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"Speling it rite eevn aftr the test" : what students can tell us

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"Speling it rite eevn aftr the test" : what students can tell us

Abstract

This paper describes a teacher inservice designed to aid teachers in implementing a developmental spelling program in an elementary setting. Developmentally appropriate instruction in spelling takes into account a student's existing knowledge of words. Such a program consists of understanding each student's level of knowledge, selecting word lists to meet the students' needs; providing explicit instruction about spelling patterns, and continually assessing students' spelling progress through authentic, written work

The questions this project will address include: (a) Why should a developmental spelling program be implemented, (b) what research supports a developmental approach to spelling instruction, (c) what are the potential benefits for students, and (d) how can a developmental spelling program be implemented and evaluated in the classroom?

The inservice described in this paper includes three two-hour work sessions. The purpose of these inservice sessions is to introduce elementary teachers to developmental spelling theory, instruction, and assessment. The inservice will include experiences in assessing students' developmental spelling stages, selecting words based on students' abilities, and using a variety of student practice options in learning new words. Finally, teachers will reflect on the progress made by their own students as a developmental spelling approach is implemented and study groups continue collaborative learning after the inservice is completed.

“Speling It Rite Eevn Afr the Test:” What Students Can Tell Us

A Graduate Project

Submitted to the

Division of Literacy Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts in Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

By

Jennifer L. Heckmann

April, 2004

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Titled: "Speling It Rite Eevn Afr the Test:" What Students Can Tell Us

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Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

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Introduction

While reading practices continue to become more varied and developmentally appropriate for learners, spelling instruction in many classrooms has not changed. Many teachers continue to attempt to meet the needs of individual learners with a single spelling list generated by reading company experts. These words are practiced in the same way that the teacher himself may have practiced spelling when in school. Assessments consist of a one-time, isolated reproduction of the words on a weekly basis to verify that the rules and patterns of the English orthographic language have been mastered.

The intent of this project is to give teachers an opportunity to explore a developmentally appropriate approach to spelling instruction. Developmentally appropriate instruction in spelling takes into account a student's existing knowledge of words (see Appendix A for Definition of Terms). As Gentry and Gillet (1993) state, "Early spelling skills unfold in developmental stages much like learning to speak" and therefore should not be treated "as a memorization task, as a list to be assigned, as learning that occurs incidentally, or as not important at all" (p. 4).

Overview of the Project

This project on developmental spelling will address the need for instructional changes in the spelling curriculum to better meet the needs of all students in the elementary classroom. The questions this project will address include: (a) Why implement a developmental spelling program, (b) what research supports a developmental approach to spelling instruction, (c) what are the potential benefits for students, and (d) how can a developmental spelling program be implemented and

evaluated in the classroom? The following sections delineate the design, purpose, and rationale of this project.

Project Description

This project consists of an inservice model for educating elementary teachers in the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District about developmental spelling. The inservice includes three two-hour work sessions (see Appendix B) for teachers to learn about the concepts of developmental spelling, how to use it in their classrooms, and how to assess students' progress through the developmental stages of learning to spell.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to introduce elementary teachers to developmental spelling theory, instruction, and assessment. The teachers will be presented with information to aid their learning and application of developmental spelling. When put into practice in the classroom, developmental spelling can help meet the needs of individual students as they grow in their understanding of the English orthographic system.

Following a review of the research supporting developmental spelling, teachers will be given opportunities to apply their learning as they evaluate student samples and assess students' initial developmental stages. A variety of spelling activities will be demonstrated for teachers to use in the classroom to enhance the natural development of students' spelling knowledge. Finally, teachers will be encouraged to reflect on the progress made by their own students throughout the inservice as the developmental spelling approach is implemented in their classrooms.

Project Rationale

Spelling continues to be practiced through inauthentic techniques and assessed via students' ability to reproduce words out-of-context on a post-test (Johnston, 2001). The reliance on a rote memorization approach is due to the lack of teacher expertise in either "how to teach spelling or in the nature of the spelling system" (Templeton & Morris, 1999, p. 103).

As a teacher, I have found the use of the basal spelling lists and drill activities easiest to implement. They have not, however, yielded promising results for my students. At times, students have been unable to retain words they supposedly mastered on the final, weekly test. Students continue to make errors in both reading and writing of the words that they have practiced. It is my opinion that students should be able to use these words to effectively communicate. I believe that effective communication for students can be achieved by implementing developmentally appropriate spelling instruction and assessment.

The Importance of a Developmental Spelling Project

Spelling has long held a place as one of the literacy disciplines. It has been and continues to be viewed as a valued skill in communication. Teachers have historically implemented spelling instruction in isolation from other literacy experiences by selecting words for study, rehearsing them with repetitive practices, administering a weekly test to evaluate the spelling abilities of their students, and inferring the preparedness of students to communicate (Gill & Scharer, 1996; Hodges, 1977; Johnston, 2001; Traynelis-Yurek & Strong, 1999).

A student's ability to "compose fluently, communicate clearly, and create a good impression in a variety of written-language social situations" (Wilde, 1990, p. 287) is important in the classroom as well as in the real world. For this reason, most educators would agree that spelling instruction is an important part of learning to write. Further, researchers and educators are becoming aware of spelling instruction as it aids in the process of learning to read (Gill, 1989; Morris & Perney, 1984; Willson, Rupley, Rodriguez, & Mergen, 1999). However, a limited number of educators are putting into practice the research of developmental spelling and transforming classroom instructional practices into those that would better meet students' needs (Gill & Scharer, 1996; Johnston, 2001; Traynelis-Yurek & Strong, 1999).

As educators' and researchers' understanding of the interconnectedness of the literacy areas has grown, so has their knowledge of the importance of spelling as a curricular subject. Beers, Beers, and Grant (1977) concluded that a student's spelling errors are seldom random. Rather, these errors indicate a student's level of understanding about letter-sound relationships. Students who can effectively produce conventional spellings of words are more likely to have a firm grasp of the English system of orthography (Invernizzi, Abouzeid, & Gill, 1994; Templeton, 1979). In studies conducted by Morris and Perney (1984) and Willson et al. (1999), a correlation was found between students' reading abilities and spelling efficacy. Morris and Perney applied a developmental spelling measure to predict reading development later in the school year for a group of first grade students. These researchers concluded that spelling abilities are not only indicative of effective communicators, but they are also indicative of effective readers.

In spite of the research in developmental spelling and its implications for reading achievement, instructional practices have remained largely unchanged (Gill & Scharer, 1996; Johnston, 2001; Traynelis-Yurek & Strong, 1999). Spelling instruction, word selection techniques, and evaluation continue to reflect a spelling curriculum in isolation. Johnston (2001) notes that a shift in practice requires teacher education and teachers having access to resources. She states, "Teachers do indeed appear to be floundering and reverting to traditional, albeit questionable, practices" (p. 153). This statement leads to the opening question for this project: What approach to spelling instruction would put into use the information that has been gained through research?

Methodology

Procedures

I began this research project because of a frustration I had with the basal-provided spelling program. The program I was using was not meeting the diverse learning levels of all of my students. A few students were learning and using new spelling patterns, a few were practicing words they had already successfully been representing in their creative writing journals, and the others were frustrated each week as the final test approached. This latter group was not able to reproduce the words in their journal even within the week that the word appeared on their list. They were not able to "spel it rite even aftr the test," because the words were beyond the developmental level of their current understanding.

