Spelling Strategies to Use at Home

A Guide for Parents

Learning to spell correctly is a crucial skill for life. Children begin to learn the basics of the language as soon as they start school, and their skills and knowledge build as they progress. However, the English language is one of the most difficult languages in the world to learn to spell, as there are so many different ways of spelling the same sounds, and different sounds represented by the same letter strings!

Many words in the English language follow specific rules, and children will be taught these rules at school. However, some words just have to be learnt, and the weekly spelling list can often be greeted with dread by parents!

If you and your child are looking for some new and fun ways to get the spellings of words learnt, try these:

Use each word in a silly sentence. The sillier the sentence, the more memorable. Underline the spelling word in each sentence.



Write a sentence or short paragraph that contains every single one of your words.



Write each word and incorporate it into a silly picture. For example, if one of the words is 'thumb' draw a hand with the word itself instead of the thumb.



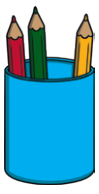
Play charades with the words. When each one is guessed, spell it.



Paint your words onto paper, write them in water with a big brush onto the outside wall of the house, or write them on the ground with coloured chalks.



Write out the letters in the words with different coloured felt-tips or pencil crayons.



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Make up a code for your words e.g. A=1, B=2 and so on. See if someone else can crack your code.



Make a mini-dictionary. Sort the words into alphabetical order then write them out with a definition next to each one. For a challenge, see if you can also say whether each word is a noun, verb adjective etc.



Make a word search with your words and list them underneath.



Ask your helper to write your words as anagrams (mixing up the letters) Can you work out which one is which?



Write out the words on the computer. Use different fonts and different colours for the different letters.



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