

Learning Spellings

Many children struggle with learning their spellings at one point during their schooling and this can be a source of anguish for parents and children. We do not want homework to ever be a cause of stress within a family and we urge you to come and speak to the class teacher if you feel the level is too hard (or too easy).

Sometimes children just do not want to do it and this is something that you will have to navigate as you see appropriate. For children with additional needs this element may be magnified. Some children with additional needs have to work so much harder at school and by the time they get home, they have nothing left 'in the tank' to complete further tasks. In cases like this I suggest that you set a time limit and they work for that time period and whatever they complete in this time, earns them praise and then it is put away. I urge you to speak to the class teacher if you feel that the homework being set is not working for your child.

In school children may be set work to do from Spelling Shed as part of their homework and this is monitored by staff at school. This is completed electronically and the child needs to follow the on screen prompts.

If your child is trying to learn their spellings without using Spelling Shed then some of these ideas may help to cement those correct spellings in their memory. Your child may find one way that they prefer and works for them or they may want to change their method frequently. Try to do a recap on words that you know they can spell to remind them of what they have learnt and to boost their confidence. For many children the key to learning their spellings is REPETITION. I would also recommend tackling a smaller selection at a time. This is more manageable and it would be better to succeed at 3, for example, rather than fail at 10. If you think this would work for your child then please speak to the class teacher and they can help to identify which ones they could target and bear this in mind back in the classroom.

- Writing them out. This could be in lists, different colours or bubble writing.
- Writing them in chalk on the floor outside.



- Use shaving foam to trace the words into. This can be sprayed into a baking tray to try and contain the mess.



- Typing them on a computer and changing the colours and fonts.
- Using a mini whiteboard.

- Letter magnets.
 - ◆ Jumble up just the letters they need and they rearrange them.
 - ◆ Repeat as above but add in an extra letter and they have to find it.
 - ◆ Race them to make the word first.
 - ◆ Put the magnets in alphabetical order.
 - ◆ If they are learning about a particular spelling rule or sound you can blu tac or sellotape those letters together to be used again to start with.
 - ◆ Draw around the magnets and colour it in.
 - ◆ The child can make the word and then closes their eyes. You remove one of the magnets and they have to identify which one has gone.
 - ◆ Arrange the magnets in an arch around the area where your child is writing or practicing their spellings. Your child can pull the magnets they need towards them. The organisation of the letters helps them to tackle the task with a clearer mind.



- Stepping stones. You can ask your child to write the spellings out on strips of paper that you place around the room and on the floor. When you call them out they have to run to it. The next step is to put the letters needed on the floor and then the child has to move around the letters spelling the word.
- Stick the spellings to the fridge and when they go past they can spell one of the words to you.
- Walking. Some children prefer to do their spellings whilst walking. As you walk alongside your child and ask them to spell their words it is less confrontational and the physical act of walking and reciting can cement the spellings in their memory.
- This website has some helpful tips on ways to memorise spellings such as mnemonics and rhymes. <https://www.theschoolrun.com/memory-aids-for-kids>
- Using acrostics. Many children like to use an acrostic for some of those words that prove continually tricky such as 'because'

Big
Elephants
Can
Always
Understand
Small
Elephants

- Make mistakes. Some children have a fear of making mistakes and this can stop them trying for fear of failure. When they see you making mistakes and how you tackle that you can upskill them in how to face their own mistakes. This can also be a great source of humour and can break any tension that may have built up.
- Online spelling games. There are lots available but this website is a good starting point.
<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/5-7-years/words-and-spelling>