



## **NASET's Practical Teacher Series**

# **How Spelling Can Help Reading Learning Common Core Words Quickly and Easily**

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This issue of **NASET's Practical Teacher** was written by Matthew Glavach, Ph.D. The article describes how new research on spelling can translate into improved reading and writing and includes examples of how to apply the research to teaching common core vocabulary words.

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### **Spelling, Reading and Brain Connectivity**

Scientists continue to map specific brain regions and neurological circuits involved in reading. New research shows the routes for reading and spelling are intertwined, and that spelling can improve reading by increasing the connectivity between the brain regions.<sup>1</sup>

### **Proficient Readers**

To become proficient readers, students must move beyond identifying letters for each sound. They must be able to access orthographic patterns (syllable and word) in long term memory. This is important to reading because words can be read in patterns rather than individual sounds, especially often occurring patterns.<sup>2</sup>

## Analyzing Reading and Spelling

Reading words requires decoding: (mapping letters to sounds) and linking letters, sounds, and meaning in long term memory. Spelling includes analyzing sounds and blending the sounds back together capturing the best of both worlds. Meaning is anchored in spelling and pronunciation in long-term memory.

## Recognizing Spelling Patterns and Words

Pattern recognition includes matching information received with information already stored in the brain. Letter and word patterns overlay on existing letter and word patterns. Letter patterns and their sounds are stored in long term memory as syllables and eventually whole words. The word form area in the brain is where syllables and word patterns are stored. <sup>3</sup> The brain processes the statistical probability that certain sounds occur in a sequence.

For example, if a student knows the letter and sound pattern *ight*, then words like *fight*, *light*, *right*, and *sight* become easier to read.

## Dividing Words into Syllables

The brain tends to group together the letters that make up a syllable.<sup>4</sup> Students do not divide words into syllables by using complex rules. They decode longer words by looking for familiar patterns. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1. Syllable Pattern Examples.

news pa per          re por ter          ir reg u lar

## Syllable Boundary Problems

The following example shows why students need practice with identifying syllable boundaries. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 2. Syllable Boundary Problem Examples

newsp ap er          rep or ter          ir re gul ar

### Multisyllable Words and Music

Multisyllable words are like music, they have natural rhythms that can make learning them easier. "Accent structures in words naturally make a sort of melody".<sup>5</sup> The rhythmic feature creates less demand on the brain. <sup>6</sup>

### Rhyming Words (Predictable Word Patterns)

Brain research shows that a similar word pattern can prime the next word if it has a similar pattern and can accelerate reading. Rhyming words are especially powerful.<sup>7</sup> (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3. Rhyming Word Examples

narration - abbreviation - punctuation

### Ending Spelling Patterns

Even when the words do not rhyme but have the same ending spelling patterns, reading time is accelerated. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 2. Spelling Pattern Examples

solution          election          examination

### Common Core Word Examples

Based on the information presented in the article and the author's research, it is recommended that the most powerful way to present spelling activities is with predictable spelling patterns and the use of rhyme and rhythm when possible.

Learning only the following patterns, will improve students reading and spelling as identical word patterns tend to overlay on each other. Students will be able to read and spell multisyllable words they have never seen before. While it is recommended that word meanings be discussed, it is important to realize that as students gain word attack skills, their ability to read for meaning improves.

The words are from common core vocabulary words for grades four, five, and six.

**-ATION: LEVEL 1 (Language Arts)**

information	invitation	illustration	animation
presentation	exploration	organization	pronunciation

**-ATION: LEVEL 2 (Language Arts)**

contraction	reaction	capitalization	punctuation
quotation	communication	notation	exclamation

**-ATION: LEVEL 3 (Language Arts)**

translation	abbreviation	participation	fascination
imitation	evaluation	salutation	personification

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**-ATION: LEVEL 1 (Social Studies)**

location	destination	transportation	civilization
migration	population	immigration	

**-ATION: LEVEL 2 (Social Studies)**

integration	segregation	discrimination	emancipation
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generation                  confederation                  declaration                  representation

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**-ATION: LEVEL 1 (Math)**

equation                  operation                  multiplication                  evaluation  
calculation                  computation                  estimation                  investigation

**-ATION: LEVEL 2 (Math)**

notation                  taxation                  inflation                  approximation  
combination                  speculation                  numeration                  valuation

The example is from the Author's book *Common Core Words*: [StrugglingReaders.com](http://StrugglingReaders.com)

**References**

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- (5) Levitan, D.J. (2009). *The World in Six Songs*. (p.25) New York: Penguin Books.
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- (7) Dehaene, S.D. (2009). *Reading in the Brain* (p. 42). New York: Viking/Penguin Group.