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An Individualized Spelling Program

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ABSTRACT

AN INDIVIDUALIZED SPELLING PROGRAM

By

Rashelle Noreen Pratz

July, 2000

Spelling is a subject taught in school that is often in debate about the most effective way to teach it. There has been vast research about the correct way to teach spelling. Traditionally, spelling has been taught with word lists compiled of isolated words that students don't often use in everyday writing. Advocates for new ways to teach spelling suggest the use of high frequency words and words students will most often use in their writing experiences. This project report provides an individualized spelling program to fit the needs of each student, in which learning to spell plays a significant role in every day writing.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

Spelling as a subject in school has been around for a long time. Yet many students continue to struggle with ways to spell and retain the word spellings in their long-term memory. Spelling generally does not get as much attention as other subject areas, such as reading or math. However, there is a connection between spelling and writing that should be made to make spelling a more meaningful task. Spelling is necessary to ensure what is written is conveyed correctly.

As new tests are created to measure the educational performance of young students, teachers continue to search for a curriculum to produce better writers. I have developed a project to target spelling for a second grade class that will incorporate high frequency words. When students have mastered the spellings of these given words, they will begin to spell better in their everyday writing.

State requirements have been developed to inform instruction, assess students in core areas, and provide ways to ensure all students are learning the same information. The Essential Academic Learning Requirements

(1997) have been taken into consideration during the development of this project.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of my curriculum project is to design an individualized spelling program that will assist second grade students to spell correctly in their everyday writing. This program will be based on high frequency words used in writing. This individualized spelling program not only takes a developmental approach, it will reduce frustration for both teachers and students. It is to give second grade students a firm foundation for building knowledge about word spellings to further progress at higher levels. What good is a score of 100% on a spelling test if the students do not use the words when they write?

Although teachers' instructional approaches may differ, we can all agree that spelling needs improvement. As a teacher in search of new ways to teach spelling, I have found many schools still use uniform spelling books generally targeting the average level students in the classroom. These spelling books lack ways to grab the low students, and challenge the high students. Spelling must be approached developmentally, taking into consideration all second graders are not at the same ability level.

Significance

Most practicing teachers would agree that tying in the importance of spelling with writing would improve spelling *in* writing (Snowball 1997).

Students first learn to spell words that are used most in writing. Building on this, students learn to spell small words such as prepositions that when spelled incorrectly can often change the meaning of what the writer is trying to say.

This project will, however, include words used in the conventional spelling book adopted by my school district. It is important to maintain consistency with other classroom teachers at my grade level. Although words in conventional spelling books most often target the average student, they give all students words to use in creative writing. It will also show students that words can be grouped by patterns.

Combining the conventional spelling book (which teaches spelling using word patterning) with high frequency words in this project will give students the tools they need to succeed with spelling in everyday writing. The overall project is significant to early writers becoming good spellers.

Delimitations and Limitations

This project will focus on second grade students. The population of students ranges on average from eighty percent Hispanic students, nineteen percent White Caucasian students, and one percent other. Most of the Hispanic students are bilingual with English as their second language.

I will look specifically at incorporating the existing spelling program used by my school district with high frequency words used in everyday writing. This program will also be individualized for each student. Until students have mastered each word on their test, they will not go on to the next high frequency word. This project focuses solely on the make up of a second grade classroom with a diverse population.

Limitations of this project begin with the population of students. It also focuses on a specific grade level. This will make it difficult to generalize this program to a different group of students. This project has not been formally evaluated or assessed.

Definition of Terms

High Frequency Words: These are words most used in everyday writing (Durnil, 1997).

Invented Spelling: Students are encouraged to use skills they've already learned to sound out words and spell them the best that they can (Gill, 1997).

Process-Centered Classroom: This is a classroom where spelling is taught through the process of reading and writing, and not as a subject of its own (Barone, 1992).

Traditional Approach: This approach relies on a basal or older method of teaching. It excludes newer, more modern approaches (Peay, 1990).

Washington State Commission on Student Learning: A committee developed to inform classroom instruction and assess students in core subject areas (WSCSL, 1997).

