The New **Oxford Wordlist** Research Report

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Preface

The Oxford Wordlist lists the 500 most frequently used words...

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The purpose of this report

The 2017 *Oxford Wordlist* research study was conducted in Australian schools and sought to compare data with the first *Oxford Wordlist* research *(An investigation of high frequency words in young children's writing and reading development)* conducted in 2007, and to provide an updated list of high frequency words for writing and reading.

The aim of this research study was to document the words children first write, to examine these choices against the same demographic criteria used in the first research study conducted 10 years ago, and to explore what these word choices indicate about how children's identities and social experiences have changed in the past decade.

The *Oxford Wordlist* lists the 500 most frequently used words, and is freely available to Australian educators. To access the *Oxford Wordlist*, go to **oxfordwordlist.com**.

ABOUT THE **AUTHOR**

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The 2017 *Oxford Wordlist* research study was conducted by Oxford University Press in partnership with Anne Bayetto from Flinders University. Anne teaches undergraduate and postgraduate topics focusing on students who have literacy and/or numeracy difficulties. Anne is also the reading expert for the Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) program.

Introduction

The number of words that students know is a predictor of their academic success and opportunities for enhanced life outcomes beyond school (Alderman & Green, 2011; Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2013), as their literacy skills are implicitly or explicitly judged by those who read what they have written (Hashemi & Ghalkhani, 2016).

The words students learn and choose to speak and write are influenced by the amount and quality of spoken language in their home, social contexts, childcare, preschool and school. Word knowledge is also influenced by the number and quality of interactive readalouds at home and at school (readalouds at school should be part of the daily routine in all classrooms at all year levels [Layne, 2015]), and the number of words learned through reading a range of text types, for example information texts. All these factors play a significant part in students' overall achievement because when writing they draw on their store of known spoken words, that is, the words they speak are the words they write.

Students with insecure spelling knowledge generally take longer to compose when writing as they are more hesitant. This is also seen in students with dyslexia who, even with sound vocabulary knowledge, are more often poor spellers (Sumner, Connelly & Barnett, 2016). Perfetti and Hart (in Dobbs & Kearns, 2016, p. 1819) make the point that students are "…unlikely to try to use words they cannot spell or do not know how to read when generating text… meaning that use of words in written text reflects some basis of word knowledge". McKeown, Beck & Sandora (in Dobbs & Kearns, 2016, p. 1818) support this assertion when they state that "Whether students use words in their writing is also important as an index of student ownership of new words". As the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) explains, "Writing has a complex relationship to talk" (NCTE, 2016).

In the Australian (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2017a), Victorian (Victoria State Government, 2017) and New South Wales (State of NSW, 2012) curriculums, a strong emphasis is placed on acknowledging the words students already have in their spoken repertoires. However, teachers must intentionally expand students' vocabularies by teaching new words and this instruction needs to start from the first year at school. This spoken vocabulary development has a symbiotic relationship with listening, reading and writing (spelling). The more words students speak, the better placed they are to understand what others are saying, to know the meanings of words when they are reading, and to start using their burgeoning vocabularies in their writing. Of particular importance is students' effortless knowledge about how to spell high frequency words as these words need to be written across a wide variety of text types for many school subjects. As pointed out by Harris, Graham, Aitken, Barkel, Houston & Ray (2017, p. 263), "…it is important that students learn to correctly and automatically spell most words they are likely to use when writing".

As in the first *Oxford Wordlist* study, the intention has been to record and analyse words that students spontaneously chose to write and to consider whether there were shared indicators and trends in relation to how students perceive their identities and lived experiences. How do they exemplify themselves in and out of school? What does the demographic data suggest to teachers? While acknowledging that students are the sum of their lives, in and out of school prior to collection of the 2017 writing samples, there are questions to be asked regarding how students' year levels, school locations, school settings, gender, language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE), and Indigenous or non-Indigenous identification may affect their word choices.

- Do students across year levels have distinctly different word usage?
- Does where a student lives influence their word selection?
- Does a student's socio-economic status (SES) shape what they write?
- Are there similarities and differences in words written by girls compared to boys?
- Are students from language backgrounds other than English writing a different corpus of words?
- Do Indigenous students write particular words that their non-Indigenous peers do not?

