

UNIT STRUCTURE
Teaching Correct Spellings
CLASS – VIII

Unit Overview	Rationale	Unit Outcomes				Methodology Support					Additional Reading		
		Learning Outcomes	Learning Gaps to be addressed	Related Lessons	Unit Objectives	Introduction	Case Study 1	Activity 1	Case Study 2	Activity 2		Summary	Suggested Questions
Overview of the language skill What the Gunotsav assessment shows us		LO 8.22 : The learner writes short paragraphs coherently in English with a proper beginning, middle and end with appropriate punctuation marks.	Sub Area: use correct spelling of a word	Unit 3 Glimpses of the Past Macavity - The Mystery Cat Unit 4 Bepin Choudhury's Lapse of Memory The Last Bargain . Unit 5 The Summit Within The School Boy	In this unit you will read ways of helping learners to: a) practise correct spellings. b) refer to dictionary for correct spellings.	What this unit will teach you	Word Wall	Using pair dictation	Using dictionary for spelling practice	Spelling Games	What you learnt in this unit	Sample Questions : Q1. Break the following words into syllables- teacher, bargain, patriot, mystery, conquest, industry, responsibility. Q 2. Dictation of words on changing letters- apply-applied, early-earlier, happy-happily, carry-carried	↪ www.tess-india.edu.in ↪ SLM-Proficiency in English (D.El.Ed), KKHSSOU

Overview

By the time children come to Class VIII, they have had exposure to English for several years, and are expected to be able to write short paragraphs coherently in English. This involves being able to compose a paragraph with a clear beginning, middle and end with appropriate punctuation. To be able to do this, children would have to know correct spelling, sentence structures and punctuation. Preparing students for composition thus requires giving them practice in all of these. In this unit, we discuss problems of writing, and the skills necessary to help children develop their ability to write coherently in English.

Rationale

Data related to the recent Gunotsav and National Assessment Survey (NAS) assessment show that children are unable to write short paragraphs coherently in English. They are unable to spell words correctly, express their thoughts and ideas in grammatical sentences and use punctuation marks appropriately. To help the learners attain the target level of competence and achievement, we need to equip ourselves with good teaching strategies and accordingly plan activities to help our students practise and improve their writing skill.

Introduction

Writing is one of the most important language skills, as it serves as a medium through which we communicate our ideas, thoughts or feelings to other people. Since writing is a comparatively more difficult skill than the other three skills, the teacher often face problems in teaching writing. One area which poses the greatest problem is teaching of spelling.

Spelling is a case of the eye, the ear and the hand. In other words, spelling is a combined effort of the eye, ear and hand, i.e. the involvement of visual, auditory or 'motor' memory.

Unit Objectives

In this unit you will read ways of helping learners to:

- a) practise correct spellings.
- b) refer to dictionary for correct spellings.

Case Study I : Puja Dutta introduces ‘Word Wall’ in teaching spelling

Puja Dutta, a new teacher in Class VIII, was not confident enough to teach English spelling. During her pre-service teacher training, she had opted for MIL pedagogy, not pedagogy of English, so she did not have much idea of the problems students face in learning English.

“When I started teaching English in Class VIII, I found that very few students could write a word without spelling mistakes. I was shocked, as these were students of Class VIII, who would be appearing for Matric exams in two years. They often made spelling mistakes when writing words from the textbook. I was worried about how they would spell words *outside* the textbook. I felt that I had to take some effective measures to teach them to spell correctly.

I thought of a ‘word wall’ exercise to teach correct spelling. I made the students organize the longer words of a particular lesson alphabetically in the form of a word wall on chart paper, which we put up on one of the classroom walls. For this, first I divided the children into groups of five, and each group was responsible for finding the words in specific paragraphs of the lesson (for example, Group 1 looked for long words in paragraphs 1 to 3, and so on). They had to note down the words in their notebooks, and together pronounce and spell them. When all the paragraphs of the lesson were covered, I made the children listen to me reading the words aloud and put dashes between groups of words wherever I paused. For example, when I read the word ‘achievement’, I said it slowly, with pauses between syllables, so that the children were able to mark the pauses like this: ‘a-chieve-ment’ Like this, I made all the groups break down each word into syllables. Then I gave each group five minutes to read through their list and remember the spellings. When they were ready, I called one word at random, and a member of the group (from which the word came) had to go to the Word Wall and write down the word there under the correct column. We kept doing this until all the selected words were on the Word Wall. Here is what we got:”

