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# Integrated Functional Creative Teaching: Spelling and Reading

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With the growth of mankind's knowledge doubling every ten years, curriculum must be renewed, revitalized and made more realistic in order to meet the demands of the future and at the same time seek to restore the public confidence and support of the educational system. Timar and Guthrie (1980) contend that the 80's will be marked by a public demand for efficiency and accountability in the teaching-learning process and by fiscal containment. In addition to a significant increase in basic skills legislation, parents will want greater accountability in the teaching of math, art, music, social studies, science, physical health, and personal well being (Landsmann, 1980).

In order to meet these challenges, subjects once taught in an isolated manner will be replaced by integrated, functional, creative teaching. Instead of teaching reading at 8:30 a.m., spelling at 10:00 a.m., math at 11:00 a.m. and, if time permits, social studies and science during the afternoon, all of these subjects will be blended.

In this blended curriculum, Creative-Integrated-Functional-Teaching: C.I.F.T., learning will not be confined to isolated slots of time but instead will be interwoven within the entire fabric of learning experiences. Through C.I.F.T., both teacher and student will be stimulated to meet the urgent challenges of the 80's.

The following example demonstrates how C.I.F.T. integrates spelling and reading. Spelling is the process of reproducing, either in written or spoken language, the letters of words in proper sequence. According to Rubin (1975) and Boyd (1970), for spelling instruction to be effective, spelling words must be both meaningful and useful to the student. If a student only learns words for the weekly spelling test and does not

use or come in contact with these words in other contexts, the chances of the student being able to reproduce these words in the future is minimized.

## Rationale for Combining Reading & Spelling

As research has shown, there is a high correlation between reading ability and spelling ability. Children can spell words that they can read with greater accuracy than words they cannot read; and if a student's vocabulary is poor, usually reading and spelling ability are also poor. By combining reading and spelling instruction, the teacher can make spelling instruction effective. Instead of the teacher giving a fourth grader, who is reading on a second grade level, fourth grade spelling words, the teacher should select words from basal stories. By doing this the student's reading group becomes the student's spelling group.

Each basal reader contains a list of vocabulary words that are central to the meaning of the story. These words in turn are associated with certain word recognition skills. These vocabulary words are repeated several times in subsequent stories throughout the basal. This integrative approach creates for the students a purpose for learning the spelling words, as well as insuring that the students will come in contact with these words in future basal stories and in different contexts. In addition, by prelearning the spelling words from the next basal story, the student will have a running start in vocabulary and word recognition skills when that story is discussed, as well as having increased his exposure and practice time. The school would also realize a budget saving since the purchasing of spelling textbooks would be eliminated.

## Recommended Sequence

The weekly spelling lesson plan would resemble the following:

### First Day:

Administration of a pretest consisting of the fifteen words selected from the following week's basal story. The student would be responsible for all of the spelling words but would be encouraged to pay closer attention to the misspelled words. After the pretest, all words would be introduced by having them pronounced by the teacher and then the student, discussing the meaning, having the student copy the words from the model, then from memory and finally by having the student reproduce the word orally from memory.

### Second Day:

The word recognition skills introduced in the basal story are discussed using the appropriate spelling words. The teacher then implements practice exercises.

### Third Day:

Continuation of practice exercises.

### Fourth Day:

Second pretest with the students checking their own papers followed by practice exercises. The students' misspelled words are spotlighted for practice.

### Fifth Day:

After the final test, the students check their own papers, then mark their own achievements on a progress chart. The students write their own misspelled words in a word bank. Every four weeks these words are reviewed and practiced.

The following ideas and activities are suggested for the use in the practice of these spelling words.

1. Using all ideas and spelling words, the teacher creates a short story and then, leaving blank spaces, omits all the spelling words. Students are to fill in the blank spaces with the correct spelling words. This can be done either by students supplying the words from

memory or from a list given to the students to copy from. Students could also try to write omitted-spelling-word stories.

2. On a tagboard circle with a spinner attached, print the spelling words. Player I spins for Player II who attempts to spell the word the pointer stops at. If spelled correctly, Player II gets one point. If incorrect, Player I gets to spell it and receives the point. The game continues until all words are spelled correctly and the winner is that player who has the most points. The job of spinning is alternated after each turn.