I wanted to discover the answers to two questions. First, what instructional approaches and practice techniques would best help students learn to spell words? Second, how do spelling words transfer to a child's authentic writing to effectively

communicate? My search led to the discovery of the text *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000). This resource revealed how teachers could assess each of their student's developmental levels and select words to match each child's current understanding. By matching students with developmentally appropriate word lists, students could feel challenged to learn new words and patterns without feeling frustrated or unchallenged by a one-size-fits-all basal spelling list. This approach also gives more opportunities for each student to find success when spelling in the authentic writing setting. The transfer of developmentally appropriate words to students' written work also held great potential.

Guided by the text *Words Their Way* (Bear et al., 2000), I began to consider how I could share my new learning and classroom experiences with other teachers. I researched the available information about developmental spelling and, like Johnston (2001), realized that teachers may be lacking knowledge of research supporting this approach to spelling acquisition as well as procedures for implementing developmental spelling in their own classrooms. I began by constructing outlines for the sessions that would be included in an inservice on implementing developmental spelling in the elementary setting. I also reviewed several texts that provided guidelines for effective teacher inservice.

Review of Literature

The literature reviewed for this project includes a reflection on historical spelling instruction, research regarding spelling acquisition in young children, and instructional approaches to spelling instruction that are developmentally appropriate. The review of literature concludes with a discussion of effective teacher inservice.

Traditional Perspectives: Word Selection, Practice, & Evaluation. Traditional instruction relies heavily on the students' ability to memorize words. Generally, one word list would be assigned to all students for one week, totaling nearly 800 words per academic year to be memorized (Wilde, 1990). This emphasis on rote visual memory "led to the development of word lists that feature high frequency words" (Johnston, 2001, p. 143). While the word selection criteria have changed through the years, the end result of the memorization perspective (Johnston, 2001) has continued to be a list of high frequency words (Beers & Henderson, 1977). These lists are deemed necessary for students to master because they appear frequently in both reading and writing tasks. Frequency lists may also include words that are commonly misspelled by students.

In the early 1970's, some educators began to embrace a thematic perspective regarding word selection. Instead of choosing only high frequency words, teachers selected words taken directly from the literature with which the students were engaged. For example, if the students were studying and reading about butterflies, the spelling list might include words like *thorax*, *abdomen*, *chrysalis*, and *proboscis* (Rymer & Williams, 2000). These words were viewed as authentic vocabulary words for spelling, because students would be required to read them in the context of a thematic unit. Most current published programs reflect this theory of word selection and vocabulary acquisition.

Thematic word selection may aid in vocabulary building, however, research has demonstrated that students may be able to read at a level higher than they are able to encode and spell words (Gill & Scharer, 1996). Other concerns over published programs were revealed in research conducted by Rymer and Williams (2000). They discovered that one published program in use in the classroom had little impact on the journal

writing of the students. Few words were applied from the weekly spelling lists to the students' creative written expressions. In fact, some of the students were already aware of the conventional spelling of words from their weekly lists before the final test was administered.

Perhaps the most startling spelling issue lies in the practice and assessment of these traditional methods as they continue to persist in classrooms today (Gill & Scharer, 1996; Johnston, 2001; Traynelis-Yurek & Strong, 1999). Traditional practices may consist of activities like writing words repeatedly, researching definitions of words, writing sentences for each spelling word, and completing workbook pages (Gill & Scharer). In a comparison of such instructional approaches, Angelisi (2000) found this "drill and write" (p. 9) practice method to be dull and ineffective for her students. She stated that the "rote-learning technique did not seem to strengthen or sharpen many of the students' attention or memory spans" (p. 11). Students in Angelisi's class instead became frustrated with the exercises and were unable to internalize the spelling words.

Wilde (1990) also voiced the need for change in instructional approaches and subsequent assessment. She stated that the use of tests in a traditional program most likely "reflect developmental level and natural ability more than anything else, which is equivalent to assigning [spelling] grades based on yearly increase in height" (p. 287). Rather, she concluded that students should be immersed in writing words at their appropriate level of development.

Developmental Spelling Stages. Reading development in young children follows predictable stages that are assessable through miscue analysis (Goodman, 1989). Similarly, developmental stages in spelling have also been observed in recent research.

Studies in analysis of students' spelling errors have shown patterns that reflect developmental stages of understanding (Read, 1971; Gentry, 1981). Analysis of these patterns demonstrate that children's errors are not random, but in fact, they are efforts toward conventional spelling at particular levels of understanding (Beers et al., 1977; Invernizzi et al., 1994).

In 1971, Read's seminal work suggested the developmental nature of spelling. His observations of students' spontaneous spellings led to the creation of different stages of development. Beers and Henderson (1977) and Zutell (1980) also noted the development of sophisticated, relatively sequential patterns in orthographic understanding among students across different grade levels. These levels of development spanned from the earliest of scribbles to the higher levels of understanding for secondary students. For the purposes of this project, the stages described in *Words Their Way* (Bear et al., 2000) will be used because of their clear application to the classroom setting (see Figure 1).

The Five Stages of Development in Spelling

(Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000)







<i>Stage</i>	Average Age of Development	General Characteristics
<i>Emergent Stage</i> 	Pre-Kindergarten to Mid-1 st Grade M MoM PE for My mom is pretty	Scribbles on paper; Random letters and numbers; Some consonants begin to develop
<i>Letter Name-Alphabetic Stage</i> 	Kindergarten to Early 3 rd Grade nat for net chrp for chirp trep for trip	Letter-sound relationships developing; Initial & final consonants represented in writing; Some short vowels, digraphs and blends developing
<i>Within Word Pattern Stage</i> 	1 st Grade to Mid-4 th Grade creim for crime reechis for reaches	Short vowel patterns represented in writing; Long vowel patterns developing; Other vowel patterns developing
<i>Syllables and Affixes Stage</i> 	3 rd Grade to 8 th Grade intenchin for intention tresure for treasure	Multi-syllable words, consonant doubling, inflected endings, prefixes, and suffixes developing
<i>Derivational Relations Stage</i> 	5 th Grade to 12 th Grade catagory for category exserpt for excerpt	Writing most words correctly; Understanding of bases and roots of words developing 

Figure 1

The first stage of development, the *Emergent Stage*, typically begins before a student enters school. Children in this stage are making their first attempts to mimic writing by producing marks on paper. The second stage of development, the *Letter Name-Alphabetic Stage*, begins as students recognize the relationships between letters and sounds. Children in this stage typically begin to represent the initial and then final consonants in their writing. As students begin to represent vowel patterns in words, they

are moving into the *Within Word Pattern Stage*. The final two stages of development, the *Syllables and Affixes Stage* and the *Derivational Relations Stage*, are associated with students in third grade and beyond. Students in these final two stages are representing words with unique patterns. For example, they are beginning to correctly write doubled consonants as in the word *attend* or special features as in the word *appearance*.

