

60 Ways to Practice Spelling

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From the [Four Blocks/Building Blocks Mailings](#)

1. Paint with water- Dip a Q-tip in water and practice spelling the words on a chalkboard. The words will disappear like magic, leaving the chalkboard clean!
2. Shaving Cream Practice- An easy way to clean those dirty work tables clean is to let the children finger paint on the table tops. Have the students practice their spelling words in the shaving cream.
3. Scratch n' Sniff- Use a new sensation to teach the alphabet or spelling words. Write letters with glue on paper, then sprinkle with Jell-O. Makes a super scratch n' Sniff when tracing over the letters.
4. Adding Machine Tape Spelling- Students get tired of writing their spelling words the same way every time. Try having the students practice their words on adding machine tape.
5. Fishing for Words- On 3" x 5" cards print the students spelling words, fold in half, and fasten each with a paper clip. Place the cards in a large fish bowl. Using a toy fishing pole or a long stick, place a magnet on the string. The students go fishing for a spelling word to practice.
6. Finger Paint Bags- Freezer strength zip lock bags and fingerprint make great writing slates. Place a dab of finger paint (tempera paint can work, although, not as well. Hey, look! A use for all that semi-dried up paint!) in the zip-lock bag, tape the bag closed for extra strength. The student then lays the bag flat on the table and writes the word on the bag with a finger. The word will disappear like magic.
7. Record a Word- Have students use a tape recorder to practice their spelling words.
8. Disappearing Act- Help your students perform a real disappearing act. Children write their spelling words with chalk on black construction paper. Then you can spray and watch their words disappear and return.
9. Flannel Board Practice- Students use a flannel board and flannel board letters to practice their spelling words.
10. Scrabble Spelling- Place the wooden letter squares from an old Scrabble game on the Scrabble rail. Students can use the squares to spell the weekly words or to write a sentence of words. Incorporate math practice by having them add the number values printed on the squares to find the week's "most valuable word."
11. Word Cubes- Write letters on small wooden blocks and have the students arrange them and to spell their weekly words.
12. Spelling Magic- Try a little magic to teach spelling words! Have students write words on white construction paper with white crayon. Then have them paint over the paper with watered down tempera paint or watercolors. Words appear like magic!
13. Partner Word Step- On large piece of butcher paper print the letters of the alphabet. Have two partners pair up together to play this game. Have one

student read the word aloud. The other child must step on the letters to spell the word.

14. Read and Grow- Encourage flash card practice with this growing flower. Cut a large, colored, construction paper flower with a yellow circle glued to its center. Use an X-acto knife to make two parallel slits in the center of the flower. Cut green tag board strips the width of the slits, and insert the strip through the flower from the back. Write the spelling words on the stem for the children to practice.
15. Egg Spellers- The teacher writes the weekly spelling words on small pieces of paper and places them inside plastic eggs. (Now you know what to do with all those plastic Easter eggs after your kids are bored with them.) Students pick the eggs from an Easter basket. The students then must write that word.
16. Spelling Keys- The teacher writes the words for the week on construction paper keys. The keys are placed on a shower curtain ring. The students can use keys as flash cards to help them practice the weekly spelling words. On Friday, after the spelling test they can tear off the keys that they learned to spell. The words that they missed remain on the ring, this allows the student to continue to practice the words they need help on. If the student can spell these words on the review test they may then tear off the keys to take home.
17. Take the Pepsi Challenge- For a motivational technique, "Take the Pepsi Challenge!" Each student has a Pepsi cup. When Friday's spelling test is returned, he writes words he misses on a card and places it in his cup. When we have our review test, students are re-tested on the same words. Anyone who has a perfect score on all the unit tests and keeps his cup empty wins a Pepsi! Give a Pepsi also for perfect scores on review tests.
18. Spelling Puzzles- Write the spelling words on different colors of tag board. Cut the words apart in a variety of ways. The students then put the puzzle back together to form the spelling words.
19. Q-Tip Eraser- Write the spelling words on the chalkboard. The students then erase the words by tracing over them again and again with a Q-tip until the words are erased.
20. Block Puzzles- The teacher strings together wooden block beads. Write the spelling words on the top of the cubes, fill in the other sides with other letters. Attach a tag to the end of the string of blocks and write the spelling words on it. The student turns the blocks to reproduce the spelling word.
21. Spelling Bingo- The teacher gives a blank bingo card for a fun activity to take the place of your traditional pretest. As the teacher reads each word, students write it in a space of their choice. After giving all the words, I call words randomly until someone calls, "BINGO!" The winner must say the correctly spelled words that gave him the win.
22. Spelling Dice- The teacher writes the weekly spelling words on dice made from inverted milk cartons. The student rolls the dice and whatever the dice lands on they write 5 times.
23. Musical Words- A word skill game that is played like musical chairs. The teacher places the spelling words on small pieces of paper in a large box or bag. The children sit in a circle, and start passing the box around while music plays. Whoever has the container when the music stops must pick out the paper and read the word. If he can't, he is out. Continue to play until there is only one person left.

