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Teaching Spelling: An Integrated Developmental Approach within the First Grade Reading and Writing Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING SPELLING: AN INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH WITHIN THE FIRST GRADE READING AND WRITING CURRICULUM

by

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May, 2000

There has been extensive research concerning various instructional procedures for the acquisition of spelling skills. Many research-based principles of effective spelling instruction have emerged from one of two contrasting models for the development of spelling competence. Traditionally, spelling has been taught with textbooks and workbooks. Students followed a structured program with the goal of learning to spell the weekly list of words. According to the traditional model, spelling is taught as a separate curriculum.

Advocates for spelling reform suggest spelling instruction should be based on the understanding of the developmental nature of the child. This project report provides guidelines and strategies for implementing a developmentally-based spelling curriculum in which writing is emphasized.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Background of the Project	1
Introduction	1
Significance of the Project	1
Purpose of the Project	3
Limitations of the Project	3
Definitions of Terms	4
Overview of the Remainder of the Project	5
Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature	7
Introduction	7
The Essential Academic Learning Requirements	8
Spelling Development in Early Childhood	8
Research-Based Strategies	14
Summary	18
Chapter Three: Procedures of the Project	20
Chapter Four: The Project	22
Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations	88
Summary	88
Conclusions	89

Recommendations	90
References	92

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

Spelling is a frequently investigated curriculum area. There has been extensive research concerning various instructional procedures for the acquisition of spelling skills (Suites, 1998; Abouzeid, Gloodgood, & Invernizze, 1997; Cramer, 1998; Rosencrans, 1998). Traditionally, spelling has been taught with textbooks and workbooks. Students followed a structured program with the goal of learning to spell a new list of words each week. Advocates for reform in the teaching of spelling curriculum suggest spelling instruction should be based on the developmental growth of the student (Bear & Templeton, 1998; Cramer, 1998; Rosencrans, 1998). Understanding how words are spelled is a means to more proficient writing and reading. To appreciate fully how words work in context, spelling instruction should include word study within the reading and writing curriculum. We should not just teach words (Bear & Templeton, 1998). The knowledge of processes and strategies for examining and thinking about words should be integrated within the reading and writing curriculum (Bear & Templeton, 1998). In word study and spelling instruction, students examine shades of sound, structure, and meaning. This knowledge, in turn, is applied to new words students encounter in reading (Bear & Templeton, 1998).

Significance of the Project

Spelling is often treated as an isolated subject, apart from purposeful writing. First grade students learn the meaning and spelling of eight frequently used words weekly.

This particular approach to spelling instruction begins during the month of January at Hilton Elementary School located in Zillah, Washington. However, it has been observed by the author, as well as by her first grade teaching colleagues, that the transfer of learning these weekly spelling words does not occur with high success across the reading and writing curriculum. How can students be successful with weekly spelling tests and not apply the learned skills in writing and reading? There is no single, simple answer. Teachers need to understand the kinds of information about words that the spelling system represents, and they need to understand the developmental course that children follow as they learn the spelling system (Bear & Templeton 1998).

A preliminary review of literature indicates that a considerable amount of research addresses developmental spelling and its role in spelling instruction (Bear & Templeton, 1998; Fresch & Wheaton, 1997; Cramer, 1998; Rosencrans, 1998). Research also indicates spelling should be integrated with the teaching of reading and writing (Suits, 1998; Abouzeid, Gloodgood, & Invernizze, 1997; Fresch & Wheaton, 1997; Manning, 1998).

The problem is twofold: first, student writing often serves as a glaring example of the ineffectiveness of teaching spelling as an isolated subject. The author has observed from daily contact with her own students, that recognition of learned spelling words within the reading curriculum does not occur with high success. Second, the implementation of a more effective spelling curriculum to replace the traditional approach of isolated spelling instruction with one that integrates spelling instruction within reading and writing instruction and embraces the developmental nature of spelling

growth and word study is needed (Allen, 1998; Bear & Templeton, 1998; Cramer, 1998; and Shanahan, 1997).

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to integrate a developmentally based spelling curriculum within the current primary reading and writing curriculum at an elementary school in Eastern Washington. This project includes strategies and activities to be used as a guide for primary grade teachers in classrooms where writing is emphasized. It will include suggestions for word selection, sample lesson plans, teaching strategies and student learning opportunities and techniques to encourage home involvement, as well as suggestions for effective recording and assessment methods.

Limitations of the Project

The limitations of this project are:

1. This project is aimed at teachers of the primary age student interested in implementing a non-traditional, developmental spelling program.
2. This project does not represent a complete primary level-spelling curriculum.
3. The time frame for implementation of this project is from the months of January through May.

Definition of Terms

In order to better understand the project, the following terms are defined:

Developmental Spelling: The development of knowledge about letters and sounds, letter patterns, and syllable patterns, and how meaning is directly represented through spelling (Bear & Templeton, 1998).

Inventive Spelling: The approximate spelling of a word focusing attention on the beginning, middle, and ending of a word (Cramer, 1998).

Meaning Derivation Stage: The ability to focus on spelling meaning rather than spelling sound. Words related in meaning are often related in sound (Cramer, 1998).

Metacognition: A student's awareness of a variety of strategies and the ability to select the most likely strategy and then monitor its effectiveness (Rosencrans, 1998).

Orthographic: Visual patterns in words are recalling letter sequences (Bear & Templeton, 1998).

Patterning: Sorting and categorizing pictures and objects (Bear, & Templeton, 1998).

Patterns Within Words Stage: The ability to manipulate more complex letter patterns such as silent vowels, short and long vowel patterns, and consonant blends and diagraphs (Cramer, 1998).

Phonetic Stage: Also know as letter-name stage. Letter-sound connections are made that result in real alphabetic writing (Cramer, 1998).

Prephonetic Stage: Pictures, scribbling, and random writing of letters. An absence of letter-sound connections (Cramer, 1998).

Stages of Spelling: Separate developmental processes through which a student passes while acquiring spelling knowledge (Cramer, 1998).

Syllable Juncture: The place within a word where syllables meet. Letters are often dropped, doubled, or changed at the juncture of syllables (Cramer, 1998).

Syllable Juncture Stage: The ability to apply syllable juncture principles of doubling, dropping, or changing letters (Cramer, 1998).

Word Banks: A collection of known sight words drawn from the student's reading and writing experiences (Cramer, 1998).

Word Families: Predictable short vowel, CVC (consonant vowel consonant) spelling patterns (Bear & Templeton, 1998).

Word Sorts: Comparing and contrasting words, thinking how they are alike and different (Bear, & Templeton, 1998).

Word Study: Processes and strategies taught by teachers and used by students to examine and think about the words that are read and written. Word study integrates spelling, phonics, and vocabulary instruction (Bear, & Templeton, 1998).

Overview of the Remainder of the Project

Chapter Two is a review of the related literature on integrating spelling with the reading and writing curriculum. Chapter Three outlines the procedure undertaken by the author to collect information about the developmental spelling curriculum. Chapter Four offers strategies, activities, and sample lesson plans to assist primary grade teachers interested in integrating a developmental spelling curriculum within the reading and

writing curriculum. Chapter Five summarizes the project, presents conclusions, and makes recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Spelling is an important aspect of language that permeates all literacy-related activities. Knowledge of the language facilitates our ability to communicate. English is both logical and fascinating. Words are learned through using and manipulating the language, not memorizing it (Fresch & Wheaton, 1997). The American public takes spelling seriously. Spelling has long been symbolic of achievement in literacy (Cramer, 1998). According to Suits (1998),

Spelling is not an isolated subject. It is interlinked with reading and writing. I teach spelling through reading and writing. I reinforce spelling skills by having students proofread their writing pieces, look at word patterns in reading . . . look for words within words . . . sound out words in reading, and picture words in their heads. On their own, students discovered the connection between reading, writing, and spelling. (p. 152)

Spelling is one of the indicators of language arts development. Teachers can examine students' writing for spelling insights and not rely totally on spelling tests. Abouzeid, Bloodgood, and Invernizzi (1997) concur that "teaching students how spelling represents meaning and parts of speech strengthens language arts instruction . . . by helping students learn about and reflect on language use" (p. 185).

