

Musical spellings!

Simply learn the word by saying or singing the letters out loud, developing a melody or rhythm – this melody or rhythm should imprint into your child's memory, so if they forget a spelling they will still remember how the rhythm or melody went, acting as a prompt to recall the spelling. Try clapping the rhythm or beating it on a drum. Improvise using empty cans or upturned saucepans!



Night time spellings - Write a spelling using a torch in the dark!



Grouping similar words

Our language has different ways to spell same sounds – eg ir in shirt, er in louder, ur in burn. A good way to help is to write all the words onto post it notes and time your child as they sort them into the different groups of spelling patterns at speed.

Make the most of modern technology

Most children are better with tablets and smart phones than we are!! Make the most of their skills and using grown up techno by downloading a spelling practice app. There are loads to choose from! Squeebles costs about £2.50 and correct spellings are rewarded with points towards game time. Another popular one is SpellBoard.

Alternatively switch the computer on, make sure spellcheck is on (be careful it's set on English not American!) and let your child practice typing in the words, using spellcheck to correct



Easy to correct - Use anything where rubbing out mistakes is easy – chalk on the patio, paintbrush and water on an outside wall, whiteboard and pen. Being able to rub out mistakes easily takes away a lot of the stress children can feel about having a go.

Magic spellings – write in a white wax crayon then paint over the top and see your writing

appear!



Mnemonics

Creating a phrase from each letter of a word and making a mnemonic can be a great tool in remembering the visual order of letters. For some children this works best if you write the word like an acrostic poem:

Because

Big

Elephants

Can

Add

Up

Sums

Easily

It's important to learn mnemonics thoroughly for them to work though – Ask lots of questions to reinforce it. Eg colour – Carry Old ladies Over Uneven Roads – you might ask Where do you carry old ladies? Who do you carry over uneven roads? etc.

Swap roles - Children love to play teacher, so play pupil and let your child test you. Make sure you accidentally get the key part of the word wrong sometimes so that they can correct you.



Find the syllables

Try breaking down polysyllabic words to make each syllable easier to remember. Help them decipher how many beats by clapping the word together (one clap per syllable) – they are used to doing this in school!

Danger – dan / ger

Windmill – wind / mill

Identify the tricky part

Often there will be one part of a word that trips your child up each time! Look at the word together and highlight the part that they find especially difficult.

For example: *night separate was what two friend said*

If a part of a spelling just doesn't seem to sink in, then try to think of tricks to help them stick. For example – weird – help by saying we are weird, so your child remembers that we is the first part of the word.

Look say cover write check

A classic technique, but not always the best for someone who doesn't like writing!

Look at the word

Cover the word

Write the word

Check the word

Or use a chart like this:

Count the phonemes

Count out how many phonemes (ie sounds, not individual letters) on fingers first eg b - oa - t = 3

Copy it	Copy it	Recall it
night	night	night

Muscle memory

Ask your child to write each letter of the word into the palm of their hand with their finger, or onto their leg. If they are a kinaesthetic learner (ie they learn by doing) this technique is likely to work well with enough repetitions (and doesn't involve writing it down which for some children makes a big difference!) Use trays of different materials such as glitter, sand, cornflour mixed with water. Write letters with a finger in the tray – it's a great way to feel letters and words

Glitter



How to help your child with spelling

Visual memory joggers

This one is a well-researched memory trick: if you can conjure up a visual image, what you are trying to remember may come back to you more easily

Eg: if your child tends to write cat as kat – remind them it's a curly c by saying "The cat likes to curl up and sleep."

Encourage your child to invent their own ways of remembering words as if they have thought of the image themselves it's a more powerful tool.



Auditory memory joggers

Accentuate the sounds in words

Eg to remember double letters, really stress and extend the sound

ss- fussysssss,

zz – buzzzzzzzz,

Use **magnetic letters** on the fridge.

Put up a word but perhaps overnight take away one or two of the letters or sounds – they can then correct the word that has been fiddled with!



Play games such as scrabble, Boggle, and Hangman, or invent your own!

For a whole heap of fun **combine baking and spelling** – use pastry dough or gingerbread, cut out several of each letter using a knife or cutter, bake and decorate then move around to spell words. Eat your words!! Alternatively make salt dough or playdough and make letters and words from these.