

Dear Parents,

The focus of the Sitton spelling program I am using is to create “forever spellers,” which means that the words assigned to your child will be learned and used correctly in their writing for the rest of their lives.

The program focuses on building visual skills and proofreading skills. The students will learn how to look at a word with their “spelling eyes” instead of their “reading eyes.” When we read, we don’t look at every letter. When we spell, we must look at every individual letter and use our visual skills to remember the correct spellings in order to use them correctly, all the time, in our writing. The program focuses on spelling skills, patterns, homophones, basic sight words (high frequency words), and overall language skills kids need to be proficient writers.

The program is divided into units. Each unit begins with a “Word Preview” which helps students practice building their visual skills and proofreading skills with five of the “Core Words.” Next, there are daily lessons and finally a Word Test in conjunction with a Skill Test that requires the students to spell words from the Core Words list correctly in context. There will be take home activities I will copy and send home from time to time. On other homework nights, you will need to select at least 10 words from the Core Words list and/or “Words to Learn” list and guide your child in completing a “Spelling Activity” (list is clipped in homework folder) with those 10+ words. The words on the “Words to Learn” list are those your child spelled incorrectly in his/her writing when I randomly selected a piece of writing to “inspect.” If your child needs enrichment, I will include words from the curriculum for extra challenge.

The unusual thing about this program is that the words on the word test are not given to the children ahead of time, so they can’t study for the test. As a result, they are being tested on their ability to spell high frequency words correctly rather than their ability to study and memorize the spellings of words on a predetermined list. The words tested are on the Core Words list, which has 336 words. The words on the test are selected at random to determine if your child has these words in his/her long term memory. At first, this will seem confusing and frustrating, but we will all get used to it over time.

The scores on the attached “Achievement Test 1” will not be recorded in the grade book. I used this first test to determine which students need modifications for the unit tests. If your child earned below a 50%, I will spell half of the lowest frequency words for them in yellow marker on future tests until I determine progress is being made and this accommodation is no longer needed. Words written by me in yellow marker will be traced by your child to help build his/her visual skills. On occasion, a spelling dictation test will be given. Students must write four sentences I dictate. Most of the words in the sentences are Core Words. Two additional sentences containing advanced words from the curriculum will be included as an option for students needing enrichment.

Although I’ve given you another “novel” to read, please read the parent letter from the Sitton company on the back of this sheet. I have used this program for three years and have found it to be of benefit in expecting children to spell correctly in their writing.

Thank you for your support,

☺ Ms. Vasquez