. Use in Placemat spelling; if making up lists of words	This activity enables learning from others and supporting. If the giving and getting is strictly on a one for one basis, then a group cannot just rely on others.	The skills of trading; negotiating, listening.	Cross curricular: whenever a number of ideas, responses or ideas are required.

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Roundtable Simultaneous	In groups, each person has a different spelling question / topic to think about and record their ideas. Everyone works individually then the group pass on their worksheets at the same time. When everyone has finished either the person who started with the first answer or the group decide on the "best answer". Make the longest / best word. Make verbs, nouns, adjectives with letter pattern choosing the best link.	Team building. Encourages pupils to work both individually and collectively. Responses can often be written or drawn. Could be paired, then group. Working at the same pace as others is not always ideal if some of the topics / questions are longer than others.	Working independently and also within a group. Supporting others, if necessary. Working at the same pace as peers. Reaching a consensus (if group decision made at the end). Sharing. Compromising.	Cross curricular. Works well when decisions / choices have to be made rather than just answers.

Strategies / Techniques	Description	Focus	Social skill	Curriculum
Mix and Match	Pupils each have a card that is related to spelling patterns / words. They ask and share with others about content of card before matching them. Cards could have words broken into syllables; letter patterns / words with them; number of letters / words.	Class building. Pupils have to participate, communicate, and mix with anyone.	Listening and communicating carefully. Turn taking, waiting for opportunity to share. Moving and learning without the former affecting the latter.	Maths – the algorithm and the answer; visual and numerical presentation of concepts. French – words and pictures of words. Language – books / characters

Websites – word and sentence level activities

Online games for children

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

great games – can link to Letters and Sounds, select letters used in each game

<http://www.tutpup.com/>

A very addictive site. You can register your class, and then the children can make up their own user name and compete with other children across the world. Spelling matches (different levels) and also maths. Awards given to motivate children.

www.starfall.com

phonic games and phonic stories

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/cvc/index.shtml>

links to old NLS so would use in different terms

<http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks1bitesize/literacy/>

http://www.kented.org.uk/ngfl/games/literacy_menu.html

<http://www.lgfl.net/lgfl/leas/greenwich/accounts/aspects/sencoproject/web/Resources/ks1/>

The adventures of Stan and Pat – online animation

Teacher Resources

<http://www.societyforqualityeducation.org/stairway/readingmaterial.pdf>

hundreds of sentences for dictation or reading practice, linked to phonics

<http://www.adrianbruce.com/reading/games.htm>

http://bogglesworldesl.com/phonics_monsters.htm

http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/vtc_-_ks2_-_english_-_writing_-_spelling_strategies

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/vtc/ngfl/english/140/index.html>

<http://www.tes.co.uk/resourcesHome.aspx?navcode=70> - free resources created by teachers for teachers. Enter “spelling” as a keyword, and you’ll find powerpoints, worksheets, weblinks, spelling lists and other resources.

Acknowledgements – Thanks to everybody below who posted these resources on the TES Resource Bank *(all of the resources below were used in this handbook)*

<http://www.spelling.hemscott.net/advice1.html> - weblink posted by [rogersmith](#)

Learning HOW to spell - [HughMorrison](#)

Spelling activities - [shoelace](#)

mnemonics cards – posted by [saffron74](#) and [sheep_tea](#) *(I haven't been able to find the original source)*

short phonic games [jambam](#)