

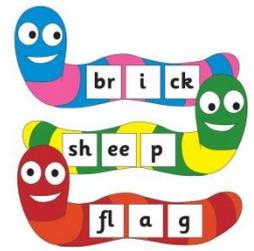
# **Tavistock Infant School**



## **A guide to spelling at KS1**

## Introduction

The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with information about how your child is taught spelling at school and to help you to support your child at home with spelling.



## In Class

Within the first term in Reception, children start to learn phonics. They start by learning the sound each letter of the alphabet makes and then move on to the sounds that two letters can make such as 'sh' and 'ch' and then three letters such as 'igh'. Children are taught how to blend these sounds together to read words and also how to segment these sounds to spell.

This work continues in Year 1 with children learning different ways of spelling the same sound for example 'ay' (day), 'ai' (rain) and 'a-e' (make).

In addition to daily phonics sessions, children also have one spelling session a week in Years 1 and 2. The words focused on in these lessons are known as the common exception words. The common exception words children need to learn in Year 1 and Year 2 are set out in the new National Curriculum. These are the words which the children are most likely to come across when reading simple texts. They will also use these words in writing.

During the spelling sessions children are taught a range of spelling strategies to help them remember the words. Learning different ways to remember words teaches children to problem solve and enables them to spell other tricky words. Tricky words are words which don't always follow patterns or rules.

The main spelling strategies children are taught are:

- Using Phoneme Knowledge (sounding out)
- Syllabification - breaking words down into syllables. The children can clap out words to identify syllables e.g. jump-ing/An-drew. Children can use phonic strategies to sound out each syllable.
- Word Shape - look at letter shape, size, ascending and descending letters.
- Tricky Letters (grotty graphemes) - looking at the position of tricky letters as an aid to spelling.

- Compound Words - breaking the compound word into simple words e.g. into makes 'in' and 'to' / upon 'up' and 'on'.
- Mnemonic - using an aide memoire e.g. because - Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants, said - Sally Ann Is Dancing.
- Using Analogy - if you know how to spell one word you can spell similar words e.g. if you can spell hill, you can spell mill, will, fill etc.

### Assessment

Children are tested on common exception words at the end of each term. Children are no longer assessed purely on the basis of a single word spelling test. Teachers make judgements about a child's ability to spell words by placing them in a context e.g. a dictated sentence and through the writing produced in other areas of the curriculum.

### At Home

When your child comes home with a list of common exception words, you could discuss with them what strategy they would use to help them remember to spell each word.

Once children have learnt to spell the word in isolation, you could also take turns to dictate simple sentences, which contain the common words and take turns to be the 'teacher' and check each other's work.

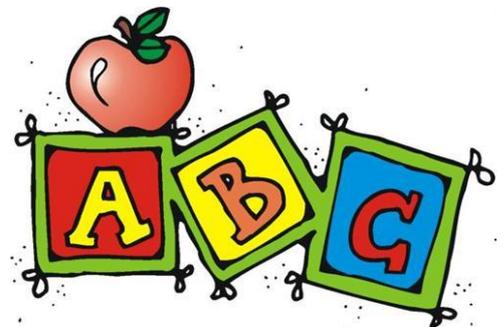
### Spelling Investigations

The National Curriculum also requires the children to learn a range of spelling conventions such as adding 'ing' and 'ed' to words.

Children are taught about these rules as part of their English work in Year 1 and grammar sessions in Year 2. Weekly homework is set for children to have a chance to investigate and consolidate this learning at home.

### Practice Makes Permanent

Learning to spell is a highly complex business. Some children learn to spell effortlessly - most get there in the end, but too many find the process of learning to spell arduous, painstaking and, sadly, boring.



Unfortunately practice, practice and more practice is often the answer. Below are some activities for making learning spellings fun.

### Pipe-cleaner Words

In advance write a few words on individual pieces of card or paper.

Ask your child to listen carefully while you say a word. Challenge your child to use the pipe cleaners to form all of the letters they hear. Show your child the word card and support them to use their pipe cleaners to add or change the letters they need to spell the word correctly.

### Goopy Words

Fill a re-sealable bag with gel or finger paint. Use masking tape to secure each bag to a table or other flat surface. Invite your child to choose a word from the Word List and use one finger to press the letters of their word into the gel or paint. Your child can erase their word by gently rubbing the bag with the palm of their hand until it is evenly distributed inside the bag.

### Guess Who

Write some words on paper. Read the words with your child. Ask them to tape a word to your back. You have to ask a question e.g. does it begin with 'th'? Can I sound it out? Now your child takes a turn to answer your questions. Tape a word to their back.



### Spelling Tennis

One person starts with a ball and as they throw it they say the first letter of the spelling word. Their partner catches the ball and then throws it back saying the second letter of the word. This throwing and catching continues until the word is made. The last person to add a letter wins.

### Rainbow words

Break the word down into syllables and write each part in a different colour.