However, student word choices are also influenced by what happens at school: teachers' instructional and social language, the learning experiences offered, and the interactions students have with their peers and with other educators.

So, what broad perspectives may be taken? What influences may have led to students' word preferences? What do their word choices tell us about them as young people and as writers? By analysing the word choices of students, teachers should be better able to make informed planning and programming decisions when selecting words to teach so they may support students in becoming successful and independent spellers, writers and readers. As Joshi, Treiman, Carreker & Moats (2008–2009, p. 9) maintain "…non-automatic spelling drains attention needed for the conceptual challenges of planning, generating ideas, formulating sentences, and monitoring one's progress". So, knowing how to fluently spell useful and relevant high frequency words frees up writers to focus on authoring rather than being distracted by this secretarial component, as too much time spent thinking about how to spell places high cognitive demand on writers (Sumner, Connelly & Barnett, 2016).

Research methodology and design

Research study design

This research study is cross-sectional and allows comparisons to be made about Australian students' writing at two different moments in time (2007 and 2017) and to consider the dynamic nature of students' word use over a decade.

In order to make valid comparisons with the original *Oxford Wordlist* research findings from 2007, the same research design was replicated for the 2017 *Oxford Wordlist* study. This research design was originally developed by Professor Joseph Lo Bianco and Associate Professor Janet Scull, who were working at the University of Melbourne. Prior to commencement of the 2017 research, permission was granted from the relevant educational authorities to approach and conduct the research in schools. This research complied with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research guidelines.

Recruitment of participant schools

Similar to the 2007 study, writing samples from 1000 students across Victoria and South Australia were collected.

The samples were all from students who were in their first three years of school. The same demographic differentiations that were investigated in 2007 were used for this study, but the proportions of participants in each category were updated according to the latest available Australian Bureau of Statistics figures (ABS, 2017). This information was used to determine which schools to approach to take part in the study. This alignment supports the ongoing relevance and broad reflection of the wider Australian population in the *Oxford Wordlist*. For example, it has been noted that since 2007 the number of urban students has increased relative to the number of rural students.

Data collection process and guidelines

Five writing samples were collected from students in their first year of school and three writing samples from students who were in their second and third year of school.

The intention for collecting five writing samples from students in their first year of school was to collect a similar total word count to that which would be expected to be generated from the writing samples of students in Year 1 and 2. As with the 2007 study, the aim was for the writing and collection process to be as natural as possible. The students' regular class teachers were asked to collect writing samples that were part of their regular writing sessions and to allow their students to use their usual writing support tools such as published and personal dictionaries. It was felt that this process would allow students to go about their writing without feeling like they were being tested and with the support they needed to facilitate their word use without potentially being constrained to write on predetermined topics.

While it was anticipated that students' word choices and text types could be influenced by topics they were taught in class, teachers were asked to only collect writing samples of free and undirected writing. Each school was given the option of collecting the samples in either Term 2 or 3, 2017. Teachers were also requested to collect the writing samples on different days over a number of weeks, so that there would be enough variety in the writing samples even if students were drawn to topics and text types they might have encountered in their learning. For example, it is expected that on a Monday many students might write a recount outlining what they did on the weekend.

Data entry and collation

During the data entry process, each writing sample was identified with student codes, along with demographic data completed by the class teacher. Students' language and cultural backgrounds were listed by teachers according to school records reported to their respective Departments of Education.

The socio-economic status (SES) of each student was not directly determined but was based on their school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value and its relation to the ICSEA benchmark value. This value provides an indication of the socio-educational backgrounds of students according to factors such as parents' occupations and educational levels, a school's geographic location and the proportion of Indigenous students. The ICSEA benchmark value is 1000, with school scores belowthis benchmark indicating a lower level of educational advantage and values above 1000 indicating a higher level of educational advantage.

