
Spelling the forming of
words from the right letters in
the right order

Roloff & Snow

SPELLING

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PREFACE

Spelling is designed to be used in any composition course which requires that students be able to spell. It can also be used as the companion volume to *Sentences, Punctuation, and Paragraphs* in a program that deals with the fundamentals of the English language as they apply to student writing; it can be used as the main text in a course in spelling; or it can be used as a supplemental workbook for composition courses in which the instructor does not want to spend class time on spelling. *Spelling* includes thorough instruction and numerous practice exercises in phonetics, Greek and Latin derivatives, dictionary use, spelling rules, and spelling demons.

The text is organized progressively from elementary three-letter words through college vocabulary. Continual assessment and progress checks assure that the student can begin where he or she has problems and move through the material at his or her own pace. There is a special chapter that teaches the student how to find words he or she cannot spell in a collegiate dictionary.

In addition to thorough coverage of concepts and frequent drill and practice exercises, specific features of this text include a Pretest for diagnostic purposes, a parallel post-test to measure student progress, an Additional Practice section comprised of concept summaries and alternative exercises, and an Answer Key. The Answer Key appears at the end of the book so that students can check their own work and the text can be used as an individualized, self-paced workbook. However, if the instructor does not want students to have these answers, the perforation of the book permits their easy removal.

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To the Instructor

You can use this text in a variety of ways. It may be the workbook for your course in spelling; you will find ample material here for a full semester course on spelling. It may be used as self-instructional material in your writing laboratory or learning center. You will find sufficient drill and practice, progress checks, and explanations of concepts for this purpose. It may be used as a supplemental workbook in your freshman composition class. The Pretests will help your students zero in on those chapters and exercises they need. In this introductory section, we want to give you a general structure for organizing your work with this text, so that it can be adapted to any of these uses.

BEGINNING THE PROGRAM

Begin the program with two of the three Pretests: "Why Can't I Spell?" and "Diagnostic Test: Phonics" on pages 1-5. (You will find the dictation for the "Diagnostic Test: Phonics" on pages 247-248.) This diagnostic inventory will identify problems in sound-letter relationships, particularly in students whose spelling instruction was interrupted or ended before grades 7-9, when words requiring consonant blends and mixed vowels are taught. If the student scores below 90 percent on the "Diagnostic Test: Phonics," have him or her complete Chapter 1 of the workbook before you test any further.

WORKING TOWARDS PHONICS MASTERY: CHAPTER 1

Review the personal inventory "Why Can't I Spell?" with students who are assigned Chapter 1. Go over possible reasons for their problems: early illness, irregular school attendance, incomplete instruction. Assure them that with concentration and practice they will succeed in learning to spell. Then begin an overview of the main phonetic patterns, Phonics Patterns 1, 2, 3, and 4, covered in Chapter 1. You may present this as a classroom lecture-demonstration or you may assign the reading and exercises out of class or as lab work. Here is a simple summary of the patterns as they are presented in the text.

Pattern 1	c v c short vowel	bad single consonant	b a(sh) digraph	(bl)a(nd) cluster
Pattern 2	c v c + e long vowel		br a (k) e consonant only	

Pattern 3	c vv c f ee d c oa t r ai n long vowels ē, ō, ā
Pattern 4	c vv c c ou ch b oi l h au l mixed vowels au, oi, ou

Each pattern is explained and then followed by dictation word drills that you can give in one of these ways:

1. Dictate the drills out loud in class to the entire group.
2. Ask your students to team up and dictate the words in each drill to each other.
3. Assign the dictation drills on audio tape. (Audio cassette tapes are available from Glencoe Publishing Company.)

In each case, you may have students check their own work by using the Answer Key, or you may want to correct the dictation drills yourself. Note that the section of the text entitled Dictation and Answer Key performs two functions. Not only can it be used by the student to check answers, it must be used to give the dictations as well. You will read in the text, for instance, “Exercise 1: Twenty words will be dictated to you.” If you turn to Exercise 1 in the Dictation and Answer Key, you will find the words that are to be dictated (also available on cassette tape) for that drill. This is the way all dictation drills work throughout the text.

