

WRITTEN EXPRESSION INTERVENTIONS



Tier 2 - 3 Letter Ordering for Spelling

Spelling words and lists are a staple of the elementary classroom. Spelling of words by writing or saying the letters requires students to understand the order or sequence of the letters. Children are often challenged by learning to correctly spell new words, especially ones that cannot be spelled by sounding the word out. Good spelling instruction should focus on the successive features of words. Letter ordering is designed to help students do just that and become better spellers.

Letter ordering is a useful strategy to help develop a student's awareness of the order of sounds in words, ability to recode letters into their sounds and recognize the visual patterns in words, and ability to recall the order of the letters. This activity can be done in small groups or individually. The English language has thousands of words, and so there is an unlimited number of ways to use letter ordering.

How to Teach Letter Ordering

In letter ordering, teaching a student how to spell a word requires four steps. For each step, individual magnetic letters, letter tiles, or letters written on small pieces of paper or cardboard are used.

1. Pronounce a spelling word and ask the student to place the letter chips in the correct order.
2. After the word is formed by the student, scramble the letter chips and ask the student to say the word slowly and create it again with the chips.
3. Next, have the student say the word again and write it on a piece of paper.
4. As the child's skill increases and the complexity of the words increases, use chips to break the word into syllables or build complex words.

For difficult words, follow these steps:

1. Have the student slowly pronounce the word.
2. Ask the student to repeat the word, pronouncing the separate sounds of the word individually.
3. Tell the student to look at the word and letter chips and note how the letters match the sounds.
4. Have the student tell you which sounds go with each letter as you point to the letters in sequence.
5. Ask the student to write each letter while saying the sounds.
6. Tell the student to practice the word until he or she can write it from memory.

Who Should Learn Letter Ordering?

Students who have trouble spelling may benefit from letter ordering. Students who score low in successive processing often have difficulty with the sequencing of letters in words (see Naglieri, 1999). Also, students who have limited attention often fail to focus on the specific letters in spelling. This intervention is likely to help students who score low in successive processing, low in attention, or both.

Progress Monitoring Tool:

Use the CBM "Spelling Probes for Progress Monitoring" located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual and graph the results using Excel, ChartDog Graphmaker (found at http://www.interventioncentral.org/tools/chart_dog_graph_maker), or similar. In addition, as a Tier 3 Intervention, the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

Source:

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Resources:

Two excellent starting points can be found at www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/ and www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.html/.

References:

Goldstein, S., & Mather, N. (1996). *Overcoming underachieving: An action guide to helping our child succeed in school*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Naglieri, J.A. (1999). *Essentials of CAS assessment*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Tier 2 – Tier 3 Story Starter

Title: What would you do if...?

Brief Description: This classroom activity gives students an opportunity to develop ideas for narrative writing. It also demonstrates the appropriate way to follow simple story structure. It allows children to use drawings to stimulate their imaginations and to help them generate story ideas, which helps engage students who see writing as something that is boring and always challenging.

Materials Needed:

Pencil
Blank paper
Writing Paper

Steps for Implementation

1. Have students fold a blank piece of paper in half. Ask students what they would do if they were invisible for 24 hours. Share ideas and probe students to add details to your suggestions.
2. Tell the students that, now that they have some ideas, they are going to make a drawing of four things that they would do if they were invisible for 24 hours. Students should use pencil or one color to make the drawings of their ideas, one in each box. The purpose of the drawings is to help the students remember their ideas without having the pressure of having to write them down immediately.
3. Now that the students are excited about the possibilities, they are ready to start writing. Begin with an introduction, where students write about how they become invisible. The body of the story will be made up of descriptions of their four pictures. The ending of the story should be an explanation of what happens when they become invisible again.

Comments/Tips:

- ↳ Have “authors” include colored versions of their drawings in the final version of their stories for illustrated stories.