- Incomplete writing samples were excluded. For example, if there were only four writing samples from a student in their first year of school, that data set was removed. Samples were also removed if handwriting was deemed illegible after reasonable attempts were made to decipher them.
- Each student's writing samples were entered into a database and tagged according to the demographic criteria provided by the teacher.
- Proper nouns (excluding days of the week and <*Mr*>) were recorded to gain insight into students' use of these words, but they were not counted in production of the *Oxford Wordlist*. The result was a total of 3218 usable writing samples. The below demographic data is based on the samples included in the analysis. The figures in Table 1 refer to the number of texts entered into the database, followed by the total word count represented by these texts. For example, 1493 texts were collected from boys comprising 61 482 words, compared to 1725 texts collected from girls comprising 82 439 words.

TABLE 1 **DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

SCHOOL YEAR LEVEL	**FOUNDATION YEAR**	**YEAR 1**	**YEAR 2**
	1300 (20 095)	1063 (56 170)	855 (67 790)
LOCATION	**URBAN**	**RURAL**	
	2962 (130 617)	256 (13 438)	
SCHOOL SETTING	**LOW SES**	**MID SES**	**HIGH SES**
	1074 (34 266)	1412 (52 720)	732 (57 068)
GENDER	**MALE**	**FEMALE**	
	1493 (61 482)	1725 (82 439)	
INDIGENOUS STATUS	**INDIGENOUS**	**NON-INDIGENOUS**	
	69 (3143)	3149 (140 913)	
LANGUAGE	**ENGLISH-SPEAKING BACKGROUND**	**NON-ENGLISH-SPEAKING BACKGROUND**	
	2558 (110 883)	660 (33 172)	

Research results

TABLE 2 **COMPARISON OF TEXT TYPE USE BY YEARS F, 1 AND 2 STUDENTS**

	2017 (Stage 3)	2007 (Stage 1)
Recount	1437	1957
Description	877	401
Narrative	610	1077
Information report	85	186
Letter	55	0
Poetry	38	2
Procedure	35	14
Exposition	34	47
Response	0	81
Personal response	17	0
Explanation	13	112
Literary description	0	0
Discussion	0	1
Other	17	4
TOTAL	**3218**	**3882**

The text type most often written was *Recount* (somewhat less than in the 2007 research).

The large number of students who spontaneously selected to write *Recounts* may reflect the focus placed by early years teachers on retells, where students are taught how to write about their personal and shared experiences. Further, this text type is relatively straightforward to teach students in their early years at school and so would likely have been familiar to all writers. The second-most submitted text type was *Description*, with somewhat more uptake than in the 2007 research. ***Narratives*** and *Information reports* were next and there is a notable increase in the writing of *Letters, Poetry* and *Procedures* which may be reflective of specific teaching.

TABLE 3 **COMPARISON OF AVERAGE WORD COUNT PER STUDENT**

	2017 (Stage 3)	2007 (Stage 1)
Foundation	16	21
Year 1	53	51
Year 2	78	78

There was no significant variation in word count between 2007 and 2017 writers in Years 1 and 2, but Foundation Year writers were more moderate in their word count.

2007–2017: What's in and out?

Many words in the 2017 research were also in the 2007 research, so these words clearly have high currency with writers.

- The first 11 words in 2017 are the same as in 2007 but are in a slightly different order.
- Between words 11–50 there are seven new entries: *<played>, <were>, <came>, <up>, <his>, <once>, <after>*.
- Between words 51–100 there are seven new entries: *<back>, <bed>, <made>, <next>, <lots>, <into>, <sister>*.

This sees an 86% agreement in word use even with the ten-year gap in collection.

Notable words that no longer feature in the 500 words of 2017 include *<computer>*, perhaps because of increased tablet and smart phone use. While *<died>* is a new word for 2017, there are a number of allied words from 2007 that no longer appear: *<killed>, <fight>, <shot>, <dead>*. While *<versus>* was in the 2007 *Wordlist* it is now in 2017 as an abbreviation *<vs>*.

What is interesting is the use of more informal language, for example: *<super>, <awesome>, <amazing>, <crazy>, <stuff>*. The word *<guys>* no longer features, and the less formal salutation of *<mum>* has replaced *<mother>*, but *<Mr>* has now been included.

The greeting of *<hi>* has appeared, perhaps indicating a move away from the more formally used *<hello>*.

Encouragingly for teachers, the words *<books>* and *<reading>* have entered the list. *<Read>* was in the 2007 *Oxford Wordlist*.