The main goal of a primary spelling curriculum should be to help the students see the connection between spelling, reading, and writing. Each of these curricula supports the other. The students need to see that spelling itself is also a component of reading and

writing. Students will not understand the connection if spelling is taught as an isolated subject. To attain this goal, the author examined three areas. The first was The Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) published by the Washington State Commission on Student Learning (WSCSL). The second was spelling development in early childhood and the stages of developmental spelling knowledge that children follow as they learn the spelling system, and third, research-based strategies integrating spelling with reading and writing at the primary level.

The Essential Academic Learning Requirements

The Washington State Commission on Student Learning (WSCSL) was created by the Washington State Legislature in 1994. It was initially a group of concerned parents, teachers, politicians, and businessmen. Their main concern was the apparent lack of reading, writing, and communication skills in the students graduating from our public high schools. They felt the academic standards required for graduation were not high enough. As a result, the WSCSL focused on reforming the way we teach. The WSCSL has published the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) for each subject. In the area of reading, the following requirements for spelling are stated:

1. The student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read.

To meet this standard, the student will:

- 1.1 use word recognition and word meaning skills and strategies such as phonics, context clues, picture clues, and word origins: roots, prefixes, and suffixes of words

In the area of writing, the following requirements for spelling are stated:

2. The student writes clearly and effectively.

To meet this standard the student will:

- 1.3 know and apply correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization

3. The student understands and uses the steps of the writing process.

- 3.4 edit-correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage

Spelling Development in Early Childhood

According to Cramer (1998), there are three foundational experiences that will help put children on the road to reading, writing, and spelling success: (1) listening language experiences, (2) oral language experiences, and (3) written language experiences.

Listening language experiences

Reading aloud accomplishes much of what is needed during the early years. Books should be available to the young child. Additionally, children should have access to materials with which to write and draw – pencils, paper, and crayons. Parents, mentors, and teachers should encourage the young child to enjoy books and praise the child's writing efforts.

Knowledge of letter names and sounds is related to success of learning to read, write, and spell. Knowing letter names makes it easier to learn letter sounds. Knowing letter names and sounds makes it possible to begin writing with invented spelling. Writing with invented spelling strengthens fluency and familiarity with letters, sounds, and words. The

result is a more successful introduction to reading, writing, and spelling. Learning to write the letters of the alphabet should begin early (Cramer, 1998).

Phonemic awareness, the ability to distinguish one speech sound from another, is essential. Once children can do this, they learn that speech sounds are represented in writing by letters or combinations of letters. Writing is one of the best ways to increase children's knowledge of letters and sounds (Cramer, 1968; Cramer, 1985; Stanovich, Cunningham & Cramer, 1984).

Oral language experiences

According to Carroll (1966), oral language learning requires no curriculum, books, or teachers. Learning happens naturally. Oral language is not "scoped and sequenced" into bite-sized pieces. Children learn to talk through listening and responding to the language of adults and peers.

Cramer (1998) recommends recording children's oral language in written form. It expresses their own words, ideas, and experiences. Children can almost always read their own language more easily than they can read the language of others.

When reading books aloud, help children understand how authors connect oral and written language. In order to read, write, and spell, children must learn the rules of written language as well as the rules of oral language.

Written Language Experiences

Written words are a series of letters bounded on both sides by spaces. They have three parts: letters, sounds, and meanings. Young children do not automatically know that these parts are needed to understand what a word actually is.

As early as age one, young children begin to scribble. It is a good idea to make paper and crayons available and to encourage this activity. It is the beginning of writing.

Talking to children about their drawing helps them to understand and make sense of their environment. Quite often there is a connection between the child's drawing and the attempted written language that often accompanies it (Cramer, 1998).

Children see letters and words everywhere in their world. Their attempts to make letters may occur as early as age two, but it is more common to see this development around the age of three.

Mock writing is not alphabetic. There is no connection between letters and sounds. Mock writing is a signal that children have discovered that written language has meaning.

Children learn to scribble, draw, print letters, mock write, and learn what a word is through the listening, oral, and written language experiences they receive at home, in preschool, or in kindergarten. Children who see others reading and writing learn how literacy can be a part of their lives. The modeling of reading and writing by parents and teachers can motivate the young child to want to have the same literacy experiences (Bear & Templeton, 1998).

Developmental spelling stages

Learning to spell is a developmental process. The names of the stages of spelling development describe the major feature of each stage. Although the names of stages differ from one researcher to another, the author has chosen to use the following names to describe each stage (Henderson, 1990):

1. Prephonetic
2. Phonetic

3. Patterns within words
4. Syllable juncture
5. Meaning derivation

The prephonetic stage is marked by an absence of letter-sound connections (Cramer, 1998). Concepts crucial to literacy, such as scribbles and random marks on paper, are formed during the prephonetic stage. Developmentally appropriate activities for this stage of spelling include reading aloud, educational toys, environmental print, drawing and labeling, writing names, and orally telling stories.

The phonetic stage marks the beginning of spelling literacy. Letter-sound connections are made that result in true alphabetic writing (Cramer, 1998). Henderson (1990) suggests that phonetic spellers are influenced by the letter name spelling strategy. If the sound of a letter in a word resembles the name of that letter, children choose that letter to spell the sound. According to Read (1971;1975), a linguist, surrounding speech sounds can influence how a word is spelled. The words children spell during the phonetic stage often include the letters one would have predicted. The invented spelling at this stage seldom involves random guessing. Developmentally appropriate activities during the phonetic stage of spelling include word banks, categorizing words, journal writing, and classroom publishing of student writing.

A third developmental stage of spelling is the patterns within words stage (Cramer, 1998). During this stage, children understand that spelling is not based on a simple one-to-one letter-sound correspondence. Students learn about long and short vowel patterns, and correctly spell consonant blends and diagraphs. Developmentally appropriate

activities during the patterns within words stage include teacher and student-directed word sorts and word study journals.

During the syllable juncture stage, children show significant progress in understanding and applying the rules for dropping, doubling, and changing letters (Cramer, 1998). By the time students reach this stage of spelling development, they have a basic spelling vocabulary and have control of many long and short vowel spelling patterns. Developmentally appropriate activities during this stage would include word study journals and the study of compound words.

The final stage of spelling development is the meaning derivation (Cramer, 1998). Words have an important spelling-meaning relationship. Words related in meaning are often related in spelling. The meaning derivation stage should also include vocabulary study as an essential part of the reading and spelling curriculum. Developmentally appropriate activities include the study of prefixes and writing activities that include current spelling words.

If children are going to be successful spellers, the process must be “demystified”. It is not magic, as many children think. As Palincsar and Ransom (1988) maintain, teachers need to change their classrooms from “mystery spots” to “thoughtful spots.” Expert spellers can identify a variety of strategies they use for spelling new words. These strategies range from visualizing the word, to saying it in parts, to sounding it out. These are strategies used while writing, not memorizing for a test. Graves (1976) states that when spelling is taught isolated from real writing, and the assessment of it is based solely on a weekly test, it is natural that children will think “spelling is for exercises, not writing.”

Spelling is a lot more than memorizing, and more than rules are needed to help students coordinate all this knowledge. Specific strategies are necessary to “activate spellers’ schemata of words and to prompt them, to check accuracy” (Wong, 1986, p.172). Teachers often assume that rules and knowledge will be applied in writing.

Children can be taught any number of rules or generalizations about our language, but to make sure the rules are actually applied, students must be taught efficient, systematic techniques for spelling unknown words (Graham & Miller, 1979).

