



# **A Guide to Supporting your Child with Spelling**



**How to help your child achieve  
their best in spelling**

# The Importance of Spelling

The English language has one of the richest vocabularies in the world. Over the last 1,000 years, the English language has inherited and assimilated many words from other languages: Latin, French, Greek and German. We have also kept aspects of the spellings of these words, which has created the most complex alphabetic language in the world.

German, Italian, Spanish, Finnish, Polish, Greek and Welsh children learn to read and spell very quickly because their speech sounds are written down, more or less, the same way in every word. This means, once they have cracked the code, they can write any word correctly.

In English, there are many different ways of writing each sound because we have more speech sounds than letters. For example, we write the sound *ay* in at least eight different ways: *play*, *rain*, *make*, *eight*, *straight*, *reign*, *rein*, *break*. This means that the alphabetic code is complex and takes a long time to learn.

Due to this, spelling tends to improve throughout our lives as we grow in experience of reading words and remembering the correct way of writing the sounds. Often, it is only through lots of practice that we become good spellers.

The process of learning to spell is cumulative for most children. Only a few lucky children learn to spell effortlessly without structured teaching. Most need explicit systematic teaching that is continually practised and reinforced, until spelling knowledge is committed to children's long term memory.



## Read Write Inc. Spelling

The spelling requirements of the National Curriculum are extremely high and the number of rules, patterns and exceptions the children are expected to know is huge. For this reason, we have decided to move to teaching spelling using the Read Write Inc. Spelling scheme. Since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 2014, this scheme has proved itself to be an effective and popular programme in schools nationwide.

# Spelling at Home

The easiest way to support your child's spelling development is through practising at home. Each day your child will bring home their spelling Log Book.

In their Log Book, you will find a list of words from the previous week they are still finding tricky, and a list of new words to practice which follow the current rule or pattern.

At the back of the Log Book there is a list of **orange words**. These are the words from the National Curriculum statutory word lists.

The spelling Log Book also contains a glossary of key spelling terms and a sound chart to see how different sounds are written down.

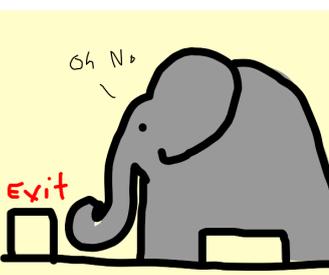
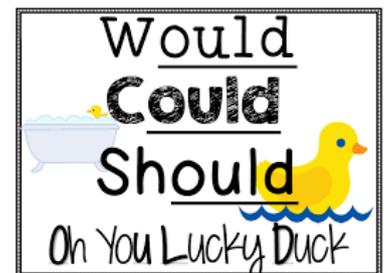


## Strategies for Tricky Words

### Mnemonics

Using phrases can help children to learn the tricky bits of words, or to help them find words memorable:

- would, could, should—oh you (u) lucky duck
- rough, enough, though, thought—oh you (u) great hooligan
- caught, daughter, naughty, laugh—ants usually get hot
- because—big elephants can't always use small entrances



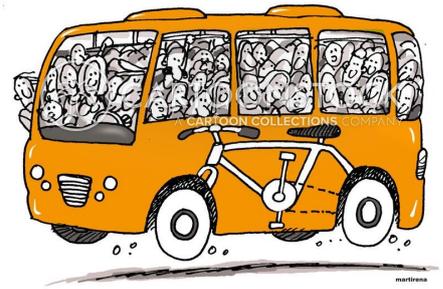
### Top Tip!

Drawing funny little pictures and illustrations can also help children to remember spelling rules, patterns and mnemonics!

## Word in a word

Sometimes it helps to notice that there is a word within a word and that can help us to spell it.

- busy on the bus
- one thing I have gone and done
- ear in hear and heard
- separate has a rat in it



## Sticky Letter

Some words are often spelt incorrectly because of one unexpected, or 'sticky' letter. These words can be written with the 'sticky' letter really big or have the letter replaced by something in the shape of the letter.

pe ☺ ple

ju 🍌 cy

fr 🧑 end

## Over-pronunciation

Over-pronouncing words can help children to identify individual syllables or particular parts of the word they are struggling with.

- Wednesday = wed nes day
- Clearly pronouncing the *-ed* on words so they recognise it is *jumped* not *jump*t

## Highlighting

Children love highlighter pens—who knows why, but they do! Work with them to identify the part of the word they are stumbling on and highlight each time they write their word.

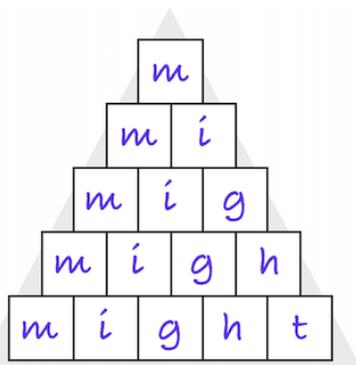


# Strategies for Practising Words

Practising spellings needs to be memorable for the children to commit the words to memory. The strategies and ideas below are some different ways that words can be practised.