Students are particularly keen to write about their own life experiences...

Media and commercial products

Proper nouns were not included in the 2017 Wordlist (excluding days of the week and *<Mr>*).

However, people's names featured strongly as did names of towns, cities, states and countries. It would seem that students are particularly keen to write about their own life experiences as many words referred to their personal context, spaces and places. As in 2007, much reference was made to Australian Football League (AFL) teams, fast food outlets, shops, movie/television characters, and digital games/characters and perhaps indicates the ongoing importance of these experiences to young writers.

What's common among early writers?

The 2017 research data shows that students predominantly wrote words, perhaps not unexpectedly, from their everyday spoken language.

Most of the words were one or two syllables in length and affixes were primarily –s, –ed and –ing. Adjectives were often used to describe objects, while some described characters, settings and feelings. Verbs used were general, for example: *<got>, <said>, <saw>, <play>, <get>, <eat>*. Comparatives and superlatives were not in the 2007 *Oxford Wordlist*, but *<best>* and *<later>* are in 2017.

School year level

The 2017 research database holds 143 593 words, yet there are only 174 different words across the year levels.

Many words were written again and again by students no matter the demographic (gender, school year, school setting, location, language background and Indigenous identification), although there were words uniquely written at different year levels. Perhaps not unexpectedly, students in all year levels named a range of animals, and references to food and pastimes featured strongly. Year 1 and 2 students wrote words suggestive of them having written imaginative stories (*<fairy>, <robot>, <unicorn>, <dragon>, <wolf>, <scary>)*, perhaps in response to teachers' text type instruction.

TABLE 4 **WORDS THAT FEATURED A UNIQUELY HIGH FREQUENCY OF USE BY YEAR LEVEL**

Foundation
sat
bubbles
pizza
buddy
mummy
goes

Year 1
better
tried
pretty
felt
pets
help
fairy
clown
white
sometimes
garden
bike
hot
animal
cousins
shark
dancing
bear
robot
train
rabbits
football
together

Year 2
small
OK
dragon
wolf
need
toy
can't
year
doll
dark
everyone
box
second
same
hear
hope
until
later
town
walking
life
still
let
find
something
dear
fire
stay
birds
told
class
number
team
under
city
here
different
hi
asked
walked
oh
scary
land
soon
before

School location

Where students live conceivably influences word choices as it reflects their upbringing and exposure to different lifestyles and learning experiences.

As highlighted by NCTE (2018, unpaginated), "Students' writing reflects the communities in which they participate. The differences in children's ways of using language are directly related to the differentiation of their place in the social world." However, there were no notable words written in the Stage 3 research that were suggestive of a rural upbringing being highly distinct from an urban upbringing. This may reflect the diminishing numbers of students living in these locations or the connectedness available to all students through digital technologies. Urban students uniquely wrote <*pet*>, <*fish*>, <*birds*>, <*dogs*> and <*cats*> and made specific reference to people: <*brother*>, <*baby*>, <*girl*>, <*boy*>. The word <*town*> was uniquely written by rural students. In relation to spelling competencies, it has been noted that "… students in remote and very remote schools are consistently outperformed by students attending metropolitan schools" (Australian Government, 2011, p. 111) and the NAPLAN data (ACARA, 2017b) has seen this pattern maintained.

Students' writing reflects the communities in which they participate...

School setting

It has previously been stated that the socio-economic status of a school does make a difference to student outcomes and so students in schools with a higher ICSEA value would possibly be higher achieving in terms of their spelling.

This seemed to be the case in 2007 where differences in word choices of students from low, mid and high SES settings were more evident, but data from 2017 suggests that this difference has narrowed. As was indicated in the *Review of funding for schooling – Final report*, "There is a correlation between students' socio-economic background and their performance… [however] not all students fit the trend" (Australian Government, 2011, p. 111).

