



# SpellingYouSee

## Readiness Guidelines



SpellingYouSee®  
Building Confidence

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*Spelling You See* uses research-based techniques to help a student develop the visual recall for commonly spelled words that is the hallmark of a confident, competent speller.

Children learning to spell in English advance through certain sequential stages and sets of skills. Students will show spelling improvement over time as *Spelling You See* moves them through these stages. Levels contain engaging rhymes and non-fiction passages on different topics such as animals or American history. Select a level based on the readiness guidelines, not what topic interests your student the most.

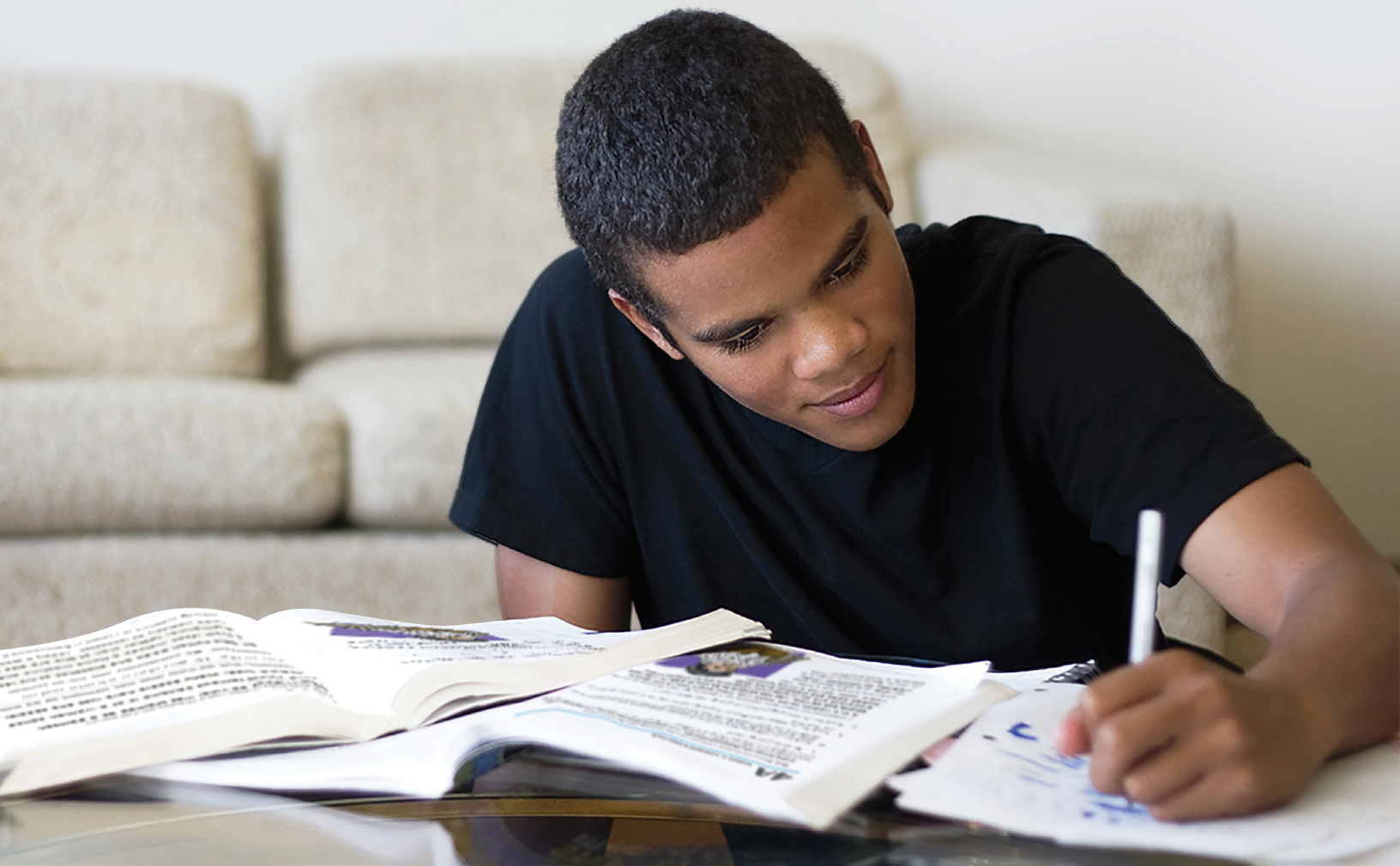
The reading passages in *Spelling You See* should be very easy for your student. This is intentional. Students can't focus on the letter patterns in words if they are struggling to understand what they are reading. Spelling skills typically lag behind reading by about two years. Therefore, do not use the student's reading level to find an "equivalent" spelling level. Use the guidelines below to find the best placement for your student.