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

Teaching children to spell correctly in everyday writing is an important task. Spelling is often taught as an individual subject with instruction focusing on how to spell words in isolation. This approach to teaching spelling often leaves students without the skills they need to spell correctly whenever they write.

A study to determine the most common errors made in writing by second grade students was conducted. Luts (1991) showed that spelling was the most common error. This error occurs more often than context, grammar, and punctuation. Spelling can be a difficult process to learn and use in the context of writing.

A recent study done by Durnil (1997) shows that there are significant reasons why spelling achievement may be low in second grade. As Durnil states:

There are three components that lead to low spelling achievement in student writing. First of all, there is a lack of transferring spelling words to daily writing. Second, students are not being held accountable for their spelling in written work. Finally, students' spelling lists consist of seldom-used words. (p. 7)

In the following review of literature, a historical look at the evolution of spelling as a subject will be surveyed. Spelling as a process and the use of high frequency words in writing and spelling will be examined. The importance of individualizing a spelling program will also be addressed.

The Essential Academic Learning Requirements

In 1994 the Washington State Commission on Student Learning (WSCSL) was formed to reform education in public schools. This committee developed the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (1997) for each subject to hold teachers and students accountable. These requirements set higher standards for all students. In the area of writing, the requirements for spelling are included .

2. The student writes clearly and effectively.

1:3 know and apply correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization

3. The student understands and uses the steps of the writing process.

3:4 edit-correct spelling, punctuations, grammar, and usage

The Essential Academic Learning Requirements were considered during the development of this project. The purpose of the project is to

improve spelling in everyday writing. The goals of this project align with the goals of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

A Historical Overview

The direction taken by teachers in the last century about the correct way to teach spelling is constantly changing. Hanna, Hodges and Hanna (1971) discuss the evolution of spelling as a subject in the early 1900s to the 1970s.

1920

Spelling was a respected subject in the 19th century. However by the 1920's it was an unwanted subject. Students were given word lists to memorize. Students liked the subject very little. The conclusion was then drawn that just because a student could read, did not mean that they could spell (Hanna, Hodges and Hanna, 1971).

1930

By the 1930's a reform was underway to incorporate high usage words. Nice colorful spelling pages were used instead of plain word lists.

1940

In the 1940's the introduction of pretests and posttests was a big hit. Spelling books were constantly in revision. (Hanna, Hodges and Hanna, 1971).

1950 and 1960

In the 1950's and 1960's, specialists began to realize the sound to letter correspondence of our English language needed to be studied. This brought about a research project called Project 1991 that demonstrated "a program ought to begin with a study of sounds in words and the letters that represent those sounds" (Hanna, Hodges, Hanna, 1971, p.77).

1970

In the 1970's, the belief that spelling shouldn't be associating sounds to letters came about. Spelling should be thought of as sound segments or syllables. (Gentry and Henderson, 1978).

1980 and 1990

In the 1980's and 1990's spelling research began focusing on the process of learning to spell. The use of spelling series was not as widespread as educators looked for a more developmental way to teach spelling. Incorporating spelling words with everyday writing had become a

more used approach to teaching spelling (Hillerich, 1982). After all, we learn to spell so that we can write.

In summary, spelling as a subject taught with word lists and rote memorization has moved to a more relevant approach. Incorporating spelling with purposeful writing activities drives home the importance of spelling and it's original purpose.

Spelling as a Process

When writing, students are often encouraged to use the skills they know (patterning) to try to sound out the words. This is called invented spelling. According to Gentry and Gillet (1993), there are five stages of invented spelling: Precommunicative (scribbles and/or pictures), Semiphonetic (use of some letters), Phonetic (spelling by sounding words out phonetically), Transitional (applying some rules), Conventional (students are ready for some formal spelling instruction). By the time students are 7 years old, (second grade) they are in the conventional stage of spelling. Here, students move away from invented spelling and are ready for a more formal approach of instruction. Gentry and Gillet state "We can roughly gauge the level of conventional spelling accomplishment by the number of

frequently occurring words that are spelled accurately,” (p.34). Again, frequently used words students should know how to spell are emphasized.

