

# SPELLING STRATEGIES, GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

## Doodle Your Words (Grades 1 to 8)

Doodling is a great way to practice spelling words. After a pretest, students can take pieces of paper and on each one correctly spell a word. They then fill the paper by doodling the word in different letter styles, sizes, and colours.

## Draw a Wordprint (Grades 1 to 8)

Wordprints are shapes drawn around a word to show letter shapes and, as a consequence, the shape of a word. Students can do wordprints for their unit words, then fill in the letters. An alternative activity is to have students draw wordprints for their words, then exchange wordprints and their unit word list with a partner. The partner fills in the prints.



## Give It a Go – Leave A Blank! (Grades 1 to 8)

When students are not sure of how to spell a word, encourage them to spell as much of it as they can. For example, say a student has trouble spelling *knuckle*. She or he might write *knu\_ le*, leaving blank spaces for parts they don't know how to spell. Later, the student can come back to the word. If she or he is still stumped, the student can ask a partner for help, or check a dictionary, unit word list, or personal dictionary.

## Highlight Letters That Need Attention (Grades 1 to 8)

Sometimes, students can spell most of a word but get stuck on one or two letters. Ask students to highlight these letters the next time they write the word. They can also stress the letters as they say the word aloud.

## Look, Say, Cover, Write Check (Grades 1 to 8)

This strategy comprises five steps.

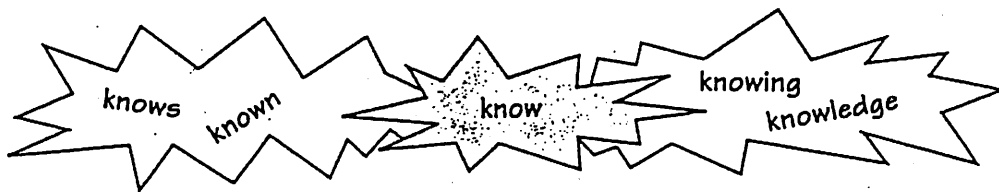
1. Ask students to choose a unit word. They look at the word.
2. Students say the word slowly to themselves.
3. They cover the word with a piece of paper.
4. They write the word.
5. When finished, they uncover the word and check their spelling.

### Building on Roots (Grades 1 to 6)

This activity is appropriate when studying suffixes with younger students. Give root words, such as *go*, *help*, *hop*, *jump*, *eat*, and *add*. Ask them to add a suffix, such as *-ing*, *-ed*, and *-er*. They write the words they can make and circle words where the final consonant is doubled (e.g., *hopping*).

### Exploding Words (Grades 1 to 6)

When studying prefixes and suffixes, word explosions help students to see how many words can be made from a common root. Have students choose one or two unit words. They make word explosions by writing as many words as possible that share the same root.



### Find the Words (Grades 1 to 6)

Prepare a passage that includes unit words students are studying. Erase the words, but leave lines to represent each letter of each word. Ask the students to read the passage, then find the unit words that have been erased. They can use the number of lines as a clue to find each word.

### Forming Compounds (Grades 4 to 8)

Give students the following list of words and numbers. Ask them to put the words together to make compound words. They can use a word more than once.

rail = 12  
day = 9  
boat = 4

house = 7  
thing = 2  
one = 6

sail = 8  
road = 11  
body = 5

every = 3  
row = 10  
some = 1

Students identify the word with the highest total, the word with the lowest total, and words that have the same total.

### Make a Mnemonic Device (Grades 4 to 8)

Creating a mnemonic device can help students remember the spelling of a word. Begin by giving them a few examples.

Have a ball with a balloon.  
The principal is your pal.

Students can choose two words they find troublesome and write a mnemonic device for each. As a class, list mnemonic devices. Underline relevant words.

### Picture the Words (Grades 1 to 8)

This visualization strategy, similar to Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check, also comprises five steps.

1. Ask students to look at a word and say it to themselves
2. They picture the word in their mind
3. They think about patterns they know in the word.
4. Students cover the word, then write it.
5. They uncover the word and check their spelling

If students still have trouble spelling the word, they can repeat the steps.

