

Tips for Improving Your Child's Vocabulary and Spelling

Vocabulary and spelling will be an integral part of your child's education including in homework assignments. This article describes activities to help a child improve his or her vocabulary and spelling.

Throughout your child's academic experience, vocabulary and spelling will be a critical aspect. During elementary school, your child may have to compile vocabulary lists from assigned books or write sentences using assigned vocabulary words. Your child will also have to take a series of spelling tests. As your child progresses through middle school and onto high school, vocabulary and spelling becomes important when he or she has writing assignments. Here are ways to improve your child's vocabulary and spelling early on in his or her education experience.

Increasing Your Child's Vocabulary

Helping your child increase his or her vocabulary is often the first step that helps your child become comfortable with using words.

Here are tips from the Learning Resource Center (www.learningresourcecenter.net):

1. Ask, "Do you know what this means", when your child reads an unfamiliar word.
2. Talk to your child about a variety of things using new words.
3. Take your child to places and talk about what you see.
4. Explain everyday activities using vocabulary specifically associated with those activities.
5. Play games that involve vocabulary, such as Scrabble, Boggle, Charades, and Crossword puzzles.
6. Play word games everywhere, including naming and rhyming games.

Improving Your Child's Spelling

Often, students look at spelling as a tedious subject, which involves rewriting a single word numerous times or having to struggle to come up with sentences to suit a word. Spelling doesn't have to be boring.

Here are activities from Child Development Institute (www.childdevelopmentinfo.com):

1. Talk with your child often. (Good spellers also have good verbal skills.)
2. Let your child write stories about subjects he or she likes.
3. Encourage your child to write letters to a friend or a relative.
4. Help your child trace words in a book or on a paper. (It's a good activity for kinesthetic learners.)
5. Use finger paints to practice writing words.
6. Let your child play with magnetic letters on the refrigerator or other magnetic surface.

For more vocabulary and spelling activities, try Super Kids at www.superkids.com or Fun Brain at www.funbrain.com.