

How to support your child with spelling

Read with (and to) your child regularly

Encourage them to spell words orally before writing them down

Trace words

Make words using playdoh, magnetic letters, pipe cleaners

Write the word without a pen! (Use just finger in the air, finger paint, shaving foam, sand etc.)

Visualisation – encourage your child to ‘take a picture’ of a word (with an imaginary camera). Then ask them to look at the camera and spell the word aloud

Write tricky words on post-it notes and stick them around the house (in the fridge, on the mirror, tv etc.)

Make it physical (clap/jump as they say each letter in the word)

Tell your child that they are the teacher and ask them to teach you how to spell the words

Write a sentence for your child to read and ask them if they can spot the spelling mistake

When spelling, encourage your child to think about what “looks right”

Have fun trying out different options...wipe clean whiteboards are good for trying out spellings, e.g:

tray

trai

boy

boi

throat

throwt

Treasure hunt – hide words around the house for your child to find

Spelling race – see how many times your child can write down a word in 30 seconds

Create own mnemonics/rhymes

Spelling Rules

Help your child to learn spelling rules. There will always be exceptions, but they work most of the time:

- Most question words start 'wh'
- i before e except after c
- Add 's' for plurals except those that end in 's', 'x', 'z', 'ch' and 'sh', when you add 'es'
- Nouns ending in 'y' change to 'ies'
- Use 'ce' for nouns and 'se' for verbs (you advise with advice)
- When adding 'ing' or 'ed', double the last consonant after a short vowel sound (so drop becomes dropping or dropped)
- Don't drop the final 'e' when you add 'ly' ('comely'), but do drop it to add 'ing' ('coming')
- **le** is much more common than **al** or **el**
- the -cian suffix refers to a person doing that job (e.g. musician, electrician)

Spelling Tips – think of your own ways of remembering words

- Find words within the word (there's a 'hen' in 'when'!)
- You **hear** with your **ear**.
- The word separate has "**a rat**" in it (separate).
- Donkeys, monkeys - There are **keys** in donkeys and monkeys.
- The word **here** is also in its opposite **there**.
- There is no word in English ending in -full except full.

thankful

grateful

spoonful

Other ways to learn spellings

- Break the word up into smaller parts (Wed + nes + day = Wednesday)
- Break the word up into sounds (th-a-n-k)
- Make up a silly sentence using the letters (big elephants cause accidents under small elephants spells 'because')
- Say the word as it is written (like 'knight')
- Find a word that rhymes with it: is the spelling the same?
- Identify word roots, derivations and spelling patterns e.g. sign, signature, signal
- Look at the core of a word and add suffixes/prefixes