While developmental stages may explain the typical development of students' orthographic understanding, frequently seen and read words must also be taken into account when reviewing the written work of students. In his work entitled *Developmental and Cognitive Aspects of Learning to Spell: A Reflection of Word Knowledge*, Beers (1980) explained that second graders were able to spell high frequency words correctly, but they were unable to transfer their word knowledge to low frequency words. In other words, students were familiar with words that they had likely been repeatedly exposed to, but they were unable to use known words to generate unknown words. Beers stated, "Although children may memorize weekly lists, they may not yet recognize the orthographic principles underlying those words" (p. 44). Further, Rymer and Williams (2000) found that assessing students solely via a weekly test was ineffective in determining the actual level at which the students were producing words in their authentic writing. For these reasons, Gill and Scharer (1996) asserted that word selection should be determined through assessment of the developmental level of each student.

Developmental Spelling Instruction. Most educators are aware that students learn at varying paces and in different modes. Given the understanding that students also acquire skills in decoding and encoding words at different rates, there is clearly no single

instructional approach that best suits all students. Two instructional approaches can be gleaned from the literature. The first category of instruction is *indirect instruction*.

Educators using an indirect instructional approach immerse students in an environment that is rich in language of texts and writing experiences (Gentry, 1981; see also, Berninger, Vaughan, Abbott, Begay, et al., 2002). Students are given authentic tasks of writing to create expressive texts within which they are encoding words. In these child-generated texts, the spelling of words can be assessed for quality of errors and developmental level of understanding. In this immersion environment, Beers and Henderson (1977) suggest that constant correction is not necessary as it can cause some students to limit their risk-taking attempts. A combination of decoding and encoding to aid in word recognition and reading skills can be furthered in such a setting.

The second instructional approach is *direct instruction* of spelling. For some students, immersion in a print-rich environment alone is not sufficient (Invernizzi et al., 1994). They require explicit instruction in comparing word features to assimilate characteristics into existing knowledge. Teacher instruction that builds upon a student's prior knowledge is an important component of direct instruction. Not only must the teacher have a clear understanding of the level at which the students are working, but he or she must also be able to scaffold current understandings to create new knowledge with the students.

Direct instruction differs from traditional approaches in that it is not thematic spelling or traditional exercises, but rather a "systematic study of word features carefully selected to match the developmental word knowledge of the student" (Invernizzi et al., 1994). This direct instruction can be accomplished through the use of word study

activities (Bear et al., 2000; Cunningham and Hall, 1994; Pinnell & Fountas, 1998). Through thoughtful manipulation of words, students can be guided through activities such as word sorting to discover the “regularities, patterns, and rules of English orthography” (Bear et al., p. 4). This constructive practice builds on the knowledge students already possess. Zutell (1980) recognized the value of comparing new words at a “variety of levels (sounds, structure, syntax, semantics) so that they [the students] might systematically discover and utilize both intraword and interword patterns of organization” (p. 64). In other words, students can use what they learn about words to generate other words, decode unknown words, and build comprehension skills. Students can make comparisons between words and notice significant features within individual words.

A subset of direct instruction currently being reviewed in research is the use and generation of student strategies (Joseph, 2000; Rittle-Johnson & Siegler, 1999; Rule, 1982; see also Radebaugh, 1985). Rittle-Johnson and Siegler developed a coding system for student strategies through interviews and observations of student behaviors during spelling tasks such as journal writing. The five strategies they discovered that students were using to write words were the following: a) memory retrieval, b) sounding out the word, c) comparing the word with a known word, d) relying on rules, and e) visually checking the word they had produced. Their findings included some new information about the developmental nature of strategies. Their research revealed that both first and second graders use similar strategies in encoding activities though not to the same degree. This information can also be applied in direct instruction. These known five strategies can be explicitly given to students through direct instruction to add to the strategies they already have in place. Pinnell and Fountas (1998) also describe strategies that could be

provided for students through explicit mini-lessons in their chapter entitled “Word-Solving Strategies.” Increased exposure to strategies can aid in the development of more efficient strategies and blending of strategies (Rittle-Johnson & Siegler) to produce words in writing.

Finally, these two instructional approaches, direct instruction and indirect instruction, support what researchers have termed alternative assessments (Gill & Scharer, 1996; Wilde, 1990). The use of rubrics in recording and documenting student achievement has been recognized as a valuable tool for relaying growth to stakeholders in other curricular areas. Gill and Scharer’s work with teachers produced such a tool for the instruction of spelling. This alternative to a weekly test can be more descriptive than a simple quantitative score at the end of each week. It has the capability to evaluate qualitative error development and sophistication (Morris, Nelson, & Perney, 1986), to record information about students’ strategies, and to better inform instruction.

The research supporting developmental spelling indicates that a shift in spelling instruction and spelling assessment is achievable. The research also indicates that a shift from traditional spelling instruction to a developmentally appropriate approach will benefit students’ achievement in spelling as well as in reading and writing. Then why has a major shift in spelling pedagogy not occurred within the elementary school setting? Perhaps, teachers lack the background information about developmental spelling (Gill & Scharer, 1996; Johnston, 2001; Traynelis-Yurek & Strong, 1999) and experiences in applying such an approach in their classrooms.

Effective Professional Development. Several resources were accessed in the creation of this inservice. These resources were reviewed to synthesize key concepts in

professional development. This inservice is based on three principles of effective teacher development garnered from the work of Fullan (1991), Richardson and Anders (1994), Speck and Knipe (2001), and Fiszler (2004).

The first principle of this inservice is that teachers need time to critically examine their own beliefs and practices (Fullan, 1991). Reflection on current practice and beliefs “enhances clarity, meaning, and coherence” (Fullan, p. 326). Instructional change is necessitated when there is a conflict between beliefs and practices. Teachers need to explore their beliefs and then examine their own classroom practices to see if the instruction parallels their beliefs about how students learn. This process of reflection gives teachers ownership and begins the process of inquiry and learning. “The *goals* of this approach to staff development are to help teachers examine their beliefs in relation to their classroom practices, and to consider alternative premises and experiment with different practices” (Richardson & Anders, 1994, p. 159).

The second principle supports the need for ongoing collaboration during and following the initial learning experience. Speck and Knipe (2001) state:

If teachers are condemned to onetime or fragmented workshops with little or no modeling, follow-up, coaching, analysis of problems, and adjustment in practice, there will be little change.... New learning must be supported by modeling, coaching, and problem-solving components in order for the new learning to be practiced, reflected on, and integrated into regular use by the learner. (p. 15)

Teachers need multiple opportunities to practice, apply, discuss, and question new information. When long-term learning opportunities are provided, teachers can verbalize their progress and get support for further improvement of instruction and continuation of

learning (Fischer, 2004). Fullan (1991) also highlighted the need for collaboration among stakeholders and colleagues in his “Teacher as Learner” (p. 327) model. Through inquiry and collaboration, teachers are able to investigate and explore as well as give and receive information and assistance.

The third principle for effective teacher inservice is a focus on student achievement. “Evaluating progress toward the goals of professional development and the impact on student learning is the accountability measure that gives credibility to the importance of continuous professional development” (Speck & Knipe, 2001, p. 17). By putting student achievement at the center of the learning, teachers can readily see the application of this inservice to their students’ learning experiences and spelling growth.

