

Introduction

This book gives you the curriculum *content* of spelling lessons for levels 1 to 6. This same content can also be used for various special education, adult education, remedial and ESL classes.

The basic content of these lessons is the 3000 *Instant Word* list, a high-frequency list refined and revised from the American Heritage study of 5 million words used in children's textbooks. To these 3000 *Instant Words* have been added 100 *Picture Nouns*, many phonograms and phonics principles, some content words from school subjects such as society and environment, and variant forms of the Instant Words (such as plurals).

The lessons in this book are not worksheets, though there may be times when a teacher may wish to copy a lesson to give to a class or an individual student as a study sheet. This copied lesson may be used at school or taken home for study or lessons with parent assistance.

Many teachers will also teach spelling using a less formalised curriculum content such as the words an individual student misspells in stories. Keeping a personal spelling list is encouraged – see Appendix 5 for suggestions. The lessons in this book may be viewed as a backup or as a more structured and research-based spelling minimum.

Number of Lessons

Most teachers or tutors will think of a lesson as one week's work, but for some classes and some students, the progress may be slower or faster.

For levels 2 to 6, there are thirty-five lessons – one for almost every week in a school year. However, there are twenty lessons for level 1 because younger students often start spelling lessons later in the year, or, if they start at the beginning of the year, they move at a slower pace. If you want a suggestion on where to start with an individual or a whole class, use the Spelling Test in Appendix 14.

Number of Words

The number of words taught in a level 1 lesson is ten, in level two fifteen, and in upper levels twenty words in each lesson. The following table summarises this information:

Level	Words per Lesson	Number of Lessons	Total Words Taught	Lesson Numbers
1–2	10	20	200	1–20
2–3	15	35	525	21–55
3–4	20	35	700	56–90
4–5	20	35	700	91–125
5–6	20	35	700	126–160
6–7	20	36	720	161–196
TOTALS		196	3545	

Methods of Teaching Spelling

Since this book basically gives you the content, you must use your own methods to teach spelling. However, you might like a few suggestions based on experience and research:

1. **Use the test–study method.** For example, you might give a spelling test of twenty words to all your Year 4 students starting with lesson 91 on Monday at the beginning of the school year.
2. **Have the students correct their own work.** Make sure they properly spell all the words they spelled incorrectly. During the first few weeks you should check their work to see that they have both found the words they misspelled and spelled them correctly. After a few weeks most students can do the self-correcting satisfactorily; however, there may be a few students who need frequent or continual supervision.
3. **Have the students carefully study the words that they missed,** paying careful attention to just the incorrect or missing letters, perhaps by circling the incorrect letters and writing the word correctly from memory several times. See the suggestions to parents in Appendix 13 for homework suggestions. See also the Five-Step Study Method at the end of this introduction.
4. **Give a second spelling test on Wednesday.** Every student who gets either 100% or perhaps 90% (your choice) will not have to take the test again on Friday. They can read or write stories.
5. **A final test should be given on Friday** only for those students who did not do well on the Wednesday test. They should study again, just the words they missed and just the letters they missed. You can help them by pointing out phonics, syllabification, spelling patterns, suffix principles or irregularities.
6. **Each student can keep a chart of final scores** achieved on their final spelling test (Wednesday or Friday). See the chart in Appendix 12.

Supplemental Parts of the Lessons

Phrases and Sentences. Each lesson for levels 1 and 2 (lessons 1 to 55) has some phrases and sentences which use the spelling words in that lesson in context. These are just to give a little practice reading these words in context, which will add a bit of meaning. Some teachers may use these phrases and sentences as part of reading or handwriting lessons. There are no phrases and sentences beyond lesson 55.

Word Study. Each lesson has a Word Study part which is often a phonogram family (make, lake, take, etc.), and some comment on one of the spelling words. The phonogram is taken from one of the spelling words. You can use this section for teaching about words and word patterns. In level 3 and above, more morphemes (like prefixes and suffixes) and other word patterns are introduced. Upper-level word studies often make interesting comments about word origins.

Phonics. All lessons for levels 1 and 2 have phonics lessons that illustrate a common phoneme–grapheme correspondence. Most of the major phonics principles are covered. See the chart in Appendix 7 for an index to phonics skills taught lesson by lesson. Since the phonics correspondence in each lesson is based on one or more words in the lesson, this further explains the phonetic basis for English spelling. Of course, if you don't like to teach phonics, you can skip this part of the lesson. The preface which follows contains a discussion of phonics versus

the whole-word position in selecting spelling words and Appendix 8 has a rather complete set of phonics principles in useful chart form.

Variant Forms. In all lessons above level 2, variant forms of the twenty basic spelling lesson words (the *Instant Words*) are given. For example, the variant forms for the base word 'copy' are 'copied, copies, copying'. Some teachers may wish to teach these variant forms and some may not. This is also a way of differentiating lessons between good spellers and slow spellers. The better students get more variant forms. The most common form of the word is the one in the basic spelling lesson, even though it might be the plural form or the past tense form.

