

Dear Parents/Carers,

Please find attached 'tricky' spelling words from the New National Curriculum that children are expected to spell by the end of Year 6.

There are different ways to learn a tricky spelling (see below for ideas) and it would be useful to talk with your child about their preferred way of learning them and for them to try out different strategies. Ask them the following questions:

- What is a good speller?
- Are you a good speller?
- If yes, why do you think you are?
- If no, why do you think you are not?
- What do you think helps to make a good speller?
- What do you think might make you become a good speller?

The answers children give to this part of the questionnaire will indicate the child's preferred style: auditory (**A**), visual (**V**) and learning (**L**). **The best spellers use a range of styles; a mixture of auditory, visual and learning.**

- I listen to the sounds of the words in my head. **A**
- I write a list of possible spellings and choose the one I think looks right. **V**
- I try to think of a spelling rule. **L**
- I break the words into bits and say their sound. **A**
- I see the word inside my head. **V**
- I link to other words that are related to it. **L**
- I say the word aloud. **A**
- I find it just comes. **V**
- I look up the word in a dictionary. **L**

Visual strategies involving the eye and hand

- Try writing the word down in two or three different ways, in joined handwriting. This will fix the spelling in the hand.
- Use a highlighter pen to draw your attention to the part of the word you need to learn.

- Look for words within words, for example, **get** in **vegetable**, and **lie** in **believe**, **a rat** in **separate**; a **piece** of **pie**; a **secretary** keeps a **secret**.
- Group together words that may not sound alike but have a shared pattern.

Auditory strategies involving the ear and mouth

- Listen to the word. Break it into syllables and then identify the phonemes in each syllable. For example, *Sep-tem-ber*.
- When letters or parts of words are silent, say the words in an exaggerated way. For example, k-nife, and *bus-i-ness*.
- Giving a word a rhythm helps.
- Analogy is using words already known. For example, *could, would, and should*.

Learning strategies based on mind and method

- Learning about the structure of words can help spelling. For example, find the root of a word and check whether it changes when prefixes or suffixes are added (e.g. *smiling*: root = smile + **ing**).
- Mnemonics are a useful memory aid. For example, *Big elephants can always use small elephants*.
- Word origins (etymology) are useful in learning spellings. Etymological dictionaries give the origins of groups of words. This information will help to identify the letter or combination of letters to use.
- Homophones often cause difficulties. Learn them with other words that look the same rather than sound the same. For example, there, here, and where.
- Think of a spelling rule. For example, short vowel and single consonant, and double the consonant when adding **-ing**.

Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any queries,

Kind regards and happy spelling!

KS2 team