

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING A SPELLING CURRICULUM

*Why Teach Spelling?*¹ summarizes the research that explains why proper spelling instruction is crucial for developing reading and writing skills in every student. The publication includes a checklist of the **criteria that a thorough and effective spelling curriculum should meet**. *SPELL/SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing* scores an A⁺⁺.

How SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing meets the criteria

Component	Yes	No	How SPELL-Links Does It
Determining Students' Spelling Abilities			
Provides an assessment tool	✓		SPELL-2 diagnostic software (sold separately)
Guides teachers in interpreting the results of the spelling assessment	✓		SPELL-2 automatically scores, analyzes, interprets student responses, and writes individualized instructional goals. Summary reports are automatically created to share interpretation of results with other teachers and with parents.
Offers word lists accommodated to students' individual spelling abilities	✓		SPELL-2 automatically adjusts word lists and other test items to match the individual student's spelling ability.
Uses words in the lists that match the students' linguistic knowledge needs to the instructional lessons	✓		Each SPELL-2 recommendation is linked to specific lessons and instructional activities in the SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing curriculum to address the student's linguistic knowledge deficits.
General Elements of the Spelling Instruction			
Devotes daily instructional time to spelling	✓		30-minute daily SPELL-Links lessons are recommended.
Integrates reading and spelling instruction so that students are manipulating, building, reading, writing and verifying words	✓		Word study activities integrate the manipulation of sounds, letters, and morphemes to spell and read words with explicit instruction on checking written words to verify correct spelling.
Emphasizes the connections among phonology, morphology, and orthography	✓		SPELL-Links uses the Connectionist Word Study Model; it explicitly teaches and develops functional integration of phonology, orthography, and morphology.
Integrates whole word instruction (for irregular words), phonemic instruction (for regular words), and morphemic instruction (for word structure and derived forms)	✓		SPELL-Links explicitly teaches students how to use phonemic awareness, letter-sound relationships, and letter patterns and spelling rules to spell regular words; how to use letter-meaning relationships, morphological rules, and semantic relationships to spell inflected and derived forms; and how to develop mental graphemic representations (MGRs) of irregularly spelled words in long term memory.
Assists teachers in following a test-teach-test sequence for spelling instruction	✓		Progress monitoring tools, including word lists for mastery measurement of each pattern, are included in the curriculum.
Includes procedure for immediate error correction during spelling instruction and practice	✓		Students are provided with immediate feedback; feedback is gradually faded until students meet performance criterion without assistance; meta-linguistic SPELL-Links strategy monikers are used to prompt error correction.
Emphasizes the predictability of English spelling	✓		Teaches students that most English words can be spelled correctly when sounds, letters, and meanings are considered.
Encourages repeated practice with words to highlight phonemic/orthographic/morphemic patterns	✓		Words are repeated across activities within a word study lesson and are presented again during authentic reading and writing activities.

¹ Reed, D. K. (2012). *Why teach spelling?* Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

Component	Yes	No	How SPELL-Links Does It
Offers cumulative review of spelling words and patterns	✓		Word lists (included) provide repeated exposure to previously learned patterns; authentic reading and writing activities at the end of each SPELL-Links lesson also provide opportunity for cumulative review of spelling words and patterns.
Includes authentic writing activities for the application of spelling words and patterns	✓		Each spelling pattern lesson includes scaffolded authentic writing activities for application of pattern-specific word study knowledge, skills, and strategies.
Explicitly teaches strategies for learning to spell regular and irregular words	✓		SPELL-Links teaches strategies for learning AND meta-linguistic strategies for application of word study knowledge and skills.
Suggests methods for peer collaboration or peer tutoring	✓		Each activity includes suggestions for peer collaboration.
Beginning Spelling Instruction			
Provides a sequence for moving from easier to more difficult sound-symbol correspondences	✓		The sequence of instruction for SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing lessons is based upon an extensive body of research across multiple disciplines regarding the development of spelling skills, including the acquisition of speech, speech perception abilities, orthographic knowledge, and other linguistic underpinnings of spoken and written language. The sequence of instruction gradually progresses from the spelling of sounds and patterns that are perceptually, linguistically, and orthographically most simple to those that are most complex.
Demonstrates segmenting single-syllable words into initial consonant sound (<i>onset</i>) and the vowel and remaining letters in the syllable (<i>rime</i>)	✓		SPELL-Links explicitly teaches students to recognize, manipulate, and use onset-rime as a meta-linguistic strategy to read and spell familiar and unfamiliar words.
Teaches position rules and phonemic patterns for spelling sounds in units (includes consonants that make more than one sound and variant vowel sounds that are based on the sequence of letters in the word)	✓		Carefully structured learning tasks are provided throughout the SPELL-Links word study curriculum to systematically guide students' discovery of common letter patterns and spelling rules of English.
Introduces the 6 syllable types one at a time, emphasizing the salient features of each	✓		In-depth study of the phonetic and orthographic features of closed and open syllables, VCe, vowel digraphs, and syllabic-r and syllabic-l vowel sounds is provided.
Includes high frequency irregular words	✓		SPELL-Links develops MGRs for effective storage and retrieval of high frequency irregular words throughout curriculum.
Provides practice with a family of words sharing a rime pattern (e.g., <i>walk, talk, chalk</i>)	✓		Students explicitly taught how to recognize and spell rime patterns in words.
Spelling Instruction with Multi-syllable and Morphographically Complex Words			
Demonstrates and provides exercises to illustrate how syllables are joined	✓		Explicitly teaches students to recognize, manipulate, and use syllable structure and syllable stress to read and spell words.
Systematically introduces morphemes	✓		Systematically introduces and explicitly teaches high and low frequency prefixes, plurals, verb tenses, verb conjugations, high and low frequency derivational suffixes, high and low frequency word roots, possessives, contractions, irregular nouns and verbs, and homophones.
Teaches morphemic spelling rules associated with affixing words and preserving roots/base words	✓		Structured learning tasks guide students' discovery of morphemic spelling rules associated with affixing words.
Includes irregular words that are multi-syllable and/or of lower frequency	✓		Multi-syllable and low frequency irregular words are included throughout curriculum.