## Rainbow Writing

Write the word multiple times in different colours to create a rainbow.



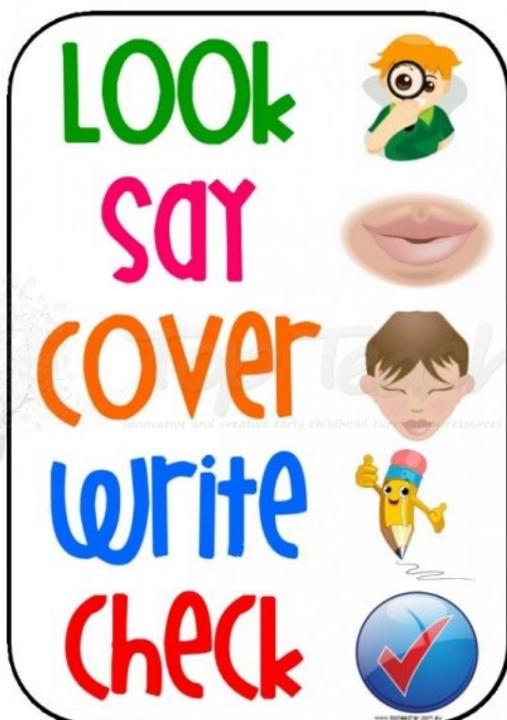
might

## Pyramid Writing

Write out each word adding a letter each time until the full word is spelt out at the bottom. This could be continued in reverse to create a diamond.

## Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check

This is probably the most traditional and common strategy used to learn spellings.



**Look:** first look at the whole word carefully and if there is one part of the word that is difficult, look at that part in more detail.

**Say:** say the word as you look at it, using different ways of pronouncing it if that will make it more memorable.

**Cover:** cover the word.

**Write:** write the word from memory, saying the word as you do so.

**Check:** Have you got it right? If yes, try writing it again and again! If not, start again – look, say, cover, write, check.

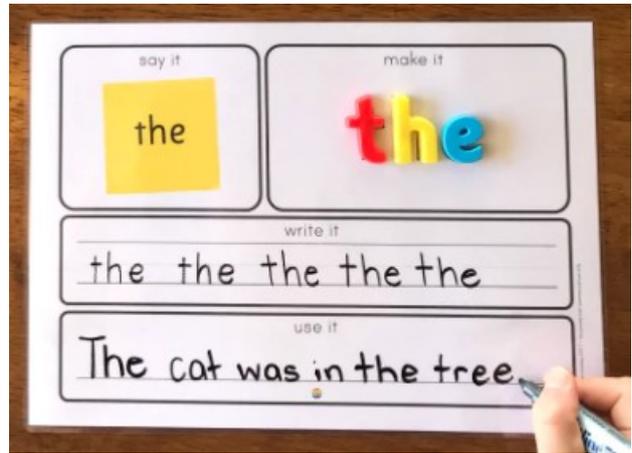
## Say it, make it, write it, use it

**Say it:** say the word as a whole

**Make it:** make the word out of individual letters (e.g. out of magnetic letters) and say each letter individually

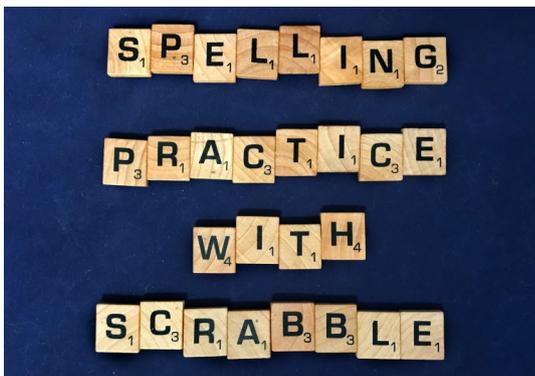
**Write it:** write the word out five times

**Use it:** use the word in a sentence



## Multi-Sensory Approaches

When making words, use a range of different methods: magnetic letters, playdough or blu tak, pieces of string, an etch-a-sketch, shaving foam, sand, flour, letters written on post-it notes, cut out letters from a magazine, alphabet pasta, scrabble tiles, anything you have at home!



## **Top Tip!**

Multisensory learning is all about encouraging learners to use more than one of their senses when taking in new information. This learning style promotes using activities that appeal to our visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile senses.

Using multisensory learning engages different parts of a learner's brain. This gives children more than one way to make connections, learn new concepts and retain information. For example, in an activity that incorporates visual, tactile and auditory learning, children will be able to form a relationship between the appearance, feeling and sound of that activity, which will then help them to remember key information from that task.