



SPELLING STRATEGIES

Initially *Phonics Pathways* can be treated as just an “exposure” experience that will sensitize your students to the logic of the English language, and introduce them to the concept that specific rules do exist that determine exactly how words are spelled.

By the end of the book, however, it may be time to begin teaching spelling in earnest. Spelling and reading enhance one another in a synergistic fashion—accurate spelling promotes accurate reading, and vice versa. And it’s certainly easier to remember one rule for many words than it is learning how to spell each word individually! (It’s also very handy as well as economical to have reading and spelling programs available together in just one book.)

Have one notebook with three divided sections in it for each student—one section for copywork, one for dictation, and one for “trouble words.” Copywork is always the best way to begin spelling lessons. Proceed as follows:

1—Have students turn to the Copy section of their notebooks. Begin with the first spelling lesson in the book, the “c-k” rule on page 51. Explain the rule, and have students read some of the words again. Have them copy from five to ten words.

2—Older students should copy the rule itself as a header on top of the page, but younger students probably will not be ready for this much writing activity just yet. Check work, have students correct errors.

3—Have students turn to the Dictation section of their workbooks. Review the rule orally, and dictate about five to ten words for them to write down. Check work, and have students correct any errors by rewriting the word correctly three times.

4—Students should keep a log of any spelling mistakes that were made in the “Trouble Words” section of their notebook. Always include these words in the next day’s dictation and use them in a spelling test once a week as well.

5—The next day see if *they* can tell *you* what the rule is. Offer whatever help is needed. Keep dictating words from that lesson until the student can write the words from dictation without error.

6—After awhile begin dictating phrases and sentences, and not just the words. If dictation is limited to word families alone students may not be able to spell the word outside of context. Only when students spell words correctly in sentences can you be absolutely certain that the spelling rule has been truly and thoroughly integrated. This activity helps develop memory and concentration as well.

For variety try spelling with tile manipulatives, with magnetic letters, on individual whiteboards or on a chalkboard. Work only about 10-15 minutes at a time when writing. Little hands and fingers *do* get tired!