**Please Note:** For a student who struggles with spelling but reads on grade level and is older than 11, we recommend you look at Levels D or E. Placement above these levels will not give an older student sufficient time to develop the visual process of confident spelling. Spelling is a visual skill and the methodologies of *Spelling You See* will help your student develop a spelling skill set over that extending time period.

### **General Instructions**

Read over the questions for each level and decide which level you think might be the most appropriate.

Use the instructions given for that level to assess your student's readiness.



Check if your student is ready for

## ***Listen and Write***

*Listen and Write* will provide lots of practice in writing individual letters and in hearing the sounds that letters make in simple words. This level is for a beginning reader who is still learning letter names and sounds and how to hold a pencil properly when writing.

*If you answer “Yes” to these four questions, your student is ready to begin Listen and Write.*

- ✓ Can my student focus on a worksheet for at least 10 minutes?
- ✓ Can my student identify most of the letters of the alphabet?
- ✓ Can my student hold a pencil and write a three-letter word?
- ✓ Does my student understand that letters make sounds?

Check if your student is ready for

## ***Jack and Jill***

*Jack and Jill* provides practice in writing individual letters and in hearing the sounds that letters make in simple words. It will also provide opportunities for students to study words in the context of nursery rhymes by marking letter patterns, copying words and passages, and writing from dictation.

This level is for the student who prints easily with lowercase letters and who knows most letter sounds, including long and short vowels.

*Jack and Jill* uses nursery rhymes because they provide a great deal of wordplay in a short passage. They include rhyming, alliteration, and, most importantly, a recognizable context that is essential to fostering confidence in an emerging reader.

***If you answer “Yes” to these four questions, your student is ready to begin Jack and Jill.***

- ✓ Can my student focus on a worksheet for at least 10 minutes?
- ✓ Can my student hold a pencil and write a sentence?
- ✓ Can my student give the sounds for most letters, including both long and short vowel sounds?
- ✓ Is my student beginning to read books like *Hop on Pop* by Dr. Seuss?

If you answer “No” to any of the questions above, try the readiness guidelines for the previous level, *Listen and Write*.

Check if your student is ready for

## Wild Tales

*Wild Tales* provides opportunities for students to study words in the context of factual passages about animals. Students mark various letter patterns, copy passages, and produce their own compositions or drawings. They also practice writing the passages from dictation with assistance. This level is for a student who knows letter sounds and can spell many common words correctly.

*Read the passage below to your student, asking them to follow along.*

Some sheep are wild. Bighorn sheep live on mountains and high hills. Male sheep are called rams. The bighorn rams have huge horns. They use their horns to fight each other. Flocks of sheep eat grass in the meadows. They climb steep hills to find more food.

*Ask your student to read the passage aloud by themselves.*

*Dictate the following list of words, one at a time, to your student, asking them to write the words on a piece of paper.*

sheep	called	horns	they	fight
eat	grass	hills	find	food

*If you answer “Yes” to these three questions, your student is ready to begin Wild Tales.*

- ✓ Can my student write two or three sentences at a time?
- ✓ Was my student able to read the paragraph aloud without sounding words out or pausing? Note that the paragraph is written at the minimum reading level for *Wild Tales*.
- ✓ Was my student able to spell correctly eight of the ten listed words?

If you answer “No” to any of the questions above, try the readiness guidelines for the previous level, *Jack and Jill*.

