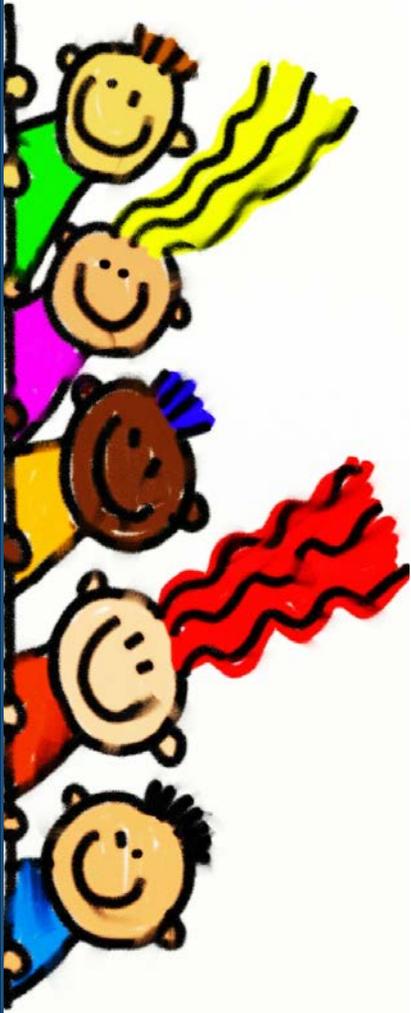




Writing Skills – Spelling and Punctuation

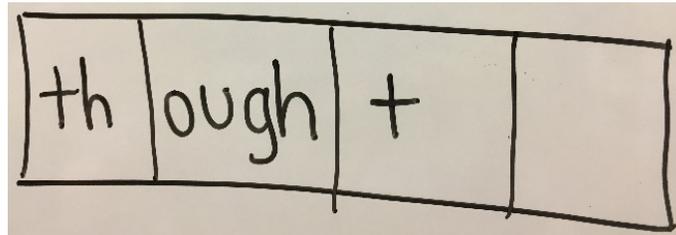
Spelling Strategies – if your child struggles to spell words, you can try these strategies:



Acknowledge that it's a challenge but it gets easier with practice– Just hearing you say that spelling can be tricky is reassuring. Encourage your child to keep trying; spelling does get easier the more you work at it. As an added bonus, the more words your child learns to spell, the easier it will be to learn to spell new words.

Encourage a good (not random) guess – Ask your child to make a good guess by slowly saying each sound in the word as they write it on a whiteboard or scrap paper.

Help your child to remember that a single sound in the English language can be spelled with one, two, three or four letters. In the word **go** the /o/ sound is spelled with the letter o. In the word **though**, the /o/ sound is spelled **ough**. Remember, whenever you see a letter in // marks, you say the SOUND rather than saying the letter name. Putting the sounds in boxes can help your child see how each sound is spelled.



It's also helpful to remind your child that most sounds can be spelled several ways. All of the words below have the /e/ sound, as in **me**.

see baby leaf Pete either key movie

In addition, some letters and letter combinations make multiple sounds. Listen carefully to the sound the letter **o** makes in each of these words:

on go off do lesson

Helping your child listen carefully for each individual sound in the word is the critical first step. Helping them remember how to spell each sound in that word is next.

Use a reference tool – There are some general guidelines for spelling, although there will always be exceptions to any “rule” in spelling. A guide to spelling all the different sounds in the English language can be very helpful as your child is writing. Ask your child’s teacher for one if spelling is a challenge for your child.

