

Spelling in the context of writing

Spelling knowledge is only useful if pupils apply it in their own writing. It is vital, therefore, that what has been taught in spelling sessions is rigorously followed up in writing across the curriculum. Only in this way will spelling knowledge be transferred to independent writing.

Once taught, strategies, patterns and guidelines should be referred to on a regular basis, whatever the writing activity. This will make the links explicit and show that what is learnt in spelling should be used when writing. This referring back can take place during any of the stages in the writing process:

- composition
- proof reading and revision
- responding to marking.

Composition

A big challenge for many pupils is trying to juggle composition skills – that is, the creative task of expressing ideas in writing – with the transcriptional skill of spelling. They must use the spelling strategies and guidelines learnt to make quick decisions about how to spell words without losing the main focus, which should be on expressing their ideas.

You can help pupils to balance and manage these two skills by:

- modelling and demonstrating the process in shared writing: for example, you might refer to a spelling pattern or explain a spelling choice
- setting targets relating to a current or recent focus and stating specifically that these will apply to all the writing pupils do; you need to make this expectation absolutely clear
- reminding pupils to apply strategies, rules and conventions they have learnt – either before they begin writing or as they write in guided sessions.

Proof reading and revision

An important part of the writing process is learning to check for misspellings and to correct errors. Pupils need to be taught the specific process of proof reading their own work. From **Spelling 2** onwards, proof reading exercises are included as part of the regular 'Revision' pages in the pupil books.

The teaching notes for the 'Revision' pages explain how to model the process of proof reading, with the focus on looking for a particular type of spelling error. This focus relates to recently taught patterns and guidelines. However, you can adapt the session to focus on any current error that is noted through ongoing assessment of pupils' spelling. As well as modelling the proof reading process, this also provides an opportunity to reinforce the guideline, rule, pattern or strategy that will help the pupil to avoid similar errors in the future.

Pupils can complete the proof reading exercise in the pupil book as preparation for proof reading their own writing. Guided proof reading sessions can be used to support pupils further. For example, you might suggest, *Let's check all the words ending with **ing**.* Younger and less confident pupils can work with proof reading partners when checking their work.