What is your role in a group presentation of the phonetics overview? The student will profit if you do the following things:

1. Rewrite the pattern you are presenting on the chalkboard, separating the beginning consonant(s), medial vowel, and end consonant(s). As you write sample words, separate their letters accordingly, perhaps writing them in contrasting colors.
2. Help students blend sounds by reading the phonemes individually, then as a unit or word.
3. Encourage students to blend orally, and have them pronounce each word either by themselves or as a group.
4. Whenever possible, write digraphs and cluster letters as units on the board or on students’ papers; for example, *sh u t* or *pr a nk*.
5. Encourage students to write their dictation drills in the same way,

separating beginning, medial, and end letters, and writing digraphs and clusters as units.

6. Walk around the classroom as you dictate, repeating words as often as necessary and giving a context clue (phrase or sentence) if asked for (it is difficult for even an accomplished speller to discriminate many initial or ending consonant sounds without seeing the speaker's mouth or lips or having a context clue); make sure the dictation drills are given in an unhurried way, whether they are done in class, with partners, or on audio cassette, by providing ample time for the drill.
7. Encourage students to show you their Cue Cards; the dictation drills are designed to identify words students do not know how to spell, but in some patterns, there is no rule the student can follow to learn the correct spelling (for instance, Pattern 3 /ē/ spellings, as in *teen* and *mean*). That's why we use the drills in combination with Cue Cards, as we explain in Chapter 1.

What is your role in a lab presentation of the phonetics overview? Since the text is designed to be self-paced and self-instructional, you will find the explanations of the phonetics concepts and the rules they generate to be simple enough for most students to follow. If you use the audio cassettes, you will find that they orient the student to the phonetic patterns and the spelling concepts involved before dictating the word or sentence drill. While you may want your students to check their own dictation word drills, you may want them to hand in their paragraph dictation drills (the seven groups of "Spelling in Sentences") so that you can look over their other writing skills, such as punctuation and capitalization. Your principal function in a lab setting is to assign appropriate exercises based on the diagnostic inventory, and to monitor progress through the drills. Students should retake the drills as many times as they must to score at an 80 percent mastery level.

Students scoring below 90 percent on the Phonics Diagnostic inventory will require about twenty-seven hours of instruction to learn the phonics patterns and the spelling rules associated with Patterns 1 and 2: finale and the doubling of final consonants when adding a vowel suffix. You can determine progress by giving Parts A and B of the Post-Test, "Mastery Test: Phonics" and "Mastery Test: Spelling Rules," on pages 243-244. If you do not see reasonable progress, we suggest the following.

1. *For second language students.* While second language students will learn the phonetic patterns and spelling rules, often they will not be able to discriminate short vowels at mastery level. It is all right if they move on to the next sections of the text. They will compensate by using visual memory skills developed in later chapters of the text.
2. *For native speakers.* If possible, refer the student to a competent audiologist for a complete audiological work-up. You are looking for possible hearing loss or auditory processing difficulties. Your indicators are lack of progress in learning the phonics patterns, continuing problems with reversals, omitted sounds, or signs of compensating by writing nonphonetic letter combinations. Work with a reading specialist or specialist for the learning handicapped (if there is a clinic in your area) for follow-up and testing.

DIAGNOSTIC TEST: GENERAL VOCABULARY

If the student scores above 90 percent on the Phonics Diagnostic, or completes the phonics exercises and Parts A and B of the “Mastery Test” with a score of 80 percent or better, have him or her take the “Diagnostic Test: General Vocabulary” on pages 4-5. This test identifies problems with doubled consonants (final, internal, assimilative, and additive), omitted and added letters, homophones, unstressed vowels (schwa), final *e*, final *y*, plurals, apostrophes (in contractions), the choice of *ei* or *ie*, suffixes, and spelling demons.

The text, however, is not organized around the spelling problems; rather, it is organized around the techniques for learning correct spelling. The following table provides a brief summary of the organizational plan of the text as it develops techniques to meet the problems inventoried in the General Vocabulary test. Help your students plan their spelling program by assigning work in the chapters cited for each of the words they have misspelled. In this way, you can use the text for general classroom lecture-demonstration, or for individualized work in a learning laboratory, or for homework, and feel assured that your students are getting precisely what they need.

