

Ways to help practise spellings

- Gradually slide a large copy of a word from behind a book or sheet of card. See how long it takes to recognise the word.
- Cover up the first letter on a set of words. Ask what the first letter might be and what the word would then be. Use words which have more than one possibility. As an alternative, cover up the last letter.
- Which words are spelled correctly? Write three versions of a word and the child decides which is correct. How can they recognise the correct spelling and what will help them remember it?
- Lay a set of words out. Say a word and the child to put their finger on that word.
- Sort words according to how many letters they have got and then read them.
- Play a memory game. Lay a small number of words on a table. Let them have a look for a while before asking them to turn around and close their eyes. Remove a card and ask them if they can tell you which card you removed.
- Create a word search containing the words.
- Ask the children to spell words which rhyme that you show them, e.g. show them 'could' and ask them to spell 'would' and 'should' or 'other', 'brother', 'another'.
- Explore strategies which can help them remember words, e.g. mnemonics, such as *because - big elephants can always understand small elephants*.
- Provide jumbled up letters, which letters do you need to make the word? E.g. dlcuo, say the correct word 'could' and they sort them into correct order.
- Write a word. Ask the child to look at the word and chant the letters, trying to remember what the word LOOKS like and how it is spelt. Take a 'photo' in their heads by looking then closing their eyes – can they see the word in their mind? Practise a few times before eventually covering the word completely. Then, ask them to write the word on their whiteboard and check if they've written carefully. Does it look right? Does it read back correctly? If not, which part appears wrong?
- Learn to spell a word through kinaesthetic learning, e.g. write a word. Look at the word together considering different ways in which it might be learned (e.g. a rhyme, pattern, mnemonic). Ask them to write the word as many times as possible within 30 seconds. Make sure they write joined up – explaining to them that the hand eventually learns the pattern of the word.
- When reading together point out any spellings that appear.

- Write parts of a word, e.g. ab__e. Ask the child to complete the word (e.g. above)
- Look for words within words. How many hidden words can they find? (Good for segmenting and remembering).
- Play 'Shannon's game' (a version of hangman) where the letters have to be guessed in the right order, developing a sense of serial probability (thinking about which letter/letter combination is most likely next. Draw a set of dashes to represent the letters in the word. Take it in turns to suggest the next letter. As the word emerges, letter-by-letter, the number of choices narrows. To help them further the first letter can be given.
- Together say the words aloud, breaking them up into chunks or syllables.
- Record yourself spelling out the word, then listen to it and check you have the correct spelling.
- Test each other aloud.
- Using post-it notes, write down each of the spellings. Assemble the notes on the wall, grouping any similar patterns/sounds together.
- Spell out the word, writing it in the air with your hand. As you do this, say the letters out loud.
- Count the number of letters in each words. Then hold up that number of fingers as you spell out the word. This will help you check you have included the right number of letters in your spelling.
- Take it in turns to write the spelling of the word on your partner's back. Your partner has to guess what word you have written.
- Use a highlighter to highlight any letters of the main word that you have difficulty remembering.
- Colour code the spellings you are learning. Use colours to pick out patterns in the way the words are spelt.
- Use 'Look, say, cover, write, check'. Look at the word, say the word, cover it up and write it. Finally, check if you have spelt it correctly.
- Play letter based games (such as Scrabble and Banagrams) and together explore the words made.