



i

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 |
| <p>Assess phonological awareness and spelling skills in order to look for specific gaps.</p> <p>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.</p> | <p>HAST- 2 (Helen Arkell Spelling Test). This Spelling Assessment can be used to provide a standardised score as well as analysis of skills.</p> <p>Teacher assessment using “Letters and Sounds” phases can be a helpful tool to inform planning and use before and after a specific intervention.</p> |

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

Make sure all adults are using ‘pure sounds’
when teaching.

Use lists and strategies associated with
phonic reading books/schemes. Link key
reading words to appropriate strategies to
develop spelling.

Use specialist programmes, games, apps and
other online resources.

Spending 10 minutes per day on one of these
programmes during or after school will support

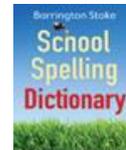
Use activity suggestions from Phase 1 aspect
7 of the Letters and Sounds publication or
“I hear with my little ear” by LDA.

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



The Dyslexia Institute Literacy Programme
(DILP) uses this card technique. (Please ask
AT for further information).

Mr Thorne: YouTube videos are helpful for
demonstrating pure sounds-

Phonic Books and associated spelling lists
For example:

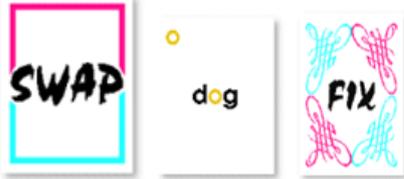
Dandelion Readers (age 4-7)

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
phonicbooks.co.uk or ask your AT for
examples.

Launch the lifeboat to Read and Spell –
www.robinswood.co.uk

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>a pupil's daily exposure to basic skills while still being enjoyable.</p> | <p>SWAP & FIX card games from GAMZ provide a fun way to practice target phonemes/spelling rules. www.gamzuk.com</p>  <p>Mr Thorne has created Apps for Spelling http://mrthorne.com/apps/ipad-apps/</p> <p>Bug Club Phonics – Pearson Education Ltd</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> |
|--|---|

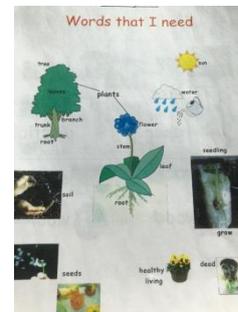
| <p align="center">Barrier: Over reliance of a single spelling strategy</p> | |
|--|---|
| <p align="center">Strategies</p> | <p align="center">Resources</p> |
| <p>Trial different spelling methods to find out which is most effective. Teach different strategies and encourage learners to apply the method which is most appropriate to the type of word.</p> <p>Teach children to use the materials available in class to support their spelling skills</p> | <p>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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling lists/ spelling walls displayed in class. • Provide age specific phoneme mats |

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.

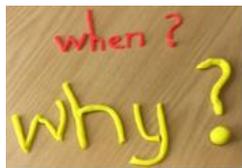
Provide opportunities to use all four sensory channels when learning spellings; say, look, listen and write simultaneously.



- 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**
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.
- Rainbow Writing- overwrite the target word in a different colour each time.
- 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 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.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <p>Simultaneous Oral Spelling</p> | <p>These are multi coloured alphabet letters for making words by lacing on to a string.</p> <p>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.</p>  |
|-----------------------------------|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Barrier: Poor working, visual or auditory memory Visual fatigue/visual discrimination difficulties</p> | |
| <p>Strategies</p> | <p>Resources</p> |
| <p>Frequent opportunities for overlearning</p> <p>Precision teaching (Contact AT for training)</p>  <p>Analyse the shape of the word</p> | <p>Graphic representations of words can make them more memorable and support recall for spelling</p>  <p>The Bee Box by Trish Wiggins is a useful source of ideas and strategies for helping children to discriminate between the letters b and d. Education Printing services Ltd Please follow this link for more information: http://www.eprint.co.uk/search.asp?strKeywords=the+bee+box&submit=%BB</p> <p>Provide visual prompts on desks and carry out visual tracking exercises. See www.eyecanlearn.co.uk</p> <p>Present a few lines of repeated letters or words to scan across and circle or highlight all of the 'd's or all the 'like's, for example. You may wish to begin with a single line and build up as appropriate. See Ann Arbor Letter and Word Tracking materials.</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.

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.

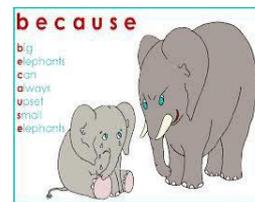
Mnemonics: Use the letters from a given word to make up a phrase to help remember the order of the letters e.g. for **said** – “**silly ants in dresses**”

Using a visual representation for the mnemonic may help too. It is also a good idea to ask the 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.



Box dictations- Cross Bow Education

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 | Resources |
|---|---|
| <p>Use ICT to support recording skills and assist with spelling.</p> <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>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> <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"> • English Type Junior: www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing • www.englishtype.com/typingtest/php • www.doorwayonline.org.uk • Dance Mat Typing – bbc.co.uk • www.typesy.com • TapTyping – www.learningworksforkids.com • Nesy Fingers Touch Typing – www.nesy.com • Word Burst Typing Game – www.apple.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> |