

Practical help with spelling: KS2

Phonics

Regular discrete teaching of a phonics programme, such as Letters and Sounds, continues to be very important for children in KS2 who struggle with spelling. As part of regular practice, include:

- Revisiting and revising phoneme/grapheme correspondences
- Engaging, lively, multi-sensory activities
- Blending and segmenting of phonemes
- Regular shared reading and display of 'tricky' words and other high frequency words

Around the room

- Wall frieze of phonemes or phoneme chart (Phase 5 graphemes)
- High frequency words on cards and posters
- Word cards: connectives, powerful verbs, wow words
- Literacy displays / word mobiles / word banks
- Magnetic boards and letters for some children
- Picture books, reading books, poetry books, words of songs
- Labelling and useful vocabulary where appropriate
- Writing workshop area
- Investigative spelling games
- Board games / Boggle / Lexicon / Scrabble etc

Activities for children working well below age-related expectations

- Sing and chant alphabet
- Work on alphabetical order, using an alphabet stuck on desk top
- Play I spy
- Share children's name cards and spot those letter patterns within other words
- Collect words which share the same phoneme
- Play with names – use musical instruments – clap syllables – alliteration eg, Happy Harry, Clever Chloe
- Make up a game of rhyming snap eg, sing/ring house/mouse
- Shared reading of rhyming texts
- Play games from Letters and Sounds DVD ideas (oral blending/segmenting)
- Use magnetic whiteboards and letters to actively blend phonemes
- Use mnemonics to help spell tricky words eg; big elephants can always understand small elephants (because)
- Provide an accessible word bank of relevant words during independent writing

Learning new words

- Point out new words in Shared Reading / blend and segment if appropriate
- Focus word of the day
- Hide new words in a made up word search
- Group new words by initial sounds, or letter patterns
- Use writing journals, where word banks can be stored
- Make a shared list of new words in Shared Writing

Developing visual strategies (relevant for some children)

- Look for 'odd one out' in pictures or sequences
- Sort tins of different beads/buttons/marbles etc
- Where's Wally? – finding things in pictures
- During handwriting, encourage careful visual perception of letter formation
- Use 'look and say' approach, using shape of whole word
- Segment words carefully, sounding out each phoneme together
- Analyse and talk about shapes and patterns in the world around them

Using dictionaries and word banks

- Teach use of a children's dictionary
- Reinforce confidence with alphabetical order
- Collect word banks, individual and class
- Have a 'word of the day' to introduce new words
- Ask designated child to bring in a 'long word' to share (regularly)
- Collect personal lists of misspelt words from own writing
- Give the class a relevant word list for the day's writing topic
- Categorise words into families, eg century, centurion, centipede

Word curiosity

- Encourage curiosity for morphology and etymology of words
- Look at root of word and see how many times you can make it 'grow'
- Make shared list of prefixes and talk about etymology eg; 'photo' from Greek word for 'light', or 'bi' from Latin, meaning 'two'.
- Sort words with 'ed' endings into different sounds, eg, ripped, pinned, plodded
- Collect 'un' words, to describe a given character, such as a king or dragon
- Play Word Detectives – inspect words (even use magnifying glass!)
- Discover where 'loan' words come from, eg, bungalow (Hindi), judo (Japanese), zebra (Bantu), pyjamas (Persian), yacht (Dutch)

Good practice

- Spelling must be taught - Support for Spelling as useful guidance
- Give children 'have a go' books, where they can make a guess first
- Encourage child to write as much of the word as he can first
- Praise the parts of the word he got right
- Show, when modelling, that first drafts can be changed and words crossed out
- Talk together about ways children can find out how to spell a word eg, notices on wall, books, word bank, writing partner, dictionary, own word log
- Make spelling target specific eg, particular phoneme, digraph, ending etc
- Find helpful word lists in Spelling Bank or Support for Spelling
- Play games with whole class or group from Yr 2/3 Planning Exemplification and Spelling Programme or PIPS.
- Reassure children that it is okay to cross out, modify and improve first drafts
- Model some correct spellings when marking work, but maintain a focus on praise, encouragement and success
- Use Look Cover Write Check strategy as part of regular practice