

## **Spelling Strategies: Effective Ways to Learn Spellings**

We live in a highly multi-sensory society and our children are growing up in a culture which appeals to all of their senses (*i.e. sights, sounds, feelings, smells, and tastes*).

We adopt the **VAK** approach of Accelerated Learning:  
**V**isual (*Sight* – What it looks like); **A**uditory (*Sound* – What it sounds like);  
and **K**inaesthetic (*Movement* – What it feels/moves like).

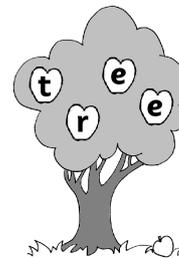
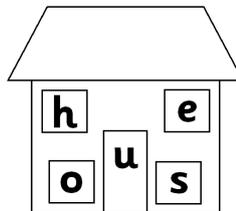
We suggest you try out a range of the following techniques and help your child discover what works best for them.

### ☺ **Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check, (Correct):**

- **Look** at the word (the shape, number of letters, etc.) and picture it in your head.
- **Say** the word out loud and then say each letter/sound slowly.  
(*Any problem letters should be said louder than the rest.*)
- **Cover** the word over.
- **Write** the word out.
- **Check** to see if you have spelt it correctly.
- **Correct** the word if you have spelt it incorrectly (and try again).

### ☺ **Picture Perfect:** Try and make the word into a picture. For example:

look



### ☺ **To The Tune:** Sing or chant the letters of the spelling word/s (to a tune/rhythm/rhyme they already know).

### ☺ **Invisible Ink:** Write out the spelling word/s with missing letters and have your child insert the missing letters. (*Alternate which letters are missing each time you visit the word.*)

### ☺ **Trace It Out:** Use your finger (foot, nose, etc.) to trace the word in the air as large as you can, looking at the movements your finger is making. You can also do this with your eyes closed and visualise painting it in different colours.

### ☺ **Sounding Out the Syllables:** e.g. yes-ter-day    sis-ter    shop-ping

- ☺ **Noughts and Crosses (Tic Tac Toe):** Play this game using two of the words your child is learning instead of Os and Xs.

For example:

went		what
went	what	
what		

- ☺ **Memorable Mnemonics:** Make up an amusing phrase or sentence using each letter to make a word in a short sentence. For example:

Silly Anne is dancing = said

Tim had a train = that

Betty eats custard and uncle sucks eggs = because

- ☺ **Hidden Words:** Find a word within your spelling word. For example:

w-hat    g-one    the-y  
 wh-at    g-on-e    t-he-y  
 w-ha-t    go-ne    t-hey

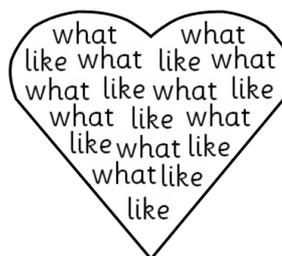
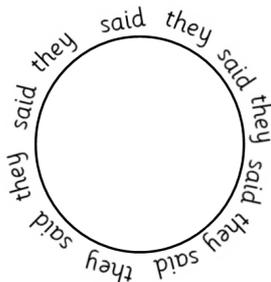
- ☺ **Rainbows:** Use a variety of colours to write out different parts of the word (e.g. syllables, phonemes/blends, or letters).

- ☺ **Stack 'em Up:** Write the spelling word letter by letter to form a pyramid.

For example: a  
 ap  
 app  
 appl  
 apple

- ☺ **Word Detective:** Encourage your child to look for the words they are learning in their reading book (other books, papers, magazines, etc.) at home and keep a tally chart to record how many times they find each spelling word. (Circle/Highlight each occurrence of the word if possible – **not** in printed books!)

