

Dear Parents:

Children need to see correctly spelled words through modeled writing, journaling, reading, word wall work, homework, and spelling practice daily. In first grade children are highly encouraged to use inventive spelling in their writing that is based on the beginning, middle, and ending sounds in a word. This is an extremely vital stage in a young writer's development. As children develop as readers and writers they then transition to more conventional spelling of frequently used words. Children who master reading and spelling sight words are more confident readers and writers.

So, in order to facilitate this development we will begin weekly spelling units. At the beginning of the week students will bring home a Spelling List of the words for the week along with a Homework Packet that may contain Spelling, Word Work, Reading, and Math independent practice activities. Your child will have 10 spelling words each week. There will also be five challenge words for students who want more of a challenge. The Spelling list will have 2 to 4 Word Wall Words and associated Word Family words we will be focusing on for the week. There will also be two dictation sentences and a fluency chart. The fluency chart includes the sight words we will be focusing on for that Spelling Unit and should be practiced for reading fluency. Have students read the words as fast as possible and time them. Then as they learn to read the words faster their fluency will improve. Please keep the spelling list in a special place so children can continue to practice nightly throughout the week. Frequency is the key. They can set time goals and have fun learning sight words.

A Spelling Test will be given every Friday on all of the words and the dictation sentences. Students can complete the Spelling Homework Packet during the week and return it on Friday. A homework and responsibility grade will be given for each Homework packet.

Here are some ideas that you and your child may find fun and helpful when practicing spelling words.

- Spell words using cereal, beans, buttons, play dough, etc.
- Spell words by writing them in dry grits in a shallow pan
- Spell words with their bodies (tall, short, and underground letters)
- Spell words with magnetic letters on the refrigerator
- Spell words by cutting them out of a magazine
- Spell words by writing them in the air or on someone's back
- Spell words by giving the child the sound and have them give you the letter
- Make a game out of spelling practice. Give clues to what the word means or how many letters it has
- Have children clap and chant the words as they spell them

These are just a few ideas and I hope they help you and your child to have fun practicing spelling words. Please remember that children develop at different levels and should not be compared to siblings or friends. Children are unique in their development and each child will demonstrate growth based on their individual learning style. Please limit spelling practice to 5-10 minutes a night and remember keep it fun!

Smiles,

Mrs. Dickson