Students from low SES settings wrote 58 unique words from their mid SES and high SES peers. These words reflected their interest in animals, make-believe and leisure pastimes. In this cohort the word <*Mr*> was used, as was <*TV*> and <*overall*>. Students from mid SES settings wrote 45 unique words that reflected similar interests to students in the other cohorts. This was the group that wrote <*holiday*>, <*holidays*>, <*firstly*> and <*secondly*>, and made use of the contraction <*can't*> and an apostrophe of possession <*dad's*>. Students from high SES settings reflected similar word use to that of their low SES and mid SES peers, but notable was their more common use of contractions <*that's*>, <*I'll*>, <*wasn't*>, <*couldn't*>, which may reflect the word use of those with whom they interact.

Gender

In 2017, boys and girls wrote many of the same words, but there is a broader gender difference in word choices than was apparent in 2007.

Within the first 300 words, boys and girls showed quite different word choices. Less domesticated animals were named by boys (*<shark>, <snake>, <monkey>, <spider>, <goat>, <fox>*) while more domesticated animals were named by girls (*<dogs>, <bird/s>, <cats>, <animal/s>, <bear>, <guinea pigs>, <bunny>*). The word *<bear>*, used by girls, may possibly be linked to teachers' use of fairy tales and traditional stories.

Boys more often wrote about active sport and leisure activities (*<soccer>, <football>, <footy>, <run>, <kick>, <bat>, <dancing>, <swimming>, <ride>*) although they did make reference to *<movies>* and *<TV>*. Girls, on the other hand, wrote about more passive pastimes (*<toys>, <doll>, <read>*) although *<bike>* suggests more activity.

Boys wrote words about competition and fighting (*<fire>, <monster>, <ninja>, <won>, <win>, <vs>*) but no words of this subject matter were written by girls.

Girls made notable references to home, family, friends, and school (*<girl>, <teacher>, <everyone>, <mummy>, <cousins>, <grandma>, <class>, <someone>, <party>, <cake>*) while boys did not.

The world of make-believe saw boys using the words *<ninja>* while girls wrote *<princess>, <castle>, <fairy>, <witch>, <magic>, <rainbow>, <king>,* and *<unicorn>*.

Boys used contractions such as *<can't>* and *<that's>* more frequently than girls.

TABLE 5 **GENDERED WORD USE (FIRST 300 WORDS): 2017**

	Boys	Girls
she	159	992
he	702	446
mum	231	394
her	73	513
dad	212	258
his	222	135
sister	71	153
brother	69	108
him	112	60
princess	0	131
girl	0	118
boy	63	51
man	40	0
grandma	0	53

It would appear that boys and girls more often write about their own gender. In total, girls referred to females 2354 times (and males 1058 times) while boys referred to males 1420 times (and females 534 times).

Foundation Year

Foundation boys wrote 59 unique words and Foundation girls wrote 53 unique words.

Both genders named people but boys used only two words, *<Mr>, <boy>,* and girls used seven words: *<baby>, <her>, <cousin>, <daddy>, <police>, <teacher>* and *<grandma>*. A range of animals featured in both lists, as did food. It was only boys who named sports: *<footy>* and *<basketball>,* and media, *<TV>* and *<movies>*. It was only girls who wrote *<princess>*.

Year 1

Year 1 boys wrote 65 unique words and Year 1 girls wrote 76 unique words.

Both genders named people with boys using two terms, *<man>* and *<friend's>*, and girls using six terms, *<girl>, <teacher>, <clown>, <cousins>, <sisters>* and *<mother>*. Animals and food were written by both genders. It was boys who named sports, *<soccer>, <football>* and *<footy>,* with no mention of sports by girls. Both genders included words around make-believe with boys naming *<robot>, <monster>, <ninja>* and *<dragon>* while girls wrote *<princess>, <fairy>, <witch>, <unicorn>, <magic>, <king>* and *<treasure>*.

Year 2

Year 2 boys wrote 77 unique words and Year 2 girls wrote 74 unique words.

Again, both genders named people. Boys used four terms: *<man>, <cousin>, <police>* and *<Mr>*. Girls also used four (different) terms: *<girl>, <baby>, <teacher>* and *<grandma>*. Animals and food featured in the writing of both genders. No girls named any sports, but boys named *<soccer>, <footy>* and *<football>*. Interest in make-believe saw boys write the words *<troll>, <monster>* and *<zombie>* while girls wrote *<princess>, <castle>, <king>, <queen>* and *<magic>*.