Researched-Based Strategies

Wong (1992) has identified the strategies used by both good and poor spellers. We know that:

- Poor spellers report fewer strategies
- Good spellers use visual imagery
- Poor spellers sound words letter by letter
- Good spellers break words into parts (not necessarily syllables)
- Good spellers think about smaller, known parts of words
- Good spellers combine word segments with a visual image of the word
- Good spellers use active monitoring or visual inspection
- Good spellers actively pronounce words to cue auditory memory, and
- Good spellers tend to use phonics initially then add visual and semantic information (p. 152)

According to Rosencrans (1998) students need to know the “why” of spelling . There is no one single successful strategy that will achieve correct spelling for all words and for

all spellers. Spelling accuracy demands the selection of the most appropriate strategy for a given word in a given situation and then at least one back-up strategy to try if the first one is unsuccessful. Therefore, a variety of strategies, as well as an attitude that attaches importance to spelling, are necessary for good speller.

Explicit metacognitive instruction should be a part of each spelling lesson to ensure that students internalize the knowledge and apply it to personal writing in new contexts (Block & Peskowitz, 1990). This is especially true when we consider that poor spellers generally lack metacognition (Radebaugh, 1985). Spelling lessons will be better understood and more valued if students are encouraged to reflect on why they are learning a strategy. The more students are able to understand their own learning process, the more control they can take in applying their learned skills.

Research also presents opposing viewpoints as to whether spelling instruction should be formal or informal. Whole language theorists often suggest that no formal spelling be taught (Gruff, 1986). They argue that through immersion, a language program, rich in independent writing, children will learn to spell through a natural progression. Traditionalists argue that direct instruction, phonics rules, and a structured, sequential word-study program are necessary (Rosencrans, 1998).

The practice of informal spelling instruction encourages children to learn to spell by writing instead of through traditional, isolated spelling exercises (Bean & Bouffler, 1987). Research has suggested that spelling develops most effectively when children are provided with many opportunities to use spelling in a meaningful way. Gentry (1987) contends that experimenting with and using language to express real ideas will enable children to internalize the mechanisms of the English language and support their progress

through the stages of spelling development. This theory states that trying to memorize all the rules of grammar and phonics is of questionable value. Ideally, these “teachable moments” are seized during writing conferences.

The practice of formal spelling instruction utilizes the traditional spelling textbook. The most common weekly spelling format consists of a pretest, followed by a set of word-study exercises, and a posttest, which usually takes place on Friday. This sequence focuses on a predetermined list of words. These words have been grouped into weekly lists to provide study in a sequence set of skills. Formal spelling programs have changed little over the years. Formal spelling instruction focuses on isolated phonetic and structural rules, and promotes the attitude that the only purpose of learning to spell is to pass the test on Friday. Good spellers tend to get better, and poor spellers continue to struggle.

To ensure that children receive the support they need, Rosencrans (1998) believes it is the teacher’s job to identify key factors of successful spelling instruction and incorporate these factors into a classroom-spelling program that enables all children to develop their ability to spell. Factors that influence spelling success include attitude, metacognition, behaviors, and word knowledge (Rosencrans, 1998).

A positive attitude and the confidence to take risks are essential to spelling competence. Motivation, which is determined by one’s confidence and attitude, is a significant variable in facilitating success (Scott, Hiebert, & Anderson, 1992). Mistakes must be seen as an important part of development and as something that everyone makes.

Metacognition is knowing what to do when you don’t know what to do; in other words, using taught strategies to spell an unknown word. To develop metacognition,

children need opportunities to talk and think about their spelling strategies. This should be an integral part of the spelling program (Wade & Reynolds, 1989).

Visual cueing can be a factor in learning to spell successfully. Good spellers are able to determine whether a word looks right and to remember how the word looks from their reading. Templeton (1986) has told us that words retain a visual link even when the auditory link is lost.

Tactile and kinesthetic cueing are factors in establishing motor patterns that stimulate memory. Motor patterns are generated as students write and say the letter sequences for spelling words. Writing a difficult word as it is spelled aloud will help build a tactile memory of the word (Rosencrans, 1998).

Children rarely do anything without a thought process taking place. Young students' attempts at spelling are based on their current perceptions of the written and oral language. Rosencrans (1998) believes if teachers take time to analyze the errors made by students in their writing they can better understand the students' thinking and plan better strategies to nurture spelling development. Analysis of writing samples is probably the most important evaluation tool for teachers because it examines how well skills and knowledge are being applied, the goal of the spelling program (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987). Buchanan (1989) told us analysis of student writing, both edited and unedited can provide a valuable source of information to determine both spelling knowledge and the processes by which students use this knowledge. It is useful because the quality of the student's spelling and the thinking that prompted it are examined. A thorough child-centered approach to assessment may provide the missing link between current research and instructional practice (Rosencrans, 1998). Using spelling errors as an

assessment tool can generate lessons that focus on the spelling process as well as the product of spelling.

Summary

The integration of spelling with the reading and writing curriculum is recommended by experts in spelling instruction and researchers of young children and how they learn. It is evident that developmental readiness plays a crucial role in primary age children's spelling growth. The beginnings of spelling are nourished through oral and written language experiences. Learning to spell is developmental.

Children go through five stages of spelling growth: prephonetic, phonetic, patterns within words, syllable juncture, and meaning derivation. If students are to be successful spellers, a variety of strategies need to be taught for spelling new words. These strategies include visualizing the word, saying it in parts, sounding it out, and using auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic cues. Young students need to know the "why" of learning a spelling strategy in order to internalize and apply the skill to reading and writing.

Research presents opposing viewpoints concerning spelling instruction. Informal spelling instruction encourages children to learn to spell by writing and reading instead of through isolated spelling instruction. Formal spelling instruction uses the traditional spelling textbook and teaches spelling in isolation as a separate curriculum. When assessing our young students' attempts at spelling, teachers need to analyze the spelling errors to better understand the thought processes and plan better strategies to nurture spelling development.

Students need to meet the goals and standards of the EALRs. Included in the goals and standards are word recognition and word meaning skills. Strategies such as phonics and word origins are integral to reading. The EALRs also state that in order for a student to be able to write clearly and effectively there must be knowledge and application of correct spelling. Proofreading and editing for correct spelling are steps of the writing process according to the EALRs. Integration of spelling with the reading and writing curriculum not only meets the standards and goals set forth by the EALRs, but it helps young students develop, understand, and apply the necessary strategies and skills needed to be successful and confident spellers, writers, and readers.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES OF THE PROJECT

The process used to develop this project consisted of several steps. Prior to the development of this project, the author spent eight years teaching first grade students to read and write. The first grade spelling curriculum, which is currently taught in the author's district, is not an adopted district curriculum. Rather, there was consensus among first grade colleagues. The author's colleagues agreed to teach spelling words from the most frequently used words list. Teachers would teach them in order, eight words weekly. The teaching of spelling is treated as an isolated subject and taught as an isolated subject. The author, as well as her colleagues, expected students to be able to correctly spell these learned weekly words in their daily writing and recognize the learned spelling words within their independent reading. It has been frustrating for the author and her first grade colleagues to not see the transfer of learning occur with great success within the reading and writing curricula. How can our students be successful on weekly spelling tests and not be successful in writing and reading the same learned words the week before?

First, the author located research and literature regarding the developmental processes of spelling development and awareness in young children. This was a crucial and integral to the author. The author had never realized that spelling is developmental. These journal and research articles were obtained through the use of the Internet.

Second, a background of the project was written which included the purpose and rationale of the study. The author identified student writing as an example of the ineffectiveness of teaching spelling as an isolated subject. The implementation of a more effective spelling

curriculum to replace the traditional approach of isolated spelling instruction with one that integrates spelling instruction within reading and writing instruction embraces the developmental nature of spelling growth.

Third, the Washington State Commission on Student Learning (WSCSL) Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EARLs) were considered. As a teacher within the State of Washington, the author is accountable for the teaching of each Benchmark and its components. Spelling is addressed in the Benchmarks for both Reading and Writing.

