



Philosophy

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- Spelling is an integral part of the total curriculum which is taught and learned in the context of meaningful reading/writing activities.
- Spelling is a tool to help facilitate communication of written language.
- The classroom environment should promote a spelling consciousness and value risk taking.
- Learning to spell is a developmental process. Children go through predictable stages at their own rate.
- Competence in spelling occurs over time.



Standard spelling is the consequence of writing and reading, not the access to it standard spelling is of little consequence if you do not write.
(from *Spell by Writing*, by Bean, Wendy and Bouffler, C., Heinemann, 1991)

Principles

1. Spelling growth occurs when children are immersed in a variety of meaningful language experiences.

Guideline 1: *Students should be involved in a variety of reading activities:*

Suggested practices:

- Author studies
- Novel studies
- Independent self-selected reading
- Shared reading
- Buddy reading
- Poetry studies
- Book talks
- Literature circles
- Whole class silent reading



Guideline 2: *Students should be involved in purposeful writing activities on a regular basis.*

Suggested practices:

- Response journals
- Reports
- Comic strips
- Writing letters
- Poetry
- Stories
- Books
- Content writing
- Newsletters
- Lists
- Charts



2. **Spelling is an integral part of the writing process; a tool for facilitating written communication.**
3. **Spelling is developmental. Children go through the various stages, from the prephonetic to standard spelling, at their own rate (see stages of spelling development).**
4. **Writers must feel free to experiment with language and take risks with spelling.**

Guideline 1: *Early use of invented spelling is a normal part of the process of becoming a competent speller.*

Guideline 2: *It is important to develop a spelling consciousness in students. Our goal is to produce independent writers who are competent spellers.*

5. **Words to be studied should come from a variety of sources.**

- Words children misspell
- Words children ask for
- Words teacher knows children need
- Words relevant to a topic or theme

Note: Words to be studied should be appropriate for students' developmental level and in the context of personal writing.



6. **Spelling should be seen as a problem solving activity in which students are active participants.**
7. **Students should be taught to utilize a variety of spelling strategies while engaging in meaningful language activities.**

Suggested practices:

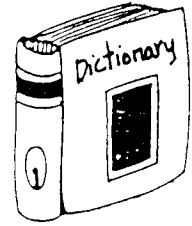
- Discovering the rules
- Proofreading - conferencing
- Dictionary, spell check, word books
- Peer help
- Mini lessons
- Wall charts
- Spelling games
- Word lists
- Give-it-a-try sheets



8. Assessment of spelling should be an ongoing part of the writing process.

Suggested practices:

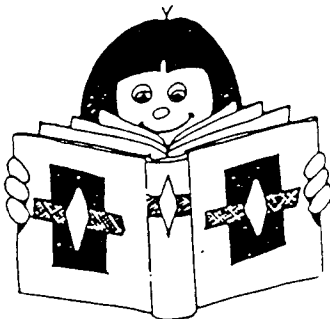
- Daily writing
- Personal spelling records - dictionaries
- "Words I Can Spell" booklets
- File boxes
- Proofreading skills
- Spelling inventories and interviews
- Published writing



9. Parents should be kept informed and involved in their child's spelling development.

Suggested practices:

- Back to school night
- Newsletters (school, district)
- Letters to parents
- Home school meetings
- Theme celebrations



To think spelling always matters is as non-productive as thinking it never matters.

*(from *Spelling for Parents*, by Phenix, Jo and Scott-Dunne, Doreen, Pembroke Publishers, 1994)*