Introduction

We love spelling

Some children learn to spell effortlessly – most get there in the end, but too many find the process of learning to spell arduous, painstaking and, sadly, boring. Spelling must be made fun, enjoyable and interesting. The Friday spelling test may be great for those who can already spell, but for others it makes for a scary Friday morning: most children get most spellings right on the day, but forget them hours later, others just get them wrong. We only get really good at spelling by practising over and over again. And if we are going to practise something a lot, it is better that we enjoy doing it.

Who will benefit from Read Write Inc. Spelling?

This spelling programme is for children who have completed Read Write Inc. Phonics or who are already reading at National Curriculum level 2a or above, or English Language Guidelines 5–14 Level B and above. The spelling programme should ideally be used alongside Read Write Inc. Comprehension which groups children by their reading ability. However, it can be used successfully with schools not using Read Write Inc. Phonics or Comprehension as it assumes that children have basic phonic knowledge from other programmes.

Read Write Inc. Spelling resources

Three Get Spelling! Books for learning, practising and assessing spelling

A Spelling Log Book for logging words to practise, spelling tips, and an ongoing assessment tool

Read Write Inc. Spelling Handbook

Get Spelling! Books

Children should complete all the activities in the three Get Spelling! Books (see page 26). There are introductory activities in Get Spelling! Book 1 which explain the whole alphabetic system to the children*. Those children who can spell reasonably well can then move quickly through the units in Get Spelling! Book 1. For children who have completed Read Write Inc. Phonics, Get Spelling! Book 1 provides a thorough revision of Speed Sounds Lessons 2 and 3 as well as more work on roots and suffixes. The words children spell in Get Spelling! Books 2 and 3 build upon what they have learnt in Book 1. There are eight spelling activities in each unit in the Get Spelling! Books. Activities 1, 2, and 3 require teaching, and Activities 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 children complete with their partners and then mark with you. These activities focus on graphemes, roots, prefixes and suffixes. The same types of activities are used in all three books. This means that as the children progress through the programme you will spend less time explaining the activities and more time teaching children how to spell. Example lesson plans for the activities in the Get Spelling! Books are provided on pages 26–31 of this Handbook. There are also ‘red words’ (common words with an irregular spelling) to learn in each unit. Notes on using mnemonics and other strategies for remembering red words are given in Information check in the Example lesson plans on page 26. In Get Spelling! Books 2 and 3 you select which of the red words the children need to practise each week. Homophones (words which sound the same but are spelt differently, e.g. ‘wait’ and ‘weight’) are also taught.

The programme is based on over learning; the English alphabetic system is the most complex in the world and needs a lot of practice to achieve proficiency in spelling. As children work all the way through the three books, they keep a log of the words they have found the most challenging, while you keep a log of common words that the children spell incorrectly in their own writing. These words are constantly revised all the way through the programme though the Spelling Log Book reviews, the Two minute check and the Spelling challenge.

* These are reproduced on pages 32–35 of this Handbook for any children not starting on Get Spelling! Book 1.