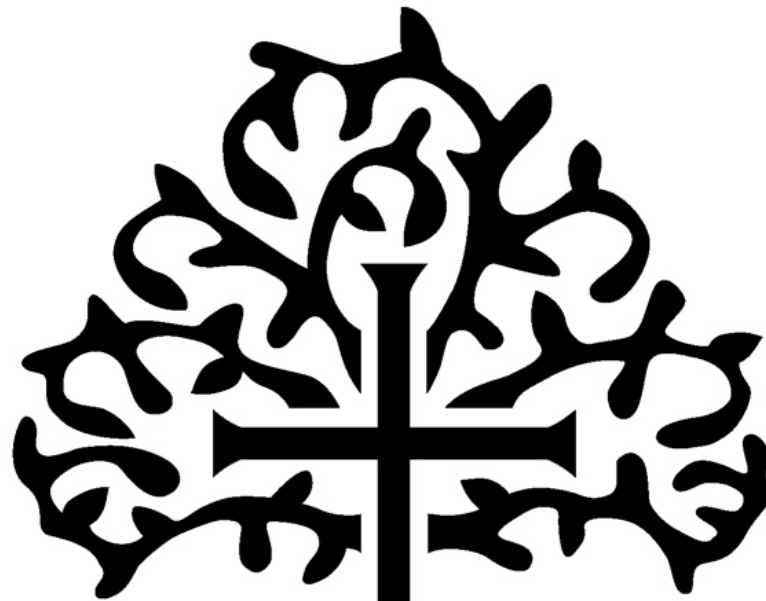


Live Oak Academy

Teaching Spelling at Live Oak Academy

Parent Guide

2008/2009



LIVE OAK
ACADEMY

Teaching Spelling at Live Oak Academy
Parent Guide

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Letter to Parents

The *Spell to Write and Read* program was developed by Wanda Sanseri, a student of Romalda Spalding, for ease of implementing the Spalding method of teaching spelling, writing and reading. The Spalding method is based upon the research of Dr. Samuel Orton, a renowned neurologist. The methods of this program are designed to reinforce the way that the human brain processes and learns information during the formative years of language development and are based upon carefully applied research.

The cornerstone of the Spalding method is teaching the sounds of the English language phonograms so that students can recognize those sounds in spoken words, translate the sounds into correctly written form, and accurately decode the written language they read. When they are learning to spell, students are writing by listening, *they are never copying the work of the teacher.*

The following instructions are provided for the parent whose student is enrolled in the spelling program at Live Oak Academy. Please carefully read and follow these instructions so that your work at home with your student will be consistent with the spelling method used in classroom instruction. This method is a multi-sensory approach, training the brain to recognize the sounds and written form of the phonograms, so it is important that the student listen, speak and write in the manner outlined in the instructions.

Thank you for entrusting your student to us, and for your partnership in educating our precious children. We pray that God will use this program to help equip our children to fulfill His will in their lives.

The Spelling Staff

Esther Holst, Department Coordinator

Myra Kaelin, Kindergarten Spelling

Kepe Wampler, Spelling A

Susan Merritt, Spelling B

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Esther Holst, Spelling E

Sue Sheffield, Spelling Review

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Preparing for the School Year

Prior to beginning home instruction for the school year, and as needed during the year, parents should study Step 5, “Introduce the Phonograms”, pages 27-32, and Step 6, “Say and Write Neatly A-Z Phonograms”, pages 33-41 in *Spell to Write and Read*. Experienced parents should also review these pages. They provide the foundational principles for teaching this program.

We ask parents to attend the first several weeks of class in order to see the spelling method taught. This is an essential part of your training to enable you to teach the method at home. The format in which home assignments will be posted is provided in Appendix A.

Sequence of Instruction

The sequence of instruction for spelling repeats each year:

1. Phonogram Practice

Phonogram practice is a daily, ongoing discipline in the Live Oak spelling method. During every classroom session instruction will begin with phonogram practice, and this will be assigned at home as well. A detailed script for phonogram practice is provided on page 4.

2. Handwriting Instruction

Students who have not learned to write start the year with handwriting instruction. In Kindergarten through Spelling B, cursive writing is taught. In Spelling C, cursive writing is reviewed for the sake of incoming students who have not learned cursive writing. Instructions for proper writing posture are provided on pages 3-4.

3. Reference Pages

Spelling rules are taught next by having the students construct reference pages in their spelling logs in class. The reference pages are constructed just before the spelling rule being taught is used in a spelling list. Because students in Spelling C, D, and E have already mastered the earlier spelling lists, these classes will construct nearly all of the reference pages at the beginning of the year.

During the first weeks in which the handwriting and reference pages are being taught, home assignments will include phonogram practice, penmanship practice, and for students in Spelling C, D, E and F, spelling review quizzes.