This developmental spelling inservice is designed with these three principles in mind. Teachers will examine their beliefs and classroom practices about spelling at the beginning and end of the inservice. The teachers will be provided with ongoing demonstrations and support through the facilitation of study groups that will focus on developmental spelling after the inservice. Through data collection and ongoing assessment, teachers will focus on student achievement and learning.

The Developmental Spelling Project

Currently within my school district, elementary teachers are implementing a variety of spelling programs and a wide range of instructional approaches. Some colleagues are using the spelling program provided with our basal series in its entirety, others are using sections of the basal program, and still others are using teacher-created materials or materials from outside sources for both formal and informal spelling instruction. The use of these diverse approaches led me to believe that a teacher inservice

on developmental spelling could provide teachers with important information and facilitate a shift in spelling instructional practices that would connect the spelling curriculum to other literacy areas and improve students' learning experiences.

The goal of this inservice is to educate teachers about developmental spelling through demonstration, practice, and application and to ultimately improve student achievement. The inservice will include instruction on how to assess students' developmental spelling stages, select words based on students' abilities, and use a variety of student practice options in learning new words. The teachers will be given time between inservice dates to explore these new concepts and practice ongoing assessments of developmental spelling with their own students.

Elementary teachers from the Vinton-Shellsburg School District will participate in the inservice. This will include teachers currently working at the West Early Childhood Center, Lincoln Intermediate Center, and Shellsburg Elementary School. The inservice sessions will be scheduled during the district's monthly early release dates.

The inservice will be comprised of three two-hour sessions (see Appendix B). Time between sessions will allow teachers to integrate developmental spelling into their classroom instruction and analyze the success of its implementation. Three separate sessions will give teachers an opportunity to add to their knowledge about developmental spelling, practice implementing developmentally appropriate instruction, and assess students' progress through the stages of spelling development. The study teams created at the end of the inservice should increase the potential for long-term teacher change regarding spelling beliefs and approaches.

Understanding Developmental Spelling (Day 1)

Day 1: Understanding Developmental Spelling

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1:00 p.m. -- | Introductions |
| 1:15 p.m. -- | Pre-Inservice Belief Statements |
| 1:30 p.m. -- | What is the current state of spelling instruction in your classroom? |
| 2:00 p.m. -- | Define Objective and Purpose of Inservice |
| | PowerPoint presentation "Why Developmental Spelling?" |
| | Developmental Spelling Research |
| 2:15 p.m. -- | The Five Developmental Stages |
| 2:30 p.m. -- | Spelling Inventories—Immediate Feedback |
| | Checklists—Authentic Assessment |
| | Describe homework assignments |
| | Highlight Teacher Resources/References |
| 2:55 p.m. -- | Closing Questions/Concerns |

Figure 2

The first session for this inservice will be devoted to educating teachers about the theory and stages of developmental spelling (Bear et al., 2000) (see Figure 1).

Developmental appropriate spelling instruction and assessment may be new concepts for some teachers. Connections will be made to the related theory of developmental reading with which many teachers are familiar. As Gentry and Gillet (1993) state:

Just as you probably have children working at different levels of proficiency in reading, you probably have children working at different levels of proficiency in spelling. The same book will not be appropriate for all the readers in your classroom; in the same way, the same spelling list will not fit all spellers.

Children need to work at their instructional levels in spelling, just as they do in reading. (p. 94)

Teachers will be given an opportunity through this inservice to learn about and explore the different levels of proficiency in spelling and how they can best help students progress in spelling. The specific questions this session will address include: (a) Why

implement a developmental spelling program, (b) what research supports this approach to spelling instruction, and (c) what are the potential benefits for students?

To begin the inservice, each teacher will individually write his or her beliefs about spelling instruction and student practice strategies. The teachers will describe and compare their beliefs to the spelling standards and benchmarks for the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District. The teachers will also be asked to reflect on their current program and its capacity to fit the needs of all students. These three statements (beliefs, practices, and standards) will be discussed with small groups of peers and then the entire group. A list of common beliefs and practices for the group will be compiled to refer to throughout the inservice. This list will be written on chart paper and posted for each day of inservice. Modifications will be made to the group's list as instructional beliefs change as a result of learning about developmental spelling.

The participants will then view the three goal areas and eleven objective statements for the three days of this inservice (see Figure 3). An overhead transparency of these objectives will be shown to the group (see Appendix C). As each of the objectives of the inservice is met, the group will refer to the transparency and check off the objective. This will add meaning to the time commitment that the teachers have made as they witness the set of objectives being accomplished.

Goals and Objectives of the Developmental Spelling Inservice

Goal 1: To enhance the participants' knowledge about developmental spelling.

- a) Teachers will discuss the current state of spelling instruction in their district, school, and classroom.
- b) Teachers will learn about the research supporting developmental spelling.
- c) Teachers will learn the five stages of developmental spelling (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000).
- d) Teachers will examine student samples of creative writing and assessments (Bear et al., 2000) provided by the facilitator to determine a developmental stage.

Goal 2: To allow participants to implement developmental spelling.

- e) Teachers will evaluate students in their own classroom to determine the spelling developmental level based on written work and an assessment.
- f) Teachers will learn new techniques for practicing developmentally appropriate spelling words with students.
- g) Teachers will implement a developmental spelling list with some students in their own class.
- h) Teachers will learn how to continue to assess students through their written work and monitor students' progress through the developmental levels.

Goal 3: To explore the potential benefits of developmental spelling.

- i) Teachers will discuss the benefits of developmental spelling to writing and reading and overall student achievement.

Figure 3

Afterwards, the group will be given the schedule for the three days of the inservice (see Appendix B).

Many participants may have similar questions about developmental spelling at the beginning of the inservice and may feel more comfortable discussing their questions if

they realize how common these questions are. The facilitator will lead a discussion regarding frequently asked questions from Gentry's (1987) book *Spelling is a Four-Letter Word*, questions from Gill and Scharer's (1996) inquiries, and Johnston's (2001) report on teacher beliefs. All of these works will serve as an introduction to developmental spelling instruction. Teachers will then be asked to generate their most important questions for this inservice. These will be recorded on chart paper, and then the presentation "Why Developmental Spelling" (see Appendix D for PowerPoint Outline and Slides/Notes Handout) will be viewed to see if any of these questions can be addressed from the onset of the inservice.

To further enhance the group's background knowledge, information will be presented from the book *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* (Bear et al., 2000). This text will serve as a reference for assessment, word selection, and developmental stages for the remainder of the inservice. The teachers will be given a handout (see Appendix E) showing the five stages of spelling development as described in *Words Their Way*. These stages include emergent spellers, letter name-alphabetic spellers, within-word pattern spellers, syllables and affixes spellers, and derivational relations spellers. Teachers will learn about the characteristics associated with each stage and the age level at which these characteristics may begin to develop. Teachers will then be given a blank inventory and checklist from *Words Their Way* (Bear et al., p. 289 & 291). They will refer to these two assessment tools when determining initial developmental stages and evaluating students' written work for spelling progress. The teachers will first be shown five completed sample inventories for elementary students (see Appendix F) on the overhead projector that represent the

developmental stages. The whole group will discuss the developmental stage reflected in each sample inventory. The teachers will then view five writing samples (see Appendix G). The group will have a general discussion about the similarities and differences of the errors for the developmental stages reflected in the writing by using the checklist to evaluate each sample's spelling level. The participants will be divided into five smaller groups to review the writing samples more closely. They will report to the whole group which details they identified as indicative of a developmental level of spelling knowledge.