3. Football — Using a football field and football shaped footballs, Team I places its marker on the 50-yard line. Each member of Team I has a turn to select a spelling word card from the top of the pile and attempts to spell it correctly. If done correctly, the marker advances 10 yards. If done incorrectly, the marker is moved backwards 20 yards. The first team to reach their appropriate goal wins. After each goal the ball returns to the 50-yard line for the other team to try to spell the words correctly.

4. Using alphabet cereal, have students first, while looking at the word printed on the board, try to spell it correctly, then spell it from memory. If they can do it correctly, they get to eat the cereal-spelled word.

5. Using a specified number of spelling words, have students write a poem, or a short story, or dramatize the words. If dramatized, the class can try to guess what the word is.

6. Make a tic tac toe board and provide card strips with spelling words written on them and five "o" and five "x" cards. Two players play the game by placing the spelling cards face down and choosing to be "x" or "o". Player I draws a card and pronounces that spelling word for Player II. If it is spelled correctly, Player II places his marker on the board. Turns are alternated, and the game continues until tic tac toe is achieved vertically, horizontally, or diagonally.

7. Bowling — Make bowling pins from cardboard and number them. On the back of each pin write

a spelling word with higher numbers being used for the more difficult words. Two players play by first setting up two sets of pins. The first player calls the number of the pin. The opponent reads the word on back of the pin; and if he spells it correctly, the pin is knocked over. The players take turns choosing pins and spelling words. The first player to knock over all the pins is the winner.

8. Put a list of the spelling words on the chalkboard. Students take turns being "it." While "it" is out of the room, the class agrees on one of the words from the list on the board. "It" returns to the room and tries to guess the chosen word. To get clues, he asks individual pupils questions that can be answered "yes" or "no", substituting the word "schazbat" for the unknown word. Example: "Can people schazbat?" Once guessed, "it" must spell the word from memory. If done correctly, "it" chooses the next "it." If incorrectly spelled, the teacher chooses the next "it."

9. Having students write a creative story using as many spelling words as possible. The teacher will introduce the activity by mysteriously saying the following sentence (which has already been written on the chalkboard): "In a far away land many miles from here — \_\_\_\_\_." The teacher then directs the class to finish the sentence in an imaginative manner.

10. Allow students to use a typewriter to spell their words.

11. The spelling words are written on the board in one column but each word is scrambled. The meanings are written in mixed order in a second column. Children have to unscramble the words then must write the correct meaning next to each spelling word.

12. Have students sit on the floor in a circle, with one child in the center. The one in the center holds the list of spelling words and calls out one word from the list. Then the teacher starts the record player and with the music playing, a beanbag is passed, clockwise, around the circle from player to player. When the music stops, the player holding the beanbag must

spell the word that was called out before the music started. If spelled correctly, the pupil in the center remains and the music continues. But if the player with the beanbag misspells the word, he trades places with pupil in the center, takes possession of the list, and becomes the word caller. A player who misspells three words is out of the game. The last player remaining in the circle wins.

13. Spelling Race — Draw a race track and place scrambled spelling words from "start" to "finish." Two teams are chosen to unscramble the words. The team finishing first wins.

14. Basketball — Divide students into two teams. The teacher pronounces a word. If the first player from Team I throws his beanbag into the basket, he may try to spell the word and if spelled correctly, he scores a "basket" for his team. If not, a player from Team 2 throws his beanbag; if he makes a basket, he gets to try to spell the word. The team with the most baskets is the winner.

15. Distribute index cards containing one spelling word to each student. As the teacher calls out each word, the student holding that word card stands and attempts to spell it. When everyone has a turn, trade cards and go through again. A variation would be to have a picture of Cookie Monster with his mouth open and words spelled on paper cookies. If the student spells the word correctly he gets to feed Cookie Monster.

16. Beat the Tape — The teacher will record each spelling word on a cassette tape at 10 second intervals. Students will prepare a practice sheet. Students must keep up with the tape and write words as they are called out one at a time.

17. Beat the Clock — Have students number a practice sheet and instruct them to begin writing as many spelling words from memory as they can when you say "Go." At the end of the time limit, stop and check. Allow students to look at the list and give them three more minutes to finish writing as many words as they can.

18. Ask for a volunteer to orally spell the words. As the student spells each word correctly, place an index card containing that word on a chalk tray in front of the class. If he gets all correct, he picks the next volunteer.