According to Gentry and Gillet, students tend to move away from invented spelling in the conventional stage. However, in a study on the effectiveness of invented spelling, Gill (1997) found there is no significant difference between a traditional approach to spelling and the approach which employs invented spelling. Yet, when evaluating students’ writing, “The invented spellers did write significantly more words,” (Gill, 1997, p.29).

Invented spelling should not be discouraged in everyday writing because in the “conventional stage” (Gentry and Gill) this may inhibit students’ creative writing. An equal balance of high frequency words, words taught in patterns, and invented spelling could prove to be a formula for better spellers in everyday writing.

Learning Words with Patterns

Teachers today often still teach spelling in isolation. A study done to investigate spelling in process-centered classrooms (Barone 1992), showed teachers were trying to incorporate words from other subject areas into spelling, instead of trying to teach in isolation. However, students still had to memorize lists. She stated, “This strategy, while connecting reading and

spelling, does not allow children to assimilate the patterns within words and generalize this knowledge to other words that they attempt to read or write,” (Barone, 1992, p. 11). Keeping this in mind, it would seem that teaching students letter patterns might help students become better spellers. This may help transfer spelling words more easily into daily writing (Sipe 1994).

High frequency words have their place in spelling. However, when students write, they want to spell words that they may not know. As stated by Gentry (1997), “children begin to acquire information about how our spelling system works long before they being school,” (p.21).

In a recent discussion, Carl B. Smith (1997) focused on basic sound-letter patterns and how they should be taught to help transfer the learning of new words. Although high frequency words are still important, students also want to be able to spell words for which they may not have seen the spellings. These patterns discussed by Smith can show students how to do that to the best of their ability by predicting how they are spelled. Smith feels “The guiding principle for the overall spelling curriculum is that children should be helped to spell those words they are most likely to need and those words they want to use in their own writing” (p.11).

High Frequency Words

Teaching students to spell words that they are most likely to read introduces the use of high frequency words in the subject of spelling. A compilation of the most frequently used words in writing has been developed for the purpose of improving spelling by Rebecca Sitton (1996). She calls the first one hundred words her “no excuse word list” (p. 7). This is because there should be no excuse why these words are spelled incorrectly in everyday writing. Her goal with her word list is “. . . to teach students to spell correctly in everyday writing without inhibiting their desire to write” (p. 5).

According to Dore & Lundsgaard (1991), research shows the first eight words on the list make up eighteen percent of all words used in writing. The first twenty five words make up thirty three percent of words used in writing. Amazingly, the first one hundred words make up fifty percent of all words used in adult writing. With a relatively short list of words (considering the number of words in the English dictionary) it would seem reasonable to teach students to recognize and spell these often used words over a given period of time.

Although teaching students the high frequency words is important, there should be a balanced approach (Murdoch, 1995). Students should also learn patterns in words to transfer that knowledge to other words. A well-balanced program should emphasize high frequency words and teach patterning skills to allow students to spell words they may not know.

Individualizing Spelling

Teaching spelling individually is often an obstacle in implementing a good spelling program. Not all students in the second grade operate at the second grade ability level. An effective program must target each individual student. "Some children simply are not able or developmentally ready to spell grade-level words, while others already know them" (Peay, 1990, p.5). This could prove to be a frustrating, or boring experience for some students. An individualized spelling program would challenge each student at their existing ability level.

Developing an individualized program to incorporate high frequency words and other words taught in patterns can be beneficial for each student. Activities must be prepared to address individual lists, activities must be made meaningful, and tests need to be given.

According to Houghton (1990) activities must be developed to meet the needs of all students with different learning styles. She suggests having a visual activity, an auditory activity, and a kinesthetic activity each week. Different activities enable students with different learning styles to better retain the word.

Individualizing word lists must also mean individualizing tests. "Getting kids to quiz one another is one solution. This idea not only saves you time, but it also strengthens skills because students work together on words they care about" (Gentry, 1997, p.50). Students feel very important giving a test to another student. It builds relationships with students as well as gives them an important role in the classroom. A few tips for student tests (Gentry, 1997) include keeping lists short and setting a comfortable, yet important tone.