Progress Monitoring Tool

Use the CBM "Writing Probes for Progress Monitoring" located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual and graph the results using Excel, ChartDog Graphmaker (found at http://www.interventioncentral.org/tools/chart_dog_graph_maker), or similar. In addition, as a Tier 3 Intervention, the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

Source:

Bos., C.S. & Vaughn, S. (2002). Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Tier 2 - 3 Step-By-Step Cartoon Writing

Brief Description: This intervention gives beginning or reluctant writers experience sequencing steps, using transition words, and writing a paragraph. The novel format makes the task more engaging and relevant. It also takes away the anxiety associated with writing and capitalizes on strengths in other areas like drawing.

Materials Needed:

Index cards without lines

Colored Pencils

Tape

Writing materials

Procedure/Steps:

1. Discuss as a group the types of things students do to get ready for school in the morning. Tell students they will be drawing a comic strip about what they do when they get up in the morning.
2. Students draw one event on each index card (e.g., waking up, getting dressed, eating breakfast). Students are encouraged to add detail to their pictures to help them remember exactly what happens.
3. Now students put their ideas in order and tape them together like a comic strip.
4. Before students begin writing, have them use the comic strip as a guide to tell the story out loud.
5. Encourage them to use transition words like first, next, later, and finally. Teachers can post a list of words to use while telling and writing their paragraphs.
6. Students can write one descriptive sentence about each frame of their comic strip to form a paragraph.
7. Attach the final copy to the comic strip and display in the classroom.

Suggestions for Evaluating Effectiveness:

Using the number of errors as a marker, compare paragraphs written in this format to paragraphs written without this structure for a select group of students or for the whole class.

Progress Monitoring Tool

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Reference:

Bos, C.S. & Vaughn, S. (2002). Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Tier 2 - 3 Copy, Cover, Compare

Brief Description: This method of teaching and learning spelling words allows the students practice at visualizing and producing the weekly spelling words through a sequence of easy to remember steps. This is a reasonable intervention to implement on an individual level, as self-monitoring is facilitated by having the correct spelling of the word readily available.

Note: This will not be appropriate for SST since spelling is not a very good indicator of written expression skills but it can be useful to use in your whole class or for individual students who are struggling with spelling.

Materials Needed:

Spelling list
Pencil
Paper

Steps for Implementation:

1. Provide students (or targeted group of students) with a list of spelling words
2. Instruct each student to study a word carefully and then copy it down.
3. Cover the copied word with a sheet of paper and write it from memory
4. Check the word and correct if needed
5. If the word was correctly spelled from memory, move onto the next word
6. If the word was misspelled, repeat steps 2-4.

Comments/Tips:

- ↔ Periodically check students' self-corrections
- ↔ Implement reward system for demonstrated improvement on spelling tests.

Progress Monitoring Tool:

Use the CBM "Writing Probes for Progress Monitoring" located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual and graph the results using Excel, ChartDog Graphmaker (found at http://www.interventioncentral.org/tools/chart_dog_graph_maker), or similar. In addition, as a Tier 3 Intervention, the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

Reference:

Murphy, J., Hern, C., Williams, R., & McLaughlin, T. (1990). The effects of the copy, cover, and compare approach in increasing spelling accuracy with learning disabled students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 15, 378-386.

Tier 2 – Tier 3 I Can Write!

Brief Description: The purpose of this intervention is to help a beginning writer increase his or her writing fluency and to provide a model for correct sentence construction. A benefit of this intervention is that it allows students to experience writing success while building their skills.

Note: This intervention is conducted in small groups.

Materials Needed:

Pencil

Paper

Procedure/Steps:

Step One:

- Present student(s) with a list of story titles and if necessary, read that list aloud.
- Encourage students to select a topic they would enjoy writing about.
- Have students write the title at the top of the paper and write about their topics as well as they can. (If they ask, provide them with the spellings of words.)

Step Two:

- As students finish their paragraphs, have them take turns reading them to the teacher or another adult helper.
- Ask the students to tell you more about their topic.
- With student input, rewrite the paragraph and have students read it aloud.

Step Three:

- Have students copy the paragraph from your paper and read it aloud with your help.

