

Spelling

Spelling is something that many children and adults can get very frustrated and sensitive about. Being able to spell accurately and easily is, however, a very useful skill, even with spellcheckers. These are some ways you can help your child to develop their ability to spell.

- **Focus upon small specific groups of words:** It is disheartening to try and tackle too many words at once. The best place to start is to look at the words that are highlighted as being problematic in your child's books. It is likely that there will be patterns in these, such as problems with double or silent letters. Focus on a maximum of five of these per week.
- **Practise little and often:** Look at the selected spellings with your child for a few minutes every day. Spending hours on spelling once a week or less is unlikely to make much of a difference, whereas a regular burst of spelling practice is much more useful.
- **Use a variety of strategies:** Some strategies are more appropriate for some words than others, and what works for one child may not work for another. Try a range of ways of learning spellings and if one doesn't work, try another.
- **Use notes around your house as visual clues:** Help your child by placing correctly spelt words in a place they will see them often, perhaps on the fridge. This means that they will see the words they are working on often.
- **Focus on the success:** Give your child lots of praise when they do succeed with a particular word or 'rule'. Spelling (especially in English) is difficult and it will take a lot of hard work to make a secure speller.
- **Admit your own difficulties:** Most people have at least some words they find difficult to spell. It's good for your child to see you tackle your own spelling issues. Let them see you have to use some of the same strategies they have to in order to show them that learning to spell is difficult and nobody is perfect.

Top tip: Spelling can be challenge. Frequent, short sessions which include plenty of praise are best.

Spelling strategies

- Use joined up handwriting instead of printing. This helps the word to stay in your motor memory and you have less opportunity to forget what comes next as your hand already has an idea!
- Divide words up according to their syllables. Manage it syllable by syllable and remember each 'chunk'.
 - Boxing

en	gage	ment
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 - Sounding out – spell each syllable individually in/ter/val
- Find words within words. Work on remembering the words you already know and the extra bits you add on in order to make new words.
- methodical Saturday beginning
- Simultaneous oral spelling. Say each letter as you write it in order to log it in different parts of your memory.
- Create your own mnemonic for the word. Each letter is the initial letter for a word in a sentence e.g.
- **B**ig **e**lephants **c**an **a**lways **u**pset **s**mall **e**lephants = because
- Say the word as it is spelled
- bus – i – ness con-science Wed-nes-day