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What Are The Best Ways Of Teaching Spelling?

By Teresa Styles

It seems that most studies of teaching spelling begin at the same place: a child's understanding of communication begins with sound. From infancy they are surrounded by sounds, which become words. As they are exposed to printed text, they learn to associate phonemes, the sounds they here with graphemes, the visual representation of those words.

Toddlers who are exposed to the alphabet are usually fascinated with the letters. Once they have learned the names of the letters, they can begin to invent spellings.

Students entering the first grade will have developed their invented spelling. At this grade level when they begin to read, teaching spelling becomes a critical part of the process. Reading along with a spoken text will extend their grasp of letters and help them understand the complexities of certain sounds and their related spellings.

Teaching spelling begins with lots of reading. If the student needs help, that's just encouragement to keep on reading. Hand in hand with this early process is frequent writing assignments. Made up spellings are the precursor to correct spellings, but the student has to be comfortable with the process.

A suggested website to check out is: <http://tips-about-kids.com>

Transitioning to proper spelling is another critical point in the process of teaching spelling. Reading helps, but it is not the complete answer since English is only partially phonetic. Rote memory can help. If a student has a printed list of the 100 or 200 most common words in his writing folder it will serve as a reference source until the correctly spelled word can be visualized.

One of the important components of teaching spelling is discussion of spelling patterns. All of the lessons we learned about long A's and short A's still apply. Showing a classroom that ea and ee both produce the long E sound will help a student sound words out and also narrow the possibilities for spelling an unfamiliar word.

Some of us are born spellers; some born mis-spellers. It seems to be as simple as that, although

dyslexia seems to be much more common than originally thought when it was first diagnosed. By the middle of the elementary grades, it will be clear that spelling ability varies greatly among students and that often it has little to do with native intelligence.

At this juncture, the most important traits for teaching spelling are patience and compassion. It is important to keep away or take away any stigma associated with the problem.

Teaching spelling to problem spellers may become a process of teaching the importance of proofreading. That's not a common process with elementary and secondary students but it may become an important one for a student who struggles with spelling.

Teresa Styles helps parents and teachers become more effective helping children learn and enjoy learning. She is a contributing author at EducationGold. For more teaching ideas go to:
<http://educationgold.com>

Home Schooling For Second Grade Spelling Words

By Jerry Cahill

If you are considering or doing home schooling there are some benchmarks you can use. When your child has reached the equivalency of second grade they have already learned a host of language items. One of these critical learning elements is that of correct spelling. Home educators just like teachers work diligently to reinforce spelling words at the second grade level.

As a home educator you can follow the methodical approach to teaching second grade spelling that is used by education professionals. This approach makes the process predictable and comfortable for the children in the home classroom. Following a systematic process allows the child to get comfortable with the learning process. Structure provides a sense of security for the child in dealing with second grade spelling words.

A list of curriculum is generally organized by vowel sounds. This provides an added bonus of understanding phonics while learning vowels as a part of spelling. This is better than creating a haphazard list of 2nd grade spelling words as educators can choose to introduce them by sound and by common elements, namely vowels.

When using the vowel approach generally the short "a" vowel sounds are first. This is a deliberate approach since "a" is the first vowel in the alphabet, it is the wise letter of choice in this first list of 2nd grade spelling words. This is especially true since children often see terms such as "cat, hat, and bat" on this list.

That of course is followed by the short "e" vowel sound. The list then follows the next vowel by the order of the alphabet and so on. In this early spelling area for second grade spelling words a simple approach is used where only one syllable words with short vowel sounds are introduced.

Once a home student has demonstrated a mastery of these short vowel lists of 2nd grade spelling words they are ready to move on to more complex and more challenging words.

Generally combinations of vowels, specifically words that end in "e" are now used. The same alphabetical list used with the short vowel sound collection of 2nd grade spelling words is used for the more advanced combinations.

After learning to spell words that end in the letter "e" vowels are paired in small words like "mail". This methodical approach involves careful planning and organization. In following the structured strategy you will watch your child maximize their learning potential.

Jerry Cahill is an author/researcher who is dedicated to helping people find the resources, books, news and information on education. Learn more at: <http://www.thehomeschoolinghelper.com>

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