Teaching Spelling and Vocabulary

Reasons Why Teaching Spelling and Vocabulary Is Important

- Words are living, powerful, and important. Learning to use them correctly honors that gravity.
- A word reflects the essence of a thing. Understanding the vocabulary we use is vital to comprehending and communicating.

General Advice and Teaching Tips

- Studies have shown the importance of learning vocabulary words in context. Giving a list of words and definitions and focusing on memorization is the least effective manner of learning new vocabulary. Consider the following tips to teach vocab more effectively:
  - Have students write individual sentences for each vocabulary word (sentences must show the definition of the word in context)
  - Have students make synonym lists for each of the words.
  - Illustrate words instead of copying definitions. Students could make flashcards with a picture on one side and the word on the other.
  - Have students report whenever they hear a vocabulary word being used outside of the classroom environment, such as at church, on the radio, or in adult conversations. The student needs to explain the context/conversation in which the word was used. This could be paired with some sort of prize or motivational system.
- Ensure that students are interacting with spelling words in a variety of ways, not simply writing out the list each day. Provide a combination of written and oral activities to help them practice.
- Most times, by high school, formal spelling programs have stopped. Instead, students could keep a spelling notebook or stack of notecards on which they keep track of their own misspelled words throughout their daily schoolwork.

Recommended Resources

- Spelling practice games:
  - [Spell It Wrong, Spell It Right: The Game of Getting It Wrong - The Dock for Learning](#)
  - [Does Spelling Count? - The Dock for Learning](#)
- Games for practicing vocabulary words: [Teaching Vocabulary in High School - The Dock for Learning](#)
- A review of a spelling curriculum: [Words Their Way - The Dock for Learning](#)
- Giving students strategies to expand their vocabularies independently: [Giving Our Students Strategies to Expand their Vocabulary - The Dock for Learning](#)

Sources

- Improving Word Usage by Jonas Sauder [Improving Word Usage (Jonas Sauder) - The Dock for Learning](#)
- Increasing the Vocabulary of our Scholars by Kendra Martin [Increasing the Vocabulary of Our Scholars - The Dock for Learning](#)
- Teaching Vocabulary in High School by Karen Birt [Teaching Vocabulary in High School - The Dock for Learning](#)
- Does Spelling Count? By Karen Birt [Does Spelling Count? - The Dock for Learning](#)