

# Helping Your Child with Spelling and Writing

This booklet contains tips and ideas to help your child to learn their spellings  
and to write in a fun and purposeful way



Created by the Cornwall Cognition and Learning Service,  
Lanner Primary School, Treloweth Primary School and St Day  
Primary School



## Working in partnership with your child's school



*Working with your child's school is so important. The school will want to help you to help your child. If you are concerned about your child's progress, please speak to the class teacher and/or SENDCo.*

### **1. Arrange to meet your child's teacher.**

- As soon as the school year starts, find a way to meet your child's teacher.
- Ask your child's teacher who else can help you and your child or visit the school website.



### **2. Attend parent meetings; let your child's teacher know if you have any worries.**

- Write parent meeting dates onto your calendar as soon as you get them.
- You can bring a friend to support you if you are anxious or have to attend on your own.
- You can also ask to meet with your child's teacher at any time during the year. If you have a concern and can't meet face-to-face, send the teacher a short note or set up a time to talk on the phone.

## **Remember**

### 3. Do ask questions.

- If something concerns you about your child's learning or behaviour, discuss your worries with the class teacher.



### 4. Encourage your child to recognise the importance of homework.

- Let your child know that you think education is important and that homework needs to be done each day.
- You can help your child with homework by finding them a quiet, comfortable place to work in, setting a regular time for homework, and removing distractions such as the t.v. and mobile phones during homework time.



### 5. Find homework help for your child if needed.

- If it is difficult for you to help your child with homework or projects, see if you can find someone else who can help. Speak to the school to see if they can help you.
- Ask your child's school if they offer a homework club. Or, see if an older pupil, family member or friend can help. Ask the school for resources to support if needed.





## Supporting your child's learning at home

### **1. Be positive about your child's learning.**

- This can help your child to develop a positive attitude toward school. It will also build their confidence as a learner.



### **2. Talk with your child.**

- Make time to talk with and listen to your child every day.
- Talking and listening are so important and will support your child's learning.
- It's also important for you to show your child that you're interested in what he or she has to say.



### **3. Be aware of your child's t.v, computer game and internet use.**

- Encourage your child to have set 'technology time' e.g. the first hour that they are home from school is their 'technology time'.



#### 4. Encourage your child to read.

- Helping your child to become a reader is one of the most important things you can do to help your child to succeed in school.
- Reading helps children in all school subjects.
- Encourage your child to use the library and visit bookshops.



#### 5. Encourage independence in your child.

- Taking responsibility and working independently are important qualities for school success.
- You can help your child by making it clear to your child that they have to take responsibility for what they do, both at home and at school.
- Help your child to prepare for each school day, making sure that they have all of the equipment they need.



#### 6. Have fun! Enjoy the time you spend with your child.



Take a moment to celebrate your child:



Write down five amazing things about your child:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.







## A brief overview of spelling

Spelling is more difficult than reading. **Why is that?** Learning to spell and learning to read are based on much of the same knowledge, but spelling requires additional skills that are unique to spelling.

## Strategies for learning to spell

Children learn in different ways which is why teaching them means using a range of approaches. This will also help them when applying spelling because they will see the word in different contexts. Here are some spelling strategies:

- Listening for the sounds and breaking them down
- Breaking a word into syllables (clap them out, tap them out)
- Using rhymes, mnemonics and songs to remember
- Using visual approaches e.g. 'word shape', 'bubble writing'
- Being multi-sensory e.g. 'word painting'
- Using verbal and social e.g. 'spelling tennis'
- Kinaesthetic and physical e.g. 'spell jump'

## Spelling is more difficult than reading for three reasons

- **Reading involves recognising words, while spelling involves reproducing words (recall).** Producing the spelling of a word is more difficult than recognising a word.
- **There are more possible spellings for most words than there are possible ways to read them.** In English, we have 26 letters, but we have 45 sounds and more than 250 ways to spell these sounds. For example, the sound of /j/ can be spelled J, G, and DGE.
- **Children spend less time spelling than they do reading. Less practice time equals more difficulty.** Since sounds can be spelled in many different ways, children need time to practise, along with learning spelling rules and patterns. In a school, more time is spent on teaching reading than teaching spelling. Lack of practice, together with the fact that spelling is TRICKY, means we have many children who struggle to spell.



## A brief overview of writing

Writing is a really important skill. It is much more than just writing words down on a piece of paper. Writing is a way of communicating; it plays an important role in your child's life—both in and out of the classroom.

You can help your child to develop their writing skills by encouraging them to carry out writing activities which are simple and fun.

Writing should be seen as an enjoyable fun experience. Developing a child's mark making skills in the early years will allow them to learn to control a pencil in such a way that it becomes automatic.

Stages of writing development (this will differ slightly for every child):



First of all, children form lines and dots



Children then develop the ability to copy a mark made by others



Gradually curves and circles appear



Learning to draw circles anticlockwise is important when forming letters



Children then develop the ability to copy straight lines/curves



Finally they use straight lines and curves to form symbols

Your child will increasingly be able to form their letters with more control.