Indigenous students

Reflective of the ABS data, there was a small number of writing samples collected from Indigenous students.

Words written by Indigenous students did not show any broad difference in use to those written by their non-Indigenous peers. The first five words written by both cohorts were identical in order and within the first ten words both groups had written <*my*>, <*was*>, <*it*> and <*we*>, leaving only one word difference (Indigenous students wrote <*on*> and non-Indigenous students wrote <*went*>). Within the first 100 words written by Indigenous students there were 14 references to people: <*I*>, <*we*>, <*my*>, <*you*>, <*he*>, <*me*>, <*they*>, <*dad*>, <*mum*>, <*brother*>, <*his*>, <*she*>, <*family*>, <*people*>. There was inclusion of words relating to leisure: <*play*>, <*fun*>, <*played*>; and to time: <*days*>, <*weekend*>. The only reference to make-believe among Indigenous students in the first 100 words was the word <*troll*>.

Words written by Indigenous students did not show any broad difference...

Students' spoken language

LBOTE students have been considered an equity group requiring additional resources within Australia's schooling system.

However, recent evidence confirms that not all LBOTE students can be considered educationally disadvantaged and this appears to be evident in the 2017 data set.

The 2007 research study showed a difference between LBOTE and non-LBOTE students in their word choices, but in 2017 these differences have decreased. This is also confirmed in the 2017 NAPLAN data where students in Year 3 from LBOTE backgrounds made significant improvements in spelling with a higher mean score than their non-LBOTE peers (ACARA, 2017b); Robinson, 2017. As Russak & Kahn-Horwitz (2015, p. 307) maintain, "The depth of the English language orthography makes spelling acquisition an extended process for first-language (L1) English speakers" and perhaps their need to focus carefully and thoroughly on words new to them supports their spelling acquisition. It is unclear whether LBOTE students in the 2017 research study were learning English or had families that were monolingual. However, whatever their background they wrote 54 unique words and their non-LBOTE peers wrote 49. Both groups named a range of animals and LBOTE students more often referred to make-believe (seven words) than non-LBOTE students (one).

Summary

As previously highlighted on p. 11, the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE, 2018, unpaginated) reminds educators that "Students' writing reflects the communities in which they participate. The differences in children's ways of using language are directly related to the differentiation of their place in the social world."

However, the influence of time spent at school, and the instruction provided, is significant. A study by Serry et al. (2015, p. 94) found "… that with more time at school, the range of children's word spelling proficiency becomes smaller and more homogenous" and that the first few years of school can predict students' later spelling abilities. With so many students choosing to write the same high frequency words, those who automatically and effortlessly know how to spell them are more likely to approach writing with confidence, thus leading to more time available for their authoring. As Dobbs & Kearns (2016, p. 1819) point out, "Developing writers are more likely to have acquired strong conceptual understandings of high frequency words, such that they are more comfortable using them." This effortless knowledge also has a relationship with reading because "As children learn to spell, their knowledge of words improves and reading becomes easier" (Joshi, Treiman, Carreker & Moats, 2008–2009, p. 6).

Inherent knowledge of high frequency words supports students to become more independent so that they can focus their attention on dealing with low frequency words. This secure knowledge promotes development of their self-efficacy and self-esteem and frees up teachers to focus on expanding students' vocabularies.

Implications for educators

1 Systematic and explicit teaching of high frequency words supports students' independent writing: it cannot be assumed that they will automatically spell them of their own volition. As Graham & Santangelo (2014, p. 1735) found in their research, "Additional and crucial support for the effectiveness of formal spelling instruction was the finding that teaching spelling resulted in more correct spelling in students' writing."

2 Teachers need to provide word-rich classrooms with Tier 2 vocabulary being intentionally taught because the words that a student speaks are the words that a student writes (Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2013). Tier 2 words are those known and used by mature speakers, writers and readers and are frequently used in a range of spoken and written contexts.

3 Teachers' daily routine of undertaking carefully planned readaloud sessions, using a mix of fiction and non-fiction texts, supports students' acquisition of new vocabulary (Layne, 2015).

4 Students should be independently and successfully reading many texts as this will increase the likelihood they will learn many more words and so draw on these words when writing.

