

## Spelling Helps Part 3

We've been looking at spelling the past two weeks, and this week we will give you some strategies to include if you want to create your own spelling program. We will also take a quick look at three popular spelling programs, Spelling Power, Natural Speller and Spelling Workout.

### Creating your own Spelling Program

A good spelling strategy is to create a spelling notebook; we prefer a 3-ring binder so you can add or move pages as you like. Here are some ideas to guide you on what to put in the notebook.

1. Phonics rimes: In English, each letter can make several sounds, making spelling complicated. However, English has 37 letter combinations (rimes) that have the same sound 95% of the time. These word parts are easy to learn. You will find them also in Section 3.2 of your Rocket Phonics book.

Put one rime at the top of each page of a section of your spelling notebook. As your child learns new words, she can add them to the list for the appropriate rime. This approach is good especially for the child who doesn't like phonics rules that frequently don't apply. Here are the rimes as listed by Janiel Wagstaff in *Phonics That Work*:

The 37 rimes from Janiel Wagstaff and *Phonics That Work*

ack	an	aw	ick	ing	op	unk
ail	ank	ay	ide	ink	ore	
ain	ap	eat	ight	ip	ot	
ake	ash	ell	ill	it	uck	
ale	at	est	in	ock	ug	
ame	ate	ice	ine	oke	ump	

2. Compound words: Label a page of your spelling notebook "Compound Words." Teach your child to look for compound words. Point out any word made up of two or more words and add them to your page. Examples include homework, bluebird, snowstorm. Conversely, if your children hear a word that sounds like two words, they should spell it as a compound word and then look it up to see if they are right.

3. Learn Prefixes, Roots and Suffixes: 70% of all multi-syllabic words are from Latin or Greek roots. If you teach the meaning and use of the most common prefixes, roots and suffixes, a reasonable guess at the definition of the word as well as its pronunciation will help your child learn thousands of words. Here is a good [link](#).

4. Syllabication: Teach your child to divide words and spell by syllabication such as: mul-ti-pli-ca-tion; dic-ta-tion; re-la-tion. This goes hand-in-hand with knowing prefixes, roots and suffixes.

5. Rules for plurals and possessive and for adding suffixes: Teach your child basic concepts, such as when the y is preceded by a consonant, change the y to i and add es.

Here is a good website that gives you and your child a brief synopsis of these rules: [http://www.splashesfromtheriver.com/spelling/spelling\\_rules.htm](http://www.splashesfromtheriver.com/spelling/spelling_rules.htm). You can write a rule at the top of a page and then on that page list the words that illustrate the rule.

In general, until your child is reading at the second grade level, use your Rocket Phonics Common Word Lists from your Rocket Phonics kit to create spelling practice for your child. Once your child begins Section 3.4 of the Rocket Phonics kit, you can begin lessons specifically geared to expanding his vocabulary.

In summary, if you are going to develop your own spelling program, start with an empty notebook and have your children enter the rimes and compound words. If they are older, have them also write the Greek and Latin root words and affixes with their meaning, and set up pages to illustrate basic spelling rules.

If you want to check out some prepared spelling programs, here is a comparison of three of the most popular.

#### **A Comparison: Spelling Power, Natural Speller, and Spelling Workout**

Spelling Workout by Phil Trocki, Modern Curriculum Press

Grade range	Words	Student book cost	Teacher
1 to 8	?	\$9.50 per grade	\$9.95 per grade

#### **Strategies**

Phonics	Short and long vowel sounds; no rimes, but blends
Syllabication	Not directly, but Latin, French and Spanish prefixes, suffixes and roots. (No Greek mentioned.) Compound words and Hyphenates
Grammar Rules	Yes

Discussion: One of the problems with a prepackaged spelling curriculum is the author doesn't know which word your child knows and which are new. New words need to be used in speech, writing or reading so that the student gets a practical understanding of how the word is used. Spelling Workout does this by providing stories and grouping words around themes (for example,

geography words or math words). This is a good vocabulary strategy, but unless it is integrated with a good spelling strategy it loses its effectiveness.

Spelling Workout's reading passages are good for vocabulary, while the crossword puzzles are an excellent integration of both vocabulary and spelling. (The word's definition is the clue, and only the correct spelling will complete the puzzle.) Spelling Workout includes opportunities for students to edit their own work. This is a two-edged sword if done right it allows the students to use words in their vocabulary that they want to use and need to know how to spell, if done wrong the students write using only those words they know how to spell.

Check out [Spelling Workout](#)

### Spelling Power by Beverly Adams-Gordon, Castlemoyle Books

Grade range	Words	Student book cost	Teacher
3 to 12	5,000 total	\$49.95 or \$5/grade	49.95

#### Strategies

Phonics	Short and long vowel sounds; no rimes, but blends
Syllabication	Not directly, but Latin, French and Spanish prefixes, suffixes and roots. (No Greek mentioned.) Compound words and Hyphenates
Grammar Rules	Yes

Discussion: Remember, the author doesn't know which word your child knows and which are new. New words need to be used in speech, writing or reading so that the student gets practical understanding on how the word is used. Spelling Power does this by pretesting and integrating your child's own writing errors into its program. They also use the phonetic principles and spelling rules as strategies. We see no mention of Latin or Greek roots or the use of rimes.

Check out Spelling Power: <http://www.spellingpower.com/>.

### Natural Speller by Kathryn L. Stout, B.S. Ed., M. Ed.,

Grade range	Words	Student book cost	Teacher
3 to 8	2500 - 3500	\$20 or \$3/grade	None shown?

#### Strategies

Phonics	No rimes, but vowel and consonant rules
Syllabication	Yes, plus Latin, Greek, French and Spanish prefixes, suffixes and roots.
Grammar Rules	Yes - Capitalization, punctuation, contractions

Discussion: Remember, the author doesn't know which word your child knows and which are new. New words need to be used in speech, writing or reading so that the student gets practical understanding on how the word is used.

Natural Speller does this by presenting words in families. Parents are then given activities to pick from depending on how new the word is to the child. The options are: general practice, dictionary skills, grammar, building vocabulary and writing. They also use the phonetic principles and spelling rules as strategies. We see no mention of the use of rimes.

See a sample lesson:

<https://www.designastudy.com/language-arts/natural-speller/>.

Natural Speller is the most thorough of these three spelling curricula, and it is recommended by the Konos curriculum. Look at its table of contents for a more complete idea.

Happy Spelling!

Your friends at Rocket Phonics