- ☺ **Spellamadoodles:** Draw a simple picture or geometric shape (or place the picture underneath a blank sheet of paper) and write the word/s several times around the edge of and/or inside the picture in different colours. For example:



- ☺ **Magic Finger:** Write the word in sand, rice, salt, shaving foam or paint.  
(*Try putting a coloured piece of paper at the bottom of a sand tray.*)
  
- ☺ **Vary the Voice:** Say the letters out in a variety of different voices  
(*i.e. high/low; fast/slow; funny/serious.*)
  
- ☺ **Word Pairs:** Write down two copies of each of the words your child is learning on pieces of paper/card. Turn them over and spread them out in front of you. Take it in turns to pick up two pieces (saying the words you've found) – If you find the pair you keep them, and if not, you place them back down. The person with the most pieces at the end of the game is the winner!
  
- ☺ **Tickles:** Trace the word on a partner's back (or palm of the hand) then have them do the same to you. Imagine the movements being made and which letters are being written. – Can your child guess the letters and whole word without you telling them?
  
- ☺ **Mispronunciations:** Say the word the way it looks.  
*e.g. Wed-nes-day*  
*pe-o-ple*
  
- ☺ **Flash Cards:** Show your child the words on a card quickly and have them read the word and repeat back the spelling of the word from memory.
  
- ☺ **Disappearing Act:** Write the word out one letter less each time until the word disappears, *e.g. happy, happ\_, hap\_ \_ , ha\_ \_ \_ , h\_ \_ \_ \_*  
(*or Reappearing Letters: The reverse of the above activity.*)
  
- ☺ **Ransom Letters:** Cut out the individual letters from newspapers/magazines and stick them on paper to spell out the spelling word/s.
  
- ☺ **Magic Writing:** Use an Etch-a-Sketch (or similar toy) to practise writing out the word again and again...
  
- ☺ **Back to Nature:** Make the spelling word/s out of sticks, leaves, stones, etc.  
(*Try using foods too – pasta, peas, lentils, etc.*)
  
- ☺ **Word Hunt:** Cut out spelling words from newspapers or magazines.  
(*Try and find as many as possible.*)
  
- ☺ **Silly String:** Write out your spelling word/s with a long piece of string  
(*in cursive (joined) handwriting if possible.*)
  
- ☺ **Tap, Tap:** Type your spelling word/s out on the computer in lots of different, interesting fonts and colours. (*Try WordArt too!*)

- ☺ **Wet 'n' Watery:** Spray out the spelling word/s on the ground in water using a water bottle.
- ☺ **Stick 'em Up:** Stick the spelling word/s around the house with 'Post-its' in places they look at frequently. Try using magnetic letters on the fridge too.
- ☺ **Search and Spot It:** Hide the spellings in a wordsearch (including each word more than once) and have your child find them.
- ☺ **Roll and Mould:** Roll out Plasticine or Play-dough and coil it to make the letters to spell out the spelling word/s.
- ☺ **Glorious Games:** Use the spelling word/s in a variety of well known games, e.g. Bingo, Hangman, Four-in-a-Row, Snap, etc.
- ☺ **Super Sentences:** Write sentences about something that interests you (e.g. football, horses, Star Wars, etc.) that include the spellings that you are learning.
- ☺ **Letters in Light:** Use a torch in a darkened room to practise writing out the spelling word/s on the wall or ceiling.

### **Some DOs and DON'Ts:**

- ✗ **Don't** try and learn too many words at once. Practise a few at a time. Find out what works best for your child - it might be one or two or as many as four or five.
- ✗ **Don't** expect your child to perform perfectly every time.
- ✗ **Don't** stick with just one method – What works with one word may not work with another. You child will help you know what works best for them.
- ✓ **Do** revisit words your child has learnt before.
- ✓ **Do** encourage your child to use words learnt in their writing at home and at school (and not just in isolation).
- ✓ **Do** help your child as often as you are able (but **don't** over do it!).
- ✓ **Do** make learning spellings fun.

**Together we can help your child develop  
their ability to spell words correctly.**