

## Tips and games for learning spellings with your child



Thank you to those of you that were able to attend our recent "Spelling Open Morning". Here are some tips, games and activities that will hopefully make learning spellings at home with your children easier, more effective and fun!

### Memory aids:

**Highlight the hard bit:** Look at the word together and highlight the part that is particularly tricky. For example: night    separate    was    receive

If your child struggles to remember one or two parts of a word, try to think of other ways to help them retain this part. For example: With 'weird', children often get the 'i' and 'e' confused. Help by saying, "We are we - ir - d!" so your child remembers that 'we' is the first part of the word.

For the 'double s' in 'dessert': desserts are two things - both sweet and sugary.

**Break it down:** Break down polysyllabic words (words with more than one syllable) to make each syllable (a single unbroken sound) easier to remember. Help children decipher how many 'beats' or syllables there are in a word by clapping the word together, one clap per syllable. So, for two-syllable words like 'danger' it would be dan / ger

Older children can also break words down into prefix, root word and suffix. For example: In 'unhappiness' the root word is 'happy', the prefix 'un' and the suffix 'ness'

un / happi / ness

### Say it as it's spelled:

To remember 'double s', really stress and extend the sound: fussssssss.

To remember 'double z', again stress and extend it: buzzzzzzzzz.

The same for double e: 'seeeeeeeeem'.

To remember 'ea' instead of 'ee', pronounce it as two separate sounds: cre - a - m.

**Make it visual:** It is well-researched that conjuring up a visual image of what you are trying to remember really helps. For example, if your child is learning 'bank' but writing 'banc', help them remember it's a 'kicking K' by saying, "I kicked my legs into the bankk." If they're writing 'cat' as 'kat' remind them it's a 'curly c' by saying, "The cat likes to curl up and go to sleep."

Encourage your child to invent their own ways of remembering words; if they have thought up the image themselves, it will be a more powerful tool.

**Make it an acrostic:** Create a phrase from each letter of a word and turn it into an acrostic. For example: BECAUSE (see picture on the right).

Big  
Elephants  
Can  
Always  
Upend  
Small  
Elephants

## Activities and Games:



**Trace, Copy, Recall:** Fold a piece of paper into three columns and label them trace, copy and recall. Write the word in the first column and have your child trace it. Next, get them to copy the word in the next column by looking back at the letters. Finally, get them to fold and hide the first two columns and practise writing the word in the final column.

**Type it out:** Open up a document to type on. Call out the word for the child to spell. They can then play around with the word such as by increasing the font size or changing the colour.



**Playdough and shaving foam:** Have your child make their words using playdough or write them in a tray of shaving foam.

**Pairs:** Create a double set of the words your child is finding tricky. Pick up two cards at a time until they find a pair. Can they verbally spell it out to you?

**Spelling Puzzle:** Make a home-made puzzle by writing the word in large letters on a piece of card.

**Noughts and crosses:** Using the spelling words, your child needs to get three in a row of the words spelt correctly. They can compete with you or a friend.

**Board games:** When you land on a certain square the player has to pick a spelling card and try to write it without looking. Each correct spelling wins the player one point.

**Prefixes and suffixes:** Use root word, prefix and suffix cards to see how many real words your child can create.

**Pelmanism:** Write homophones on cards (words that sound the same but are spelt differently such as 'threw' and 'through'). Put the cards face down and take it in turns to pick two. When you find a pair you keep them. Can your child write each of them in a sentence?



**Word searches:** Ask your child to make a word search with their spellings and challenge you to solve it!

**Word ladders:** Write a sound or a word at the top of a ladder. Your child must think of other words to write down the rungs of the ladder with the same sound or spelling pattern.

**Word scramble:** Write your child's spelling words with all the letters mixed up. Can they unscramble them?

**Build a sentence:** See if your child can write each of their words in a sentence. Can they build their sentences into a story?

Whitch

bee

**Create with colour:** Have your child write the word in one colour, trace over it in another colour and keep repeating until you have made a rainbow word!

**Make the headlines:** Have your child cut letters out of newspapers or magazines and stick them onto paper to make the words in their list.