Finally, strategies and activities are offered to be used as a guide for primary grade teachers in classrooms where writing is emphasized. Suggestions are included for word selection; sample lesson plans, teaching strategies and student learning opportunities and techniques to encourage home involvement, as well as suggestions for effective recording and assessment methods.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

Organization of the Project

The organization of this project is based on the spelling curriculum currently being taught in the author's first grade classroom at Hilton Elementary in Zillah, WA. It is not an adopted district curriculum. The organization is also based on the Writer's Workshop writing curriculum and the adopted district reading curriculum, which is published by Silver-Burdett. This project includes the topics of Spelling Goals, Spelling Strategies, Word Study Strategies, Parents As Spelling Partners, Assessment and Evaluation, and Black Line Masters. All of the teaching strategies and student learning opportunities are aligned with the current Essential Academic Learning Requirements for the State of Washington. The author modeled this project on the developmental spelling program , The Spelling Book: Teaching Children How to Spell, Not What To Spell by Gladys Rosencrans . The majority of the teaching strategies and student learning opportunities are from The Spelling Book: Teaching Children How to Spell, Not What To Spell by Gladys Rosencrans unless otherwise noted.

The second part of the project includes blackline masters useful for teaching spelling strategies, student learning activities, and effective recording and assessment methods. It should be noted that the teaching strategies, student learning opportunities, as well as suggestions for effective recording and assessment methods would be a useful resource for any primary teacher.

The Developmental Approach to Spelling Instruction

The basic components of a developmental spelling curriculum differ from the pretest, word-study, posttest sequence found in most traditional spelling programs. Lesson planning is ongoing.

Responsive Planning

Lessons should be planned to meet observed needs. Assessment and evaluation must be comprehensive and broad based. Little value is placed on scores, but the insights gained from misspelling analysis are invaluable in planning group spelling lessons.

Class Profile

In order to plan lessons and structure spelling activities to meet identified need rather than a preset sequence, it is helpful to identify individual areas of need. The Class Profile is a format for

planning lessons around individual assessment. The *Black Line Master, Class Spelling Profile*, provides grids designed to assist in planning lessons. This does not mean the teacher should try to implement 25 individual spelling programs, but, rather, to help in planning activities that will help all children to progress in their spelling development. The grid is used as a checklist to record the results of formal and informal assessment. Student names are listed along the side. A mark is placed in the column under the skill-strategy area in which a weakness has been noted. When the grid is completed, the overview it gives of the class's needs makes selecting and planning lessons much more purposeful.

Attitude

Spelling lessons should promote a sense of discovery and fun. The attitude children bring to their spelling will often determine their successes at spelling. Young students should be made aware of the following:

- *Sharing each other's thinking is good, it is not cheating.

* Different opinions are great because there is always more than one way to think about things.

* Mistakes are a part of learning.

Spelling Lessons

It's important that students have a variety of repeated experiences and strategies while working with spelling patterns in order to form their own conclusions and generalizations about spelling patterns. The teacher's job is to guide their students' thinking through daily word-study lessons. Descriptions of word-study lessons are addressed in the section, **Word Study Strategies**. Children should be involved in spelling activities each day. The focus of the instructional activities will be based on the needs identified in your Spelling Class Profile grid.

The unique feature of a developmental spelling curriculum is that the spelling lessons are never based on a predetermined list of words that the students memorize. If a word list is used, it is only for word-study activities. As much as possible, the

spelling words come from a thematic unit or the students' independent writing.

Guided Thinking

Spelling instruction presented to the whole class allows the teacher to guide the lesson, which helps the students become aware of the desired focus. For example, if the teacher has identified a general need for more information on contractions, a lesson is developed on this concept. A piece of student writing containing contractions may be presented to the class. Shared thinking about the contractions is offered. Then the teacher should model the correct spelling of the contractions. If possible, a follow-up would include using and writing contractions in individual student writing.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is an instructional format that can be used within the developmental spelling

curriculum. Young children are generally motivated to help one another. They usually just don't give answers; they like to explain their answers.

Cooperative groups provide a supportive environment which allows students to take risks.

They realize that other people make mistakes, too.

Cooperative groups also promote discussion, shared thinking, and verbalized learning. When young students are able to explain something new they have learned in their own words, they internalize their understanding and demonstrate

comprehension. The size of a cooperative group can be determined by the activity that is presented.

Activities such as sorting and classifying words usually work best with groups of four. If brainstorming is required, a group of six is workable. Partnerships also work well for most activities. Whatever the size of the group, be sure to stress the following:

- *everyone participates
- *everyone cooperates
- *everyone in the group must know the answer

Spelling Tools

Spelling Tools used in this project include instructional strategies such as Spelling Logs, Word Banks, and Weekly Spelling "Tests".

Spelling Logs

Spelling Logs are journals or notebooks in which students record, in their own words, their observations and understanding of spelling. For example, following a lesson on contractions, students would be directed to write, in their own words, the main ideas to remember about the contractions they studied. The emphasis when using Spelling Logs is on the students recording their own understanding of spelling. The focus is not on the right answer, but rather on thinking and recording personal understandings of spelling. Spelling Logs are useful for teacher assessment and evaluation. The writing found within the Log give authentic evidence of spelling comprehension. The Black Line Master *Spelling Log Prompts* is

useful for young students should they not feel confident to record in their own words.

Word Banks

Word Banks are personal dictionaries. Students create their own individual list of words, in alphabetical order, that they may refer to when writing. Word Banks provide a visual image of the correct spelling of a word, which impresses upon the students, that correct spelling is important. Spiral notebooks work well for creating a Word Bank dictionary. Correct spelling must be emphasized. Sounding out a word is not acceptable because it may not be the correct spelling. Words in the Word Bank should be written in a list form.

Weekly Spelling "Tests"

Weekly Spelling "Tests" are a structured time in which partners dictate words to each other. The words are chosen by a partner at random from the student's Word Bank. The goal of these weekly "tests" is to practice correct spelling, not

memorization of a word. Students correct their own test and record the results on a graph. The Black Line Master *Spelling Dictation* is useful for the weekly spelling tests. The graph can show the number of words spelled correctly each week.

High Frequency Words

High frequency words are words worth remembering. They are words that occur frequently in the student's writing and reading. Quite often, they are words that do not follow spelling rules. Young students need to realize and understand that many of these words have irregular spellings and that the sound-it-out strategy does not work well. It is important that high frequency words are included in each student's Word Bank. The choice of these high frequency words should be teacher-directed.

High Frequency Spelling Words

I	said	more	school
can	play	came	many
is	your	three	could
to	this	know	thing
he	here	away	cut
big	what	so	around
not	get	make	soon
with	little	day	live
are	do	man	as
go	the	too	right
run	mother	from	told
it	father	got	does
did	how	all	would
look	work	had	much
will	two	house	home
that	must	new	gave
a	about	put	let
at	something	no	there
down	his	very	light
see	boy	water	time
now	one	long	us
good	by	some	way
then	were	first	tree
in	over	tell	made
but	ran	has	still
for	eat	why	other
up	after	say	night
on	into	ask	think
they	her	an	just
she	call	use	them
have	was	old	
like	back	never	
me	when	people	
we	girl	well	
my	be	their	
and	of	want	
come	saw	walk	
you	help	take	

Thematic Unit Spelling Words

<u>Animals</u>	<u>Penguins</u>	<u>Apples</u>	<u>Dinosaurs</u>
feathers	Antarctica	apple	fossil
shell	penguin	seeds	extinct
school	rookery	tree	dinosaur
scales	stones	flower	reptile
habitat	colony	skin	volcano
animal	feathers	core	swamp
water	hop	meat	lizard
air	slide	stem	flat
skin	swim	leaf	sharp
fur	chick	red	teeth
pack	egg	yellow	meat
food	snow	green	plant
herd	ice	striped	swim
colony	Adelie	pie	fly
flock	Emperor	juice	
farm		sauce	
pet		fresh	
wild			
desert			
forest			
ocean			
jungle			
mountain			
zoo			
<u>Maps</u>	<u>Plants</u>	<u>Butterflies</u>	<u>Space</u>
north	plant	butterfly	star
south	soil	moth	constellation
east	light	egg	planet
west	water	larva	meteor
continent	space	caterpillar	rotate
country	seed	chrysalis	moon
state	stem	pupa	asteroid
city	trunk	metamorphosis	orbit
	branch	cycle	gravity
	flower		
	fruit		
	leaf		
	root		

Looking Good

Objective

Students "inspect" words visually to see if they "look" right.

