



Skills and Concepts for Grade 3

A third grader's spelling experiences should include:

- spelling by analogy** (_est: best, guest, quest)
- short and long vowel spelling patterns** (long a: stay, train, space)
- consonant spelling patterns** (/k/: came, kite, back, question, school)
- soft/hard consonant spellings** (c: city, bicycle, once; second, American, cutting)
- consonant blends** (_r: try, group, throne)
- irregular spellings** (through, thought, great)
- multisyllabic words** (together, important)
- silent letters** (castle, write, take, bright, lamb)
- spelling digraphs** (both, white, crash, children)
- spelling diphthongs** (/ou/: sound, clown; /oi/: point, boy)
- spelling double-letter words** (across, usually, beginning)
- spelling vowel-r** (/or/: morning, before)
- spelling soft-syllable endings** (/ər/: ever, color, dollar)
- letter substitutions** (letter-card manipulations)

Further, students should learn **strategies** that enable them to anticipate the spelling of a word, such as when /k/ follows a short vowel, it is usually spelled *ck* (luck), and when /k/ does not follow a short vowel, it is usually spelled *k* or *ke* (bark, like). The *ke* spelling is signaled by a long vowel sound. Students learn that this concept also applies to /ch/ (lunch, catch) and /j/ (judge, large).

Spelling experiences should be integrated with opportunities for **language growth**, such as identifying and spelling **antonyms** (always/never), **synonyms** (large, huge, gigantic), **homophones** (there/their/they're), **homographs** (live, read, does), **possessives** (Dan's, student's, ours), **regular and irregular plurals** (hats, inches, ladies, children), **contractions** (couldn't), **compound words** (something), **multiple meanings** (feet), **idioms** (to change hands), **analogies** (came : come :: said : say), **sorting words** (by meaning, phonic properties, structural attributes).

Students should explore **other word forms** of high-use writing words through the addition of **prefixes** (re, un) and **suffixes** (s, ed, ing, es, er, est, ly, ful, y), and the basic **rules** that govern their use, such as the addition of suffixes to words in which the final consonant is doubled, the final silent *e* is dropped, the final *y* is changed to *i*, and the final letter is *s*, *x*, *sh*, *ch*, or *z*. Further, students should explore **irregular verb forms**.

Explicit instruction in **visual skills** is essential, including the Word Preview—then students apply these skills in writing and proofreading.

Students need abundant **writing** opportunities to work toward the mastery of **Core Words** 1-335, to grow them into many more words, and to maintain 100% accuracy in all everyday writing for **Priority Words** 1-55 (by the end of the school year).