In preparation for Day 2, the teachers will briefly review the resources used in assigning homework responsibilities for beginning classroom implementation. Each participant will be asked to use an inventory from *Words Their Way* (Bear et al., 2000, p. 289 & 291) with three or more students from his or her classroom. The teachers will also be asked to collect work samples from three or more students and bring these samples to the next session. As soon as the three inventories and samples are collected, the teachers will make a copy to share with the inservice facilitator. This will allow time for the facilitator to review the inventories and samples before the next meeting.

Prior to Day 2, teachers will assess the spelling developmental stages represented in the three selected students' completed inventories and written work. During the second session, teachers will share samples with colleagues, discuss how they determined their spelling stages, and ask their peers and the facilitator questions about complex inventories or written work that may not clearly indicate a developmental stage.

Finally, the teachers will summarize the day's learning and clarify the assignment for the next session. The format for this closing discussion is entitled "3-2-1 Reflection"

(Wald & Castleberry, 2000). The teachers will be asked to discuss and record their responses by listing “3 things I learned,” “2 ideas I want to pursue,” and “1 question I have” (p. 54). These statements will be collected for review by the facilitator to guide the inservice instruction for the next session.

Developmental Stages and Word Selection (Day 2)

The second day of inservice (see Figure 4) will begin with a review of the eleven inservice objectives using the statements on the transparency (see Appendix C).

Teachers will briefly review the activities of Day 1 and discuss any questions they may have about the learning from the first day.

Day 2: Word Selection and Student Practice

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| 1:00 p.m. | -- | Review of Objectives |
| 1:10 p.m. | -- | Direct Instruction through Word Sorts |
| 1:30 p.m. | -- | Discuss Student Samples and Inventories |
| | | Review of Student Knowledge |
| | | Word Selection for each Developmental Stage |
| | | Practice Techniques—10 activities |
| 2:45 p.m. | -- | Describe homework assignments and answer questions |

Figure 4

Teachers will then be presented information on direct instruction associated with word sorting (Bear et al., 2000). Teachers will learn how to explicitly focus student attention on a specific word feature to aid students' development in spelling. For each developmental level, specific word features will be selected. For example, emergent spellers should be directed to sort words based on the initial consonant sounds. Syllable and affix spellers should be given words to sort by number of syllables or by the beginning or ending syllable. The participants will be given words to sort at various

developmental levels. A reproducible form for word sorting (see Appendix H) will be provided for each teacher to use as they record their sorts.

The next section of the inservice will review how to determine students' specific developmental spelling stages based on their written work and spelling inventories provided in *Words Their Way* (Bear et al., 2000, p. 291). Teachers will bring three examples of student inventories and creative writing samples to the second session in order to discuss how they categorized the work into developmental spelling stages and clarify any questions they may have about this process.

After determining the students' spelling stages, the teachers will be shown one method for creating appropriate spelling lists that can best meet their students' instructional needs. The teacher will look for common spelling patterns and use *Words Their Way* (Bear et al., 2000) to create a spelling list based on a student's developmental stage. For example, if a student is not proficient in spelling the long vowel pattern *ai* and is overgeneralizing the pattern of a-consonant-e in her written work, a list could be created with *ai* words such as *rain*, *wait*, and *tail* for the student to practice and explore this word feature.

Next, a variety of practice techniques will be demonstrated to replace traditional practices such as repeatedly writing words or completing worksheets. New practice techniques will include two activities from each of the developmental stages (Bear et al., 2000). Teachers will participate in word practice activities that will later be implemented with their students depending at which of the five stages the students are functioning. Each of the practice techniques are described below according to the developmental spelling stage they are meant to enhance.

At the *Emergent Stage*, the word study activities for demonstration and participation will be “Beginning-Middle-End: Finding Phonemes in Sound Boxes” (Bear et al., 2000, p.121) and “Letter Spin for Sounds” (p. 132). Sound boxes use three letter words and a three-pocket holder with the first pocket labeled *beginning*, the second pocket labeled *middle*, and the last pocket labeled *end*. Students distinguish what sound is represented in each position. In the game “Letter Spin for Sounds,” the students use a spinner labeled with beginning consonants and match pictures with the correct corresponding beginning sound.

In the *Letter Name-Alphabetic Stage*, the activities “Word Hunts” (Bear et al., 2000, p. 167) and “Beginning and End Dominoes” (p. 170) will be introduced. When hunting for words, students are directed to collect and record words with specific blends or digraphs. For “Beginning and End Dominoes,” students are asked to match the ending sound of one picture to the beginning sound of another picture. For example, the *th* pattern at the end of *teeth* could be matched with the *th* pattern at the beginning of *thread*.

The activities “Green Light, Red Light” (Bear et al., 2000, p. 207) and “Building Word Categories” (p. 212) will be introduced for the *Within Word Pattern Stage*. The aim of “Green Light, Red Light” is to get to the red light first. Players are given word cards and asked to sort them into identified long vowel categories. The first player to have five examples for that category says, “Red light.” When playing “Building Word Categories,” students are dealt five cards with words containing similar long vowel patterns. The students attempt to gather pairs of matching cards by drawing from a pile and discarding on each turn. A match could consist of two words that have the same long

vowel pattern such as *bone* and *tone* where the long *o* vowel is created with the vowel-consonant-vowel pattern.

The activities for the *Syllables and Affixes Stage* are “Double Scoop” (Bear et al., 2000, p. 231) and “Stress Busters” (p. 243). In the game “Double Scoop,” students move across a gameboard by determining which words have doubled final consonants when adding an ending. When playing “Stress Busters,” the students practice identifying which syllable is stressed in a given word. The students move along a gameboard according to which syllable is stressed in the word they selected. For example, if the second syllable is stressed, the player moves two spaces on the board.

For the *Derivational Relations Stage*, “Words That Grow From Base Words and Word Roots” (Bear et al., 2000, p. 259) and “Rolling Prefixes” (p. 277) are the activities that will be demonstrated. For the activity “Words That Grow From Base Words and Word Roots,” a diagram of a tree is drawn for students with a root contained in several words placed at the base of the tree. Students generate words in which the word root is represented as one of the syllables. For example, *spec* could be placed at the base of the tree. On each of the *spec* tree branches, students could write words that include *spec* as a syllable, as in *respectful*. When playing “Rolling Prefixes,” students try to dispose of cards that have the same prefixes. Their aim is to discard all of their cards by following the prefix or “suit” chosen in a particular round of play.

Before Day 3, the teachers will be asked to select one or more students to study words from developmentally appropriate spelling lists for one month. During this month, the teacher will document any responses of the student(s) during instruction or any observations of transfer of spelling knowledge into the journal writing of the student(s).

The teachers will also be asked to implement at least one new practice activity with a small group of students who are functioning at the same developmental stage. With another small group of students, teachers will implement one word sort activity for spelling practice. During both activities, teachers will record any observations of student behaviors or comments that they would like to share with their peers during Day 3.

This session will also close with the “3-2-1 Reflection” (Wald & Castleberry, 2000) procedure. The teachers will be asked to discuss and record their responses by listing “3 things I learned,” “2 ideas I want to pursue,” and “1 question I have” (p. 54). The facilitator will collect these statements to evaluate the progress of the inservice and the developing understanding of the teachers.

