

Ten things you can do to help your child become a better speller.

Your role as a parent is a pivotal one in helping your child achieve success in spelling, reading, and writing at school. Here are some helpful tips that will help set your child on the path to word study success!



1. When reading to your child, point out patterns that occur across words (“Look! The ‘e’ at the end of ‘bike’ and ‘cake’ can make the ‘i’ and ‘a’ say their names!”) Encourage your child to look for other words with the same pattern.
2. When your child asks you how to spell a word, don’t automatically spell it for her. Ask her to think about sounds in the word, the letter patterns of other words that are similar, and the meaning of the word.
3. When your child brings home his weekly spelling list, ask him to look for patterns across words and group words together according to the same pattern; we don’t want him to think that words can only be memorized.
4. Encourage your child’s teacher to teach her students to think about the sounds, patterns, and meanings that dictate why words are spelled the way they are.
5. If your child is stuck on how to spell a word, start by asking him to think about each sound he hears in the word and putting at least one letter for each sound; make sure he writes the letters at the exact same time he says the corresponding sound.
6. Point out that words that are related by meaning often use the same base or root. “Hey! ‘Magician’ and ‘magic’ have similar meanings. I see ‘magic’ in ‘magician’ even though I don’t hear it in there.”
7. When your child needs to spell a long word, encourage her to think of smaller chunks within the word that have meaning. “‘Comfortable’. Well, I know how to spell ‘comfort’ and I know that ‘able’ is often spelled as ‘a-b-l-e’. Let’s try that.”
8. When you are helping your child learn to spell a word, associate with a word he already knows how to spell. “How do you spell ‘broach’? Well, it rhymes with or sounds a lot like ‘coach’. Use ‘coach’ to help you spell ‘broach’.”
9. When spelling a word, encourage your child to say the individual sounds – *not* the letter names – as she writes the corresponding letters; we say sounds and we write letters.
10. Don’t dismiss spelling as something that can always be corrected by spellcheckers. That’s simply not the case!

You can always get more involved!

Write to your school board about increasing emphasis on spelling instruction for all students!

Get remedial help for students who need it. Seek out specialists who understand the importance of spelling and the proper ways to teach spelling.

Remember that spelling is very important! Poor spelling impedes future education and career opportunities!

For more information on helping your child achieve spelling, reading, and writing success visit www.learningbydesign.com



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