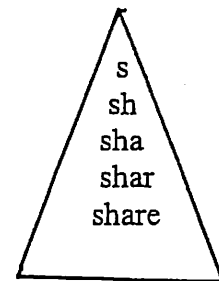
### Make Word Waves (Grades 4 to 8)

Feeling a word's rhythm can help students remember how to spell a word. The easiest way to do this is to mark each syllable by making a wave.

on to      re mem ber

### Build a Pyramid (Grades 1 to 8)

Students choose a unit word, then draw a triangle. They print the first letter at the top of the pyramid. On the next line, they print the first and second letter. On the third line, they print the first, second and third letter, and so on, until they have written the entire word.



### Riddle Time (Grades 1 to 6)

Write riddles on pieces of paper. On the back of each piece of paper, write a unit word that answers it. Students can work with a partner. One student reads the riddle to the other. She or he can give clues to help the other student find the answer. Here are some examples.

- a) I am large, pink, and can make lots of noise. What am I? (a pig)
- b) You do this at school or home. (sit)
- c) I am another word for big. (huge)

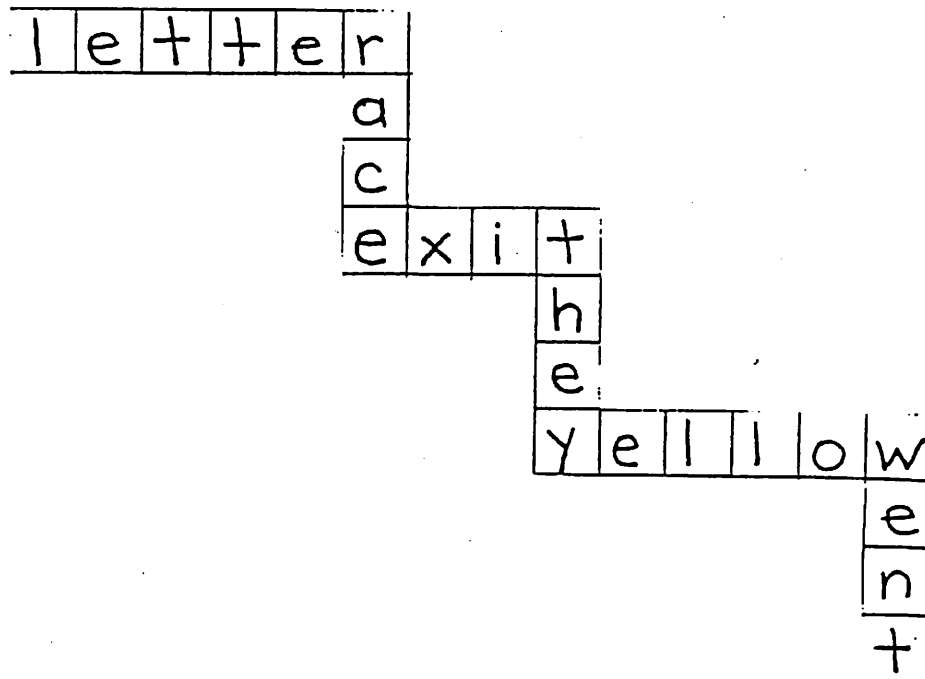
Older students can use their unit word list to write riddles for a partner to solve.

### Sound Clap (Grades 1 to 6)

Have students find a partner. Ask them to take turns reading their partner's unit word list. When they hear the sound they are studying (e.g. "sh") at the beginning of the word, they clap their hands. Students snap their fingers when they hear the sound in the middle of the word, and stamp their feet when they hear it at the end of a word.

### Word Stairs (Grades 4 to 8)

Students write a unit word. They use the last letter of the word to start the next word. Have them use as many unit words as possible.



1.   o

2.  s

3.  h

4.    n

5.  f

6.  w

7.  f

8.   e

9.  a

10.  s

11.   a

12.  h

13.   a

14.   e

15.   i

there  
then  
was  
what  
when  
for  
down  
five  
six  
has  
have  
her  
his  
seven  
saw

# Word Wall Activity

Name \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. ehnt \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. nhew \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. asw \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. what \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. heva \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. ish \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. wndo \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. erh \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. wsa \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. reeht \_\_\_\_\_

- 11. sha \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. sveen \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. rfo \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. xsi \_\_\_\_\_
- 15. ievf \_\_\_\_\_

five  
six  
has  
have  
her  
his  
saw

there  
then  
was  
what  
when  
for  
down