Comments/tips:

- ↔ Have students illustrate their completed paragraphs and post the results up in the classroom.

Progress Monitoring Tool

Use the CBM "Writing Probes for Progress Monitoring" located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual and graph the results using Excel, ChartDog Graphmaker (found at http://www.interventioncentral.org/tools/chart_dog_graph_maker), or similar. In addition, as a Tier 3 Intervention, the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

Reference:

Bos, C.S. & Vaughn, S. (2002). Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Tier 2 – Tier 3 Proofreading with “SCOPE”

Brief Description: As students get older, error free work becomes more and more important. This intervention offers students a mnemonic device for remembering the steps involved in thorough proofreading. **NOTE:** This intervention is conducted in a small group.

Materials Needed:

Poster board with the SCOPE steps written on it:

Spelling: Is the spelling correct?

Capitalization: Are the first words of sentences, proper names, and proper noun capitalized?

Order of Words: Is the syntax correct?

Punctuation: Are there appropriate marks for punctuation where necessary?

Express Complete Thought: Does the sentence contain a noun and a verb or is it only a phrase?

Student-generated writing piece that needs to be edited.

Sample piece of writing on an overhead

Overhead projector

Procedure/Steps:

1. Discuss with the students how often they get into difficulty because they are not sufficiently skilled at proofreading their papers before they submit them and therefore get low grades because their papers have many errors in them.
2. Teach the students the mnemonic strategy “SCOPE” using the poster board.
3. Demonstrate using SCOPE with a sample piece of writing on an overhead projector.
4. Give the students ample practice and opportunity to apply SCOPE in their own work.

Comments/tips:

- ↔ If necessary, staple a copy of the SCOPE sheet to student’s papers before they turn them in to remind them to edit their work.

Progress Monitoring Tool

Use the CBM "Writing Probes for Progress Monitoring" located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual and graph the results using Excel, ChartDog Graphmaker (found at http://www.interventioncentral.org/tools/chart_dog_graph_maker), or similar. In addition, as a Tier 3 Intervention, the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

Reference:

Bos, C.S. & Vaughn, S. (2002). Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Tier 2 Peer Tutoring Spelling Game

Brief Description: This intervention is based on increasing active academic responding in the classroom. This strategy targets spelling accuracy by combining classwide peer tutoring with public posting in a game-like format. In addition to providing increased opportunities for each student to practice spelling without increasing the total amount of time set aside for spelling instruction, it prevents reinforcement of errors because peer tutors provide immediate feedback for responses. Also, because the peer tutoring game only takes 15 minutes to complete, it can be easily used within the spelling period, regardless of how the spelling curriculum is arranged.

Note: This will not be appropriate for SST since spelling is not a very good indicator of written expression skills but it can be useful to use in your whole class or for individual students who are struggling with spelling.

Materials Needed:

List of spelling words

Pencil and paper for each student

Red or blue slips of construction paper in a box, enough for one slip per student

Posterboard chart listing the team names, with columns for posting red and blue team point totals and weekly team winners

Procedures/steps for implementation:

1. Tell the students that they will be playing a new game to help them learn more spelling words. You'll need about 30 minutes for the first day of training
2. Tell the students that the game is like basketball. In this game, they will make "baskets" (2 points) and "foul shots" (1 point). Select one student to demonstrate tutoring to the class, using the procedures described below. Then select two more students and guide them through the procedures in front of the class. Conduct two more demonstrations with other student pairs. Then have the entire class practice the procedures while you walk around the room giving corrective feedback and praise for appropriate tutoring.
3. On Monday of each week, teach the list of new words to the entire class or to the spelling groups.
4. Also on Monday, have each student draw a red or blue slip of paper from a box for assignment to one of two teams. Then create tutor pairs within each team.
5. Begin the tutoring game by asking students to move to their tutoring stations (an arrangement where they can work in pairs). Designate one student to serve as tutor first. Distribute the new word list and spelling forms or sheets of paper
6. Signal the students to begin, and, if desired, set a timer for 5 minutes. Tutors present tutees with the list of words as many times as possible during this time period. The tutor says a word while the tutee writes it on his or her paper. The tutee then really spells out to the tutor the word he or she has written.
7. If the word is correct, the tutor says, "Correct! Give yourself two points!" and the tutee marks a "2" on his or her list. If the word is incorrect, the tutor points to, pronounces,

and spells the missed word orally to the tutee. The tutee must write it correctly three times before receiving the next word. After the word has been corrected, the tutee receives one point.