Student Practice and Ongoing Assessment (Day 3)

The final session will begin by having the participants discuss the responses they recorded within their classroom as a result of partially implementing a developmentally appropriate spelling program. Teachers will review their initial belief statements about spelling and discuss any changes that have occurred in their philosophies as a result of new learning and students’ progress. Teachers will be asked if their students have made any spelling connections in other curricular areas. For example, have they seen or could they foresee the impact of developmental spelling instruction on reading and writing?

Day 3: Student Practice and Ongoing Assessment

- 1:00 p.m. -- Changes in Beliefs
Student Successes & Connecting the Curriculum
Teacher Questions
- 1:30 p.m. -- Five More Practice Techniques
- 2:15 p.m. -- Ongoing Nature of Assessment and Rubric Development
- 2:30 p.m. -- Evaluation of Developmental Spelling Inservice
- 2:50 p.m. -- Formation of Study Groups

Figure 5

The final session (see Figure 5) will include a demonstration of additional spelling practice activities for students. These five activities will be selected from two resources, *Making Words: Multilevel, Hands-on, Developmentally Appropriate Spelling and Phonics Activities* (Cunningham & Hall, 1994) and *Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom* (Pinnell & Fountas, 1998). After identifying and understanding the developmental stages that exist within their classrooms, teachers will need to explore more activities to fit the specific developmental stage of knowledge that their students possess. Participants will divide into groups based on the developmental stage they would like to explore further. They will have the opportunity to practice one activity in developmentally based groups. These five additional practice activities will include “Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check Study” (Pinnell & Fountas, p. 180), “Make Connections” (p. 181), “Word Search” (p. 156), “Choose, Write, Build, Mix, Fix, Mix” (p. 175), and making words and finding the mystery word (Cunningham & Hall).

Following the additional practice activities, teachers will be given instructions for using ongoing assessment of students’ progress through the developmental stages. The checklist developed by Bear et al. (2000) of developmental stages will be used to

highlight what teachers can continue to look for in students' written work. Teachers will review the writing samples they collected as part of the ongoing evaluation of progress toward more advanced developmental spelling stages. At this time, teachers may divide into grade level groups to revise and refine the *Words Their Way* (Bear et al.) checklist to match the district and curricular goals for spelling instruction. Teacher-specific objectives will be generated to aid teachers as they review every student's writing and set goals for the instruction in their own classrooms. From these objectives, a rubric will be created.

As part of the rubric creation, teachers will discuss the strategies they have observed students using in the classroom to spell words. A brief presentation will be given on the strategies observed by Rittle-Johnson and Siegler (1999) (see Review of Literature: Developmental Spelling Instruction) and the strategies described by Pinnell and Fountas (1998) regarding word-solving instruction. These strategies could be included on a rubric that the teachers create to track the various strategies students are using to spell. The teachers may find such a tool to be helpful in determining what strategies are not being effectively utilized by students and should be taught through direct instruction.

Following a brief review of the teacher resources used in this inservice, teachers will be asked to complete an evaluation (see Appendix I) denoting the benefits that resulted from this training and improvements that would enhance the inservice. Teachers will also be given the opportunity to sign-up for spelling study groups. These groups will be formed by grade level or areas of interest such as exploring further research in spelling or learning from other instructional resources. Once the study groups are formed, they

will determine a schedule, create objectives, and set responsibilities for all of the members. The facilitator will obtain a copy of this information and schedule monthly or bimonthly meetings with the individual groups to act as a resource, gather information about the process of implementation, and examine other developmental spelling research and resources. The facilitator will also continue to collect information about the changes in spelling instruction at the school, and the effect these changes have on student learning and achievement. Specifically, can a change be seen in the application and transfer of spelling knowledge to students' authentic writing? This information will be shared with the spelling study groups and administrators as curriculum needs and goals are redefined.

Concluding Remarks

The creation of this project began with the following four questions: (1) Why implement a developmental spelling program, (2) what research supports a developmental approach to spelling instruction, (3) what are the potential benefits for students, and (4) how can a developmental spelling program be implemented and evaluated in the classroom?

As a classroom teacher, I previously used the basal-provided spelling lists. I came to understand that these spelling lists were not matching the needs of the diverse learners in my classroom as they worked to effectively communicate through written language. I sought resources that led me to understand the developmental nature of spelling, and I revised my approach to spelling instruction. My main purpose for designing this inservice is to assist my colleagues who are also frustrated by traditional spelling instructional approaches. This inservice should provide teachers with instructional theories that support developmental spelling, new instructional strategies for

application in the classroom, and methods for continually assessing students' spelling development. By implementing developmental spelling in the classroom, teachers will be better able to meet their students varying developmental needs.

The information gathered from the inservice evaluations and reflections may also help to define the focus of the study groups. For example, if the teacher evaluations expressed a need for a review of more resources, a study group may investigate and continue to learn about other resources that would enhance classroom instruction. This will help create ownership of implementation and likely increase the possibility of long term application in the classroom.

Additional surveys may be developed to "analyze whether teachers improved their practice and whether the changed practice affected student learning" (Speck & Knipe, 2001, p. 17). It has been my own experience that a developmental spelling program can have a significant impact on students' attitudes toward spelling practice and writing. Teachers involved in the study groups will need to reflect on the benefits of their own implementation and the effects it has on student experiences and achievement.

The research on developmental spelling, however, is not extensive in the area of student transfer from spelling practice to the students' authentic writing tasks. While it is possible to assess students' written work for its developmental stage, more information is needed about how students apply their spelling practice and knowledge to their written work. Specifically, what instructional strategies can aid in the transfer of knowledge in isolation to authentic, written stories and help students "spel it rite?" The following question remains: If educators are aware of their students' developmental spelling levels and the instruction and assessment of spelling are developmentally appropriate, what

effect can be seen in students' authentic writing? By gathering information from the spelling study groups, I hope to begin to address these questions and add to the body of literature that supports the use of developmentally appropriate spelling instruction. I hope to help teachers guide students on the path to "spelling it right even after the test."

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Appendix A

GLOSSARY: Definition of Terms

- Alternative Assessments:** Differs from traditional assessments in that it is more authentic in nature and reflects the process of learning
- Authentic Writing:** Any writing done in the context of real world writing, not words written in isolation without a purpose
- Developmental Spelling:** An approach to spelling instruction that takes into account a student's knowledge of spelling
- Developmental Stages:** Expresses the level of a student's understanding about spelling
- Direct Instruction:** Explicit instruction that focuses on specific word features
- Five Stages of Development:**
Emergent Stage, Letter Name-Alphabetic Stage, Within Word Pattern Stage, Syllables and Affixes Stage, Derivational Relations Stage (see Appendix E)
- Indirect Instruction:** Immersion in a print-rich environment with authentic writing tasks that may or may not be evaluated for spelling errors
- Memorization Approach:** Word selection is based on frequently used words
- Ongoing or Continual Assessment:** Assessment of daily writing tasks or stories
- Orthographic System:** Letter-sound relationships, sequence of sounds in words
- Rubric:** Alternative assessment based on set criteria
- Student Strategies:** Ways students go about encoding words for writing
- Thematic Approach:** Word selection is based on unit of study and vocabulary words
- Traditional Practices/Exercises:** May consist of activities like writing words repeatedly, researching definitions of words, writing sentences for each spelling word, and completing workbook pages
- Word Selection:** The method used by a teacher/instructor to determine the words to be studied by any or all students
- Word Sort:** Activity focusing on a specific word feature