They can practise by writing for a purpose, such as writing out cards.

It is likely that they will naturally begin to use either their left or right hand more when writing.







## Menu of spelling activities:

Use cooked spaghetti to form your spellings	Paint your spellings	Write your spellings with your eyes closed
Make your spellings out of plasticine/play dough	Use pipe cleaners to make your spelling words	Spell out your spellings and ask someone to write them down for you
Write your spellings on a whiteboard...then rub them off!	Use your iPad/tablet/laptop to write out your spellings	Write your spellings in the sand using your fingers



## Menu of writing activities:

Write for two minutes - use a stop watch. Don't worry about spelling or punctuation!	Write a note to a family member...or a pet...or a favourite toy	Make a list of your favourite foods - animals...pop stars...etc.
Create a menu for your family dinner tonight!	Cut a picture from an old magazine and write a story about the picture	Find a really strange (but safe) place to write in
Forget about reading...just for tonight!	See if you can sneak in some writing without anyone noticing!	Write five words to describe you (or your mum/dad/pet)

## Fun ways to practise your spellings!

### Spelling Rainbows

Choose your 3 favourite crayons to rainbow write your spelling words. Write each word first in pencil. Then trace over each word three times. Use different colour crayons each time.



### Silly Sentences

Write ten silly sentences using a spelling word in each sentence. Please underline your spelling words! Write your sentences neatly!

**Example** My dog wears a blue and purple dress when he takes a bath.



### Backwards Words

Write your spelling words forwards and then backwards.

**Examples:**

where = erehw

colour = ruoloc



### Pyramid Writing

Pyramid write 10 of your spelling words.

When you are finished, draw a pyramid around your word.

h

h o

h o m

h o m e



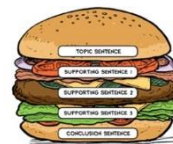
### ABC Order

Write your spelling words in alphabetical order.



### Spelling Paragraph

Write a paragraph using ALL of your spelling words. Underline your spelling words.



### Draw and Label

Draw and label ten of your spelling words neatly. You **must** **colour** your drawings and labels. Don't forget to add detail. Do your very best work!



### Adding My Words

1. Choose ten spelling words.
2. Add up each spelling word.
3. Write them neatly.

**\*Consonants are worth 10**

**\*Vowels are worth 5**

**Example**

Said =  $10 + 5 + 5 + 10 = 30$

There =  $10 + 10 + 5 + 10 + 5 = 40$



## Spelling Tips for Parents from Parents

(taken from <http://www.theschoolrun.com>)

"I find the best way to learn new words is to write them over and over again. To make it more interesting for my daughter, we don't just use pencil and paper - she also practises with bath crayons on the wall tiles, a mini whiteboard and pavement chalks in the garden." - **Miriam, mum to Olivia, 7**



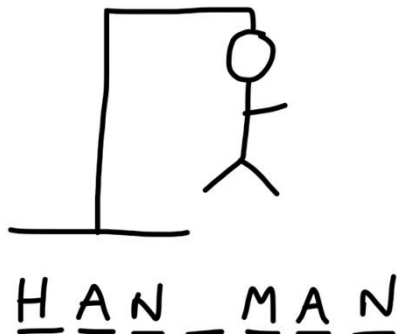
"I pronounce my children's spelling words phonetically to help them learn them. For example, carpet is 'car-pet' rather than 'car-pit' and kitchen is 'kit-chen.' It has become a family joke: they call it Mummy language!" - **Amanda, mum to Kiera, 9, and Harry, 6**



"We use magnetic fridge letters to help Archie learn his spellings. At the start of the week, I pick out the letters for him and put them in the right order, then as he gets more familiar with the words I get him to find the letters himself." - **Erin, mum to Archie, 6, and Charlie, 4**



"Word puzzles help my children with their spellings. I often make word searches or crosswords using their weekly words, and we play Hangman with them, too." - **Jamila, mum to Hasna, 10, and Hani, 7**



"Mnemonics work well for my twins. We use all the tried-and-tested ones, such as 'O U Lucky Duck' for words like 'could' and 'should', but also make up our own, like 'Balloons Always Land Lightly On Our Noses' for 'balloon'." - **Carrie, mum to Elizabeth and Madeleine, 7, and Joseph, 4**



"I write my daughter's words on sticky notes and put them in places where I know she'll see them often, such as in her lunch box and on her mirror. She can then glance at them in passing, which helps them sink in." - **Nicky, mum to Evie, 6**



## Fun ways to practise your writing!

## Sending a message

Leave notes on pillows, desks, mirrors for your family. Ask them to write you a note in return. A family chalkboard or message board is a great way to write messages.



## Give your writing as a gift

For birthday presents or for other gifts,  
write a letter or a story instead of giving a  
present.



