

Guidance: Little Wandle Spelling

Little Wandle Spelling is a new programme designed to provide a seamless link from *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* to learning spelling in Year 2 by building on children's knowledge of the alphabetic code and teaching them how to spell with confidence.

The programme provides full coverage of the National Curriculum in England requirements for spelling in Year 2. For detailed information see 'National Curriculum overview' in the Resources tab of the website.

Background

The English language is inherently complex due to its diverse origins, apparent in the number of words that come from the Anglo-Saxons, from Latin and French, and from ancient Greek. With such varied influences, there are many different ways to spell words in English.

Building on children's knowledge of the alphabetic code

To be able to read, children need to first learn to sound and blend. When they spell, they need to encode by segmenting the sounds. It's natural, therefore, that there will be a lag with spelling as young children have not had enough time to learn or absorb the accurate spelling of all words they want to write.

However, by the end of Key Stage 1, the children should be able to segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these using graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically plausible attempts at others. They should also be able to spell many common exception words.

Phonic knowledge continues to underpin spelling after Key Stage 1; teachers should still draw the children's attention to GPCs that do and do not fit in with what has been taught so far, so as to build effectively on previous knowledge and enable the children to 'grow the code'.

The elements of learning to spell

Alongside a strong foundation based on their alphabetic and phonic knowledge, to spell with confidence children need to develop an understanding of:

- spelling patterns, conventions and rules
- homophones and homographs, including when to use them
- morphology – the study of words and their parts (morphemes include root words and affixes)
- etymology – the study of the history of words
- orthography – the common way in which letters are arranged in a particular sequence
- how to use apostrophes
- word classes.

Little Wandle Spelling supports the development of each of these elements within a clear progression.

Programme structure (Year 2)

Little Wandle Spelling has been trialled in Little Wandle schools so that we can be sure that it supports children as they move from the core programme to learning spelling in Year 2.

The programme begins by reviewing Phase 5 so we are sure every child has secured that part of the alphabetic code. The children then learn foundational spelling concepts in the Bridge to spelling that they will apply in the Spelling units. The programme provides five weeks of content for each half term.

Term	Weeks of teaching	Programme focus
Year 2 Autumn 1	5 weeks	Phase 5 review
Year 2 Autumn 2	5 weeks	Bridge to spelling
Year 2 Spring and Summer	20 weeks	Spelling

Phase 5 review

The five-week Phase 5 review ensures the children have secured the trickier parts of Phase 5 and can apply this alphabetic knowledge both to read and spell.

Each 25–30 minute lesson closely mirrors the structure and resources from the core programme. The Phase 5 review:

- revisits common graphemes, and unusual graphemes found in useful words
- teaches the children to investigate ‘where in the word’ a sound appears and then make the ‘best bet’ for its spelling by learning what the most common spellings are at the beginning, middle and ends of words
- recaps Phase 5 tricky words
- provides opportunities to practise and apply learning by spelling carefully selected words and dictation sentences.

Bridge to spelling

The Bridge to spelling teaches the children how to ‘think about spelling’. Over five weeks of daily 25–30 minute lessons, the children complete the alphabetic code and learn the underpinning concepts of spelling. The Bridge to spelling:

- introduces key spelling terminology
- teaches the children to add sound buttons, which provides a clearer focus on segmenting so that the children are using phonics as their main strategy for spelling
- includes activities that will feature throughout the programme, ensuring the children become familiar with teaching and learning routines
- explains basic conventions for suffixes and spelling, for example, swap, double, drop.

The Bridge to spelling reflects key concepts from the National Curriculum for Year 2.

Spelling units

Once the learning covered in the Bridge to spelling is secure, the children are ready to move on to the Year 2 Spelling units.

The Spelling units (Spring and Summer) are designed to be taught in 15-minute lessons, four times a week. They provide full coverage of National Curriculum spelling requirements at Year 2. For more information about the Spelling unit progression, see ‘Programme overview’. For guidance about how Little Wandle Spelling fulfils National Curriculum requirements see ‘National Curriculum overview’. Both resources can be found in the Resources tab of the website.