Procedure

This is a good strategy to use for high frequency words used in writing. Black Line Master *Looking Good* can be used to guide a student's thinking through this process. The teacher identifies a misspelled word from the student's writing and highlights the word. The student tells the teacher what part of the word is spelled correctly. The teacher asks questions to prompt the student to make spelling changes. Suggested questions would be the following:

What two letters go together to make this sound?

Is there another way to make the same sound?

You're missing a letter. What do you think it might be?

This is a mixed up word. Do you remember the letter that goes here?

Write the word with the changes the student suggests. Have the student try to choose the word that looks correct.

Sounds In Parts

Objective

Students break words into parts to gain correct spelling.

Procedure

This strategy is good for both auditory and visual learners. By clapping or voice intonation, the teacher models the idea of beats or sounds in words. If the concept of syllables has been taught, draw on this concept to help the students spell the word correctly. Have the students practice breaking words into parts using clapping and voice intonation. A useful acronym would be to "take SIPs of big words". The teacher should model how to spell each part of a word and focus on common letter clusters. Many opportunities for student practice is important. The students should be able to write in their Reading Log how to use this particular strategy.

Imagine, Copy, Examine

Objective

Students recall a word in their mind, write the word, and use self-checking for correct spelling.

Procedure

The teacher chooses a word that the student or students have recently written or read. Ask the following questions to elicit student responses:

- Where did you see the word?
- What does it look like?
- What did the printing look like?

The students then write the word on paper and examine the word to see if it looks correct.

Encourage students to ask themselves the following questions:

- Does it look right?
- What part doesn't look right?
- Do I need to change any part?

Encourage the students to discuss within groups or partners how they used this strategy to gain the

correct spelling. The teacher needs to model this strategy many times before expecting young students to use it independently. If students are using Word Banks, this is a useful strategy. The students should be able to recall words with increasing accuracy as they are written in their Word Bank.

Building Blocks

Objective

Students use letter clusters, such as prefixes and suffixes, to build new words.

Procedure

Before this strategy can be successfully implemented, there needs to be prior instruction in simple prefixes such as re-, pre-, and -un, and the suffixes -er, -ing, and -ed. Discuss the analogy of building blocks. When attempting to spell a new word, students can ask themselves the following questions:

Is there a part of this word I know?

What do I need to change?

Does it look right?

Practice using Building Blocks can be used in the student's personal writing, proofreading, and individual student writing conferences.

Memory Tricks

Memory tricks, or mnemonic devices are another way to remember difficult spelling words. However, one of the problems with mnemonic devices is that they must be internalized by the student, not just memorized. *Black Line Master Mnemonics: Memory Aids* is an example that can be helpful to students to remember difficult "demon" words.

Carousel Brainstorm

In this activity students explore word possibilities using initial sounds and consonant blends and then check for correct spelling. In the first part of the activity, students work in teams of five or six. For the second part, students work as partners.

Preparation

Group students into teams of five or six. Prepare an overhead transparency of Black Line Master *Flower Power*. Make twice as many enlarged (11x17) copies of the *Flower Power* Black Line Master as there are groups. The copies are numbered and posted around the classroom in places where the groups may gather about them and write on them. A marker is available for each group.

Procedure

Using the model on the overhead, choose a common root word and print it over the roots of the flower. Brainstorm new words made by adding initial sounds and beginning blends to the root word. These new words are recorded on the leaves and petals of the flower.

Carousel Process

Each group gathers at one of the flower power diagrams. One student in each group is chosen to write the words. Each group chooses a root word and prints it on the roots of the flower. Examples of root words:

play help clap wish drive catch
right

The groups are given two minutes to brainstorm and record all the words they can think of by changing the initial sound or consonant blend to the written root word. At the end of two minutes, the groups stop, and go to the next poster. The groups are timed again for two minutes. They must read the words that have already been recorded and

brainstorm any new ones. This process is repeated until each poster has been visited.

Letter Ladder

This activity develops vowel-and complex-cluster and mental dictionary skills.

Procedure

Depending on class size, divide the class into teams, with no more than 4-5 players on a team. A four-or five-letter word is written on the board for each team. Each player must race up and make a new word by changing only one letter of the word. The first team to make a correctly spelled word for every player is the winner.

Example of a Letter Ladder

Player 1: cake
Player 2: came
Player 3: camp
Player 4: lamp
Player 5: limp

A variation of Letter Ladders is to have students change the original word into a specified target word. For example, change *line* into *said* in four changes.

Example of Letter Ladder Variation

Start with the word *line*:

Player 1: *lane*

Player 2: *land*

Player 3: *sand*

Player 4: *said*

Cluster Relay

This activity develops vowel and letter cluster skills.

Procedure

Divide the class into four teams. Provide each team with a space on the chalkboard and write a target cluster in each space. The clusters for each team can be the same or different. On a signal, one player from each team races up and writes a word using the cluster, going to the end of the line when done. Prompting from team members is encouraged. The first team to complete a correctly spelled word for each member is the winner.

Example of Cluster Relay Words

Team 1

-ay

way
play

Team 2

-ight

night
fright

Team 3

-ish

wish
swish

Team 4

-ick

sick
slick

Demon Cards

Demon Cards are index cards on which students make a list of the correct spelling of their personal "demon" or difficult words. These cards can be kept in a binder or in their writing folder. The card is used as a quick reference during writing. Demon cards save the student time in looking up the word in a Word Bank or in a dictionary.

Procedure

Demon cards can be introduced to the whole class or to individual students. Let students choose a maximum of 10-20 words that they often spell incorrectly. These can be chosen from their writing or the reading curriculum. The words they choose should be printed on index cards. The cards can be taped to the student's desk, kept in a writing folder, or put on a binder or notebook cover. The use of the Demon Cards should soon become a habit.

Word Sort

Word sorting activities require students to focus on specific structures of words. Students are given a list of high frequency words and are instructed to sort the words into categories.

Procedure

Students should work in partners or small groups. The teacher needs to provide the students with a list of 20-30 high frequency words. The words can also be selected from a current unit or theme being taught. The words can be recorded on sentence strips, index cards, or *Black Line Master Brainstorm Recording Sheet*. One copy of the selected words is given to each group or partners. The words are cut apart individually. The students are then instructed to group the words into categories. The words may be grouped by semantics (meaning), or word patterns (auditory or visual). As an extension of this activity, the teacher may decide to tell the students to sort the words a second way. Some suggestions for

extending word sorting and classifying are as follows:

*sorting words into categories according to sounds, letter clusters, endings, or parts of speech

*sorting words to match pictures

*sorting words according to feelings

Cluster Collection

Cluster Collection helps students develop an awareness of common letter patterns within words.

Procedure

This activity works best if directions and instruction is given to the whole class. Ask students to brainstorm groups of letters that appear often in words. Record their ideas on an overhead transparency of *Black Line Master Cluster Collection*. Encourage students to refer to lists and charts that are posted throughout the classroom. Next, re-group the students into groups of three or four. Make copies of the transparency of brainstormed clusters and *Black Line Master Cluster Collection*. Give each group a copy. Each group is instructed to cut out the clusters and sort them into the following categories according to how often the particular clusters are found in spelling:

Never Sometimes Frequently Letters That *Always Go Together*

When the groups have finished the sorting, be sure to share the examples that each group has chosen and ask why the particular letter clusters were chosen. Shared thinking and discussion should focus on what was noticed about different clusters and how it can help the students to become better spellers.

Data Collection

The Black Line Masters *Data Collection Sheet* and *Data Reflection Sheet* can be used to record errors and their corrections. This activity encourages students to analyze their spelling errors.

