

A Guide to Active Literacy



Stage 4/5

Spelling

Introduction

The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with information about how spelling and phonics are taught at Fossoway Primary School and how you can support your child at home.

Children will continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of sounds (phonemes) through a structured and comprehensive programme designed to build confidence and engage pupils in learning. Phonemes are the smallest units of sound that build a word. For example pin – p/i/n or chip – ch/i/p

The children are taught in a block of four weeks, with two weeks focusing on teaching phonemes and their representations, one week on spelling strategies and one week on spelling rules.

The 4 week cycle is detailed below:

Week 1 and 2

The children begin the process by being taught one particular phoneme and all of its representations in words (e.g. the phoneme 's' has the representations 's', 'ss', 'c', 'se' and 'ce').






Children then consolidate their understanding of the phonemes using the following strategies:

- Elkonin Boxes - breaking words into phonemes and recording this using Elkonin boxes

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- Reciprocal teaching – working with a partner pupils take it in turns to be the caller, writer and checker
- Diacritical marking – investigating words – recognising and identifying which phonemes are contained within each word. Children are involved in listening carefully, enunciating the words accurately and using the diacritical marking code to identify individual sounds and blends.

-  Single sounds/phonemes are marked with a dot under the sound
-  Joined phonemes are marked by underlining with a dark line
-  Split phonemes (formerly magic 'e') are marked with a joining loop



- Phoneme Stories – finding words containing the focus phoneme
- Active Spelling activities – e.g. rainbow writing, pyramid writing etc

Week 3

This week focuses on words that cannot be spelt using knowledge of phonics. A tricky word list will be introduced appropriate to pupils' stage, interdisciplinary learning or current school events. The teacher will model how to spell these words and pupils will participate in the following activities:

- Discussion of the meaning of words
- Discussion and use of spelling strategies
- Active spelling activities

Week 4

This week focuses on developing children's knowledge of spelling rules. A word list is introduced featuring words which follow the rule. Children will participate in the following activities:

- Thinking of words that follow the spelling rule
- Working with a partner, they will be involved in peer teaching where they take it in turns to be the caller, writer and checker
- Active spelling strategies



Assessment

Children are no longer assessed solely on the basis of a single word spelling test. Teachers can make judgements about a child's ability to spell words by placing them in a context, for example a dictated sentence or paragraph. Teachers' assessment judgements are also based upon daily work in class.

At Home

Encouraging your child to explain what they have been learning is an excellent way of supporting them at home. Helping your child to break down wordlists into manageable sections so that you are focusing on 2/3 words per night can also be helpful. Playing games and making learning fun helps to consolidate and support their learning without carrying out onerous tasks. Below you will find a few suggestions that you may wish to try:

- Look for words that contain the focus phoneme in books, comics, magazines and the local environment.
- Use spelling words to play snap, hangman or other traditional games
- Use something edible to create spelling words such as grapes, raisin or Smarties (as a special treat!)