19. Having been given a dictionary and a spelling word, after one minute, the student stands and gives as much information about a word as he can. He receives one point for each fact.

20. The teacher calls out a spelling word and students in rows race to look up the words in the dictionary.

21. Team Spelling — The students are divided into four groups. The board is divided into four sections. One person from each group goes to the board which corresponds to the groups number. The teacher pronounces a spelling word. Each person writes the spelling word on the board. If they spell it right, their team gets one point.

22. Old MacDonald Spelling Words — Students sing: "Old MacDonald had a farm...and on his farm he had a **box** (spelling word), etc....with a box (spells word) here and a box (spells word) there, etc..."

23. Write a spelling word on the board whose meaning is not known to the class and have students make up their own definitions. The definitions are discussed, then students look the word up in the dictionary.

24. Draw a rabbit in a cage on the chalkboard. Ask each child to spell a certain word that you dictate in order to rescue the rabbit. If they spell it correctly, part of the rabbit gets erased. Game continues until the rabbit is completely erased.

25. Sit in a circle and have a "monster" in the middle. Each child has a pile of cards in front of him, and students take turns pronouncing each word. If correct, the child gets to keep the card. If incorrect, the "monster" gets it.

26. Baseball — Student choose the type of hit they want: A single — spell the word.

A double — single plus definition or using it in a sentence

A triple — double plus a synonym and an antonym or giving a rhyming word

A homerun — triple plus putting the word into syllables or adding a prefix and a suffix.

If wrong at any point, the student is out. Three outs and the inning is over and the other team goes to the plate.

27. Students can create their own dictionaries or word banks. Each entry would include the pronunciation, definition, sentence, and a picture to illustrate the word.

28. Give points for finding spelling words in other written materials such as newspapers or magazines. At the end of the week, tally all scores and reward the winner with the "word detective of the week" badge.

29. Divide students into two teams and give each pupil a card bearing a letter used in one of the spelling words. When a word is pronounced, both teams spell the word by placing themselves in the proper position. The team that spells the word first scores one point. Continue in this manner until all the new words have been used. The team with the most points wins. Be sure to provide two cards for each team for any letter that is used more than once in a word.

30. Place the children into two or three equal rows. Pronounce a spelling word for the first row. The first child says the first letter, the second child says the second letter, and so on until the word has been spelled. The next group is asked another spelling word. The children in the second row respond in the same manner. This procedure is continued for each row. For each letter omitted or every word misspelled, a team is given one point. The team with the fewest points wins.

31. Have the children form a circle. One child is "It." He walks around the circle, stops in front of another pupil, and asks that pupil to spell one of the words. If the pupil spells the word correctly, he becomes the new "It." The spelling words can be written on a small piece of paper and distributed to each "It."

32. Write spelling words on slips of paper, fold and place in a box. Ask one pupil at a time to choose a slip and hand the paper to the teacher, who pronounces the word and asks the pupil to write it on the board. If the child misses the word, he takes the paper and studies it and after all students have had one turn, gets another turn.

33. The spelling sitdown is played in the same manner as a spelling bee, except that the children who spell the words correctly take their seats. The team that has the fewest members standing wins. The spelling may also be done by having each team write the responses on the board. Children at their seats may also write the words you pronounce on paper.

34. Starting with a vowel, have children take turns adding one letter at a time so that a word is spelled with each addition.

a	o	e
at	on	be
ate	one	bee
late	tone	been
later	stone	

35. Think and Spell — Have one pupil stand in front of the group and say, "I am thinking of a spelling word that ends with an 'e'." The children who know the answer raise their hands. One child is called upon to write the word on the chalkboard. If he writes the word correctly, he becomes the leader.

36. One child on a team begins by writing a word he knows on the board. He asks another child to spell a word that begins with the last letter of his word. Continue this, giving a point to the opposite team when a pupil cannot think of a word or misspells one. This activity works best when the teacher is helping students review many spelling words.

37. Add-a-letter — Divide the students into several equal teams. Pronounce a word; then have the first member of each team go to the board and write the first letter of that word. As soon as he writes the letter, he runs to the second member of his team and gives him the chalk. The second member then writes the second letter. This continues until one team has completed the word. The