‘Word Wall’ for ‘Glimpses of the Past’

Aa	Bb	Cc	Dd	Ee	Ff	Gg	Hh
a-chieve-ment	be-cause	Com-pa-ny con-quest crip-ples con-quer-ed	de-throned dis-sat-is-fac-tion de-ceive	es-sence em-per-or	for-eign-ers	gov-er-nor gen-er-al griev-an-ces	hu-mil-i-at-ed
Ii	Jj	Kk	Ll	Mm	Nn	Oo	Pp
in-dus-try in-tel-lec-tu-al		knowl-edge		mar-tyrs ma-n-u-fac-tured		o-pin-ion	pa-tri-ots
Qq	Rr	Ss	Tt	Uu	Vv	Ww	Xx
	res-pon-si-bi-li-ty re-bel-lion	Sac-ri-fi-ces star-va-tion sus-pi-cious se-poy		un-touch-a-bi-li-ty up-surge	vi-o-lent		
Yy	Zz						

“After a month I discovered that the students, even the weaker ones, could write most words with correct spelling. Now, my own confidence in teaching spelling has improved. It made me think: how has it worked? I believe that by constantly looking at a certain word hung on the wall of the classroom and by constantly hearing the spelling from the teacher and peers or partners, my students can remember the spellings of longer words.”

Let’s stop and think

1. Did you think Puja Dutta’s strategies of teaching correct spelling will work with your students?
2. What might be the problems in your class?
3. What other strategies can you use to teach spelling?

Activity I : Using pair dictation

One of the ways in which the attention of every child in the class can be drawn towards correct spelling is a technique called 'pair dictation'. When children are given the responsibility to dictate to their peers, they get practice in reading aloud with appropriate pronunciation. They learn to pay greater attention to words, and in the process their brains are able to recognise the shape of a word faster and more easily. This greatly improves reading speed and comprehension, and also familiarity with spelling.

You can use pair dictation with any short passage and with any class. Follow these steps to try a pair dictation exercise with your students:

1. Select a short passage (a different paragraph for each student in a pair) from the lesson.
2. Organize your students into pairs. Check that everyone is in a pair. Anyone left-out should join a pair to make a group of three.
3. Give students instruction for the pair dictation task: tell them that they will take turns to dictate their paragraph to their friend. One will read out his/her passage and the other will write it down as heard. When that is done, the other student will read out his/her passage and the first student will write it down. Each pair in the class will do the activity at the same time.
4. Make sure that students have exchanged their roles after they finish dictating, so that one who is speaking now has the chance to write and vice-versa.
5. Give a time limit for the activity (say ten minutes)
6. Walk around the room as students work. Check that all students are involved in the activity.
7. When the time is up, tell the students to stop working.
8. Tell the students to check their work with the textbook.
9. Provide feedback on common mistakes that you noticed.

Let's stop and think

1. What are the advantages of peer dictation for the teacher?
2. What problems can arise when you do it in your class?
3. Should you use long passages for dictation or short ones? What will motivate your students to do the activity more?

Case Study 2 : Partha Pratim Gogoi uses a dictionary for spelling practice

Partha Pratim Gogoi, who teaches English in Class VIII, realized that his students had never learnt to use the dictionary as a handy tool to learn correct spelling. They all had dictionaries at home, but these were bilingual (e.g. English to Assamese) dictionaries which did not have much scope for spelling practice. Mr Gogoi also realised that even though the school had good English-to-English dictionaries, students did not use these on a regular basis.

This is what he says about his experiment with dictionaries in Class VIII:

I know it is really a challenging task to use a dictionary for teaching correct spelling, because children are afraid of big books like dictionaries and thesauruses. But I do believe in the saying 'Something well begun is already half done', so I decided to give it a try and make the most of helping students use a dictionary for correct spelling.

First of all I needed at least three or four dictionaries for this purpose. Apart from the two available at school, I brought two from home. But they were not enough, so I chose two pages from a large dictionary and made photocopies, so that we now had eight dictionaries/pages with us.

Before beginning the activity, I clarified that people use a dictionary for multiple purposes, but we were going to use it to learn correct spellings.

