

PRIMARY SPELLING INVENTORY

This inventory is designed to assess the word knowledge students bring to their reading and spelling. Students are not to study these words because that would invalidate the purpose of the inventory, which is to find out what they truly know. You can administer this same list of words three times (September, January, and May) to measure students' progress.

The words are ordered by their difficulty for grade levels K through 3 and sample the features students are to master during these years. Have students spell enough words to give a sense of the range of ability in your class. For kindergarten, students spell the first 5 to 8 words. First graders spell at least 15 words and second and third graders spell all of the words on this list. Students who spell nearly all of the words correctly can be asked to spell words from the Elementary Spelling Inventory.

Instructions

Administer the spelling inventory the same way you would a spelling test, but assure the students that this is not for a grade but to help you plan for their needs. Call the word aloud and use it in a sentence to be sure students know the exact word. Copy a Feature or Error Guide for each student and staple it to the student's paper.

Directions for Using the Feature Guide. For each word, check the features spelled correctly that are noted in the columns at the top of the Feature Guide on page 302. Add an additional point in the "correct" column if the word is spelled correctly. Do not count reversed letters as errors but note them in the boxes. If unnecessary letters are added, give them credit for what is correct but do not give them credit for a correct spelling (e.g., If *fan* is spelled FANE, the student still gets credit for representing the short vowel).

Total the number of points under each feature and across each word, allowing you to double-check your numbers. The total score can be compared over time, but the most useful information will be the feature analysis. Look down each feature column to determine the needs of individual students. For example, a student who spells 6 of 7 short vowels correctly on the primary inventory is knowledgeable about short vowels although some review work might be in order. A student who spells only 2 or 3 of the 7 short vowels needs to be involved in word study around this feature. If a student did not get any points for a feature, then earlier features need to be studied first. To determine a stage of development note where errors fall under the stages listed at the top of the Feature Guide.

Arrange students' papers in order from highest total points to lowest total points before transferring the numbers across the bottom row of each student's Feature Guide to the Classroom Composite on page 322. For a sense of your groups' needs and to form groups for instruction, *highlight* students who make *two or more errors* on a particular feature. If you call out less than the total list, *adjust the totals* on the Classroom Composite.

Directions for Using the Error Guide. Using the Error Guide on page 303, circle each error or write in the student's spelling by the error that is most similar. When a word is spelled correctly, circle the spelling at the end of the string of errors. After all words have been scored, determine where most circled words lie and look at the top row of the table for the developmental spelling level for this student. Total the words spelled correctly and note where the student is within the stage: *early* in the stage, in the *middle*, or *late* in the stage. Use the Spelling-by-Stage Classroom Organization Chart on page 327 to organize word study groups and to find the developmental levels, the types of features, and the chapter in *Words Their Way* to turn to for activities.

Sentences to Use with the Primary Spelling Inventory

Set One	
1. fan	I could use a fan on a hot day. <i>fan</i>
2. pet	I have a pet cat who likes to play. <i>pet</i>
3. dig	He will dig a hole in the sand. <i>dig</i>
4. rob	A raccoon will rob a bird's nest for eggs. <i>rob</i>
5. hope	I hope you will do well on this test. <i>hope</i>
6. wait	You will need to wait for the letter. <i>wait</i>
7. gum	I stepped on some bubble gum. <i>gum</i>
8. sled	The dog sled was pulled by huskies. <i>sled</i>
(You may stop here for kindergarten unless a child has spelled 5 correctly.)	
Set Two	
9. stick	I used a stick to poke in the hole. <i>stick</i>
10. shine	He rubbed the coin to make it shine. <i>shine</i>
11. dream	I had a funny dream last night. <i>dream</i>
12. blade	The blade of the knife was very sharp. <i>blade</i>
13. coach	The coach called the team off the field. <i>coach</i>
14. fright	She was a fright in her Halloween costume. <i>fright</i>
15. chewing	Don't talk until you finish chewing your food. <i>chewing</i>
(You may stop here for first grade unless a child has spelled 10 correct.)	
Set Three	
16. crawl	You will get dirty if you crawl under the bed. <i>crawl</i>
17. wishes	In fairy tales wishes often come true. <i>wishes</i>
18. thorn	The thorn from the rose bush stuck me. <i>thorn</i>
19. shouted	They shouted at the barking dog. <i>shouted</i>
20. spoil	The food will spoil if it sits out too long. <i>spoil</i>
21. growl	The dog will growl if you bother him. <i>growl</i>
22. third	I was the third person in line. <i>third</i>
23. camped	We camped down by the river last weekend. <i>camped</i>
24. tries	He tries hard every day to finish his work. <i>tries</i>
25. clapping	The audience was clapping after the program. <i>clapping</i>
26. riding	They are riding their bikes to the park today. <i>riding</i>

Feature Guide for Primary Spelling Inventory

Directions: Check the features that are present in each student's spelling. In the bottom row, total features used correctly. Check the spelling stage that summarizes the student's development. Begin instruction at that stage with a focus on the types of features where the student missed two or more features in a column.

