



### **Visual Skills Necessary For Spelling Success**

Spelling is a complex visual task requiring skilled eye movement control, eye teaming, focusing, and central-peripheral visual attention. Necessary visual perceptual skills include visual discrimination, visual figure ground, visual closure, visual sequential memory, and visualization. Deficits in visual skills or in visual-auditory or visual-motor integration interfere with one's ability to experience spelling success.

### **Techniques For Spelling Success**

#### SPELLING CONCEPTS

1. Analyze the word
2. Visualize the word in an upward gaze
3. Spell and write the word with rhythm

#### HOW TO ANALYZE A WORD

1. Outline the shape of the word on graph paper. This facilitates visual discrimination of fine lines and differences. Note the characteristics of each letter (eg: small, tall, tail, twin, and silent letters).

what

when

where

2. Looking for clues. Does the word "play fair" by following a spelling rule? If it follows a spelling rule, note which rule. If it does not follow a rule, note the difference.
3. If a word does not "play fair," pronounce it as if it followed the rule and compare with its correct pronunciation.

Magic E Rule: done      Pronounced: dun

4. Divide the word into syllables. Note compound words.
5. Spell the word. Note errors and compare with the correct spelling.

#### VISUALIZE THE WORD

1. Visualization is the ability to make mental images, pictures, or "movies" in your head.
2. Visualization is a vital skill for reading, spelling, and particularly abstract thinking.
3. Visualization skills can be enhanced through practice. Some people will see a clear image. For others, the image will be vague or more like a feeling.

#### RHYTHM

1. Rhythm enhances performance. Always tap the rhythm of the word as you spell it. Emphasize with your voice any part that gives you trouble.
2. Tap out the rhythm with fingers, hands, drumsticks, Marsden ball, etc. A cheerleader approach is also effective.

#### NEW LEARNING APPROACH

1. People look up, either to the right or left, to key into the language center of the brain used for visualizing and recalling visual information. It has been determined that your child visualizes best in the upper right/left field of vision.
2. Have the child sit in a balanced position, facing straight ahead. Display a spelling word in the designated visual field. The child should look at the word and spell it. (No head movement is allowed.) Next, remove the word. Have the child maintain the same eye position, visualize, and spell the word again.