

Spelling Strategies

WHAT IS A SPELLING STRATEGY?

- **A** spelling strategy is a means for a child or young person to retrieve an accurate spelling choice using a method compatible with their learning style. They may choose a different strategy for different words.
- **T**he child or young person should always choose their own strategy but this can only be done when they are aware of the different options.
- **E**ffective spelling strategies enable the child or young person to retain the sequential look, shape, sound and feel of a word.
- **S**pelling should always be linked to a cursive style of handwriting so that the word is felt by the hand movements (kinaesthetic memory). The spellings children and young people say out loud are not always what they write down. Therefore spellings should always be written. After all we only learn to spell in order to communicate in writing.
- **A**ccurate spellings are more easily recalled if they link to the child or young person's own writing. The child or young person will remember them if they have a purpose and the child or young person really wants to use and recall that spelling.
- **L**earning spellings requires effective memory strategies. Children and young people need to be taught the different strategies of how to remember. **Do not just tell children and young people to 'learn them', but teach them how to learn and remember.**
- **R**egular revision is essential for the word to be embedded into the long term memory. Before any effective spelling can be achieved a child or young person must be able to hear the different phonemes (smallest unit of sound) within words.

LOOK, SAY, COVER, WRITE, CHECK

1. **LOOK** at the word and **SAY** the word out loud.
2. **COVER** the word.
3. **WRITE** the word, **SAYING** the letters names as you write - using joined writing (as appropriate).
4. **CHECK** the word. Is it correct? If so, well done!
5. Now **REPEAT** 3 times even if you got it right the first time.
6. Now **WRITE** some sentences using the word.

MNEMONICS

Create a **verse, rhyme or sentence** to help remember a spelling. Don't over use this strategy as children or young people then can't remember the different mnemonics!

eg

said: **Sally-Anne** is **daft**

or **Sally-Anne** is **dancing**

any: **Ants** never **yawn**

necessary: **One** collar and **two** sleeves

If the child or young person creates their own mnemonic, they are more likely to remember it.

USING HIGHLIGHTER PEN

Use highlighter pens to highlight tricky parts of the word. e.g. **appear**

Use different colour, especially if it is a polysyllabic word

e.g. **accompany**

BREAK THE WORD UP INTO SYLLABLES

1. **Listen** to the word.
2. **Clap** or **tap** out the syllables as you say each one. eg. **enjoyment** = **en-joy-ment** (3 syllables).
3. **Listen** to the phonemes (individual sounds) in each syllable.

4. **Write** all the phonemes you can hear in each syllable in joined script (as appropriate) as a whole word.

5. **Check** the word.

Don't forget to teach that **every syllable MUST contain at least one vowel** or the letter 'y'.

LETTER STRING PATTERNS

1. **Look** at the word e.g. 'stake'.

2. **Find** words which are part of the same family with the same letter strings

ake

cake

make

bake

3. **Say** the words.

4. **Make** sentences using the words.

5. Cover the original target word (stake).

6. **Write** the word orally stressing the highlighted parts.

7. **Check** the word.

TACTILE SPELLING

Just because you are learning to spell a word, it doesn't mean you need a pen and paper! Try using your finger and practise your spellings in a tray of salt or sand.

1. **Look** carefully at the word.

2. **Say** the word.

3. Say each letter **name**.

4. **Write** it in the salt/sand with a finger or pencil top.

5. Shake the tray to clear the salt/sand and write again.

6. Keep practising.

WORDS WITHIN WORDS

1. **Look** at the word.

2. Can you see any words hidden within the word?

3. There is a rat in separ**ate**.

4. **Say** the whole word.

5. **Say** the word **again** but stress the hidden word within the bigger word.
6. **Cover** the word.
7. **Say** and **write** the word, remembering the hidden word.
8. **Check** the word.

WORD SHAPES

This strategy is useful to learn a group of words. This is particularly liked by learners who have a strong visual learning channel.

1. **Look** at the word.
2. **Make** the word using magnetic or wooden letters.
3. **Draw** a box around the shape of the word **making**.
4. **Remove** the letters.
5. **Look** at the shape: Can you **visualise** the letters in the box? What are they?
6. **Check** you are right by putting the letters back in the 'box'.
7. Now **write** the word.
8. **Draw** a box around it. Does the box look like the first one?
9. **Check** the spelling.
10. Now try with a group of 5 different boxes. Can you recognise the word from the box shape.

RHYTHM

Some children learn by chanting words in rhythm; it's a fun way of remembering!
e.g. accommodate

a, double c, o, double m, o, date!

SAY IT INCORRECTLY!

e.g. bargain

Children are likely to forget the a, so pronounce it incorrectly, stressing the potential error: bar **gain**

Wed **nes** day