

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 2726–2730

someday
 basketball
 damp
 doorway
 lane

Prefixes

autograph
automobile
automatic
autobiography
autocrat

States & Territories

Western Australia
 South Australia
 Northern Territory
 Queensland
 New South Wales

Capital Cities

Perth
 Adelaide
 Darwin
 Brisbane
 Sydney

Word Study Prefix 'auto' meaning 'self'

autograph – a signature; 'graph' means 'write', it is 'self-written'.

automobile – a car; 'mobile' means 'move', it is 'self-moving'.

automatic – operates by itself, or 'self-operating'.

autobiography - a biography or life story written by the subject.

autocrat – a dictator or person who rules without consulting others or 'self-rule'.

Variant Forms

basketballs
 doorways

damper, dampness, dampens
 lanes

Review: Start students keeping a personal spelling list. See Appendix 5 for suggestions.

Personal Spelling List

Keeping a personal spelling list is a good idea for all students. It was suggested in the introductory material and it is mentioned in the review sections of the lessons.

The reasons for keeping a personal spelling list are that research has shown that most pupils' spelling errors consist of a relatively few trouble words. If these words are on the list, pupils can learn them more easily. If they have to look them up, it is much faster using a personal spelling list than a dictionary.

Also, a personal spelling list should contain words missed on the final spelling test. Thus, words which pupils had trouble learning can be reviewed with the list or looked up easily.

The two main sources of words for a pupil's personal spelling list are:

- words missed or requested when writing stories, and
- words missed on the final tests.

If the pupil makes a booklet for keeping the personal spelling list with one page for each letter, it will be quickly observed that some letters like 's' use up a lot of space, and some letters like 'q' or 'z' use up very little space. Hence, some suggested page allotments are given in the following table for a large 60-page booklet or a small 18-page booklet.

Students can select spelling partners and partners can test each other from the own personal spelling list words. Words can be ticked off if they are spelled correctly.

The review section of the lesson suggests that the teacher check the personal spelling list of each student every few weeks to see that it is being updated (added to). This can be done while spelling partners are testing each other.

Pages Needed for a 60-Page Booklet		Pages Needed for an 18-Page Booklet	
A	3	A	1
B	4	B	1
C	6	C	1
D	3	D	1
E	2	E	1
F	3	F	1
G	2	G	1
H	2	H	½
I	2	I	½
J	½	J	¼
K	½	K	¼
L	2	L	1
M	3	M	1
N	1	N	½
O	2	O	½
P	4½	P	1
Q	½	Q	¼
R	3	R	¾
S	8	S	2
T	3½	T	1
U	½	U	½
V	1	V	½
W	2	W	⅓
XYZ	1	XYZ	⅔