The 44 Phonemes		
Following is a list of the 44 phonemes along with the letters or groups of letters that represent those sounds.		
Phoneme (speech sound)	Graphemes** (letters or groups of letters representing the most common spellings for the individual phonemes)	Examples
Consonant Sounds:		
1. /b/	b, bb	big, rubber
2. /d/	d, dd, ed	dog, add, filed
3. /f/	f, ph	fish, phone
4. /g/	g, gg	go, egg
5. /h/	h	hat
6. /j/	j, g, ge, dge	jet, cage, large, judge
7. /k/	c, k, ck, ch, cc, que	cat, kitten, duck, school, occur, antique, cheese
8. /l/	l, ll	leg, bell
9. /m/	m, mm, mb	mad, hammer, lamb
10. /n/	n, nn, kn, gn	no, dinner, knee, gnome
11. /p/	p, pp	pen, apple
12. /r/	r, rr, wr	run, marry, write
13. /s/	s, ss, se, c, ce, sc	sun, mouse, dress, city, ice, science
14. /t/	t, tt, ed	top, letter, stopped
15. /v/	v, ve	vet, give
16. /w/	w	wet, win, swim
17. /y/	y, i	yes, onion
18. /z/	z, zz, ze, s, se, x	zip, fizz, sneeze, laser, is, was, please, Xerox, xiphophore

Source: *Orchestrating Success in Reading* by Debra Rutland (2002)



S: Spelling



Rule	Example
All words: Every word or part of a word has a vowel sound.	<i>mat, stop, pin, log, tug, water, farmer, open</i>
CVC words: If a single vowel is surrounded by consonants, it usually has a short sound.	<i>fat, hen, slip, hop, bug</i>
VCe words: If the e sits at the end of a word, the vowel says its name.	<i>made, time, hope, cube</i>
Tricky words: Some words are spelled differently but sound alike. It is very helpful to learn these words by sight.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The two girls are too tired to swim. A dog wags its tail when it's happy. They're standing there by their house. Your smile shows you're happy.
Irregular past tense verbs: Some verbs are not changed to past tense by adding -d or -ed.	<i>get/got, hide/hid, tel/told, sing/sang, buy/bought, see/saw, run/ran, speak/spoke, take/took</i>
Irregular plural nouns: Some nouns are not changed to plural by adding -s or -es.	<i>mouse/mice, tooth/teeth, child/children, foot/feet, deer/deer, person/people</i>

Memorizing Spelling Words – Many common words are used so often it’s helpful to memorize how to spell them. The Copy, Cover, and Compare strategy is highly effective for memorizing how to spell words.

COPY, COVER, and COMPARE

- Copy spelling word from list onto your paper
- Check for accuracy
 - Correct – go to step 3
 - Wrong – cross out and repeat steps 1 and 2
- Cover newly-copied word with blank index card or your hand
- Write the word again, spelling from memory
- Uncover the copied word and check for accuracy
 - Correct – go to next word
 - Wrong – cross out and repeat steps 4 and 5

Capitalization and Punctuation – Part of spelling is knowing when to capitalize the first letter of a word. Another skills to help your child with is how to add punctuation marks to the end and in the middle of sentences. Your child’s teacher can provide short guides to the rules for punctuation and capitalization. The best strategy is to help your child make corrections on their own writing.

C: Capitalization	
Rule	Example
Capitalize the first word in a sentence.	The elephant jumped on the chair.
Capitalize the names of people.	I like to dance with Maria .
Capitalize the names of places.	Our school is on Pine Street .
Capitalize the days of the week.	My birthday is on Tuesday .
Capitalize months of the year.	His birthday is in June .
Capitalize the names of holidays.	My favorite holiday is Halloween .
Capitalize the names of cities.	Jim lives in Boston .
Capitalize the names of states.	He moved from New York to Texas .
Capitalize the names of countries.	She goes to Canada every summer.
Capitalize the names of teams.	The Giants are my favorite team.
Capitalize the names of organizations.	My favorite sport is Little League baseball.
Capitalize important words in the titles of books.	One of my favorite books is the title The Wolf by Scott Phillips .

P: Punctuation	
Rule	Example
Statements and facts end with a period.	Sally likes to ride the bicycle.
Questions end with a question mark.	Who is our president?
Sentences with strong feeling end with an exclamation point.	This is the best TV show ever!
Commas are used in lists.	I was born on June 30, 2006.
Commas separate three or more words in a list.	Don't forget salt, sugar, nuts, and milk.
Commas are used in greetings if written.	Dear Maria,
Commas are used in closing letters.	Sincerely, Bob
An apostrophe shows who owns something.	My dad's truck is red.
An apostrophe is used in contractions.	That's coming. That's coming.

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