Procedure

The teacher needs to model the use of *Data Collection Sheet* and *Data Reflection Sheet* on the overhead projector before students are expected to use them independently. Working with partners, students then choose a piece of their own individual writing they would like to analyze. Using the *Data Collection Sheet*, students find and record in the boxes provided both the errors and the correct spelling. The boxes found in the *Data Collection Sheet* may be cut out and sorted into categories. However, it is important to name the categories. For example:

nigt (night) *playd* (played) *runer* (runner) *telling* (telling)

The questions listed on the *Data Collection Sheet* help students to extend their thinking.

Word Wheels

Students create a visual image of words having a similar word base. The base or word part is written in the center of a wheel, and the derivatives are written on the spokes of the wheel.

Procedure

Word Wheels can be completed by individual students or in groups of two or three. Distribute a large paper circle to each student or group. The paper circle is folded in half three times to divide it into eight sections. The fold lines can be traced with a marker for better visibility. However, a small circle should be left blank in the middle of the circle. A root word or word part is chosen or assigned by the teacher and printed in the middle of the circle. Students write a related word in each of the eight sections. When the Word Wheels are finished, they should be shared with the rest of the class. The Black Line Master *Word Wheels* would be useful for this activity. Students are encouraged to copy the words from other

Word Wheels to write in their Word Bank or
Spelling Log.

ABC Order Cards

This activity develops alphabetical order skills of frequently used words.

Procedure

The teacher keeps a list of brainstormed words on index cards and hands them out to individual students or groups of two to three students. The teacher directs the students to arrange the cards in alphabetical order. The cards can then be placed on a bulletin board for daily reference by the students.

Parents Need Information

Most parents are used to helping their young students memorize spelling words. This is the method they were probably taught when spelling was taught to them. Many parents feel that if words are misspelled within their child's writing, it is an indication that their child is not succeeding in the areas of writing and spelling. Altering a parent's view of spelling can be quite challenging. As a result, parents need some general information about the development of spelling ability. This would help them understand their child's growth in writing and spelling.

Communication Matters

Good communication with parents encourages support for you, the teacher, and support for your methods of teaching spelling. Weekly letters sent home with your students is a good opportunity to share what was learned during the week in spelling. The sample Letter To Parents describes the methods of good spelling instruction and may be

adapted and shared with parents. Parent conferences provide good opportunities to discuss your spelling instruction methods and expectations. Parent volunteers within your classroom can give a good "inside view" of your spelling program and is good for public relations, too!

Be sure parents know your expectations for writing and spelling. Many parents think that 100% accuracy is necessary and don't understand the idea of draft writing, editing, and inventive spelling. Spelling Logs and Word Banks should be allowed to go home regularly to show the student's progression and growth.

If a child is struggling with spelling, it is important that the parents understand how you are trying to help. Parents want to help, and often the only way they know how to help is to focus on memorizing word lists. Help them understand the various strategies you use at school so they can implement them at home to help their child.

Supporting Spelling At Home

For some young students spelling is difficult. As discussed earlier, three things are necessary

for good spelling: a positive attitude, learning strategies, and knowledge of the English language. On the following pages activities and strategies are listed to support parents who want to help their young student with spelling. These activities and strategies can be used over and over again. It is important to stress to parents to keep the learning time at home enjoyable. Forced practice and drill will only destroy the young child's motivation to learn.

Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

In First Grade I believe spelling is important. We will be working hard to become good spellers in our class this year, even though we will NOT be having weekly spelling tests. I would like to tell you about my beliefs concerning spelling and some of the components of my developmental spelling program. I assure you, we do work hard on spelling!

I believe spelling is important in real writing. We will learn about our language and its structure through proofreading actual student writing and learning how to locate and fix spelling errors.

I believe it's important to know when to focus on spelling. Not all spelling needs to be perfect. In first draft writing, ideas are more important. After editing and locating and fixing errors, the final draft of writing should not have any spelling errors.

I believe it's important to learn a variety of spelling strategies. These strategies can be used to try to spell new words. This facilitates learning better than trying to memorize the spelling of words.

I believe it's important to learn about the structure (phonics, grammar, and letter patterns) of our English language. This is done through Word Study rather than by memorizing spelling rules.

I believe that spelling is an integrated part of the reading and writing process and should not be taught as a separate curriculum. The more spelling is used in real reading and writing, the better the results will be. Spelling compliments increasing vocabularies and reading skills.

I believe in daily spelling activities. These activities are included within all of our studies. For example, during a science lesson about Animals, I would use our theme words to explore a certain letter pattern.

If you have any questions about my spelling program, please call me or come in and we can talk about it. I welcome your suggestions and thoughts!

Respectfully,

Spelling At Home

Attitude

Talk with your child about when and why it's important to spell correctly. Work with words found in your child's own writing.

Strategies

Talk about how to spell difficult words. Your child needs to develop the language to think and talk about spelling.

Encourage your child to use inventive spelling in writing.

Help your child hear separate sounds in words.

Find out how your child attempted to spell an incorrect word.

When proofreading your child's writing, find words that your child is not sure about and would like to check.

When you spell a word with your child, encourage your child to think of another word with the same or similar pattern.

Help your child to break larger words into smaller parts.

For words that need to be memorized for correct spelling, have your child say the letters out loud at the same time as they are written.

Word Study

Help your child to use a dictionary.

If you have a computer at home, teach your child to use the spellcheck.

Brainstorm a list of 50-100 frequently used words that your child uses.

Write the high frequency words on paper but leave out groups of letters. Have your child fill in the missing letters.

Keep a personal Word Bank of misspelled words.

Encourage writing at home.

Play word games, such as *Scrabble*, and do word puzzles.

Sort words into categories that have similar letter groups or sounds.

Assessment and Evaluation of Students' Spelling

In a developmental spelling curriculum assessment and evaluation are ongoing; that is, these two processes are an ongoing part of daily classroom activities rather than a separate component, usually known as the weekly spelling test. A traditional spelling program usually emphasizes weekly spelling tests and assigns a percentage or grade. This type of evaluation usually is not helpful to the student or the teacher. It doesn't pinpoint where a student may be having spelling difficulties. In a developmental spelling program the focus of evaluation and assessment changes from *testing* to *gathering information* which will give the teacher a direction for spelling instruction. The ongoing process of gathering information will help the teacher make instructional decisions such as:

- *What phonics should I be teaching now?
- *Should I teach a unit on plural endings?
- *Should I introduce long vowel sounds?
- *Maybe I should teach contractions

*What about compound words?

These are questions that can be answered only by gathering information about individual students. Gathering information to assess the needs and base program decisions is done by constantly evaluating lessons and activities as they occur within the classroom. Independent student writing, conferencing with students about their writing, and dictated tests are methods that can be used by the teacher to gather information about student spelling. The spelling instructional needs of the students will vary with each class depending on the general level of spelling development within the classroom. The teacher's instructional decisions will be based on the current themes and topics being studied, because that is most likely what the students' writing will reflect. This type of ongoing assessment is valid only if it is used to plan future learning and teaching.

Dictated Tests

One of the challenges with formal spelling tests, or any formal test, is that it usually generates apprehension within the young student.

The student is focused on the correctness of the answer, rather than the "how" of the answer. Knowing the "how" and the "why" of spelling internalizes the spelling process within the young student. The reason for dictated tests is gathering information for both the student and the teacher. It is not to pass a value judgment. It is the information that is important, not the score. Direct teaching about "tests" and gathering information should be included within the developmental spelling program. Young students need to know that it's okay to make mistakes because valuable learning will result from the mistakes. It's important that young students understand the teacher's perspective about assessment.

The value of dictated word tests can vary. For example, a student's independent writing may show very few errors, but new or challenging words are not being used. A dictated test would reveal the student's knowledge of new or challenging vocabulary. Dictated tests can also focus on specific instructed information that has already been taught to the class, such as plural endings.