An individualized spelling program is not all that new. It just requires a little more time on the part of the teacher. However, the benefits include students who enjoy spelling because it is challenging to them as individuals. Another benefit is an increase of correctly spelled words in everyday writing, with students tending to write more.

Spelling Retention and Transfer in Writing

Giving meaning to spelling words allows for better retention of words. “The ability to read and write a word comes from understanding its meaning in context” (Fresch and Wheaton, 1997, p. 28). Understanding how to use the words they learn in writing is just as important.

Opportunities to use these words they learn must be given often. “To have a real purpose for learning about spelling, children need many opportunities to write and have peers read their writing” (Snowball, 1997, p. 22).

Students need repeated practice using words in context to develop a high degree of retention. According to Sipe (1994):

Too often, words that were spelled correctly on Friday’s test show up misspelled on Monday’s writing assignment. Students need repeated practice to assure long-term retention, and this practice must be in the context of their own writing. While the traditional method of writing each word ten times has no proven effect, using spelling words in original writing correlates to a high degree of retention. (p.3)

Students given the opportunity to use their spelling words in original writing are more likely to retain correct spelling.

When given the opportunity to edit their own first writing drafts, students can detect their own misspellings and correct them. Spelling errors can be reduced if students learn to proofread their own papers (Calkins, 1986 and Graves, 1983; as cited by Bradley and King, 1992). This process allows for better retention of words students learn how to spell.

Summary

Mastering the spellings of every word in the English language would be difficult. However, students should be responsible for spelling words used frequently in writing. The evolution of spelling as a subject in school has progressed from memorizing word lists to incorporating words in everyday writing. Spelling has also been discussed as a process with developmental stages. The importance of individualizing spelling for each child is noted, to prevent frustration for less developed or highly developed students.

Incorporating learned spelling words into everyday writing would enhance better retention of spelling words. This highlights the purpose of learning to spell. Transferring spelling words learned weekly into writing is what teachers are ultimately trying to achieve for student success.

Conclusion

Spelling has evolved over time into a subject that relates directly to everyday writing. Addressing this connection is the first step to improving spelling. Recognizing spelling as a process also allows word spellings to be retained for future use. By teaching patterns in words along with high

frequency words, students are better equipped to remember and implement correct usage of spelling in future writing. Individualizing spelling is also a large component in a successful program. Students must be allowed to learn at their developmental level. Spelling continues to evolve as a subject that directly affects everyday writing. It has been concluded, based on the literature, that all these components contribute to a successful spelling program.

CHAPTER THREE

Procedures

Information gathered for this project came from published research and books. The databases ERIC and Article First were used. Books were obtained from Central Washington Universities library.

Another source of information is my personal experience as a classroom teacher and what has worked in the past. Teaching second grade students for three years and teaching with a diverse population for five years has given me some insight for what strategies may be most useful to teach individualized spelling.

To develop this project, high frequency word lists were gathered and made into one. Each word is in order of its frequency. Words were also taken from the existing spelling program (Woodruff and Moore, 1990) implemented in my school district. These words were grouped into patterns and added to lists using the same sequence the spelling workbook uses.

Using guidelines suggested by Houghton (1990) activities were compiled for use with any individual list. These activities include visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods.

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FOREWORD

Designing a project that would be useful to me was important. I wanted to be able to use this in my second grade classroom and feel like it was tailor made to fit the needs of children I work with. The project is in use already, and I will continue to use it in the future.

I appreciate the support of my family during this last two years. I have worked during the day and taken classes at night to complete my Master's Degree and this project. For their support, I am thankful.

CHAPTER FOUR

An Individualized Spelling Program

Overview

As new tests are created to measure the educational performance of young students, teachers continue to search for a curriculum to produce better writers. The purpose of this curriculum project is to design an individualized spelling program that will teach second grade students to spell correctly in their everyday writing.

The author developed this program after implementing parts of it with her second grade class and noticing success from student's work. After reviewing the literature and analyzing ways to teach spelling, it was used on an informal basis. The author's district implemented the word list (Woodruff & Moore, 1990) using sound-letter patterns. Research indicated a need for high frequency words to be incorporated.

