

Helping your child spell at home -parents can help their children by:

- encouraging them to look closely at words
 - and talking to them about words
- encouraging them to try new words
 - **tip:** they won't do this if you're always criticizing their spelling
- playing word games with them, such as:
 - hangman
 - Boggle
 - Scrabble
- encouraging effective memorizing strategies such as mnemonics e.g. because-**big elephants can always upset small elephants**
- encouraging good reading/writing posture
 - sitting up - eyes 12 to 18 inches away from the work
 - forearms making a triangle with the torso insist upon it (friendly nagging if necessary!)
- encouraging spare time reading
 - pointing out interesting newspaper items
 - encouraging visits to the library
 - buying comics, magazines and books as treats
- respecting "good mistakes": those which use letter patterns which do make the right sound, even though they are not right for that particular word. So, for "purpose":
 - "purpus" would be a good guess - like "focus"
 - "prupose" would be a less good guess
- ensuring a dictionary is on hand for homework
- **Develop auditory and vocal skills.** Good spellers are usually good readers and good speakers and vice versa. Using the school or local library helps your child develop some of these skills. Restrict the amount of TV he watches. Your child cannot talk back to a television set. Children need to use the language they will be writing. Give your child the opportunity to talk with you.
- **Experience stories.** Let your child write about the things he likes. He can illustrate the stories himself or cut pictures from magazines to illustrate them. Let him write the words without assistance unless he asks for help. Misspelled words can then be used in little games you play with your child. A one-line "story" may be all that he can handle. If so, fine.
- **Write letters.** Corresponding with a friend or relative-or a simple statement at the bottom of a letter you write to someone your child knows-offers him opportunities to spell.
- **Trace words.** This activity helps many children. Have your child sit next to you (or, if young, sit on your lap). Sit so that you can guide his writing hand. Make

sure that only his index and middle fingers are extended, and that his eyes are closed. If your child is using manuscript, use that form. Take his hand and print (or write) the word that is confusing to him.

Don't tackle an entire spelling list in one sitting. Take one-third for example, each evening, to work on with your child. Break the practice into small units. Try fifteen minutes of review when he gets home; fifteen minutes before supper; fifteen minutes after supper. Shorter periods given frequently are more effective than one massive review-which is also exhausting and frustrating.

Sometimes words on a spelling list can be "clustered" into similarities. For example, you might try attempting all of the five-letter words one day, all the words beginning with consonants the next day, all the words beginning with blends the next day. This kind of grouping will help your child to perceive similarities and differences in the words, and, hence, develop his recall.

An old trick that really works is to have your child practice. Write each of his words, and then draw with a black crayon around each word. Then he can lightly color the shape of the word. This is known as "studying the shape" (or configuration). Just make sure your child uses straight, not curved, lines when he outlines the word.

Before your child starts to silently study his list for that day, let him pronounce each word. Children must know how to properly pronounce a word before they attempt to spell it, if their pronunciation is not correct, they will indeed spell it as they would pronounce it in their own way. (Also make sure they know what the word means and can use it or understand it when they hear it.)

To start studying, a child should look at the word, pronounce it, spell it orally as he looks at it, cover it with his hand, and then attempt to spell it or, as he traces it on your kitchen table, letter by letter.

After your child has studied, let's say five words, in the manner described, spell the words to him, in random order, and have him name the word you spelled.

Younger children parents may wish to invest in a set of plastic magnetic letters that are available at many discount, toy, and variety stores. Let your child spell the word by successively placing the magnetic letters on the magnetic board. You can show him the word, then remove it. Have him name each letter as he locates it and places it on the board. This is good for developing the correct order for letters within the words.

Word lists. These can be made using paper available in the house. Print or write the words being studied. Post one copy of the list on the refrigerator, another on the door to your child's room.

Put movement into learning words. Have your child clap for each letter or take a step for each letter as he spells the word orally. This will help "lock in" the correct sequence of letters, as well as develop full recall for the word. Also ask them to show

you our spelling aerobic technique-letters above the line (bdhlt)-stretch up and letters below the line (fgjppqy) -stretch down.

Listening skills do help spelling. "What letter does 'chart, end with?" What letter does 'piano' begin with?" Play these games just for a few moments before supper, or after breakfast to develop your child's ability to hear sounds in words.

Rhyming words is another game that can build spelling skills. "Can you think of a word that rhymes with fill?" As your child says hill, Bill, till, and so on, write them down. He'll soon notice, himself, that they have identical endings.

Remembering. This is a game to develop visual memory. Write one word on a piece of paper. Leave space underneath it. Tell your child to look at it as long as he wants, that is, until he can remember the letters, then have him fold the paper so that he cannot see the word. He is then to try to write the word from memory. Let him check it himself, and if he has misspelled, try again.