Spelling Problem	Remedial Strategy	Chapter
Doubling consonants (final, internal, assimilative and additive)	Roots and Affixes	Chapter 2: Words Made Up of Word Parts
Unstressed vowels (schwa), homophones, omitted and added letters	Dictionary	Chapter 3: How to Find Words in the Dictionary
Final <i>e</i> , <i>ei</i> or <i>ie</i> , final <i>y</i> , demons, plurals, apostrophes	Cue Cards	Chapter 4: Demons, Mavericks and Rules

As you become familiar with each chapter, you will realize that the rules or principles of spelling are treated in more than one chapter. Rather than organizing the text around a linear exposition of the rules, we have set up each chapter to treat groups of words. Consequently, the final *e* and doubling rules

are treated in Chapter 1 where they refer to Pattern 1 and 2 words: *banning*, *writing*. They are treated in Chapter 2 where they refer to word roots ending in *e* or in single consonant letters: *conceding*, *permitting*. They are treated in Chapter 4 where they are helpful in relearning demons: *having*, *loving*.

WORDS MADE UP OF WORD PARTS: CHAPTER 2

Why do we stress the Greek and Latin derivatives in spelling instruction? Most of the problems in doubling consonants can be solved by information embedded in the prefix, root, or suffix of a word. If we can teach and drill a fixed number of roots and affixes that appear in most commonly misspelled words, we can (as it were) automatically generate principles of assimilative and additive doubling. Introducing two simple rules about adding vowel suffixes will teach final and internal doubling.

Unlike spelling instruction in the lower grades, your program does not have enough hours to integrate a small number of words into a weekly language arts experience. Consequently, you have no context to provide memory stimulus. Yet you must teach many words to make any impact on your students' progress. You will be teaching random information to students who have not been successful auditory or visual learners in the past, although they have learned information taught by touch and through motion. For these reasons we teach roots and affixes by printing them on slips of paper which the students manipulate to build words. We suggest that the student color code the different slips—prefix, root, and suffix—to reinforce the position of the word parts in words. We approach the cutting, color coding, and manipulating in a matter-of-fact, no-nonsense way.

The learning technique in this chapter combines these tasks:

1. The student takes dictation (in class, through teaming up with a partner, or by using audio cassette tapes).
2. The student manipulates prefix-root-suffix cards to make words and copies them on scratch paper.
3. Periodic dictations measure progress in spelling the same words without using the cards.

Your role in group presentation of this material can be to provide incidental information about the history of English spelling, about the infusion of other language systems into our own, and about the effect of these infusions on spelling. When students learn that we not only embrace new vocabulary from other cultures and languages, but also the original spelling patterns from those languages, they can understand why we have so many exceptions to our spelling rules.

In both group and lab presentation, spend as much time as you can observing the student as he or she writes dictation. Catch problems as they occur, and reinforce correct spelling as often as you can. Watch the student who shortcuts the process by writing the words from memory rather than by manipulating the cards. If there are misspellings, gently guide the student to the use of the

cards, explaining that copying is an important step in the memory process. Students will not be comfortable with the way a correctly written word looks to them if they are used to misspelling it. Help them understand that their feelings of discomfort are typical and will pass if they receive enough exposure to and reinforcement of correct spelling over a period of time.

As you assign work in this chapter, do not skip around. The information has been presented in such a way that the drills cover only those roots and affixes that the student has been instructed to cut out and alphabetize. If you skip sections, you might be giving dictations the student is not prepared to do.

HOW TO FIND WORDS IN THE DICTIONARY: CHAPTER 3

To be independent in spelling as well as in listening and note taking, a student needs to know how to write words he or she cannot spell—the student needs a code, as it were, that can be used to write down the sounds he or she hears in a word, and then must be able to use the code to find words in a dictionary. For instance, in most words with unstressed vowels or troublesome suffixes, the spelling problem occurs in the middle or last syllable. If only the student could find the word in the dictionary, that troublesome unstressed vowel or suffix spelling would be revealed to him without application of rule, principle, or memory device.