The most effective way to teach spelling in the elementary school is often debated. Incorrect spelling in everyday writing can often impede the message the writer is trying to send to the reader. Unfortunately, it is very

common. Luts (1991) showed that spelling was the most common error in writing. This comes above context, grammar, and punctuation.

A compilation of the most frequently used words in writing has been developed for the purpose of improving spelling by Rebecca Sitton (1996). She calls the first one hundred words her “no excuse word list” (p.7). This is because there is no excuse why these words are spelled incorrectly in everyday writing. The first eight words on the list make up 18% of all words used in writing. The first twenty-five words on the list make up 33% of all words used in writing. Amazingly, the first one hundred words make up 50% of all words used in adult writing (Dore and Lundsgaard, 1991). With such astounding statistics before us, it would seem necessary to first teach students to spell these words.

A balanced approach to spelling must also be considered. Students need to be allowed to write creatively. To do this, words not often written are used. Teaching students to recognize word families and patterns is also important. Words used in an existing spelling book, Working Words in Spelling, for second grade (Moore and Woodruff, 1990) are also included in this project to teach students such word family patterns. These words are recognized as important words in second grade spelling. However, the workbook pages will not be used.

Developing an individualized program to incorporate high frequency words and other words taught in patterns can seem overwhelming.

Activities must be prepared to address individual lists, ability levels and learning styles. Activities must be made meaningful, and authentic tests need to be given. All said issues will be addressed.

AN INDIVIDUALIZED SPELLING PROGRAM

Goals

The goal of this curriculum project is to produce better spellers in everyday writing. It is to give second grade students a firm foundation for building knowledge about word spellings to further progress at higher levels.

The Washington State Commission on Student Learning (WSCSL) has developed a goal for students in the area of writing that incorporates the use of correct spelling. Students will “know and apply correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization.” (WSCSL, 1998, p. 27) This incorporates local, state, and even nationally expected outcomes.

As a classroom teacher, the need to find a curriculum to produce good spellers is more urgent than ever. It is the goal of classroom teachers to always seek new information on how to find successful curriculum.

Organization of the Project

The project is organized in an easy to follow manner. After first detailing how to begin with initial assessment procedures, the project moves on to student record keeping and weekly activities. Partner tests at the end

of the week are then explained. Implementing additional authentic assessments from everyday writing are explained.

This project includes black line masters for the word lists, the word dictionary, a spelling score sheet, an activity journal, and weekly spelling list worksheets. These would also be a useful resource for any spelling program.

Curricular Description

Based on the literature review, the project is designed to facilitate the learning of spelling using several strategies. Students will learn high frequency words and incorporate them into their everyday writing. Students will learn sound-letter patterns to learn to generalize spellings for words that sound out. Students will each have their own individualized program depending on their ability level.

An individualized spelling program enables each student to begin his or her knowledge of word spellings at their own ability level. Each week students will be given a list of ten words to learn how to spell and implement into their everyday writing. Students will be given several opportunities to learn these words before being tested on them and then use them in everyday writing.

On the first day of the program, students are given a pretest of all high frequency words and all words from the spelling book adopted by the school district. The pretest will only continue for twenty minutes. Any students missing five or more in a row are ready to begin spelling at that place.

Students successfully spelling on the pretest, i.e. missing less than five in a row, will continue with another pretest the next day. The rationale for not continuing beyond five errors is the less frequently the student sees the word in writing, the less likely they are to be able to spell it. (The high frequency words are in order of their frequency.) This procedure can go on a few days, as there may be highly capable spellers in the class. When all students have completed the pretests, the process of creating spelling lists begins.

Any words a student spells correctly on the pretest are crossed off their individual master list and dated (Appendix A and B). On the student's test, correct words are given a green star. Students will then transfer all words with green stars into their word dictionaries (in alphabetical order by first letter only). Students are now responsible for spelling these words correctly in everyday writing. This reference (the word dictionary) is to be kept in their desks for all future writing uses.