Appendix B

DEVELOPMENTAL SPELLING INSERVICE SCHEDULE

Day 1: Understanding Developmental Spelling

- 1:00 p.m. -- Introductions
- 1:15 p.m. -- Pre-Inservice Belief Statements
- 1:30 p.m. -- What is the current state of spelling instruction in your classroom?
- 2:00 p.m. -- Define Objectives and Purpose of Inservice
PowerPoint presentation "Why Developmental Spelling?"
Developmental Spelling Research
- 2:15 p.m. -- The Five Developmental Stages
- 2:30 p.m. -- Spelling Inventories—Immediate Feedback
Checklists—Authentic Assessment
Describe homework assignments
Highlight Teacher Resources/References
- 2:55 p.m. -- Closing Questions/Concerns

Day 2: Word Selection and Student Practice

- 1:00 p.m. -- Review of Objectives
- 1:10 p.m. -- Direct Instruction through Word Sorts
- 1:30 p.m. -- Student Samples and Inventories Discussed
Review of Student Knowledge
Word Selection for each Developmental Stage
Practice Techniques—10 activities
- 2:45 p.m. -- Describe homework assignments and answer questions

Day 3: Student Practice and Ongoing Assessment

- 1:00 p.m. -- Changes in Beliefs
Student Successes & Connecting the Curriculum
Teacher Questions
- 1:30 p.m. -- Five More Practice Techniques
- 2:15 p.m. -- Ongoing Nature of Assessment and Rubric Development
- 2:30 p.m. -- Evaluation of Developmental Spelling Inservice
- 2:50 p.m. -- Formation of Study Groups

Appendix C

Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives of the Developmental Spelling Inservice

Goal 1: To enhance the participants' knowledge about developmental spelling.

- a) Teachers will discuss the current state of spelling instruction in their district, school, and classroom.
- b) Teachers will learn about the research supporting developmental spelling.
- c) Teachers will learn the five stages of developmental spelling (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000).
- d) Teachers will examine student samples of creative writing and assessments (Bear et al., 2000) provided by the facilitator to determine a developmental stage.

Goal 2: To allow participants to implement developmental spelling.

- e) Teachers will evaluate students in their own classroom to determine the spelling developmental level based on written work and an assessment.
- f) Teachers will learn new techniques for practicing developmentally appropriate spelling words with students.
- g) Teachers will implement a developmental spelling list with some students in their own class.
- h) Teachers will learn how to continue to assess students through their written work and monitor students' progress through the developmental levels.

Goal 3: To explore the potential benefits of developmental spelling.

- i) Teachers will discuss the benefits of developmental spelling to writing and reading and overall student achievement.

Appendix D

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Outline for
DEVELOPMENTAL SPELLING INSERVICE

"Why Developmental Spelling?"

Jennifer L. Heckmann

An Inservice Training for Teachers from "Speling It Rite Eevn Afrt the Test"

What spelling program do you use now?

- Spelling curriculum from a basal series is typically based on the AVERAGE knowledge for the corresponding AGE group.
- Are all of your students working at
 - ...the same READING LEVEL?
 - ...the same WRITING LEVEL?
 - ...the same SPELLING LEVEL?

How are your students performing?

Are students able to:

- READ the words they have PRACTICED in the context of stories?
- WRITE the words they have PRACTICED in their journals?
- RECALL previously learned words and TRANSFER old learning to new settings?

Variability

- Three groups of students exist:
 - Above Average Spelling Knowledge
 - UNCHALLENGED, WORKING FROM PRIOR KNOWLEDGE
 - At Average for Age
 - APPROPRIATE
 - Below Average Spelling Knowledge
 - FRUSTRATED, TRYING TO MEMORIZE EACH WORD EACH WEEK (~ 800 words/year)

Researchers say:

- Word selection should be based on assessment of a developmental level (Gill & Scharer, 1996)
- Spelling instruction can help students as they learn to read (Morris & Perney, 1984; Willson, Rupley, Rodriguez, & Mergen, 1999)
- By using what they know, students can generate new words, decode unknown words, and build comprehension (Zutell, 1980)
- Students require explicit instruction in word features (Invernizzi, Abouzeid, & Gill, 1994)

- Students can be guided through activities such as word sorts to discover the “regularities, patterns, and rules of English orthography” (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000, p. 4)

The Bottom Line

- Spelling knowledge is a critical part of learning to write or encode.
- Spelling knowledge can aid in learning to read or decode.

Traditional Approaches to Spelling Instruction

- Memorizational Approach
 - Theory: Spelling is memorizing
 - High frequency words for study
 - Practice is repetition
- Thematic Approach
 - Theory: Importance is current theme
 - Theme-based words for study
 - Practice is to build vocabulary skills

A Developmental Spelling Approach:

- Does not require the memorization of all new concepts
- Does not require repetitive practice
- Does not mean looking up definitions, writing words repeatedly, or completing worksheets

A Developmental Spelling Approach Means:

- Understanding the stages of knowledge for your students
- Selecting words for study that build on students’ stage of understanding
- Practicing words in a meaningful and explicit way
- Assessing students’ progress in authentic writing tasks

Developmental Spelling Means:

- Helping ALL students learn to spell, write, and read
- Helping ALL students communicate effectively
- Helping ALL students “spel it rite evn aftr the test”

Variability

Three groups of students exist:

Above Average Spelling Knowledge

UNCHALLENGED, WORKING FROM
PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

At Average for Age

APPROPRIATE

Below Average Spelling Knowledge

FRUSTRATED, TRYING TO MEMORIZE
EACH WORD EACH WEEK
(~ 800 words/year)

Researchers say:

Word selection should be based on
assessment of a developmental level (Gill &
Schirer, 1996)

Spelling instruction can help students as
they learn to read (Morris & Perney, 1983; Willson, Ruple,
Rodriguez, & Megan, 1999)

By using what they know, students can
generate new words, decode unknown
words, and build comprehension (Zutell, 1980)

Researchers say:

Students require explicit instruction in
word features (Invernizzi, Abouzeid, & Gill,
1994)

Students can be guided through
activities such as word sorts to
discover the “regularities, patterns, and
rules of English orthography” (Bear,
Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000, p. 4)

The Bottom Line

Spelling knowledge is a critical part of learning to write and encode.

Spelling knowledge can aid in learning to read and decode.