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Sequence of Instruction (continued)

4. Spelling Lists

Once the handwriting and reference pages have been taught, the spelling lists are introduced. Spelling words are dictated in class in syllables, then written and marked in the students' spelling logs **in unison**. Because the words are taught by dictation, the students must learn to write and mark the words at the pace set by the teacher. Students who write ahead on their own miss the instruction and reinforce mistakes through their writing. The multi-sensory learning approach requires that the student listen, speak and write correctly the first time in order to train the brain to spell accurately. Therefore, teachers at all levels will strictly enforce the requirement to work in unison.

Once the spelling lists are introduced, spelling practice, quizzes, tests and enrichments will be added to the home assignments. This means the workload of spelling assignments will increase. Parents should plan for their student to spend 30-45 minutes on spelling each day at home.

There is an important distinction between quizzes, which are practice, and tests, which are assessments. Instructions for administering spelling quizzes and tests are provided on page 5.

Posture Practice

Correct posture is an essential element of good writing and penmanship. **Every time your student picks up a pencil to write, perform the following posture check with them.** This may seem tedious and long, but after repeating the following steps many times, the student will be able to anticipate and correct any posture problems themselves. (These steps are summarized from pages 33-34 of *Spell to Write and Read*.) If your student is older and a competent writer, do not assume that he/she has mastered good posture.

1. Sitting Position

Sit up with hips, shoulders and head in a line, with your body facing the desk or table, but not touching it, and your elbows just off the edge.

2. Pencil Grip

Refer to the picture on page 34 of *Spell to Write and Read* for proper pencil grip. Ask, "Am I gripping the pencil lightly, not tightly?"

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Posture Practice (continued)

3. Paper Position

Slant the paper so that the outside edge is parallel to the writing arm.

4. Hand Position

Rest the writing arm on the paper at a comfortable angle, with the paper edge parallel to the writing arm. Rest the non-writing arm on the table, using the non-writing hand to anchor the paper as you write.

Phonogram Practice

Drill the phonograms each day. The Spelling teacher will designate in the home assignment the specific phonograms to be drilled. Use the following two steps:

1. The parent shows the student each phonogram card and the student pronounces all the sounds that phonogram makes. Make certain that he/she says the sounds exactly as indicated on the back of the phonogram cards. If you are not certain of the exact sounds, listen to the audiotape. Parents may prompt the student using the instructions on the back of the cards if necessary. Repeat this drill at least twice each day.
2. Have the student take a piece of ruled paper provided by the teacher and fold it in half lengthwise, forming two columns. Have the student write his/her name and the date in the top margin. The student will write in the first column only, turning the paper over as more lines are needed, and leaving the second column blank. The parent dictates the sound(s) each phonogram makes and the student writes the phonograms neatly, using only lower case letters. **Make certain the student is saying all of the sounds of the phonogram as he/she writes it.** The goal is for the student to be able to write the phonograms from dictation only, so do not show the phonogram cards unless the student has difficulty. After completing the drill, have the student write the same phonogram one or more times on the same line in the second column. As your guide for writing, use the cursive or manuscript Writing Formation Guide sent home by the teacher. (Live Oak Academy uses the A Beka style for cursive writing.)

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Phonogram and Spelling Quizzes

When administering a phonogram quiz, the parent dictates the sound(s) made by that phonogram, and then the student writes the phonogram while saying its sounds.

When administering a spelling quiz, the parent dictates each word, uses the word in a sentence, then repeats the word. If the word is a “think to spell” word, the parent adds the spelling tip provided next to the word in the *Wise Guide for Spelling*. The student then writes the word, sounding it out as he/she writes it. Students need not write in syllables or mark the word.

Because the purpose of a quiz is practice, Students must try to write the phonogram or word independently. If the student needs help, the parent shows the phonogram card, recites the applicable spelling rule, or gives other helpful prompts. Students should not be allowed to write a phonogram or spell a word incorrectly on a quiz. Stop the student and correct any mistakes immediately, so the mistake is not practiced. Quizzes are not turned in to the classroom teacher.

Weekly Spelling Tests

The purpose of the spelling test is to assess mastery. Spelling tests are administered on Monday, covering the prior week’s spelling list(s). When administering a test, the parent dictates each word, uses the word in a sentence, then repeats the word. Parents must use accurate pronunciation. For example, the word “tree” should not be pronounced “chree”. However, the parent should not unduly emphasize pronunciation in order to provide spelling hints. “Think to spell” pronunciations are used during the spelling dictation in class and may be given in quizzes, but not during a spelling test. For example, for the word “Wednesday”, we think to spell Wed-nes-day, but for testing purposes we use the common pronunciation of “Wensday”.

As the student writes the word, they should “think to spell” on their own and say the phonograms as they write them. Most students will need the parent to reinforce these disciplines. Students need not write in syllables or mark the word.

