



Spelling Games and Activities



Information for Parents

The Teaching of Spelling

Spelling is a key component in the teaching of literacy, and is given a high priority through a whole school approach. To become successful spellers, pupils need to be taught in a **fun, motivating and interactive** manner using a wide variety of activities and should include the promotion of collaborative learning,

Mortlach Spelling Programme

- ✓ Pupils, throughout the whole school, will be taught to spell in a systematic approach, in using a **look, say, cover, write, check** approach.
- ✓ Children in the early years will also be learning to spell through a phonic approach, 'Jolly Phonics'
- ✓ Teaching and learning will be monitored by the teacher week by week for difficulty and the number of words to be learned.
- ✓ At all stages of their learning, to establish the spelling/writing connection, your child will be provided with opportunities to relearn the words that they have misspelled in their own writing.
- ✓ At each stage, pupils will be given "Tricky Words" which are commonly used words which do not fit a spelling pattern



How can you help your child to spell better?

The following 'games' provide you with a range of strategies that you can use at home to consolidate spelling words. Your child will learn to spell easier, quicker and better if he/she is given short but fun activities on a regular basis.

These interactive and collaborative games are more effective than the usual worksheet or sentences and will help your child become a more independent and focused learner.

Useful Website:

- www.spellingcity.com



The following activities may be used at ALL stages of the school.

Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check - SHOW ME

Work as a pair. Both of you look at the same word. Cover the word and then individually write the word on a piece of paper. Reveal the word 'one two three, show me' and check that you each have the same spelling. This is repeated with every word on the list. This is a quick activity that is very effective.

Spelling Tennis

You may have seen this one on the television programme 'hardspell'. Older children really enjoy this one as it can be quite challenging. Work with your child. One of you takes the role of both 'reader' and 'checker', the other spells the word by saying **alternative** letters until the whole word is spelt. If a mistake is made, the checker stops the game and shows them the correct spelling. The word is then spelt again and then put to the bottom of the pile. Correct words are discarded.

Hangman

This is played in the traditional manner using pre-drawn gallows and the spelling words. Your child chooses a word from their list, then turns the list over and draws the corresponding number of dashes (one dash for each letter of the word). The second player (parent) guesses a missing letter. If they are correct, it is written on the correct dash. If they are wrong a piece of the body is drawn in the gallows. If all pieces of the body (head, body, two arms and two legs) are drawn before the word is guessed, the player loses. Your child **MUST** write the word correctly to win. Only then can the list be turned over and checked. You can take turns with this game.

Alphabetical Order

Your child writes out their spelling list in alphabetical order. This activity is best used with P3-7 aged children. It is particularly effective at making them look closely at the spelling of words that begin with the same letter eg when learning common words.

Word search

Using squared paper, your child makes a word search with their spelling words included. Words are **NOT** written out underneath. They need to look really closely to make sure that they haven't made a mistake and that they have included all their words. For the **next** spelling session, word searches are swapped with another member of your child's spelling group. Words are ringed and then written out underneath. How many can they find? They are then swapped back and marked by the original owner of the word search.

Silly Story

Work as a pair with your child. Ask your child to write a short story (about a paragraph) using as many of their spelling words as possible. Again, set a time limit of about 10 - 25 minutes. The stories are usually very silly so children enjoy this activity.

Noughts and Crosses

In pairs, your child gives you their list of spellings and you ask him/her to spell one of the words. If the word is spelt correctly, the appropriate mark is placed on a noughts and crosses grid. If wrong, no mark is written, but their mistake explained and the correct spelling shown. Take turn about at spelling the words. 10-15 minutes time limit is probably long enough to play several games.

Magnetic Letters

Working with a partner, younger pupils would first look at a word from their list or from a flash card, cover it and then make their word using magnetic letters. This would continue until all the words are displayed. Another pair would then be asked to check their spellings.

Definitions

Make this exercise a more worthwhile learning experience. you will need a dictionary to find and write the definition of each word. If possible use more than one dictionary to compare different definitions of a word for example on the internet.

Speedy Spelling

Using a timer, you have to see how many times you can write the word in the time limit. You can play this by yourself or with a partner.

Rainbow Writing

Each letter of the word must be written in a different colour.
Alternatively, write each complete word in one of the colours of the rainbow.

Draw a picture

Draw an illustration of the word
Eg. elephant



Word Families

Take one of your spelling words and find other words that would be in the 'family'.
Eg. Rain = pain, Spain, explain, strain, brain



The Following activities are more suitable for Upper Stage Classes

Mnemonics

Show your child the example of a mnemonic, explain how they are used e.g. **big** elephants **can** always **understand** **small** elephants **because**.

Working with a partner, your child tries to make up a mnemonic for half of the trickiest spelling words. A time limit should be set for 20 minutes.

Guess the word

Choose one of their spelling words, and write one letter on a sheet of paper at a time. You can begin **anywhere** in the word- it does not have to be at the beginning. Your child tries to guess the word after each letter is added. If they guess correctly, they must spell the whole word to win a pre-determined number of points. The fewer letters that have been given – the more points to be won.

Words Within Words

Your child tries to find smaller words inside each of their spelling words without rearranging the letters. E.g. using the word 'practising', you could find –'act' 'sing' 'in' 'is'. Set a time limit, say 15 - 25 minutes, for them to work individually to find as many words as possible using all their spelling words. Finish off with an oral feedback session to pull all their suggestions together.

Kim's Game

Spelling words are written on pieces of paper and laid out on the table. Your child studies the words. He/she then looks away and you remove **one of** the cards. Your child turns back, looks at the remaining cards and has 2 minutes (use an egg timer) to write the missing word on a sheet of paper, this is kept hidden. Towards the end of the game all the guesses are then revealed by your child at the same time. If they are correct, they win a point, but only if the word is spelt correctly!

Crossword

Using squared paper, your child makes a crossword using their spelling words. Definitions are written below to form the clues. Your child may have already written the definitions during a previous spelling session.

Syllables

With your child, split their spelling words into syllables eg. beau-ti-ful. (Each syllable must contain a vowel.) Again close attention to detail is needed so it helps them to retain more difficult spellings.



Flash cards

This is similar to the 'show me' activity. Quickly write out words on pieces of paper making sure that they have the correct spellings. Read aloud a word, while your child writes the same word down on a piece of paper. This time when you say 'show me' both of you show the correct spelling noted on the pieces of paper. You can take turns reading or spelling.

Spelling Aloud

Using pieces of paper as above, read a word out aloud. Your child spells the word out loud. If they spell correctly, they 'win' the card. If they are incorrect, the card is put to the bottom of the pile. You can take turns and the winner is the one who has most cards at the end of the game.

Muddled Letters

The adult writes all the spelling words in a muddled up fashion eg 'beautiful' could be written 'befitualu'. It is better if they always put the initial letter in the correct place. This is a great activity, as children have to scrutinise each word to make sure they have got all the correct letters. Without looking at the correct list, your child has to rewrite each word correctly.

Dictionary Race

Your child will need a dictionary. Your child calls out one of their spelling words which is then hidden. The idea is to be the first to locate the word in the dictionary. This not only helps them to remember how to spell, it is also excellent for practising dictionary skills. You can turn it into a game by giving them counters to win.

Find the Word

This is a good activity for younger pupils who are learning how to spell High Frequency words. Each pair is given a highlighter pen and piece of text, for example a newspaper or advert. The teacher writes a few common words on the blackboard and the children highlight as many as they can find. Younger children may need to be given a highlighter each or you may ask that each common word is highlighted using a different colour.