Personal Spelling List. Each student can keep their own personal spelling list. On this list might be words missed on a final spelling test and words that the student has asked for, had to look up or spelled incorrectly during story writing. This list can be used for personal study, reference when writing future stories and supplemental games and drills. See Appendix 5 for more suggestions.

Review. Some review definitely helps the permanence of learning anything. At the bottom of each lesson page there is a suggested review schedule. This schedule is based on a four-week cycle. Every fourth week a review of selected main spelling words is suggested, on the next week a review of Word Study in the preceding four lessons is suggested, on the next week a review of the preceding four weeks of Phonics sections is suggested, and on the seventh week the teacher can check to see if each student is keeping up a personal spelling list. These review suggestions given with each lesson can also help the teacher in formulating weekly lesson plans.

General Comments about Teaching Spelling

- Most spelling experts agree that good pronunciation helps when learning to spell. Exaggerate enunciation when giving the spelling words. Some teachers introduce the words by pronouncing them syllable by syllable.
- **Point out trouble parts** of words like silent letters or unusual or non-phonetic parts of words.
- **Point out regular rules** and regular phonic principles in words.
- **Discuss the meaning** and use of each word. Use the word in a sentence when giving the spelling test.
- **Vowels cause more trouble** than consonants. Stress vowel sounds and the way they are spelled.
- **Give students a lot of praise** for good spelling, particularly if they are showing improvement. Look at their spelling progress charts regularly.
- **Don't let spelling get in the way of good story-writing.** Let students use invented spelling on first drafts. Later they can proofread and correct.
- **Have a little fun.** Play some spelling games like *Scrabble* or have a spelling bee. Laugh at some mistakes, both theirs and yours. Remember that the only people who don't make spelling errors are people who don't write anything.

Instant Words 101–115

over	place
new	years
sound	live
take	me
only	back
little	give
work	most
know	

Sentences to Read or Write

Take over the new work.
 It is the only little sound I know.
 Which place do you like?
 Give most of it back to me.
 Most years I live over there.

Word Study Past tense '-ed' for verbs

sounded	placed
worked	lived
backed	

Note: This is the regular rule for writing past tense. Also use this '-ed' ending when writing the past participle. The past participle uses 'have, has, had', for example, 'He has worked.' Some verbs have an irregular past, for example, 'give-gave'.

Phonics Long 'o'

over	most	no
only	go	so

Note: The open-syllable-ending rule, which states that if a vowel letter ends the syllable, the vowel is long, explains 'over, go, no, so', but does not work for 'only' or 'most' because these are exceptions.

Phonics Charts

Initial Consonant Blends – Chart 8

Beginning Blends

These mainly fall into four families:

S family

ST	SP	SC	SK	SW	SM	SN
stand	sport	school	sky	swim	small	snake
state	space	scream	skate	sweep	smell	snow
stick	spot	scout	skin	swing	smart	snare
story	speed	scare	skirt	switch	smile	sneak
study	spend	screen	skip	sweet	smash	snap

R family

PR	TR	GR	BR	CR	DR	FR
pray	try	grey	bread	cry	dry	fry
price	tree	grade	broom	crazy	drink	from
press	trip	grow	brown	crew	dream	free
present	truck	grand	brake	cross	drum	front
pretty	trade	grass	bring	cream	drop	fruit

L family

PL	CL	BL	FL	SL	GL	TW
play	club	black	fly	slow	glad	twelve
plus	clown	blue	flag	slap	globe	twice
place	clay	blood	flat	sleep	glove	twin
plane	clear	blow	flood	slide	glass	twenty
plant	class	blame	flower	slip	glow	twist

Final Consonant Blends and Silent Consonants – Chart 9

Final Blends

ND	NT	CT	NG	LD	
and	ant	act	long	old	
blond	bent	duct	sang	mild	
grand	hunt	fact	king	told	
band	can't	protect	ring	build	
end	don't	subtract	young	wild	
NC(E)	NK	RT	MP	PT	LT
once	ink	part	jump	kept	salt
since	think	smart	lamp	rapt	belt
dance	bank	heart	camp	slept	built
prince	trunk	hurt	bump	crept	melt
bounce	thank	art	stamp	swept	fault

Silent Consonants

SILENT C BEFORE K	SILENT K BEFORE N	SILENT W BEFORE R	SILENT GH
back	know	write	high
luck	knife	wreck	right
rock	knee	wrist	taught
sick	knock	wrong	light
deck	knit	wrench	night

Exceptions: almost any letter can be silent. Here are some examples:

g–gnaw	b–climb	e–come	p–pneumonia
h–rhyme	c–science	l–half	n–solemn