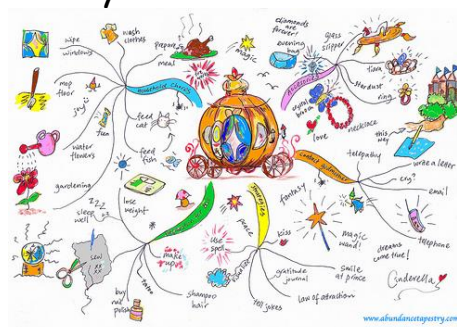
## Journals

Ask your mum or dad for a special journal or notebook. Write in your journal as often as possible.



## Mind maps

If you're finding writing tricky, use a mind map to record your ideas.



## Make a Menu

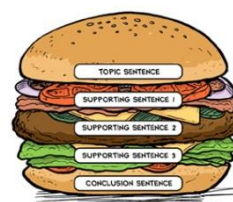
Design and write the menu for a family dinner.  
Ask for help with some of the tricky words if you need to.

The image displays three menu templates. The first template, titled 'Food Menu', has three columns: 'Starters', 'Main Courses', and 'Desserts'. The second template, also titled 'Food Menu', has three columns: 'Starters', 'Main Courses', and 'Desserts'. The third template, titled 'Food Menu', has three columns: 'Starters', 'Main Courses', and 'Desserts'.

## Spelling Paragraph

Write a paragraph using *ALL* of your spelling words. Be sure to underline your spelling words in your paragraph.

**Don't forget a topic sentence and a concluding sentence.**





## Writing Tips for Parents

(adapted from [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org))

Find ways to read, write, and tell stories together with your child. Always celebrate your child's writing. The tips below offer some fun ways in which you can help your child to become a happy and confident writer. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

### Tell family tales

Children love to hear stories about their family. Talk about a funny thing that happened when you were young. Encourage them to record the stories in different ways.



### Create a writing toolbox

Fill a box with exciting drawing and writing materials. Find opportunities for your child to write, such as a shopping list, thank you notes or birthday cards.



### Get drawing!

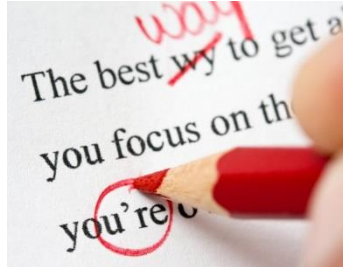
Writing a story isn't always just about the words. Creating comic books, picture books and illustrated stories can let your child use their artistic talents too. Or you could move from page to screen and get them coding to create an animated tale.





### One more time with feeling

When your child is reading their work back, ask them to re-read a sentence at a time. How can they make it better? Could they choose a different word for e.g. 'said' or 'nice'? Help them to create a checklist for their work e.g. 'Do I have capital letters at the start of my sentences? Yes/No'



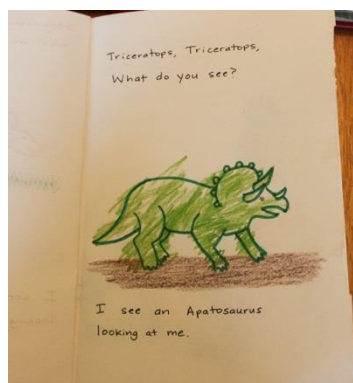
### Invite an author to class

Work with your child's school to see if an author can visit to talk to your child's class about the writing process. Children often think they aren't 'clever' enough if they can't sit down and write a perfect story on the first try.



### Create a book together

Fold pieces of paper in half and staple them to make a book. Ask your child to write sentences on each page and add his or her own illustrations.



## Useful weblinks and resources:

<https://www.nessy.com/uk/> - computer software. Comes well-recommended by other parents and you can download it for free for a trial period.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks2/english/spelling\\_grammar/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks2/english/spelling_grammar/) - KS2 focus

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/7-11-years/spelling-and-grammar> - games that can be played online

<http://suzieshomeeducationideas.blogspot.co.uk/2013/09/25-multi-sensory-activities-for.html> - multisensory ways to learn spellings

<http://www.communication4all.co.uk/http/ClassroomBasics.htm> - downloadable alphabet arc (near the bottom of the page)

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/writing-activities/5-easy-ways-to-support-writing-home> - different ways of approaching writing

<http://resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/literacy.html> - school website with many word/spelling games (also has other topic areas)

<https://www.theschoolrun.com/creative-writing-for-children> - ideas to make writing more fun

<http://www.theschoolrun.com/9-spelling-strategies-real-parents> - strategies and links to games to make the learning of spellings more fun and interactive

<http://www.readingrockets.org/teaching/reading-basics/spelling> - spelling strategies, app recommendations and much more!

200 Tricky Spellings in Cartoons: Visual Mnemonics for Everyone by Lidia Stanton (available on Amazon for £5.99)

10 Minutes A Day Spelling KS1 (English Made Easy Ks1 and KS2) by Carol Vorderman (available on Amazon for around £5 each)

The Spelling Rule Book (available on Amazon at around £11-£12)