24. Transparency Show Off- The teacher makes a transparency of regular lined paper. The students practice writing their spelling words on the transparency. The students then show off their work on the overhead projector for all to see.
25. Individual Chalkboards- Have the students practice writing their spelling words on small chalkboards. They love it!
26. Tissue Paper Tracing- The teacher writes the weekly spelling words on a large piece of paper. The students then place tissue paper over the words and trace over them with crayon.
27. Wooden Flash cards- Try using pieces of wood as flash cards. The students enjoy the change!
28. Contact Paper Chalkboards- The teacher needs to make 5" x 7" cardboard pieces, cover half the cardboard with the special chalkboard contact paper. (You can also do this with chalkboard paint!) Then write the spelling word on the other half. The students look at the word and then copy it on the chalkboard side.
29. Magnetic Cookie Sheet- The teacher arranges assorted magnet letters on a cookie sheet. Students use the letters to form the weekly spelling words.
30. Overhead Posters- The teacher makes a transparency of the weekly spelling words. The list is then shown on the wall. A piece of butcher paper is taped to the wall. The student then traces the spelling words onto the butcher paper.
31. Hold It- Young children often find it difficult to hold a handful of cards while playing "Go Fish!" These card holders are really simple to make and really do the job! Place two plastic lids (Cool Whip lids work great!), flat sides together. Place a button in the center on each side, and sew the entire unit together with strong string or dental floss. Children slip cards between the two lids and hold the card holder. The game is played just like "Go Fish!" by using a pair of cards for each spelling word.
32. Typewriter Fun- Have the students write their spelling words ten times each on the typewriter. (Or try it on your classroom computer. If you're brave you can use your graphics software! Kid Pix is perfect for this.)
33. Paint Your Words- Have the students use small paint brushes to paint their words 5 times each.
34. Soft Flash cards- Use wall paper scraps to make unusual flash cards to practice the words.
35. Carbon Paper Practice- Have the students use carbon paper (yes, remember that stuff?) to help them write their words. I got some old NCR scraps from a printer that worked great and was a lot less messy. The best part: it was free!
36. Close pin Spelling- The teacher cuts out articles of clothing, from construction paper. The spelling words are then written on the articles of clothing. The students then reproduce the spelling words by hanging them on the clothes line with clothespins that have the letters written on them.
37. Salt Box Spelling- The teacher pours salt in the lid of a box (approx. 1/4"). The student then practices the words in the salt.
38. Alpha-Bit Spelling- Students use cereal to reproduce their spelling words. Don't forget to have a snack with the words you make.
39. Pudding Practice- Try using instant pudding as a finger paint to practice spelling words.
40. Palm Reading- Motivate your students with palm reading. Write a spelling word with watercolor marker, (you might want to make sure that this is all right with the parents first.) on the palm of each student. Have the students try

to spell each other's words. The students can check their spelling by reading each other's palms.

41. Pyramid Power- Give your students a weekly spelling assignment with a different twist. Have students write their words in order of difficulty. They write their easiest word once at the top of the paper near the middle, the next easiest twice, and so on. Students will have a pyramid shape when they are finished.
42. Portable Slates- Portable slates make a great spelling game. Plastic coffee can lids and 1 pound margarine tub lids are used as slates. The teacher calls out a spelling word and the students write answers with crayons, hold up their slates to be checked, then wipe them off with tissue.
43. Sandy Words- Have students write their spelling words in glue, sprinkle sand over the glue. The students then trace over the words with their fingers for practice. They make terrific flash cards!
44. Rainbow Words- Have the students practice words with felt pens, alternate colors for a rainbow look.
45. Put It In Print- Have the students cut out the letters from a newspaper to spell the weekly spelling words.
46. Round About Flash cards- Have students decorate a paper plate. Cut a slice out of the paper plate so it looks like a slice of pie cut out of the plate. Brad around piece of paper to the back. Then write the weekly spelling words in the window. The students turn the wheel and practice saying the word.
47. Spell It With Beans- The students use lima beans to spell the weekly spelling words. The students can also glue the beans in place for a 3-D flash card.
48. Spelling Squares- Students practice their words on graphing paper. The students use 1 box for each letter. Have the students figure out which spelling word is in the shortest, longest, etc. . . .
49. Rainbow chains- Rainbow chains are a great way of keeping track of the words a student knows. The student writes the words he successfully spelled on Friday's final test on a construction paper chain. The children love to see their chains grow!
50. Sandpaper Practice-Students write their words on sheets of sandpaper. The students can really feel their words!
51. Pipe cleaners - Children use these to form their spelling words.
52. Toothpicks - Same as above.
53. Word search - They can pick 10 of their stumper (high frequency) words to make up a word search.
54. Alphabet Stamps
55. Word collage - They design a collage using all of their words using markers, colored pencils etc.
56. Design a word - They pick one word and bubble letter it and design it.
57. Magazine letters - They find the letters in a magazine and glue them onto construction paper.
58. Painting - Paint their words.
59. Playdough - I have cookie cutters that are letters of the alphabet. The kids also like to form the dough itself into letters.
60. Magnetic Letters - I bought at a dollar store. Twist-Tie Spelling - use the twist-ties from the store to form letters to spell the words.