Rewrite

This is a strategy in which a piece of writing, completed by the student weeks or months earlier, is dictated, and the student rewrites it without seeing it. The piece of writing can be chosen from samples in a writing folder, from entries on the Spelling Log, or from a former writing draft. The students work with partners and decide who will dictate first. One student reads the story aloud. The student then repeats the story sentence by sentence, slowly enough for the author to write the words. The author cannot see the words and sentences being dictated. The finished story is then analyzed and compared with the original writing. This type of test is useful for showing spelling growth over a period of time. Many of the words that were misspelled in the original piece of writing may now be spelled correctly. If desired, the two pieces of writing can be scored for a percentage of correct words.

Writing Conferences

Writing conferences can be between an individual student and the teacher or between the teacher and the entire classroom. Student responses stating why a word was spelled a certain way and how the student figured out the spelling of a word give insights to the teacher about the spelling strategies being used. It may be difficult for a young student to verbalize thinking and be aware of the strategies used to figure out the spelling of a word. It's important that the teacher show encouragement and patience.

Assessing Spelling Logs

The most beneficial use of assessment of Spelling Logs is to have the students write what they learned during a particular lesson or activity. This not only reinforces the learning and understanding by the student, but also gives the teacher documented evidence of the student's level of understanding.

Analysis of Independent Writing

The greatest source for gathering information for classroom spelling instruction is analysis of student independent writing. Through this type of assessment thought processes and levels of awareness become more apparent than any other. The real goal is for the student to apply spelling knowledge, not to memorize words. Writing samples for analysis can come from any source including student journals, story drafts, reports, projects, or class assignments. All of the above mentioned writing activities would provide different information. The teacher needs to take into consideration the nature of the writing activity.

- *Was the student writing a personal experience?
- *Were there prewriting activities?
- *Was the writing proofread by the student or the teacher?
- *Was the writing done independently or in a group?

*Did the student ask others for help or sound out the words independently?

All of these different writing experiences have an affect on the level of spelling competence. If a student were writing about a personal experience, prior knowledge and vocabulary would be different than if the student were writing a summary about events from a book. If a student had participated in prewriting activities, the teacher should expect a higher level of spelling within the student's writing. The amount of peer support would also give important information as opposed to writing independently and sounding out the words alone.

Checking For Errors And Strengths

Instead of correcting an original piece of student writing, the teacher could make a photocopy to work with. After the errors are marked and circled, the teacher can calculate a percentage of correct spellings. The errors can be recorded on the Black Line Master *Spelling Analysis* sheet. The Standard Spellings at the

bottom of the sheet is used to record important words that the student has spelled correctly. This provides information and evidence of what the student does know and is applying regarding spelling instruction.

Recording Information

Assessment and information about student learning is sometimes planned and sometimes unexpected. The focus of assessment is to give data to the teacher in order to initiate planning for spelling lessons and to report to parents during parent conferences or report cards. Completing a student spelling profile using the Blackline Master *Spelling Behaviors Checklist* provides a focal point for discussing student progress with parents. It is helpful and assists the parents in understanding the goals of the spelling curriculum as well as their child's current learning and spelling development.

Spelling Interview

Name _____

Date _____

1. Spelling is important because

2. When I am writing I spell words by

3. When I come to a word I'm not sure how to spell, I

4. The most important thing to remember about spelling is

5. The hardest thing about spelling is

6. _____ helped me the most to learn to spell. They helped
by

7. The most important thing I learned in spelling this year was

8. I am/am not a good speller because

Spelling Log Prompts

I used to
think _____

but now I
know _____.

I was surprised to learn
that _____

Something I learned today
is _____

How would you teach this strategy to another
person?

What is the most important thing to remember
about this strategy?

Explain this strategy in your own words.

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Letter Clusters

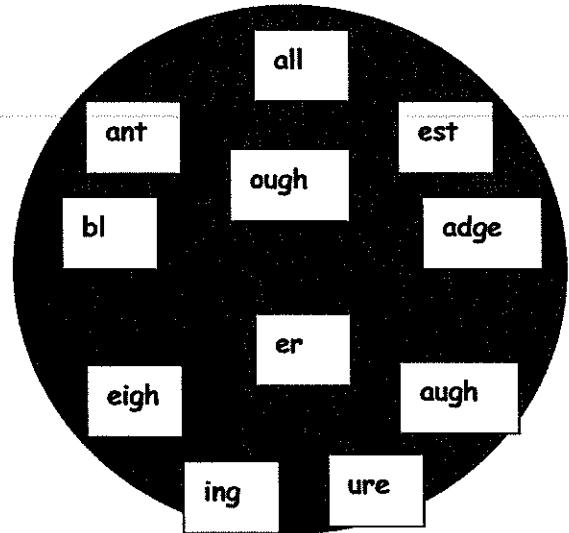
From the story you have just read look for groups of letter that are often found together. We call those *letter clusters*. Fill in as many boxes in the chart below as you can.

1. Think about how these clusters are used: ♦ in words ♦ for spelling ♦ how they look ♦ how they sound ♦ other ideas
2. Cut out the clusters and sort them into groups or categories according to how you think they go together. Make sure you name each category! Be prepared to share your group's thinking with the class.
3. In your Spelling Log think about these questions:
 - What are your observations about how letter clusters are used in spelling words.
 - Do some clusters usually come at the end (or beginning) of words? Which ones?
 - Are any clusters spelled differently than they sound?
 - Are you surprised about any of the clusters? Which ones?
 - What have you learned that will make you a better speller?

Cluster Collection

Name _____

Date _____



Letters that Never Go Together	Letters that Sometimes Go Together	Letters that Frequently Go Together	Letters that Always Go Together

Some Useful Letter Clusters

at	as	ad	an	am	ar
ain	ask	ack	are	and	ant
ed	en	et	em	ep	eg
ent	ept	est	eld	ell	er
is	ig	ip	in	im	it
ing	ink	ish	ind	itch	ill
og	ot	op	on	ob	or
ost	ong	oll	ond	ock	
un	ug	ut	up	us	ur
uck	ung	ulk	uch	ull	ush
cr	br	cl	pl	dr	gr
sp	st	tr	fr	fl	sh
mp	nd	nt	sk	sl	th
ame	ade	ake	ave	ace	ay
ail	ait	age	air	arp	art
arm	ard	ark	arge	arch	
ee	eet	eel	eep	eat	eat
ead	ear	eam	andy	any	ancy
ime	ide	ike	ive	ine	ire
igh	ight	ind	ild	irt	ird
ule	ure	ume	use	uge	ute
ew	oo				
ome	obe	oke	ose	one	ope
oat	oast	ow	old	ost	oal
orn	orse	ork	orch	ort	oin
alf	kn	wr	tle	kle	mb
gle	ble	ple			
tion	ight	ure	ness	ious	ment
age	less	able	ough	each	

Data Reflection Sheet

Writing Used _____

Name _____

Date _____

What was your most common error type?

What spelling surprised you?

What will you remember next time you are writing?

Data Reflection Sheet

What one(s) made you say "Oh no! How could I have done that?" Why?

What were some vowel errors?

Visual Tricks

Visual tricks can be used to help students remember confusing spellings.

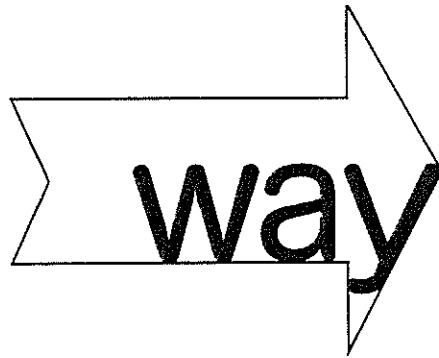
She is a friend to the end.

Let's go to get her together.

Don't believe a lie.