Any words misspelled on the pretest will appear on their spelling lists for future study and testing. Words one through five on their spelling list

will come from the high frequency word list. Words six through ten will come from the spelling book used by the author's school district (Moore and Woodruff, 1990). This list is much shorter than the high frequency word list. If during the school year a student should successfully spell all words from the spelling book, their list will then be solely compiled of high frequency words.

Highly Capable Spellers

For those students who find spelling an easy task, a challenge must be made. If the student successfully spells all the words from the spelling book, they have the choice to continue only with words from the high frequency list, or add words they see while reading. These words can come from literature books or from study in other subject areas. Words misspelled while writing rough drafts may also be added to the list. Adjustments such as these must be made for more highly capable students to be challenged.

Students that have not mastered the words on the two word lists should focus on those words first. Until they are able to successfully spell words most often used in writing they should not focus on words they will rarely spell (which they will find in subject areas we they are studying).

Student Record Keeping

Each student will keep a spelling notebook in his/her desk. The notebook is provided for each student prior to the first day of pre-tests. The notebook should be a three ring binder with dividers separating the following sections:

1. Section 1 should be the spelling word dictionary (Appendix C) for writing correct spelling words. This will be used during writing activities.
2. Section 2 should be a spelling score sheet (Appendix D) to record spelling scores for their own personal information. This can provide self-motivation for the student.
3. Section 3 should be the activities journal (Appendix E) to keep track of the Tuesday activities they choose.

Weekly Schedule

Monday

Students are given their list of ten words. (To help make lists easy to find in desks and at home, student lists should be on tinted copy paper.)

Students copy their words two times each on the given spelling paper (Appendix F). Students must then show the words to the teacher, who checks for correct spelling and also requires students to read the words aloud. (This provides auditory learners with help and ensures all students have heard the words. Any words the student does not know the meaning of, the teacher will define and use in a sentence.) Students then cut the paper to separate the now three identical lists. The teacher made copy goes in their backpack to go home, a student made copy goes to the teacher for Friday's test, and the last student copy goes in the student's desk for weekly activities.

Tuesday

This day is spent doing kinesthetic, visual, and/or auditory activities which can include the following.

- Students write words with glue and yarn onto large construction paper. When dry, this provides a way for the students to feel the way the words are spelled.
- Students cut the letters of the words out of magazines or newspapers and spell them correctly on large construction paper. This provides a good visual sense of the letters that make up the words.
- Students use alphabet stamps to spell the words on blank paper.

- Students watercolor the words.
- Students record themselves spelling the words onto a cassette tape, and then replay each word to hear how they spelled it.
- Students use large graph paper to write all the letters of all the words.

Students then cut out all the boxes, scramble them up, then try to unscramble. When unscrambled, students glue them correctly onto construction paper.

These activities are rotated. Due to unavailability of some supplies in multiples, students work on different activities of their choice. Students are asked to keep written record in their spelling notebook of the activities they choose each Tuesday. This enables the teacher to see what learning styles students choose to learn by. It can also prevent students from always choosing the same one and not trying out other ways of learning. In this case, the students can be asked to try different activities.

It is recommended that all above activities be available each week, with a maximum of five students at each center. (This will cut down on discipline problems associated with larger, non direct-instruction time.) Students are required to choose one activity, but can participate in more if time permits.

Wednesday

This day is spent using the ten words in sentences. Examples are always given and written on the white board as a reference. Students are encouraged to write detailed sentences, but only words in their spelling dictionaries and on their current list must be spelled correctly. The quality of these sentences needs to improve as the year progresses. Students are allowed to use invented spelling for any other words. If time allows, students are asked to read two of their sentences (which they may choose) aloud to the class. This also holds them responsible for being able to read what they have written.

Thursday

Students are each given ten white flash cards. Students must write each word on a flash card with a dark colored pen (black, blue, red, or green) large enough to read well. Students then partner up and proceed to quiz each other. An option for students having trouble is to first look at the word, then close their eyes and try to see it. It may be easier to spell if they see it in their mind. The flash cards are taken home to help with studying.

Friday

Testing should take place every Friday morning. Students are partnered up to both give and receive tests. (Partnerships only last four to

six weeks, then students rotate.) During the tests, the teacher is available to help students read any words to their partner that they may need help with. Students are encouraged to use each word in a sentence if possible, to help their partner understand the words meaning in context.

