

## Guidelines for Teaching Spelling

Some students learn to spell quite effortlessly, but all students benefit from some systematic spelling instruction and practice.

Students who are experiencing difficulty in spelling need intensive instruction and practice tailored to match their individual levels of word knowledge.

Here are some guidelines for spelling instruction:

- Review previously taught spelling words.
- Consider students' knowledge and skills, and use words students can read.

Determine the number of words to teach in one lesson, based on students' needs.

Some students need to read words many times before they remember how to spell them.

- Introduce frequently used and regular word patterns first.
- Provide immediate and appropriate feedback to reinforce correct spelling of newly learned spelling patterns.

Expect students to correctly spell previously taught words.

- Provide practice for newly learned words or word patterns before other patterns are introduced.

Dictate words or sentences and have students write them.

Provide ample practice for students who are having difficulty with spelling to help them remember letter-sound correspondences and patterns.

Use techniques that encourage students to focus on the phonemic elements of words.

For example, students can repeat the word after the teacher and then say the sounds as they write the corresponding letters

Have students participate in guided self-correction whenever possible.

To focus students' attention on spelling and letter patterns in words, provide opportunities for them to analyze and sort words into categories.

Encourage students to use their decoding skills as they read words during word sorts.

Use word banks to provide a reference for students as they write.

Encourage students to use keyboarding and plastic letters to spell words.

- After word sorts, extend students' knowledge of words by encouraging them to look for more words that follow particular spelling patterns or generalizations.

Have students hunt for other words in their reading and writing that fit studied patterns or discovered generalizations.

Have students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups.

Encourage students to record their words in notebooks or on word-bank cards.

- Help students learn how to check and monitor their spelling.

Have students read words after they have spelled them.

Adapted from the 2TRA *Highlight—Spelling* presenter notes that are based on: Bear et al., 2000; Carreker, 1999; Moats, 1995; Templeton, 1996; Templeton & Morris, 1999.  
(Complete citations are included in the *Highlight—Spelling* reference pages.)