Research Based Practices for Spelling

Research suggests that students learn best when they are systematically and explicitly taught the rules for spelling. Instead of working from a spelling list, students will enter into a deep study of phonetic patterns, learning when and how to use the correct sound spelling correspondence when writing words.

This year, we will use several strategies below when segmenting and blending sounds to read and write words. Therefore, we will not work from a spelling list, but rather focus on a phonetic skill for the week and provide example words that follow that rule. The focus is on the letter-sound correspondence, not a specific list to memorize.

Segment Sounds

When students are trying to spell a word, they may need to segment, or separate the sounds in the word. Have them hold a fist in the air and hold one finger up for each sound they hear in the word.



Sound Boxes

When first learning the sound-spelling relationship, students should attend to the number of sounds in a word and the spelling patterns of each sound, along with rules for when to use the sound. Students will place one sound in each box. Some sounds will be spelled with more than one letter.



Letter-Sound Correspondences

After students segment the sounds, they must attach each sound to a letter or letter combination. Students should use the sounds they know and have been explicitly taught.





Dictation

Dictation is used to assist students in recognizing the sound in isolation, in a word, and in a sentence. When using this strategy, remind students of the sound, then dictate an example word with the sound while the student writes the word. After that, dictate a sentence using words with the sound-spelling pattern.

The cat sat on a bag.