At the conclusion of the test, the parent corrects the test, marking incorrectly spelled words and recording them in the Review Word Log. Students turn in the graded test to the classroom teacher on Tuesday.

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Penmanship

Penmanship is included at every level of the spelling program and is assigned for practice at home. The role of the parent is to:

- (1) Ensure the student is using correct posture and pencil grip so that poor habits are not formed or reinforced.
- (2) Check the completed penmanship assignment each day to ensure the letters are formed correctly according to the Cursive Letter Formation Guide.
- (3) Assign additional practice for any problem areas noted.

There are many penmanship styles. Students at Live Oak Academy are required to form the lower case letters according to the Cursive Letter Formation Guide provided. The upper case letters provided in the Guide are a simple style to assist the student's learning. Over time, students often develop a personal style of penmanship for upper case letters. Any personal style that is legible and reasonable is acceptable.

Review Word Log

Any spelling words that are misspelled on the Weekly Spelling Test have not yet been mastered. These misspelled words are recorded by the parent in the Review Word Log (Appendix C). The parent then adds these Review words to subsequent spelling list words for practice and quizzing purposes.

On a separate test sheet each Monday, the parent administers a test of any Review words not yet mastered from prior tests. If the Review word is spelled correctly on the test, one check mark is recorded in the Log. When a Review word has been spelled correctly on three successive tests, and three check marks have been recorded, we consider the student to have achieved mastery, and the word is no longer added to future tests.

The Review word practice and testing is managed at home; therefore, tests of Review words are not turned-in to the teacher.

The Review Word Log is provided in Appendix B. You may make as many copies as you need.

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Appendix A: Home Assignments Format

Live Oak Academy
Spelling __, Week 1
SAMPLE Home Assignment Format

Name: _____

Wednesday, September 5

Phonogram Drill	Parent drills the following phonograms:
Phonogram Quiz	Parent quizzes the following phonograms:
Spelling Quiz	<i>WISE Guide for Spelling</i> , Section __, pages ____, words #__-__, and words not yet mastered on student's Review Word Log. As the parent dictates each spelling word, the student writes the word in cursive, sounding out each syllable as he/she writes the word. Check for accuracy in <i>WISE Guide</i> , pp. _____.
Spelling Sentence	Student composes and writes an original sentence using Section __ spelling words. Parent checks for proper capitalization and punctuation.
Spelling Enrichment	This may include spelling rules review and other enrichment exercises as described in <i>The Wise Guide for Spelling</i> .
Penmanship	Using best penmanship, student completes assigned lesson.

Friday, September 7

Phonogram Drill	Parent drills the following phonograms:
Phonogram Quiz	Parent quizzes the following phonograms:
Spelling Quiz	<i>WISE Guide for Spelling</i> , Section __, pages ____, words #__-__, and words not yet mastered on student's Review Word Log. As the parent dictates each spelling word, the student writes the word in cursive, sounding out each syllable as he/she writes the word. Check for accuracy in <i>WISE Guide</i> , pp. _____.
Spelling Enrichment	This may include spelling rules review and other enrichment exercises as described in <i>The Wise Guide for Spelling</i> .
Penmanship	Using best penmanship, student completes assigned lesson.

Monday, September 10

Phonogram Drill	Parent drills the following phonograms:
Phonogram Quiz	Parent quizzes the following phonograms:
Spelling Test	<i>WISE Guide for Spelling</i> , Section __, pages ____, words #__-__. Student writes the word as the parent dictates it. Turn-in test on Tuesday.
Review Word Test	On a separate test sheet, Parent tests words from Review Word Log. Parent corrects test, putting a check mark in the Log next to words spelled correctly.
Penmanship	Using best penmanship, student completes assigned lesson. Turn in completed penmanship assignment on Tuesday.

Please turn-in completed checklist, Spelling Test and Penmanship on Tuesday, September 11.

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Appendix B: Quiz and Test Master

This master allows space for writing up to 50 phonograms or spelling words. Have the student circle the word “Quiz”, “Review Word Test”, or “Weekly Spelling Test” so that you will remember which forms need to be turned-in to the classroom teacher. Remember, quizzes and Review Word Tests are not turned-in. Weekly Spelling Tests must be turned-in.

Name _____

Date _____

Quiz / Review Word Test / Weekly Spelling Test

1.	16.
2.	17.
3.	18.
4.	19.
5.	20.
6.	21.
7.	22.
8.	23.
9.	24.
10.	25.
11.	26.
12.	27.
13.	28.
14.	29.
15.	30.

Quiz / Review Word Test / Weekly Spelling Test
(Continued)

31.	41.
32.	42.
33.	43.
34.	44.
35.	45.
36.	46.
37.	47.
38.	48.
39.	49.
40.	50.

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Appendix C: Review Word Log Master