As the teacher corrects the tests, correct words are given green stars. They are also crossed off the student's individual master list and dated. On the student's test, any word spelled incorrectly is spelled correctly in red ink by the teacher. This word will reappear on next week's list. A mark is placed next to the word on the master list to keep track of how many times the student misses the word. The teacher then goes down the master list to the next words and puts them on the given spelling paper for the list for next week.

On Friday afternoon, the students' tests are returned. Any words given a green star are transferred into their spelling dictionaries. This could also be done on Monday before receiving the new list. By writing the correct words into the dictionary, students are being held accountable for spelling those words correctly on future writing assignments.

Spelling Conferences

Concerns about poor progress must be addressed during a brief conference with the student. This can be done in three minutes during a quiet reading or working period. If a student misses a word several times in a row, this needs to be discussed at a conference between the teacher and the student. Meaning of the word can be clarified again and suggestions about different activities to try can be given.

Additional Testing

For this spelling program to be successful, it must measure the true progress in students' everyday writing activities. Teachers must choose a minimum of one authentic writing piece per month to grade. Two grades will be given for each authentic writing assignment that is assessed. The first will be for the percentage of words spelled correctly and the other will be for the number of words from their word dictionary spelled correctly. (Parent volunteers are suggested in aiding with this task.) This measurement will help determine if a student's spelling is truly improving in their everyday writing.

Suggested authentic writing activities include:

- Daily free writing

- Assigned story writing that corresponds with any writing program implemented by a school district
- Journal entries

The teacher can put a transparency paper over the journal assignment or writing assignment and take notes on words misspelled. Using this method, the student will have no marks on his/her journal or writing paper. Any piece of writing can be used to gain insight into spelling achievement.

Summary

In summary, the project is designed to improve spelling in everyday writing. Using high frequency words in conjunction with words learned with sound-letter patterns can improve spelling in everyday writing. Individualizing the program to fit the needs of each student's abilities makes it flexible.

Sound-letter patterns are a good way to first learn spelling in the conventional stage of development (Gentry and Gill, 1993). However, the high frequency words will be around into children's adult writing careers. Knowledge of them and the ability to spell them should be addressed as early as possible. All of the above components play a role in providing success in spelling in everyday writing.

APPENDIX A
 Word List¹

bad	best	bus	pick
sad	nest	rang	stick
add	fast	hang	corn
met	last	ring	candy
wet	lost	sing	sandy
jet	cook	song	today
pin	took	better	tonight
win	wood	letter	dish
hot	doll	butter	fish
lot	call	car	miss
dot	hall	card	sister
bug	tall	cart	winter
hug	wall	far	brother
tan	walk	farm	beside
fan	duck	tar	store
bet	pull	barn	horse
leg	full	bark	forget
pig	ate	dark	forgot
twig	gate	park	ever
nap	late	arm	dear
cap	bake	hand	year
hen	game	bird	gas
fed	hope	bite	apple
kid	pay	side	rabbit
live	I'm	star	bunny
map	ride	fine	funny
clap	five	nine	supper
den	bell	fire	dinner
pen	fell	low	summer
fox	sell	blow	dress
box	hill	slow	looked
gone	fill	town	looking
done	roll	flower	door
ten	eyes	ago	cool
six	gave	goes	fold

four	cake	house	wash
baby	end	round	ask
father	send	clock	black
rest	sent	block	blue
best	dust	sick	white
week	bread	paper	talk
green	sled	warm	
sleep	soft	mark	
lamp	flat	list	
camp	bang	rose	
band	bring	sometimes	
bath	king	help	
lunch	oh	bedtime	
beach	ant	noon	
hit	plan	soon	
dip	stand	need	
city	trip	feed	
wish	milk	feet	
find	shop	room	
zoo	drop	sea	
boots	stop	meat	
log	spot	clean	
open	much	leave	
home	shut	seed	
know	flag	feel	
jumped	glad	sleeping	
die	grab	road	
son	stamp	boat	
try	child	coat	
cry	thin	plays	
dry	train	coming	
fry	plays	sold	
sky	coming	hold	
fly	sold	cold	
tree	hold	told	