Find the wrong word. Write a short sentence for your child. Tell him that there is one word spelled incorrectly. Ask him to see if he can find it. To begin, make it a rather obviously misspelled word. Leave a letter out, or add an extra letter to a word. Ask him to first read the sentence, then to circle the misspelled word. Then make sure you erase it and write it correctly.

Helping your child at home with spelling requires patience and a non-school-like setting. Don't try to be a teacher. Be a parent who teaches. Your child wants to please you-he wants your honest, sincere praise. Keep the activities short-and fun, and do them regularly, with variety.

While testing is a traditional and easy way of assessing short-term spelling learning, our ultimate goal is for our students is to apply what they have learned into their writing. Your child may be given weekly spelling tests as a means of checking their learning, but other types of assessment may be used as well. In all classes, students are directed to proofread and edit their writing for spelling (purple polishing pen).

More top Tips for Supporting Spelling Development

- Help your child write the spelling words on a separate piece of paper in alphabetical order.
- Have your children draw pictures for each of the spelling words. Have them write the word below the picture. Take all the pictures and create a spelling reference book over the course of the year.
- Create a word search with your child's spelling words. You can do this by making a grid of 10 squares by 10 squares, writing the spelling words in the grid, then filling up

the other squares with random letters. Keep a list of your children's spelling words nearby for them to reference while doing the word search.

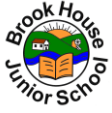
- When studying spelling, encourage your children to use the "**Look, Cover, Write, Check**" method.

- Take a piece of paper and fold it into four columns. Label the columns (as seen below). Have your children write the spelling list in the "Look" column. They should then **look** at each word, and **say** the letters to remember how the word looks. Next, have them cover the words by folding the "Look" column over to the "Cover" column. Have your children write the word down in the "Write" column (from memory) and then check to see if they were correct by looking at the original word. They should rewrite the word in the "Check" column. You may want to underline the letters your children originally missed with red. Do this for the entire spelling list. Even if your children spell every word incorrectly at first, praise them for their efforts and encourage them to keep trying. You want your children to stay confident during this exercise so they don't give up!

Helping Your Child with Spelling: A Parent's Guide

Spelling is just a small piece of the puzzle with regards to writing. Ways to use the spelling lists to increase vocabulary and improve grammar are:

- Have your children write the opposite (antonym) of each spelling word. Help them find the antonym if they don't know it at first.
- Have your children write a synonym (a word with a similar meaning) for each spelling word.
- Have them make the plural for each of the nouns on the list.
- Have them add prefixes (un-, in-, re-, pre-, im-, etc.) or suffixes (s, es, er, ed, est, ing, etc.) to words when possible (the new word must still be a real word.) Talk about how this changes the word, and/or its meaning. (For example, if the original spelling word is "possible" adding "im" to the word makes it "impossible" - the complete opposite in meaning.)



Spelling Home learning at Brook House -Introduction to Parents



This booklet is intended to give you information about the approaches used in our school to help children to become effective spellers. As with all aspects of the curriculum, children learn best when parents provide active encouragement and support. Parents are also able to extend what happens in school and help children apply their learning to the world beyond the classroom. All children are different and the development of spelling will vary with individuals. The booklet explains the general expectations for children as they move from Year 3 through to Year 6.

Some points to bear in mind:

- Children learn best through play - spelling activities are best seen as 'playing with words'.
- Good spellers are usually good speakers and good readers - children need to be listened to read to and read with.
- Spelling is about spotting patterns and generalising -it would be impossible to learn to spell each word separately! Seeing patterns, making analogies and generalising are key skills, which is why sorting activities with words are particularly helpful.
- Being able to spell is not an indicator of intelligence or overall writing ability, but being able to spell accurately is socially important and probably does improve our 'life chances'.
- Spelling is a thinking process rather than a rote learning process. If you can explain why a word is spelt in a particular way, you will probably remember how to spell it.
- Many children find computers highly motivating. Some useful websites are referenced which may be useful.
- Children will enjoy spelling if it feels like fun and if they feel good about themselves as spellers. We need, therefore, to be playful and positive in our approach - noticing and praising what children can do as well as helping them to correct their mistakes.

We hope that this booklet will provide you with some starting points for spelling activities, which you can develop in your own creative ways!

Helping Your Child to Spell - Year 1 and Year 2 (SEN pupils)

Your child will be somewhere along the way to becoming a good speller.

Listed below are a few strategies good spellers use:-

- They have a store of words they can spell- beginning spellers know words like am, here, the, I, is, it.
- They sound words out - beginning spellers can sound out words like cat, mum, dad, sit, fit, etc.
- They know many common letter patterns, so they know when a word looks right - beginning spellers know patterns like sh, th, ch, ing later on ought, ious etc.
- They can divide words into syllables- beginning spellers can do this with words like carpet and garden.

- They can make links between the meaning of words and their spelling - beginning spellers don't do this much. Later on connections will be made between words like sign, signature, circle, circumference
- They work out spelling rules for themselves
- They use adults and dictionaries to help them.