5 Phonological awareness must be systematically and explicitly taught, through both listening and speaking, as it is a key gateway skill for development of reading and writing (Carson, Gillon & Boustead, 2013; Ehri, 2013).

6 Letter–sound knowledge (phonics) must be systematically and explicitly taught as part of reading instruction, as it supports students to become independent and successful readers and builds their capacity when spelling words (Williams, Walker, Vaughn & Wanzek, 2016). As Ehri (2013, p. 11) stated, "Grapheme–phoneme knowledge is critical for enabling students to build a reliable vocabulary of sight words" while (Dobbs & Kearns, 2016, p. 1836) explain it as "…students who have stronger literacy skills are at a sort of dual advantage, with stronger ability to build lexical representations for new items and stronger writing skills to allow for the cognitive demand of incorporating new vocabulary items into text".

7 Having students write about topics that interest them increases the likelihood that they will be willing to write and this willingness provides logic for learning how to spell high frequency words.

8 Pre-assessing to confirm which high frequency words students can already correctly spell supports teachers to efficiently plan what words need to be taught and learned next (Alderman & Green, 2011).

9 Be pragmatic about the number of spelling corrections to be done based on errors identified in students' writing. Students may be reluctant to write words they are not confident in spelling if they believe they will have to correct all of their errors. Lowe & Bormann (in Daffern, Mackenzie & Hemmings, 2015, p. 73) observed that "Research also suggests that as primary school students progress through schooling, they may become less willing to take risks with vocabulary choice when writing, particularly if they are unsure of a word's spelling".

10 Students' invented spelling provides a window into their thinking and supports teachers to use targeted instruction on the way to students learning conventional spelling of high frequency words (Sénéchal, 2017).

11 Students need to be taught how to analyse, learn and think about their spelling of high frequency words because these words have portability of use across contexts in and out of school (Wing Jan, 2015).

12 Teach high frequency words with other 'like' words as this minimises demands on working memory and supports students in understanding that words in the English language share similar letter patterns, for example, when teaching <*come*>, also teach <*home*> and <*some*>. As Ford, Davis,and Marsten-Wilson stated (in Dobbs & Kearns, 2016, p. 1819),"Individuals acquire better representations of words when they are part of morphological families that contain more entries." When students understand that "The English orthography consists of three layers that affect spelling development: alphabetic, pattern, and meaning" (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton & Johnston in Williams, Walker, Vaughn & Wanzek, 2016) they will be better able to learn how to spell high frequency words.

13 As part of developing students' reading skills, teachers should reinforce the learning of high frequency words by having students read decodable books that include multiple words that share the same letter pattern.

14 When teaching high frequency words, include instruction in how to spell words with their plurals and using different tenses, for example, *play (plays/played), called (call), like (likes), want (wants/wanted).*

15 Teach the predominant multiple meanings of high frequency words that share the same spelling (homographs).

16 Teach the alternative spelling of words that share the same pronunciation (homophones).

17 Teach students that some high frequency words may be used as different parts of speech, for example, as a noun, adjective, verb and/or adverb (<*all*>, <*back*>).

18 Teachers need to ensure they have a secure understanding of grammar as this supports high frequency word instruction (Zbaracki, 2015).

19 Some high frequency words will take longer and be harder, to teach because they are abstract, that is, they are not like many nouns and verbs that can be photographed, or drawn, to support retention (Dobbs & Kearns, 2016). Teachers are advised to use a range of instructional approaches to strengthen recall of these non-imageable words.

20 Teaching dictionary skills and using dictionaries during reading and writing activities is critical for developing capable and confident readers and writers. Dictionaries support students with their spelling and help them with their comprehension and to understand how language works, including punctuation and grammar.

21 Teachers should make clear links between reading and writing because "When readers see a new word and say or hear its pronunciation, its spelling becomes mapped onto its pronunciation and meaning" (Ehri, 2013, p. 6).

22 Students need to be taught how to develop a fluent and legible handwriting style (Asha & Estes, 2016; Wolf, Abbott, & Berninger, 2017).

23 Students need to be taught how to touch type so they can more readily be authors (Poole & Preciado, 2016).

Inherent knowledge of high frequency words supports students to become more independent...


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