The learning strategy in this chapter is to present a code—the existing *American Heritage Dictionary* pronunciation symbol key—to transcribe words as they are *heard*. Along with the code, all of the variant spellings of each sound in the code are presented—on slips of paper to be cut out and filed in a directory. The student is taught the following technique:

1. Listen for the first three or four sounds of a word.
2. Look up those sounds in your directory.
3. Look in the dictionary under every combination of sounds until you find the word.
4. Verify the word by comparing your phonetic spelling with the phonetic spelling given in the dictionary.

Again, as you assign work in this chapter, do not skip around. The phonetic alphabet has been presented in sections, followed by dictations of words that use only those sounds for which cards have been cut and filed. If you skip ahead, you might be giving dictations the student is not prepared to do.

Here is an illustration of the technique in practice:

1. The student has been given the word *heinous* (either pronounced by you in class, dictated on audio tape, or read in text as written in phonetic symbols: hā' nəs. The student copies the symbols or writes them as he or she thinks they should be.
2. The student identifies /h/, /ā/, and /n/ as the first three sounds.

3. On separate entries in the directory, the student looks up the various spellings for each of these sounds. (They are listed in order of their frequency of use in English.)
4. The student chooses the *h*, or more common, spelling of /h/.
5. The /ā/ sound has six variants, but only four could occur in beginning syllables; the student will have to search the dictionary under each of the four: *a-e*, *ai*, *ea*, *ei*.
6. There are only three variants of /n/ that are possible, since *kn* and *pn* occur only at the beginning of words; the student will have to search under *n*, *nn*, or *gn*.
7. All the preliminary logic done, the student now searches the dictionary

under <i>h</i>	<i>a-e</i>	<i>n</i>
	<i>ai</i>	<i>nn</i>
	<i>ea</i>	<i>gn</i>
	<i>ei</i>	

until he or she finds the word whose pronunciation symbols match those that were given.

The exercises in this chapter should be presented as group work if possible. First, the instruction can be lively. Students enjoy racing with each other to locate the words. Second, the words included in this chapter open up interesting discussions of vocabulary and usage. The student can be paying attention to new words and their meanings as well as developing independent spelling skills.

Finally, the process of finding words in the dictionary involves considerable problem-solving strategy. A definite sequence of steps is involved. Skipping a step will lead to a dead end, frustration, and immobility. You can watch how the student lapses into a state of mind that well explains why he or she has not caught on to spelling before now. Then you can make that turn around for the student. Since the strategy is cognitive, use the lessons as cognitive problem-solving exercises. Go over the seven-step process with each word on the drill until *all* of your students are able to find each word promptly. Do not pass over words if some of your students are lagging behind. Simply go on to the next words with students who are ready. Let the slower students catch up. Otherwise, they will lapse into old habits of helplessness and immobility. Ask the students to monitor the sequence of steps they are using. If they skip a step, have them return to it immediately. The goal is to find the given words in the dictionary 100 percent of the time in each of these exercises. Time should not be a factor, although you will find that students are able to find words more quickly after two or three sessions.

DEMONS, MAVERICKS, AND RULES: CHAPTER 4

There are some words that are used too often in writing to be looked up every time a student needs them. Some of these words follow clear rules or

principles. Others do not, although they can be learned with the aid of a memory gimmick or mnemonic device. Still others are so close in appearance or sound to other words that no device seems to work to tell them apart. These are the words we include in this chapter. The two characteristics common to all these words are these:

1. The student needs to use them almost every day.
2. The student has learned them incorrectly at one time or another.

The learning strategy we have chosen to solve the spelling problems represented in this chapter is the use of Cue Cards. As we explain early in the text, Cue Cards are cards on which students print words they want to remember, along with a gimmick, rule, observation, comment, decoration, or color code to make the word memorable. In this chapter, we have printed Cue Cards for eighty-four commonly misspelled words. A special pretest (Exercise 106) will help you and each student determine which Cue Cards are to be cut out and used for the drills in this chapter. As dictation drills are given (in class, through partners' teaming up, or on audio cassette tape), students are to write from memory the words they do not have Cue Cards for, just as in a regular spelling test. The words for which they do have Cue Cards, however, they must *copy* from the cards. Then students repeat the dictation, this time without using Cue Cards. As they master words they previously misspelled, they can set aside the Cue Cards for them. Words in this chapter are looped: that is, they are presented in successive drills in case an interval of time weakens the new memory. Consequently, it may happen that a student misspells a word he or she had previously mastered. If so, the student retrieves the Cue Card and tries again. The feedback in this chapter is concrete: the student finally has no more Cue Cards. While many students enjoy sharing memory gimmicks and mnemonic devices, there is no need to present this chapter in a group setting. Pairing students off to give dictation or letting them use the audio cassette tapes will free you to spend valuable time counseling students, checking progress on drills and exercises in the text, and assigning Additional Practice exercises.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICE

Although there are ample exercises in the text chapters to illustrate and provide drill for spelling concepts, you may discover your students need more exercises or different types of exercises. As you look over the Additional Practice exercises, you will find a variety of tasks from which to choose: filling in missing letters, supplying missing words, unscrambling words, working with word stems, and doing crossword puzzles. For the student with serious problems in sound blending, there are dictation drills for a variety of individual phonemes, both consonant and vowel, which you can assign after specific diagnosis.

ENDING THE PROGRAM—MASTERY TEST: GENERAL VOCABULARY

When the students have completed the chapters you assigned, give them the "Mastery Test: General Vocabulary." An 80 percent score indicates that both you and they have done a good job. Scores between 70 percent and 80 percent indicate that the student needs more work in word study: suggest a course in vocabulary building or laboratory exercises in word families if that kind of instruction is available in your learning center. Unless the student has not been monitoring his or her progress in the chapter drills to assure 80 percent mastery level on each exercise, there should be no scores which fall below 70 percent. Occasionally a student is unable to devote the time needed to work to the mastery level. If the student scores below 70 percent on the Mastery Test, have him or her retake it, using the prefix-root-suffix cards, Cue Cards, and dictionary. As long as the student can master words of this difficulty with the learning techniques you have taught, he or she can be evaluated on this basis. Although such a student's spelling will be more labored and time consuming than that of the student who has been able to memorize words, he or she will be no less accurate in a final draft. You might want to apply this criterion to many of your students if you are teaching spelling as a supplementary aspect of freshman composition or of a writing lab.

CONTENTS

Preface ix

To the Instructor x

Pretest 1

To the Student: Why Can't I Spell? 1

A. Diagnostic Test—Phonics 3

B. Diagnostic Text—General Vocabulary 4

CHAPTER 1 PHONICS 7

Vowels and Consonants 8

Phonics Pattern 1: Short Vowels 10

Spelling in Sentences: Group 1 13

Spelling in Sentences: Group 2 17

Making Cue Cards 19

Phonics Pattern 2: Long Vowels, Silent e 20

Spelling in Sentences: Group 3 23

Practicing Phonics Pattern 2 25

Spelling Rules for Adding Suffixes 27

The Rule for Doubling Final Consonants; The Final *e* Rule 27

Spelling in Sentences: Group 4 31

Suffixes That Begin with a Consonant 33

Phonics Pattern 3: Vowel Digraphs for /ā/, /ē/, /ō/ 35

Spelling in Sentences: Group 5 39

Practicing Phonics Patterns 1, 2, and 3 41

Phonics Pattern 4: Mixed Vowel Sounds /ow/, /oi/, /aw/, /ōo/ 42

Spelling in Sentences: Group 6 45

Practicing Phonics Pattern 4 47

Spelling in Sentences: Group 7 51

Summary 53

CHAPTER 2 WORDS MADE UP OF WORD PARTS 55

Roots: *cede, ceed, cess* 57

Prefixed: *ac, con, ex, inter, pro, ne, re, pre, se, suc, un* 59

Rule 1: prefixes used with *ceed* 63

Suffixes: *al, ate, ful, ly, ing, ary, ion, ity, ive, ed* 65

Rule 2: final *e* before suffixes 69

Roots: *ceive, cis, cept, claim, cise, clamat, cide, crit, cur, duct, curr, dict, ferr, duce* 70