It is very important that children are encouraged to have a go at spelling words they don't know when they are writing. If they do not have a go they will not get the chance to practice these important strategies. If children only use words they can spell, they may never make a mistake, but they will not get the chance to become good spellers. Always praise your child for having a go!

Helping Your Child to Spell - Year 3 and Year 4

In years 3 and 4, most children will:

- Understand and use the terms 'letter', 'vowel', and consonant'. 'Phoneme'. syllable, prefix and suffix
- read and spell words containing 'long' vowel sounds such as dream, thief, bright, flair
- understand that the same sound can be represented in different ways e.g. mean, green, mummy, thief
- come to understand that the same letter pattern may represent different sounds e.g. beat, bread
- continue to use the skill of 'phoneme counting' as a key spelling strategy for spelling unknown shorter words (e.g. In the word crash there are 4 phonemes or sounds c - r - a -sh)
- use the skill of syllable counting to 'chunk' and spell longer words and compound words e.g. suddenly, unimportant, weekend, blackbird, churchyard
- extend their range of high frequency (common words) e.g. their, again, having, couldn't
- investigate the rules for making plurals e.g. girl, girls, box, boxes, city, cities
- investigate rules for adding 'ing' or 'ed' e.g. stop, stopping, stopped, hope, hoping hoped
- investigate common prefixes and suffixes e.g. un-, dis-, re-, pre-, -ful, -ly
- learn how the apostrophe is used for omission (don't) or possession (the dog's dinner)
- learn to use dictionaries and ICT spell-checkers
- learn to proof read their writing - checking words if they don't 'look right'
- You can help by:
 - continuing to read and share books together including jingles, nonsense rhymes and poetry
 - helping your child to say and spell the alphabet, days of the week, months of the year
 - playing Scrabble, 'Hangman': doing word-puzzles, word-searches and simple crosswords together

- providing 'real' purposes for your child to write e.g. writing shopping lists, 'to do' lists, thank you letters, household labels
- providing 'real' purposes for using knowledge of alphabetic order e.g. looking up a telephone number, finding a book in the library
- sorting objects (e.g. jars of herbs and spices) into alphabetical order
- making up sets of paired words on card and playing 'pairs' using the words your child is currently learning
- writing the words your child is learning on cards or post-its and sorting the words in as many different ways as you can think of
- helping your child to learn spellings by 'playing' with the words as much as possible e.g.
- cutting words up to make word jigsaws, writing a word in pencil and going over the tricky part in colour, making tricky words out of plasticene or play-dough, writing the words with your eyes shut, looking for shorter words inside a longer word talking to your child about the words he/she is learning to spell at school and discussing some good ways of remembering the words
- encouraging breaking words into syllables e.g. Wed - nes -day
- praising successful attempts at spelling - praise the correctly spelt letters and discuss ways of remembering the 'tricky bit'
- showing how to try out alternative spellings and checking to see which looks right
- encouraging the 'look, say, cover, write, check' strategy to learn spellings
- providing a dictionary and illustrated thesaurus - give support with using these
- using the 'Spellits' activities on the BBC website bbc.co.uk

Helping Your Child to Spell - Year 5 and Year 6

In years 5 and 6 most children will:

- understand and use the terms letter, vowel, consonant, phoneme syllable, prefix and suffix
- use independent spelling strategies e.g. breaking words into syllables, using known prefixes, suffixes and letter strings, using known spelling rules, checking that spellings 'look right', using dictionaries and spell checkers
- take personal responsibility for learning their own commonly misspelt words using strategies that they find helpful
- secure the correct spelling of high frequency (common words) e.g. their, through
- transform words e.g. changing tenses (ing ed); negation (un, im) making comparisons (er est); changing verbs to nouns and vice-versa (dictate/dictation, decoration/decorate)
- use the apostrophe accurately for omission (don't) or possession (the cat's whiskers)
- extend their knowledge of prefixes and suffixes (aero- aqua- micro, -scope)
- research the derivation of words and learn how to use an etymological dictionary

- You can help by:
- As well as the activities listed above
- talking with your child about the books/newspapers/magazines you are each reading
- talking to your child about the words he/she is learning to spell at school and discussing some good ways of remembering the words
- identifying the 'root' word in a longer word e.g. musician, musical
- demonstrating an interest in words -talking about the meanings and possible derivations of words
- playing Scrabble, 'Hangman'; doing word-puzzles, word-searches and crosswords together
- investigating spelling websites e.g. puzzlemaker from discoveryschool.com, spellits from bbc.co.uk, wordcentral.com
- providing an adult dictionary, thesaurus, spell-checkers

We thank for taking the time to read this booklet and we hope it will be useful in helping you to continue to support your child with their home learning.

Best wishes

Miss Bielby (Literacy Co-ordinator)