

SPELLING IS FUN!

Janette Skeath

The traditional teaching and testing of spelling does not suit the dyslexic's style of learning. It is involvement that enhances learning, and it is much better if the teaching can be tailored to how the individual learns best.

Spelling via the Senses.

Dyslexia is not an "absolute" condition, but different dyslexics have a different combination of difficulties, although there are features that may be shared.

A two-pronged approach can be helpful:

1. Phonic - a very structured programme.
2. Teaching the spelling of words which may not fit into this programme, or are specifically subject related. Key words have to be learnt.

Learning Key Words.

1. Five words are taught every week.
2. These words are listed in a small vocabulary book, which is kept in the pupil's pencil case or pocket. Pupils are encouraged to; learn their key words at any available moment during the working day.
3. The words are listed on a sheet, which is kept in their SpLD file. The sheet is designed to be a very positive document and will record the pupil's success each week.

All pupils have their own index box with an alphabetical card system in place. Each word is entered on a card; the pupil composes his own context sentence using the word correctly. Cards are file alphabetically. Colour-coded cards are useful for instant retrieval of topic-based lists. A list of the current five word is in the lid of the box.

Then comes the task of learning how to spell words:

The Sense of Sight.

Children who use the sense of sight are "visual learners" and need to see in order to learn.

- The need to look upwards to recall information, so poster pinned high up on the classroom wall can be helpful.
- Colour is appreciated by the visual learner who will understand vowels, syllables and decoding strategies if colour is used to highlight a point.
- The visual learner is quick to spot word within word and to learn from making a visual picture in his/her mind:

Labo rat ory



Appa rat us

- These "rat" word are easily remembered when a rat story is woven around the scientifically connected words.

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▪ "ought"

- o "oh"
- u you
- g great
- h hairy
- t twit



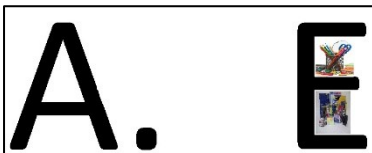
e.g. thought; nought; sought.

• "guard" words



e.g. guard; guarded; guardhouse; guardian; guardianship.

• "stationary" or "stationery"



A comes to a full stop but
E has shelves for the stationery.

• "old umbrella" words

- o old
- u umbrellas
- g get
- h holes



plough; bough; dough; cough; enough

• "look" words

"oo" saying "u"



Look it up in a cookery book.

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- Mnemonics

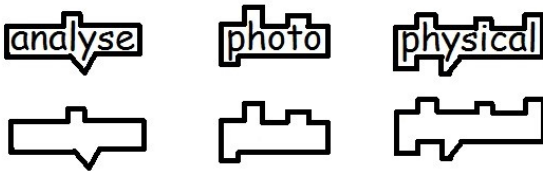
Mnemonics are ideal for the visual learner. The most successful ones are those made up by the pupil.

- b big
- e elephants
- a are
- u useful
- t to
- i indians
- f for
- u uplifting
- l logs



- Boxing techniques.

By "boxing" the word, the shape of the box can help correct spelling.



The sense of Sound.

These children are often described as "auditory learners" who need to hear in order to learn. They will often look out to the side to stimulate recall, and therefore posters need to be at head height in the classroom, on the sidewalls.

- Flappy cards.
Each syllable is written under each individual flap.
Each flap is closed and checked in turn.
- Clapping to a rhythm.
- Tape recording.
Each word can be recorded on tape for repetition.
- Families.
Words are taught in family groups.



The Sense of Touch.

These children need to touch, to feel and experience the letters in order to learn. They are "kinaesthetic learners". Their style of learning is slow, and they need time to allow the mind to work at its best. These children look down in order to stimulate their memory skills. Posters need to be placed low down.

- Magnetic letters.
Games using magnetic letter can be helpful.
- Plastic letters.
Anagrams are solved using plastic letters that can be moved around.
- Drama.
Drama and movement are vital to this learning style.
- Carpet writing.
This is using a soft pile carpet, and letters are scribed with a finger.
- Salt/Sand tray writing.
A tray of salt or sand is used in the same way as Carpet writing.
- Squared paper.

C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y
C	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	Y

- Word processing.
Can be used to correct spelling (and grammar) and each word should be reinforced and checked to be the correct word.

The Sense of Taste.

These children find that eating can re-enforce the rules and to assist recognition.

The Sense of Smell.

This is a less common sense to integrate into lessons, but for some children it can be very helpful.

- Mixed Spice.
Mixed spice can be used for the "-ice" words. The word is written in glue, and then the spice is sprinkled on to it.
- Coffee.
Similarly, coffee can be used for words with "ff" or "ee"

Spelling Ideas.

Multisensory ideas for learning spelling that might be useful:-

- Magnetic letters
- Magnetic White board and dry wipe pens (available from Crossbow Education)
- Sand tray
- Plasticene (or similar) to form letters and words
- Tracing letters/words on each other's backs
- Tracing letters/words in the air
- Writing letters/words outside on a pavement using a squeezezy bottle containing water
- Wikki Stix (available from Crossbow Education)

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