

Helping Your Child to Spell

Ideas for learning to spell new words

Look, Cover, Write, Check, Look

The word is written clearly at the top of a piece of paper. Ask your child to:

Look: Look at the word. Say the word. Spell the word, using the letter names. Ask the child to close their eyes and spell it. Ask them then to open their eyes and check the spelling. If it is not the same, start again.

Cover: Fold over the top of the piece of paper so the word is hidden.

Write: Write the word from memory. Dot the 'i's. Cross the 't's. Close the 'o's. Check the writing to see that every letter can be read.

Check: Uncover the word. Check the spelling. Is it all right? If not, which bits are right?

Look: Look at the top word again.

Continue with the steps again until the child has written the word three times correctly.

Tracing

The word is written large in joined up writing and your child traces over the word with their finger twice while saying the letters in the word. Using the letter names, A(ay), B(bee), C(cee), not the sounds. The child then writes it twice without looking at the word.

Saying the letters aloud

Your child should write the word twice while saying the letters in the word and then write it again without looking at the word. Use the letter names, a(ay), b(bee), c(cee) - not the sounds.

Looking for the words in words

Your child will find it easier to remember a word if you can encourage them to look for the words they know inside words they don't know. You can help your child to think up a sentence which draws attention to it.

Making word families

Your child can be encouraged to relate a new word to others with some common features e.g.

Chat, chart, cheap

Main, gain, rain

Bush, rash, wish

Using rules

Your child can be helped to remember some spellings by learning spelling rules. Our classteachers will be able to advise on the rules that will help them to learn.

Aids to memory

Some words are so hard to remember, it is useful to devise special ways of remembering them.

Using odd pronunciation:-

Saying Wed-nes-day for Wednesday

Saying me-rin-gue for meringue

Saying bis-cu-it for biscuit

Saying to-get-her for together

Using sentences:-

Saying "big elephants can always upturn snake's eggs" to help spell because'. (Mnemonics)

Reading and writing

Reading helps children to spell better, so do look at the 'How can I help my child to read better?' guidance for parents.

Legible handwriting with correct letter formation helps children to spell better. You may need to talk to your child's teacher about improving your child's handwriting skills.

Using the sounds in words

If you can spell the word easily by saying the letter sounds, then your child can be encouraged to sound out the word when spelling it. Many three letter words can be sounded out e.g., cat, run, big. Be careful not to put 'u' after every consonant, eg cuh-a-tuh. This confuses the child. Use the pure sounds /c/ /a/ /t/.

Finally...

Do talk to your child's teacher who will give you further ideas, including spelling games, for helping your child to spell correctly. It is always good to work together with the teacher so that you develop a partnership approach to helping your child.

Visit www.iamdyslexic.com for ideas from children who have made up spelling hints for themselves. Make up lists of successes – words that I can spell to prove how many your child does remember regularly.

How you can help to develop your child's memory skills?

Auditory memory skills

Clapping a rhythm and making your child copy it.

Repeat a story that you have told them in the correct order.

Play a game like "I went on my holiday and put into my suitcase.

Re-tell a joke.

Simon says.

Ask your child to name three things found in the kitchen. Build up the number of items.

Visual memory

Spot the difference.

Dot to dot.

Bingo with pictures or words.

Odd man out.

Word searches (that track left to right only).

Kim's game – where you show your child a set of picture cards and they have to try to recall them after a few minutes of looking at them.

Place objects on a tray and ask your child to memorise it. Remove an object without seeing which one, and see if he/she can identify it.

Learning Styles

What are learning styles?

Learning styles are simply different approaches or ways of learning.

What are the types of learning styles?

Visual Learners:

- learn through seeing
- they are neat
- good at planning
- speak quickly
- good at spelling
- might be prone to doodling in class
- would rather read than be read to

These learners need to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of a lesson. They may think in pictures and learn best from visual displays.

Auditory Learners:

learn through listening...

Auditory learners learn best through verbal lessons, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say.

They like to:

- spell out loud

- discuss things
- tell rather than write

These learners often benefit from reading text aloud and using a tape recorder.

Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners:

learn through , moving, doing and touching...

Tactile/Kinesthetic learners learn best through a hands-on approach, actively exploring the physical world around them.

They may:

- find it hard to sit still for long periods
- become distracted by their need for activity and exploration.
- speak slowly.
- make lots of gestures.
- like to act things out.
- have messy handwriting.
- touch others to get attention