

A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING A SPELLING PROGRAM



Evaluation of Read Naturally's Signs for Sounds

A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING A SPELLING CURRICULUM: Signs for Sounds

Component	Yes	Somewhat	No	Comments or Suggestions for Supplementing
Determining Students' Spelling Abilities				
Provides an assessment tool	✓			Levels 1 & 2 both have an assessment.
Guides teachers in interpreting the results of the spelling assessment	✓			Assessment identifies students' strengths and needs and determines an appropriate level.
Offers word lists accommodated to students' individual spelling abilities	✓			Assessment indicates which lessons match students' abilities in the sequence of skills.
Uses words in the lists that match the students' linguistic knowledge needs to the instructional lessons	✓			Word lists for each lesson follow a carefully designed sequence of instruction that matches students' linguistic knowledge.
General Elements of the Spelling Instruction				
Devotes daily instructional time to spelling	✓			Level 1 lessons can be completed in 30 minutes. Level 2 lessons can be completed in 50 – 55 minutes. More than one lesson can be completed per week.
Integrates reading and spelling instruction so that students are manipulating, building, reading, writing, and verifying words	✓			Students match phonemes to letter(s), manipulate phonemes in word families to build more words, and read words to verify accuracy.
Emphasizes the connections among phonology, morphology, and orthography	✓			Students listen for individual phonemes, match each phoneme to a letter or combination of letters, and then write the word.
Integrates whole word instruction (for irregular words), phonemic instruction (for regular words), and morphemic instruction (for word structure and derived forms)	✓			Students receive phonemic instruction for regular "sound-out words," morphemic instruction, and systematic instruction for irregular high-frequency "spell-out words."

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Assists teachers in following a test-teach-test sequence for spelling instruction	✓			Students receive initial instruction in matching sounds to symbols, write each word, and then check each word.
Includes a procedure for immediate error correction during spelling instruction and practice	✓			Students check each word immediately after it is written (letter by letter) during the practice test and again on the final test.
Emphasizes the predictability of English spelling	✓			All words on each word list provide systematic practice on a specific regular word pattern.
Encourages repeated practice with words to highlight phonemic/orthographic/morphemic patterns	✓			Multiple lists of words with the specific regular word pattern are available for each lesson for repeated practice. Lessons are taught to mastery and build on each other.
Offers cumulative review of spelling words and patterns	✓			Review lessons provide reinforcement and cumulative review. Irregular high-frequency (spell-out) words are continuously recycled if necessary.
Includes authentic writing activities for the application of spelling words and patterns	✓			Students write dictation sentences that are carefully structured to include the featured regular spelling pattern and the current and recent high-frequency words.
Explicitly teaches strategies for learning to spell regular and irregular words	✓			Students learn a specific strategy for words with regular spelling patterns (sound-out words) and a different strategy for irregular words (spell-out words).
Suggests methods for peer collaboration or peer tutoring		✓		Program can be individualized or taught to groups. Students may use the spell-out routine for studying irregular words together.

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Beginning Spelling Instruction				
Provides a sequence for moving from easier to more difficult sound-symbol correspondences such as:	✓			The first 16 lessons of Level 2 provide a "fast-forward review" of the content of Level 1 and then continues much farther in the sequence of regular spelling patterns.
Single or most common consonant sounds	✓			Level 1
Short vowels	✓			Levels 1 & 2
Initial consonant blends	✓			Levels 1 & 2
Two-letter consonant digraphs	✓			Levels 1 & 2
Long vowel s	✓			Levels 1 & 2
-r controlled vowels	✓			Level 2
Vowel pairs/teams	✓			Levels 1 & 2
Final consonant blends	✓			Level 2
Diphthongs	✓			Level 2
Three-letter consonant digraphs	✓			Level 2
Special cases (e.g., igh, ing)	✓			Level 2
Demonstrates segmenting single-syllable words into the initial consonant sound (also called the <i>onset</i>) from the vowel and remaining letters in the syllable (referred to as the <i>rime</i>)		✓		Focus is on sound-by-sound spelling. For students who have more difficulty, onset-rime approach is suggested as a modification.
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)	✓			Initially teaches consonants that make more than one sound and variant vowel sounds based on position in separate lessons. Later lessons mix words to check understanding.
Introduces the six syllable types one at a time, emphasizing the salient features of each	✓			Level 2 teaches syllable types.
Includes high frequency irregular words	✓			Teaches first 50 high-frequency words (including irregular) in Level 1. Teaches first 100 high-frequency words (including irregular) in Level 2.
Provides practice with a family of words sharing a pattern or rime (e.g., <i>fought</i> , <i>bought</i> , <i>sought</i>)	✓			Word lists include families of words sharing a pattern or rime.

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Spelling Instruction with Multi-syllable and Morphographically Complex Words				
Demonstrates and provides exercises to illustrate how syllables are joined	✓			Level 2
Systematically introduces morphemes such as:				
• High frequency prefixes		✓		Level 2
• Plurals and possessives		✓		Level 2, plurals
• Verb tenses			x	
• Verb conjugations			x	
• Derivational suffixes	✓			Level 2
• Lower frequency morphemes		✓		Level 2
Teaches morphemic spelling rules associated with affixing words and preserving roots/base words	✓			Level 2—doubling final consonant, dropping final e, etc.
Includes irregular words that are multi-syllable and/or of lower frequency	✓			Teaches first 50 high-frequency words (including irregular) in Level 1. Teaches first 100 high-frequency words (including irregular) in Level 2.