Student's Name _____ Teacher _____ Grade _____ Date _____

SPELLING STAGES →	EMERGENT		LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC				WITHIN WORD PATTERN			SYLLABLES & AFFIXES	
	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE		
Features →	Beginning Consonants	Final Consonants	Short Vowels	Consonant Digraphs	Consonant Blends	Long Vowel Patterns	Other Vowel Patterns	Inflected Endings	Feature Points	Words Spelled Correctly	
1. fan	f	n	a								
2. pet	p	t	e								
3. dig	d	g	i								
4. rob	r	b	o								
5. hope	h	p				o-e					
6. wait	w	t				ai					
7. gum	g	m	u								
8. sled			e		sl						
9. stick			i		st						
10. shine				sh		i-e					
11. dream					dr	ea					
12. blade					bl	a-e					
13. coach				ch		oa					
14. fright					fr	igh					
15. chewing				ch			ew	ing			
16. crawl					cr		aw				
17. wishes				sh				es			
18. thorn				th			or				
19. shouted				sh			ou	ed			
20. spoil					sp		oi				
21. growl							ow				
22. third				th			ir				
23. camped								ed			
24. tries								ies			
25. clapping								pping			
26. riding								ding			
Cells with 2 or more errors	(7)	(7)	(7)	(7)	(7)	(7)	(7)	(7)	(56)	(26)	

SPELLING STAGES:

EARLY MIDDLE LATE

LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC

WITHIN WORD PATTERN

SYLLABLES & AFFIXES

DERIVATIONAL RELATIONS

Words Spelled Correctly: /26

Feature Points: /56

Total /82

Error Guide for Primary Spelling Inventory

Directions: Circle student's spelling attempts below. If a spelling is not listed, write it in where it belongs on the developmental continuum. Determine a spelling stage that summarizes the student's development. Begin instruction at that level with a focus on features characteristic of that stage.

Student's Name _____ Teacher _____ Grade _____ Date _____

SPELLING STAGES →	EMERGENT		LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC				WITHIN WORD PATTERN			SYLLABLES & AFFIXES	
	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE		
Features →	Consonants Beginning Final		Short Vowels	Consonant Digraphs & Blends		Long Vowel Patterns	Other Vowel Patterns		Inflected Endings		
1. fan	v	f	fn	f(o,i,e)n	fan						
2. pet	p		pt	pa(o,i)t	pet						
3. dig	d		dk dg	deg	dig						
4. rob	w r		rb	rib rub	rob						
5. hope	h		hp		hop			hope			
6. wait	y w	yt	wt		wat			wate wei(ie)ght	wait		
7. gum	k g	km	gm		gom	gum					
8. sled	s		sd		sad slad	sled					
9. stick	s		sk		stek stik	stick					
10. shine	s		sn		sin shin			shai(y)ne shien	shine		
11. dream	j g		grm jrm		g(j)rem	drem		dreme	dream		
12. blade	b		bd		bad blad			blaid	blade		
13. coach			ch kh		coc koch	coch		coche	coach		
14. fright					fit frit			frite	friet friht	fright	
15. chewing			chon	chun		chuing	chooing		chewing		
16. crawl			kl krl		cro	cral		crool crall	crawl		
17. wishes			wechz	weshs	wishs			wishis	wishes		
18. thorn			trn		thrn			thurn thorne	thorn		
19. shouted			st cht	sht		shotd		showted shauted	shouted		
20. spoil					spl			spole spollo	spoyl	spoil	
21. growl			gral			grall		grille groul	growl		
22. third					thrd			therd thurd	third		
23. camped			capt		camt			campt camped	camped		
24. tries			chrs					chris tris	trys trise tryse	tries	
25. clapping					clapn			cklaping	claping	clapping	
26. riding					redn ridn	wriding		rieding rideing	riding		

SPELLING STAGES:

EARLY MIDDLE LATE
 LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC
 WITHIN WORD PATTERN
 SYLLABLES & AFFIXES
 DERIVATIONAL RELATIONS

Words Spelled Correctly: /26