Then I made eight groups for the activity. At the beginning of the task, I put up pairs of words on the blackboard, one with the correct spelling and the other with wrong spelling, such as *recieve-receive*, *bridge-brigde*, *sitting-siting* and so on. I announced that each group would have to look for the words in the dictionary and tell me the correct spelling. Whichever group finished one pair of words could move on to another pair, and so on. But first we would practise together.

We took up the pair *tought-taught*. I taught them how to look at the top left and top right corners of a dictionary page to see which word entries were found on that page. The good thing about this activity was that all the students were involved in the work. While they were busy looking for the word, I moved around the class to check whether they were able to use the dictionary appropriately. First they took a lot of time to find the words and tell me the correct spelling, but gradually they were able to look for words faster.

In the next few days, I made students check spellings on their own. I would say a word from the lesson aloud and ask for its spelling. Children would give various spellings, and I would put them all on the blackboard. Their task was to check for the correct spellings in the dictionary. With constant practice, students finally got into the habit of consulting the dictionary for spellings. In the next exams, when I checked their answer scripts I was very pleasantly surprised to find that their spelling ability had greatly improved!

Let's stop and think

1. The teacher made photocopies of dictionary pages for his students. Do you think this is a good strategy? Would you use these in your class? Why?
2. Do you think using dictionaries is a useful way to improve children's spelling?
3. Have you tried using the dictionary to teach words to your students? How would you solve any problem that might arise while doing so?

Activity 2 : Spelling Games

Teaching spelling can be made joyful by organising spelling games. Here is a spelling game that you can try out with your students. Provide a list of words with scrambled spellings. Give easy clues to the meaning of each word. Give a set of about six of such words and clues to every bench, and tell them each bench will win points for the first correct set of words. This will help them improve their spelling and also make them read English with more confidence. Here is a sample list of words you can use, with clues..

- (a) arbgain (something we do when we find that the shopkeeper is asking for a high price): _____
- (b) ariocht (a cart drawn by horses): _____
- (c) thgeiw (how heavy something is): _____ (d) enedlist (past tense of 'heard'): _____
- (e) hedge: (plants bordering a house, cut to look like a wall): _____
- (f) pnodre (to think): _____
- (g) telmeh (something worn on the head for protection): _____
- (h) anwdered (the past tense of 'moving about from one place to another'): _____

Let's stop and think

1. What do you think are the advantages of giving clues with words? Do you agree they improve not just spelling, but children's ability to read?

2. Besides jumbled/scrambled words, what other ways can be used to improve students' spelling at Class VIII?

Unit Summary

Being able to write in English is a relatively higher order skill that will be useful for every student in their personal life both inside and outside the school. In order to develop this skill, both teachers and students should focus on correct spelling. In this unit, you read some ways in which students' spelling skills can be improved. The activities suggested here will also help students read English at a normal speed and with more comprehension. This, in turn, will develop their confidence to read their lessons as well as other texts outside the classroom.

Additional Reading

1) How to Teach English

- Sarma M. Madan (Prof.)

- Mohapatra Debasish.

Tezpur University

Edition:2009

Bhabani Print & Publications, Guwahati.

2) Methods of Teaching English

- Mowla Shaikh Dr.

- Rao Prabhakar M. Dr.

- Sarojini B.B. Edition: 2004

NEELKAMAL PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD.

3) SLM- Proficiency in English (D.El.Ed)

KKHSOU, Housefed Complex, Dispur ' Guwahati-6

4) SLM- Teaching of English in Elementary Classes,

KKHSOU, Housefed Complex, Dispur ,Guwahati-6

5) TESS-INDIA, www.tess-india.edu.in

Suggested Questions

- 1) Break the following words into syllables- teacher, bargain, patriot, mystery, conquest, industry, responsibility.(Clap and show)
- 2) Give three examples of monosyllabic (one syllable), di-syllabic (two syllable), tri-syllabic (three syllable) words.
- 3) Spell the following words-
doubt, debt, tomb, bridge, judge, knowledge, knock
- 4) Spot the correct spelling from the pair of words given below-
deceive-decieve, seize-sieze, forty-forty, pronunciation-pronunciation
- 5) Write three words having double consonants, (e.g. travel-travelled)
- 6) Dictation of words having dropping letters-
write-writing, come-coming, type-typical
love-lovable, make-making
- 7) Dictation of words on changing letters-
apply-applied, early-earlier,
happy-happily, carry-carried
- 8) Rearrange the jumbled words into meaningful words-
mmitsu, inwith, obdisey, sauqd, stzana, mostern, mteryys