SESSION 2: STAGES OF SPELLING DEVELOPMENT — EARLY SPELLING STAGES

Introduction | Developmental Spelling Stages | Self-Assessment | Alternative Project 1 | Look Ahead

Introduction

“When phonics is taught devoid of books, children are asked to postpone their excitement for literacy.”

— Lapp and Flood

Overview
Session 1 explored the roles of reading and writing in learning to spell and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of embedding spelling instruction into an integrated language arts program. In this session, you will focus on the early stages of spelling development and how a student’s knowledge of phonics and spelling is reflected in his or her writing. You will use readings and an interactive activity to identify the developmental stages of spelling and to examine developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and activities. If you have chosen to do the three alternative projects in lieu of one final project, you will complete Alternative Project 1: Spelling Position Paper by the end of this session.

Objectives
By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Explain and discuss the effectiveness of using the Bear and Templeton model for word study with older students.
- Evaluate whether it is important to focus on students’ spelling or the content of their writing in your online journal.
- Develop a position paper on spelling instruction for your school. (Alternative Project 1)
- Analyze three spelling samples and describe an activity to develop the spelling skills of each student represented by the spelling samples.

If you haven’t done so already, download and print the Assignment Checklist to keep track of your assignments for this course.
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Developmental Spelling Stages

Connecting Spelling Development and Literacy Development
Understanding the developmental stages of spelling can be challenging. The article "Explorations in Developmental Spelling: Foundations for Learning and Teaching Phonics, Spelling, and Vocabulary" and charts from "Words Their Way" provide an overview of the stages you might find in a classroom of students. As you read, think about where students might fall within the developmental stages. Think about how you might use the charts to assess student performance and design a developmentally appropriate spelling program.

Participate in an online discussion about Bear and Templeton's proposal for a model for word study by responding to the following questions.

Do you think the model will work equally well for older students who are increasing their vocabulary? How might the model be modified to meet the ability levels and curricular goals of the upper elementary grades?

Post your response and an example of a modified strategy for older students.

This assignment will help you prepare for the final project where you will plan activities for a student in the emergent spelling stage. You may wish to refer to the assessment rubric for the final project before you begin. As you complete the rest of the readings and assignments for this session, you should go to the discussion forum at least two or three times to continue the discussion. Refer to the discussion rubric to review the expectations for participating in online discussions in this course.

Identifying Developmental Spelling Stages

Analyze Student Writing
Connecting instruction to a student’s developmental stage in spelling is essential for spelling growth. Making the best instructional decision begins with careful analysis of student writing. In this interactive, Analyze Student Writing, you will have an opportunity to analyze the developmental features of a student's writing and to select appropriate instructional activities. Use the article "Explorations in Developmental Spelling: Foundations for Learning and Teaching Phonics, Spelling, and Vocabulary" and charts from "Words Their Way" along with your own notes to guide your instructional decisions as you complete the interactive activity.

Read "Where’s the Phonics? Making the Case (Again) for Integrated Code Instruction." As you read, examine the examples the authors use from a first-grade classroom to illustrate research-based practices that promote the development of phonetic knowledge and the use of the alphabetic “code” for reading, writing, and spelling in an integrated language arts program.
On the discussion board you have discussed modifications in spelling instruction that address the needs of developing spellers. In the reading, "Explorations in Developmental Spelling: Foundations for Learning and Teaching Phonics, Spelling, and Vocabulary," Templeton and Morris shared some of the research that supports approaching spelling from a developmental perspective and analyzing student writing as an effective way to monitor developmental progress. Some educators worry that focusing on spelling will inhibit student writing. For instance, Sandra Wilde reminded us that the main goal of having students write is not to produce perfect spelling but to communicate their thoughts and ideas. What do you think? In your online journal reflect on the following question:

In grades 1–3, is it more important to focus on word accuracy or content?
Use examples from your own professional experiences and reading to support your response.

Examination of Student Spelling Samples Assignment
Analyze the three spelling examples provided below and try to identify the spelling stage that each represents. Describe the spelling features that you identify. Provide an activity to develop the spelling skills of each student represented by a sample. You may wish to refer to the assessment rubric for this assignment before you begin. Submit this assignment to your facilitator.

Spelling Sample 1
My bot iz beg (My boat is big.)

Spelling Sample 2
I dg (I have a dog.)

