



Skills and Concepts for Grade 4

A fourth grader's spelling experiences should include:

- spelling by analogy (be_: behind, became, behave)
- short and long vowel spelling patterns (long a: able, state, rainy, today)
- consonant spelling patterns (/j/: just, change, giant, gym)
- hard/soft consonant spellings (c: cities, fancy, notice; complete, carefully, cute)
- consonant blends (_r: library, hundred, scratch)
- irregular spellings (build, watch, friend)
- multisyllabic words (information)
- silent letters (become, often, walk, answer)
- spelling digraphs (weather, English, wheel, telephone, check)
- spelling diphthongs (/ou/: hour, power; /oi/: voice, enjoy)
- spelling vowel-r (/er/: certain, third, surface)
- spelling soft-syllable endings (/əl/: apple, final, camel)
- letter substitutions (letter-card manipulations)

Further, students should learn **strategies** that enable them to anticipate the spelling of a word, such as /er/ is usually spelled *er*, *ir*, or *ur* in stressed syllables (person, circle, surface) but when /er/ follows /w/, the sound is usually spelled *or* (world).

Spelling experiences should be integrated with opportunities for **language growth**, such as identifying and spelling **antonyms** (summer/winter), **synonyms** (construct, build), **homophones** (there/their/they're, there's/theirs), **homographs** (wound, object), **possessives** (Maria's, friend's, his), **regular and irregular plurals** (hearts, geese), **contractions** (shouldn't), **compound words** (everything), **multiple meanings** (check), **analogies** (common : uncommon :: complete : incomplete), **idioms** (caught short), the meaning and use of **often-confused words** (lose/loose), **abbreviations** (hour/hr.), **sorting words** (by meaning, phonetic analysis, structural attributes), **Greek and Latin roots** (port/transport).

Students should explore **other word forms** of high-use writing words through the addition of **prefixes** (anti, de, dis, ex, im, in, mis, multi, re, sub, un) and **suffixes** (s, ed, ing, es, er, est, ly, ful, y, less, able, ty, ness, ment, ship, th, ion/sion/tion), and the basic **rules** that govern their use, such as the addition of suffixes to words in which the final consonant is doubled (including stressed final syllables), 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** 1-500, to grow them into many more words, and to maintain 100% accuracy in all everyday writing for **Priority Words** 1-75 (by the end of the school year).