A piece of pie

I hear with my ear



Bears have ears

witch

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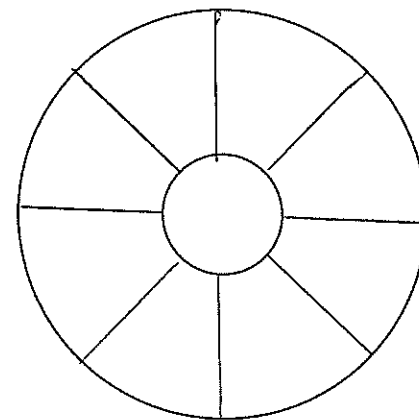
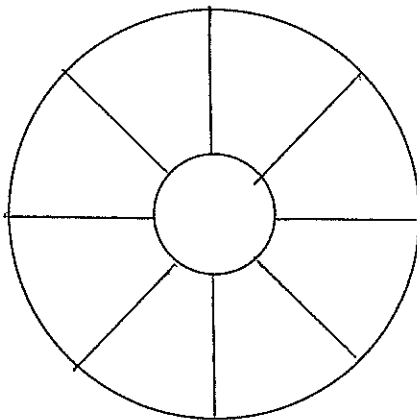
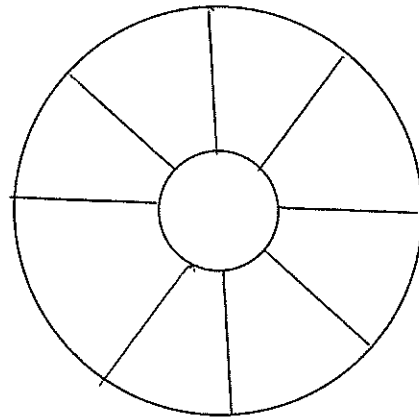
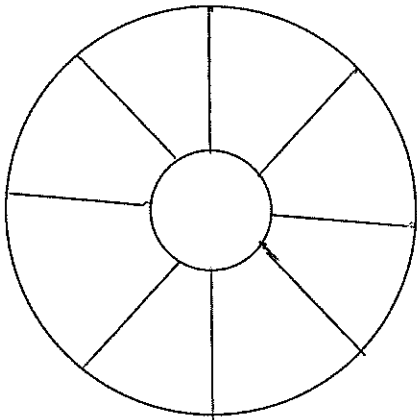
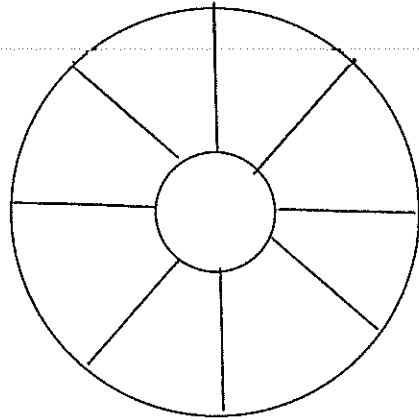
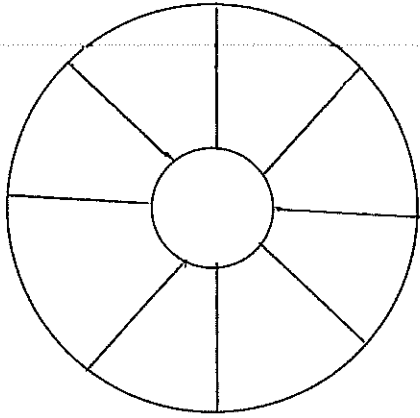
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Word Wheels

Name _____

Date _____



Spelling Behaviors Checklist

Does the student:	Usually	At times	Seldom
Show a positive, thoughtful attitude?			
Know when/where spelling is important?			
Show a willingness to attempt new words independently?			
Use a variety of spelling strategies in writing?			
Verbalize his or her spelling strategies?			
Correctly segment words for spelling?			
Use basic sound-symbol relations?			
Use a varied and extensive speaking vocabulary?			
Demonstrate ability to paraphrase work knowledge?			
Use age-appropriate, specialized language in writing?			
Consistently spell age-appropriate high-frequency words correctly?			
Use grammatical structures correctly?			
Maintain and use a Word Bank?			
Write in a variety of genre?			
Know how to use a dictionary?			
Use a thesaurus effectively?			
Demonstrate knowledge of common letter clusters?			
Demonstrate knowledge of contractions?			
Demonstrate knowledge of homophones?			
Demonstrate knowledge of prefixes and suffixes?			
Demonstrate ability to find errors in writing?			
Demonstrate ability to correct errors in writing?			

Notes:

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Legislators and educators throughout the nation and Washington State have been focusing on student achievement as well as better methods to teach our students. The spelling curriculum used in the author's school district is not an adopted district curriculum. It is a curriculum taught separately from reading and writing. This project was designed to integrate the teaching of spelling within the first grade reading and writing curriculum.

Providing a spelling program that is based on language development and linked to writing requires the classroom teacher to put aside the traditional methods of weekly spelling lists and tests. First, it has been observed by the author, as well as her first grade teaching colleagues, that the transfer of learning weekly spelling words does not occur with high success across the reading and writing curriculum.

The author reviewed the goals set forth by the Washington State Commission on Student Learning. Second, research was done to explore the process of spelling development in early childhood. Researchers of young children and how they learn and experts in spelling instruction confirmed and agreed that developmental readiness plays a crucial role in primary age children's spelling growth. Learning to spell is developmental. From this research, a purpose for the project was developed. Third, the author examined various developmental spelling programs which integrated the teaching of spelling instruction within reading and writing instruction. Spelling and word study strategies

were chosen which would provide meaningful and stimulating learning experiences to strengthen and enhance the students' spelling skills. Next, black line masters were included to supplement the teaching of the various spelling and word study strategies. Also, guidelines for assessment and evaluation were included, as well as suggestions and guidelines for encouraging parental support of spelling instruction at home.

Conclusion

Based on research, the author has learned what is necessary for an effective integrated developmental approach to teaching spelling within the reading and writing curriculum.

1. Spelling is developmental. Children need developmentally appropriate word study strategies.
2. Spelling words are best comprised from high-frequency word lists, thematic units of study, and reading curriculum sight words.
3. Students are engaged in daily writing activities.
4. Inventive spelling is accepted as a logical and natural step toward conventional spelling.
5. A structured management system within the classroom is encouraged for implementation of instructional activities and assessment.
6. An effective developmental spelling program encourages parental involvement and has a parent education component.
7. Spelling instruction should be multilevel.

8. The main goal of a primary, integrated spelling curriculum should be to help the young students see the connection between spelling, reading, and writing.

As a result of this research and project, the author concludes that the integration of spelling instruction within the primary reading and writing curriculum and the developed learning activities are beneficial not only for teaching spelling but also enhance and encourage student learning and knowledge of spelling.

Next year, the author wants to use what she has learned. Her goal is to implement the Spelling Log and Word Banks. Her first grade colleagues have agreed to purchase personal dictionaries for each of our students that will be used to create individual word lists in alphabetical order. The students may refer to these word lists when writing. Word study strategies will be used more frequently and integrated within our daily writing activities. Assessment and evaluation of student spelling will be more difficult to change because Spelling is a separate category on the first grade report card. A single grade for spelling is required. However, the author wants to use individual student writing samples as part of the evaluation and assessment process for herself and parent conferences.

Recommendations

The author has several suggestions to enhance this project. To insure that the integrated developmental spelling instruction be successful, it is imperative that all educators of primary students understand and support the rationale of developmental spelling. Prior to implementing an integrated developmental approach to spelling instruction, educators should take classes, read books and research articles on spelling development and how it relates to spelling instruction. Teachers should analyze high-

frequency word lists and thematic units and decide what words should be included for spelling instruction. Opportunities to discuss and plan for the development of integrated spelling instruction must be in place prior to and throughout the school year. Parents must be informed about the structure of a developmental spelling program and their role in such a program.

Assessment and evaluation in a developmental spelling program are an ongoing part of daily classroom activities rather than a separate component. The focus of assessment and evaluation changes from testing to gathering information and evaluating student lessons and activities as they occur within the classroom.

Developing a new non-traditional spelling program requires leadership. Teachers must be committed to reshaping their thinking surrounding spelling instruction.

Integration of spelling with the reading and writing curriculum meets the standards and goals set forth by the Essential Academic Learning Requirements. It helps young students develop, understand, and apply the strategies and skills needed to be successful and confident spellers, writers, and readers.

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