Spelling Sample 3
(Sally likes red.)
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Self-Assessment (not required)

Complete the following self-assessment to determine whether you understand the concepts in Session 2.

1. Reading promotes the spelling development of young students by
   1. ☐ a. building a sight word vocabulary.
   2. ☐ b. providing a context for learning letter-sound relationships.
   3. ☐ c. encouraging students to look at the print in texts to interpret the messages.
   4. ☐ d. developing awareness of sound segmentation.
   5. ☐ e. all of the above

   answer

2. Which of the following is an important component of Word Study instruction?
   1. ☐ a. phonics
   2. ☐ b. focus on word structure
   3. ☐ c. vocabulary
   4. ☐ d. exploring and examining words
   5. ☐ e. all of the above

   answer

3. Which of the following is a feature of alphabetic knowledge?
   1. ☐ a. left-to-right letter sound match
   2. ☐ b. being able to apply the vowel-consonant-silent e pattern
   3. ☐ c. identification of vowel digraphs
   4. ☐ d. understanding syllable patterns
   5. ☐ e. all of the above

   answer

4. Julia writes, “I lik to fot” (I like to float) in her journal. Her spelling is characteristic of students in the
1. a. prephonemic stage of spelling development.
2. b. early letter name stage of spelling development.
3. c. semiphonemic stage of spelling development.
4. d. middle letter name stage of spelling development.
5. e. all of the above

answer

5. Which of the following instructional activities would be most appropriate for a student in the middle to late letter name stage of spelling development?

1. a. shared writing activity with a focus on short vowel patterns
2. b. word and picture sorts with long vowel patterns
3. c. word hunt for words that begin or end the same
4. d. rhyming sound sorts with pictures
5. e. all of the above

answer

Additional Activities (not required)
The following activities may be useful as you complete your final project but are not required.

Read the article "Kindergarteners Talk about Print: Phonemic Awareness in Meaningful Contexts." The authors describe ways to engage young children in reading and writing activities that encourage them to apply their knowledge about phonics and spelling. As you read, think about how you might use these strategies with your students.

Read "Interactive Writing in a Primary Classroom." Button, et al. describe how to engage students in group writing, in which the teacher and students share a pen and compose together. While you read, think about how this activity develops language, phonics, and spelling knowledge. Focus on how teachers can guide classroom talk so that students can discover and apply new knowledge.

In the notes section of your online journal, reflect on the following:

If you have used classroom discussions about print, similar to those presented in the Richgels and the Button articles, with your primary-grade students during shared reading, shared writing, or interactive writing, write about your experiences and your observations related to these types of activities which promote students' literacy development.
If you have not had an opportunity to use these activities in a classroom, write questions and concerns about implementation such as scaffolding instruction, selection of appropriate materials, and assessing student learning.

References


Additional Readings (not required)


All IRA articles are used with permission from the International Reading Association.
Alternative Project 1

This is the first of three alternative projects in this course. Remember, you should only complete this alternative project if you have chosen to do three alternative projects instead of one final project.

Spelling Position Paper: Alternative Project 1

This project will enable you to synthesize your learning from Sessions 1 and 2. You may wish to review the assessment rubric for Alternative Project 1 before you begin.

1. Develop a position paper on spelling instruction for your school. Your audience will be staff members, parents, administrators, and the Board of Education.

2. Describe the spelling approach you will take and support it by citing research. Try to anticipate questions your audience will have about your approach and include additional references to support it.

3. Use the following outline to draft your position paper:

Outline for Position Paper

- Rationale
  - Purpose of the spelling program
  - Description of how students will be served by the program
  - Explanation of how diverse populations will be served by the program
- Content of Spelling Program
  - Instructional activities
  - Assessment tools
- Research Base for Spelling Program

4. Go to the discussion board, create a new message and attach your position paper so your peers can review it and give feedback.

5. Revise the position paper to incorporate suggestions (when appropriate) from your peers.

6. Submit your completed position paper to your facilitator.
Look Ahead

You can use the information you learn in each session to help you plan your final project. Don’t forget, you do not have to wait until Session 6 to begin working on your final project.

Session 1 explored the roles of reading and writing in learning to spell and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of embedding spelling instruction into an integrated language arts program. Session 2 outlined the early stages of spelling development and provided strategies for connecting instruction to a student’s developmental stage in spelling to facilitate spelling growth.

In Session 3, you will continue to learn about the stages of spelling development.

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