Prefixes: *ab, abs, in, de, intro, dif, of, dis, suf, trans, per, mis, oc* 75

Suffixes: *ence, able, ent, ic, ory, ize, ise, ism, y, ness, ship, ment, or* 83

Rules 3 and 4: doubling consonant before suffixes 88–89

Rule 5: *ability, ibility* 90

Prefixes: *ad, com, ag, contra, at, cor, circum, di, e, sub, ef, sup, im, super, ob* 92

Roots: *fine, gress, fin, ject, fuse, mit, mitt, fus, miss, ply, script, plic, spect, rupt, tract, scribe, vert, verse, vis* 97

Suffixes: *ance, erion, ee, ial, ible, ure, ist, ant, ite, ual* 103

Which Suffix To Use? *able or ible, ance or ence* 109

CHAPTER 3 HOW TO FIND WORDS IN THE DICTIONARY 121

Using the Pronunciation Guide and Guide Words 122

Making a Phonics Directory: The Forty-six Basic Sounds of English 125

CHAPTER 4 DEMONS, MAVERICKS, AND RULES 153

Pretest: Eighty-four Demons 154

Demons and Mavericks: *doesn't, than, there, where, writing, too, niece, were, selves, receive, its, rhythm, many, hungry, dining* 156

Demons and Mavericks: *since, happiness, their, whole, whether, visible, psychology, convenient, similar, fashion, worries, site, conscience, a lot, criticism* 161

Demons and Mavericks: *marriage, ruin, sight, English, parallel, picture, it's, weather anxiety, we're, having, occasion, physiology, personnel, schedule* 167

Demons and Mavericks: *exercise, hurrying, patient, describe, quit, sense, miniature, quite, belief, probably, noticeable, quiet, they're, perception, physics* 173

Demons and Mavericks: *height, conscious, physician, Wednesday, question, angel, meant, sincerely, succeed, imaginary, then, embarrass, athlete, valuable, quantity, interpret, equipment, existence, privilege, prejudice, wholly, know, through, though* 179

Additional Practice 189

Additional Exercises for Chapter 1 189

Additional Exercises for Chapter 2 208

Additional Exercises for Chapter 3 208

Additional Exercises for Chapter 4 212

Appendix: Career Words 235

Post-Test 243

A. Mastery Test: Phonics **243**

B. Mastery Test: Spelling Rules **244**

C. Mastery Test: General Vocabulary **245**

Dictation and Answer Key 247

Pretest **247**

Test **251**

Additional Practice **267**

Post-Test **280**

Index 285

PRETEST

TO THE STUDENT: "WHY CAN'T I SPELL?"

"Why can't I spell?" Find the answer to this question by circling "yes" to any of the following statements that are true for you.

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. I never learned to read. | Yes |
| 2. My family moved frequently when I was young. I went to several different grade schools. | Yes |
| 3. I had a hearing loss when I was in primary school (kindergarten to third grade). | Yes |
| 4. I was sickly and missed school frequently when I was in primary school. | Yes |
| 5. My third or fourth grade teacher took extended leave. We had substitutes most of the year. | Yes |
| 6. I am from another country. I learned English as my second language. | Yes |
| 7. I learned to read by the "sight" method. I didn't learn how to sound words out. | Yes |
| 8. I was always better with my hands than I was doing reading or English in school. | Yes |
| 9. I don't remember being taught spelling after the fourth or fifth grade. | Yes |
| 10. I have had little opportunity in school to practice writing. My teachers did not assign essays or compositions on a regular basis. | Yes |

You can't spell now because you weren't taught how to spell by a method that would work for you.

Here are some specific reasons why you cannot spell. If you circled "yes" to any of the previous statements, here is what that might mean.

1. You cannot read. You have a problem that *can be corrected*. Your English instructor or counselor knows where you can get help. Find out right away, and get started. Reading is a necessary basic skill in our society.

2. Because you moved around frequently, you missed critical lessons in reading and spelling. You do not know all your English sounds and the way they are spelled (phonics).