Traditional Approaches to Spelling Instruction

Memorizational Approach

Theory: Spelling is memorizing

High frequency words for study

Practice is repetition

Thematic Approach

Theory: Importance is current theme

Theme-based words for study

Practice is to build vocabulary skills

A Developmental Spelling Approach:

Does not require the memorization of all new concepts

Does not require repetitive practice

Does not mean looking up definitions, writing words repeatedly, or completing worksheets

A Developmental Spelling Approach Means:

- Understanding the stages of knowledge for your students
- Selecting words for study that build on students' stage of understanding
- Practicing words in a meaningful and explicit way
- Assessing students' progress in authentic writing tasks

Developmental Spelling Means:

- Helping ALL students learn to spell, write, and read
- Helping ALL students communicate effectively
- Helping ALL students "spel it rite eevn aftr the test"

Appendix E

The Five Stages of Development in Spelling

(Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000)

<i>Stage</i>	Average Age of Development	General Characteristics
<p><i>Emergent Stage</i></p> 	<p>Sample</p> <p>Pre-Kindergarten to Mid-1st Grade</p> <p>M MoM PE <i>for My mom is pretty</i></p>	<p>Scribbles on paper; Random letters and numbers; Some consonants begin to develop</p>
<p><i>Letter Name-Alphabetic Stage</i></p> 	<p>Kindergarten to Early 3rd Grade</p> <p>nat <i>for net</i> chrp <i>for chirp</i> trep <i>for trip</i></p>	<p>Letter-sound relationships developing; Initial & final consonants represented in writing; Some short vowels, digraphs and blends developing</p>
<p><i>Within Word Pattern Stage</i></p> 	<p>1st Grade to Mid-4th Grade</p> <p>creim <i>for crime</i> reechis <i>for reaches</i></p>	<p>Short vowel patterns represented in writing; Long vowel patterns developing; Other vowel patterns developing</p>
<p><i>Syllables and Affixes Stage</i></p> 	<p>3rd Grade to 8th Grade</p> <p>intenchin <i>for intention</i> tresure <i>for treasure</i></p>	<p>Multi-syllable words, consonant doubling, inflected endings, prefixes, and suffixes developing</p>
<p><i>Derivational Relations Stage</i></p> 	<p>5th Grade to 12th Grade</p> <p>catagory <i>for category</i> exserpt <i>for excerpt</i></p>	<p>Writing most words correctly; Understanding of bases and roots of words developing</p> 

Appendix F

STUDENT INVENTORY SAMPLES
(Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000)Inventory Sample 1

<i>bed</i>	1. bd
<i>ship</i>	2. sp
<i>when</i>	3. wn
<i>lump</i>	4. lp
<i>float</i>	5. vt

Inventory Sample 2

<i>bed</i>	1. bed
<i>ship</i>	2. shep
<i>when</i>	3. wen
<i>lump</i>	4. lup
<i>float</i>	5. flot
<i>train</i>	6. tran

Inventory Sample 3

<i>bed</i>	1. bed
<i>ship</i>	2. ship
<i>when</i>	3. when
<i>lump</i>	4. lump
<i>float</i>	5. flote
<i>train</i>	6. train
<i>place</i>	7. place
<i>drive</i>	8. drive
<i>bright</i>	9. brite
<i>shopping</i>	10. shoping
<i>spoil</i>	11. spoal
<i>serving</i>	12. surving
<i>chewed</i>	13. chood

Inventory Sample 4

<i>bed</i>	1. bed
<i>ship</i>	2. ship
<i>when</i>	3. when
<i>lump</i>	4. lump
<i>float</i>	5. float
<i>train</i>	6. train
<i>place</i>	7. place
<i>drive</i>	8. drive
<i>bright</i>	9. bright
<i>shopping</i>	10. shopping
<i>spoil</i>	11. spoil
<i>serving</i>	12. serving
<i>chewed</i>	13. chewed
<i>carries</i>	14. carries
<i>marched</i>	15. marched
<i>shower</i>	16. shower
<i>cattle</i>	17. cattel
<i>favor</i>	18. favor
<i>ripen</i>	19. rippen
<i>cellar</i>	20. seller
<i>pleasure</i>	21. plesure
<i>fortunate</i>	22. fochininte
<i>confident</i>	23. confedent

24. cattle

25. rippen

Inventory Sample 5

<i>bed</i>	1. bed
<i>ship</i>	2. ship
<i>when</i>	3. when
<i>lump</i>	4. lump
<i>float</i>	5. float
<i>train</i>	6. train
<i>place</i>	7. place
<i>drive</i>	8. drive
<i>bright</i>	9. bright
<i>shopping</i>	10. shopping
<i>spoil</i>	11. spoil
<i>serving</i>	12. serving
<i>chewed</i>	13. chewed
<i>carries</i>	14. carries
<i>marched</i>	15. marched
<i>shower</i>	16. shower
<i>cattle</i>	17. cattle
<i>favor</i>	18. favor
<i>ripen</i>	19. ripen
<i>cellar</i>	20. cellar
<i>pleasure</i>	21. pleasure
<i>fortunate</i>	22. fortunate
<i>confident</i>	23. confident
<i>civilize</i>	24. civilise
<i>opposition</i>	25. oposition

Appendix G

STUDENT WRITTEN WORK SAMPLES

Written Work

Sample 6

a falsand yers ago dinosaurs axist and thar wer tyrannosaurus thay wokt along the dert and stopt he so (saw) a stegosaurus and he wus hunger so he wokt to the stegosaurus and sade wut or (are) you going to do (?) aet you (.) he aet hem.

Written Work

Sample 7

Ones a pone a tim thare whas a little boy that had no famle becas he got last he onle had a pane (penny) he had no more mane he fownd a hawse he sade he coddle go in he saw bars (bears) he did not car he was hagne (hungry) the bars laft a nowt it sady I did this the bares gat bake hom thay rade the not thay awte side looking for hem. The And

Written Work

Sample 8

Wans a pona time thar was a little girl that was pore one nighte she wisht for a wishing fish the nexst morning a fish was thar she had no mone she wisht for som mone then she wisht to be a prinsas and the she had a hos (house).

Written Work

Sample 9

If it was valintins day I would give pepol valintins cards every day. If it was valitins day I would give pepol gum on the cards. If it was valitinas day I would give my bestest friends soakers. If it was valitinas day I would give children valitinas to make them happy if it was valatinas day I would be nice to my bestest frinds.

Written Work
Sample 10

Once upon a time there was a house where three pigs lived. And one day one of the pigs was taking a bath in his bathtub and instead of water, out came...Ahhh! Cold, cold, cold there's snowflakes in the bathtub! said the pig. Then he froze and they moved. The End.

Appendix H
WORD SORT CHART

Word Sorting

Name: _____

Date: _____

These all _____	These all _____	Oddballs
I put these together because _____	I put these together because _____	I put these together because _____

(Adapted by J. Heckmann for Developmental Spelling Inservice Project from *Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom*, Pinnell & Fountas, 1998)

Appendix I

EVALUATION FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Name: (Optional) _____

Your Current Position: _____

Date of Inservice: _____

Directions: Circle your response to the following statements.

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. My initial beliefs about spelling instruction have changed..... | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. I already have or intend to change my approach to spelling instruction..... | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. I think it is important to implement a developmental spelling program..... | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. I met the objectives of the inservice..... | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. I was already implementing a developmental spelling program before attending the inservice... | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. I would like to continue to learn more about developmental spelling..... | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 7. I intend to join a study group to further explore developmental spelling with support..... | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 8. I think a developmental spelling program will have an effect on my students' achievement in spelling, writing, and reading..... | SD | D | N | A | SA |

8. What ideas do you plan to or have you already implemented in your own classroom as a result of this inservice?

9. What could be done to improve this inservice?
