



Programming for Spelling

Useful Spelling Rules

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Introduction

It is a popular misconception that the English language is a highly irregular language, one which largely defies rules and conventions. While many languages are, certainly, more predictable than English it remains true that at least 80% of the language conforms to some rule or structural group.

Learning about spelling rules and spelling conventions has a number of benefits.

First, it allows children to generalise spelling skills to new words. For example, if a student learns that 'busy' becomes 'busied' using the rule: 'change the 'y' to an 'i' before adding a vowel ending', then the student has a good chance of getting the spelling of 'carry' – 'carried' correct even if it has not been explicitly taught.

It encourages the analysis of words. This analysis ensures that students 'know' about a word in more ways than they would do in a whole-word approach, which is an ineffective method of ensuring that information is learned and stored in long term memory..

It reduces apparent chaos. For example, if 'dry'–'dried' is correct, is 'play'-'played' an exception? (No, just add the vowel ending when the 'y' in the base word is preceded by a vowel.)

The teaching of rules is about the teaching of guidelines that assist the spelling of unfamiliar words. There are always exceptions to rules. Teach the rule and be happy when a student finds the exception! This means that they are thinking!

Structure of the Book

This book is organised on three strands.

Strand 1

- Syllabification
- Pronunciation
- Common spelling rules

Strand 2

- Each rule is explained and supported with examples.
- Dictation sentences are provided that pertain to the rule.
- Word lists are provided for the teacher.
- Study Sheets are provided that practise the rule on two levels of difficulty.
- Study Sheets are provided for practice in discrimination between two or more rules.

Strand 3

- Study Sheet activities that include
 - Spelling (to apply the rule, state the rule)
 - Proof Reading
 - Vocabulary
 - Sayings and Expressions
 - Research Questions

Pronunciation

Meaning

Match the word with its meaning. Write the word on the line next to its meaning.

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| centenary | ancestors | cemetery | eccentric | muscles |
|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|---------|

1. A place where bodies are buried. _____
2. Parts of the body which give it the strength and power to move.

3. A hundredth anniversary. _____
4. Not usual or normal. _____
5. The people from whom you are descended. _____.

Write your answers in complete sentences.

1. Name four of your ancestors.

2. Give an example of eccentric behaviour.

3. How old would you be if you were a centenarian?

4. What would you expect to see in a cemetery? Name four things.

The Bossy 'e' Rule

Meaning

Match the words to their meanings. Write each word on the line next to its meaning.

| | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| fin | base | hop | bake | fat |
| mate | rose | fade | cub | hope |
| pill | lame | fate | fine | cube |

1. To jump on one leg _____
2. To lose colour _____
3. Unable to walk properly _____
4. A good friend _____
5. At the bottom _____
6. A baby lion _____
7. To cook in an oven _____
8. Not thin _____
9. A flower _____
10. A tablet _____
11. A solid object with six square faces _____
12. To expect something will happen _____
13. Something that helps a fish to swim _____
14. Something you have to pay as a punishment _____
15. Fortune or destiny _____

Adding 'all', 'full' or 'till' to a root word

Rule 3 When the suffixes 'full' and 'till' are added to a word, drop one 'l'.

Choose the correct spelling.

Choose some of these words to finish the sentences.

Take care! Not all of the words will be used.

There are some spelling errors in this list.

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| tearful | sucessfull | beautiful | spitefull | untill | skilful | painful | deceitful |
| gratefull | until | hopeful | playful | successful | wonderful | spiteful | grateful |

1. I had a _____ time at the party.
2. The little puppies were very _____ .
3. That graze on your arm looks rather _____ .
4. You are _____ at playing the trumpet.
5. Calling someone a bad name is a _____ thing to do.
6. I am _____ to you for washing my car.
7. Telling lies is a _____ thing to do.
8. He said a _____ goodbye to his grandmother.
9. Her mother was always _____ that she would do her homework.
10. You look _____ in your new dress.
11. You cannot go out to play _____ you have cleaned your room.
12. If you study hard you will be _____ in your exams.