8. After five minutes, the pair reverses roles.
9. During tutoring, walk around the room, supervising and awarding bonus points ("referee points") to tutors for examples of positive tutoring, up to 5 additional points per student.
10. After another five minutes, it is time to stop. Have tutoring pairs add up their points, including any bonus points. Record individual scores on the individual chart, and record team points on the team chart.
11. On Friday, give a spelling test on the words tutors have practiced. Have team pairs exchange papers, correct each other's answers, and award three points for each correctly spelled word.
12. Have each student report his or her points and record them on the individual score chart.
13. Announce the team winner for the week, and post the winner on the team chart.
14. Randomly spot check students' scoring and point additions. Correct as needed.

Comments/Tips:

- ↪ Implement a reward for the winning team (small prizes)
- ↪ Set a class goal of total number of points earned by both teams and have a bigger prize (such as a movie or pizza party).

Progress Monitoring Tool:

Use the CBM "Spelling Probes for Progress Monitoring" located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual and graph the results using Excel, ChartDog Graphmaker (found at http://www.interventioncentral.org/tools/chart_dog_graph_maker), or similar.

Source:

Delquadri, J.C., Greenwood, C. R., Stretton, K., & Hall, R.V. (1983). The peer tutoring spelling game: A classroom procedure for increasing opportunity to respond and spelling performance. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 6, 225-239.

Tier 2 – Tier 3 Increasing Writing Productivity with Self-Monitoring

Brief Description: The purpose of this intervention is to increase word production through self-monitoring of word counts. The rationale behind this intervention is that the more students write, the more effect they will become at writing, and the idea is that if students monitor their amount of writing output, they will strive to increase that amount. A benefit of this intervention is that it improves students' motivation for writing.

Materials Needed:

Journals or notebooks for student writing (one journal per student)

Student-made line graphs for recording word counts

Poster board chart with bar graph for recording class word counts

Red felt-tip marker

Watch with second hand, kitchen timer, or stopwatch

Procedure/Steps:

1. Select a time for free writing in individual journals. Free writing should be conducted daily or several times a week.
2. Explain to the students that they will be learning to evaluate their progress in writing by counting and recording the number of words they write during each session.
3. Display the class chart and explain that you will be graphing the total number of words written by the class for each writing session. Using the group average number of words written correctly calculated during the observation period, set a weekly goal of total words to be written by the class. Draw a red line on the chart to indicate that goal. Raise that goal by about 5% each week.
4. Discuss specific topics students may select, provide a writing prompt, or permit students to select their own topics. Provide approximately 15 minutes for writing.
5. After students finish writing, demonstrate how to create a simple line graph on their chart and have them record the number of words they wrote during that session on their graphs. Tell them to count all the words, regardless of whether they believe the words are spelled correctly.
6. Provide an opportunity for students to voluntarily share their writing with the rest of the class.
7. Each week, review journals and graphs to monitor student self-recording and to obtain the class word count total for recording on the class chart. Discuss progress in achieving the weekly goal and praise students if they meet or exceed it.

Comments/tips:

This intervention can also be done for 3-5 minute periods. In that case, give students time to brainstorm ideas and to plan their writing before the time begins.

Progress Monitoring Tool:

Use the CBM "Spelling Probes for Progress Monitoring" located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual and graph the results using Excel, ChartDog Graphmaker (found at <http://www.intervention>)

central.org/tools/chart_dog_graph_maker), or similar. In addition, as a Tier 3 Intervention, the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

Reference:

Rathvon, N. (1999). *Effective School Interventions*. New York: Guilford Press.