1. Woodruff & Moore (1990)

APPENDIX B
High Frequency Word List¹

the	we	no	good
of	there	make	new
and	can	than	write
to	an	first	our
in	your	been	me
is	which	its	man
you	their	who	too
that	said	now	any
it	if	people	day
he	do	my	same
for	will	made	right
was	each	over	look
on	about	did	think
are	how	down	also
as	up	only	around
with	out	way	another
his	them	find	came
they	then	use	come
at	she	may	work
be	many	water	three
this	some	long	must
from	these	little	because
I	would	very	does
have	other	after	part
or	into	words	even
by	has	called	place
one	more	just	well
had	her	where	such
not	two	most	here
but	like	know	take
what	him	get	why
all	see	through	help
were	time	back	put
when	could	much	different
		go	away

again	below	four
off	saw	head
went	something	above
old	thought	kind
number	both	began
great	few	almost
tell	those	live
men	always	page
say	show	got
small	large	earth
every	often	need
found	together	far
still	asked	hand
between	house	high
name	don't	year
should	world	mother
home	going	light
big	want	country
give	school	father
air	important	let
line	until	night
set	form	picture
own	food	being
under	keep	study
read	children	second
last	feet	soon
never	land	story
us	side	since
left	without	white
end	boy	ever
along	once	paper
while	animal	hard
might	life	near
next	enough	sentence
sound	took	better

1. Sitton (1996)

Vv

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 18 horizontal lines.

APPENDIX F

WEEKLY SPELLING
LISTS

Name: _____

Date: _____

WEEKLY SPELLING
LISTS

Name: _____

Date: _____

WEEKLY SPELLING
LISTS

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

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CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this project was to provide an individualized spelling program to meet the needs of a diverse group of second grade students. It was designed to improve spelling in everyday writing and provide a higher degree of retention and transfer of spelling words. In meeting student needs, it was designed to make spelling more fun, as well as improve spelling in everyday writing.

Teachers are a fundamental part of the spelling curriculum. Setting aside the traditional workbook and isolated word lists can improve students' spelling on tests as well as in their everyday writing. Providing a spelling program that is individualized to meet each students developmental needs will make spelling a more useful subject. Using high frequency word lists in combination with patterned words for ease into learning to spell other words will improve spelling in writing.

Conclusions

Based on the literature review and the development of this project, several conclusions have been drawn to inform the author of what is needed for an effective spelling program.

1. Children progress through stages of invented spelling.
2. Patterning words are helpful in teaching children to generalize spelling to other less frequently used words.
3. The use of high frequency words may improve spelling in everyday writing.
4. Students need to be engaged in writing activities on a regular basis to ensure retention and transfer of spelling words into writing.
5. Assessments obtained in authentic settings (everyday writing) as well as weekly tests will better inform the teacher of student needs.
6. An individualized spelling program allows students to work at their own developmental levels of spelling.
7. Research in the area of spelling is always changing.

As a result of this project, the author believes incorporating spelling with everyday writing will generate better spellers in her second grade classroom.

Recommendations

Several suggestions are made by the author to enhance this project.

1. Teachers must carefully read through the program and be willing to commit the time that is needed to fully implement it.
2. Teachers should read articles and books, take classes, and attend other related workshops on spelling to understand how spelling can relate directly to writing.
3. This program should be in place before the beginning of the school year. Materials should be gathered and be on hand.
4. Teachers should evaluate this program several times a year.

Evaluations can be done by asking students how they feel about the program. Teachers should also review assessment data.

Assessments should reflect growth.

5. Technology should be considered when implementing this

program. Research should be done about spelling software and aids for students with disabilities.

Using this program for a year has proven successful for students in the author's classroom. It was well received by students who liked the activities they could choose. Students in this class expressed they had more knowledge of how to spell many words.

Implementing a non-traditional spelling program requires time and commitment. Incorporating spelling into everyday writing meets the standards set by the Washington State Commission on Student Learning. It helps students spell more accurately in everyday writing.

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