

Spelling Strategies – advice for parents

Below are some ideas to help your child to learn and practise their spellings each week. Spelling needs to be practised at least 5 times a week to embed well. Encourage them to use the different learning strategies to help them learn the correct spelling and then to use the different games and activities to consolidate their learning.

Learning Strategies:

The spelling comes home using the Look, say, cover, write, check strategy, which should be used in the first instance and then they can use the other methods on different days.

1. Look, say, cover, write, check

Look at the word carefully. Pay attention not just to the letters and their order but also to the shape the word makes on the page

Say it aloud. Say the word both as you would usually say it, and then again enunciating any silent letters,

E.G. Wed – nes – day.

Cover the word with a piece of paper or your hand

Write the word down from memory.

Check your answer letter by letter. If you've got it wrong, write it out again correctly.

2. Using sounds to breakup and blend

E.G. subway s – u – b – w – ay

3. Using syllables to breakup and blend

E.G. subway sub / way

4. Mnemonics

Using an acrostic poem or rhyme to remember the spelling.

E.G. rhythm **r**hythm **h**elps **y**our **t**wo **h**ips **m**ove

5. Finding root words within words

E.G. antiseptic antiseptic

6. Spotting patterns

Often, children will be given a list of words that are connected by a certain rule, such as 'I before E except after C.' Making sure your child knows the rule can take a lot of the effort out of learning what might look like difficult spellings, as **the pattern can be applied to most or all of the words.**

Games:

1. Hangman

This can be made more difficult by lowering the number of guesses that can be made before they lose.

2. Beat the clock

Again this can be varied. You could time how long it takes them to complete the test correctly and they can try to better their time or they could see how many words they can remember and spell correctly in a given amount of time.

3. What is missing? (Kim's game)

Using the list given, hide a word. They have to guess which word is hidden and spell it. Make it more difficult by hiding more than one word.

4. Letter tennis (easy)

Spell words aloud together by saying one letter each in turn.

5. Letter tennis (hard)

Played the same as above but you can say 1, 2 or 3 or the letters in one go. The object is not to be the person saying the last letter.

E.G. antiseptic

Player 1 - an

Player 2 - tis

Player 1 - e

Player 2 – pti

Player 1 - c (lost as had to say last letter)

6. Word searches or crosswords

You do not need to make these yourself (unless you wish to) as there are free websites that will do it for you. All you will need to do is input the words and print. An example of a free site is below.

<https://www.puzzle-maker.com/>

Activities:

1. Dictionary work

Children could write the spelling words in alphabetical order and use a dictionary to find their definitions.

2. Write sentences

Children use the spelling words in their own sentences showing they understand the meaning of the words. Encourage them to write great sentences with the different literary features they have been taught (fronted adverbial, expanded noun phrases, similes etc.) and each sentence must be punctuated correctly.

3. Dictation

You dictate sentences/short paragraphs containing the spelling words and they write it down. Once again make sure they have punctuated it correctly.

This is by no means a complete list of ideas but it is a good starter and your child will recognise most of them as they are used in their lessons at school.

Challenge:

Every few weeks put the spelling words in a 'hat' and have a family spelling bee and see who comes up trumps. We would love to hear who wins!!!!