NOTE: If your student is aged 10 or above and can read the passage without correction or prompting but did not spell eight of the ten listed words correctly, their reading skill may be beginning to outpace their spelling skill. *Wild Tales* may still be an appropriate placement for them. If the content of *Wild Tales* appears too juvenile for your student, consider the next level of Spelling You See, *Americana*. To gain maximum benefit from the program, be sure to follow the handbook instructions in approaching the lessons with your student.



Check if your student is ready for

## Americana

*Americana* provides opportunities for students to study words in the context of factual passages about events and people in American history. Students mark various letter patterns, copy passages, and practice writing the passages from dictation. This level is for a proficient reader with gradually improving spelling skills.

*Americana* may be appropriate for an older student who reads well at this level but whose spelling skills are not equivalent. Contact a Placement Specialist to discuss the best fit for your student.

**Read the passage below to your student, asking them to follow along.**

Seahorses are fish, but they are not like other fish. Seahorses swim upright. They have a curved neck. They do not have scales. Their fins are very small, so they swim poorly. A seahorse uses its tail to hold onto sea grasses. A group of seahorses is called a herd—just like a herd of horses!

**Ask your student to read the passage aloud by themselves.**

**Dictate the following list of words, one at a time, to your student, asking them to write the words on a piece of paper.**

fish	other	neck	tail	herd
like	swim	small	group	horses

**If you answer “Yes” to these three questions, your student is ready to begin Americana.**

- ✓ Can my student write two or three sentences at a time?
- ✓ Was my student able to read the paragraph aloud without sounding words out or pausing?  
Note that the paragraph is written at the minimum reading level for *Americana*.
- ✓ Was my student able to spell correctly eight of the ten listed words?

If you answer “No” to any of the questions above, try the readiness guidelines for the previous level, *Wild Tales*.

NOTE: If your student is aged 11 or above and can read the passage without correction or prompting, but did not spell eight of the ten listed words correctly, *Americana* may still be an appropriate placement for them. To gain maximum benefit from the program, be sure to follow the handbook instructions in approaching the lessons with your student.

Check if your student is ready for

## American Spirit

*American Spirit* uses Spelling You See's core activities of marking various letter patterns, copywork, and writing the passages from dictation. Students will read about various people and events from American history. This level is for a student who spells many common words confidently, with an emphasis on the mastery of everyday words and experience with English's many irregular letter patterns. Remember, the reading passages should be very easy for your student. That is intentional, to allow them to focus on spelling.

**Read the passage below to your student, asking them to follow along.**

As a young man, Johnny Appleseed learned how to grow apple trees. When settlers moved into Ohio and Indiana, he planted orchards for them. He also planted orchards of his own and sold trees. Johnny lived simply. He had no house. He walked from place to place. His clothes were ragged. He is remembered for helping many needy people.

**Ask your student to read the passage aloud by themselves.**

**Dictate the following list of words, one at a time, to your student, asking them to write the words on a piece of paper.**

young	apple	planted	house	clothes
learned	settlers	simply	walked	people

**If you answer "Yes" to these three questions, your student is ready to begin *American Spirit*.**

- ✓ Can my student write for 10 minutes at a time?
- ✓ Was my student able to read the paragraph aloud without sounding words out or pausing?  
Note that the paragraph is written at the minimum reading level for *American Spirit*.
- ✓ Was my student able to spell correctly eight of the ten listed words?

If you answer "No" to any of the questions above, try the readiness guidelines for the previous level, *Americana*. A student who struggles with spelling should not be placed higher than *American Spirit*, regardless of their level of reading proficiency.

Check if your student is ready for

## Ancient Achievements

*Ancient Achievements* provides continued word practice using core activities of marking letter patterns, copywork, and dictation while gradually increasing reading level. Students will read about fascinating topics from long ago, like cave paintings, Viking ships, and the travels of Marco Polo. At the same time, students are introduced to interesting facts about word roots and more advanced word patterns. It is designed as a bridge to the next stage of spelling.

**Read the passage below to your student, asking them to follow along.**

The man's first name is pronounced Fy-lo (rhymes with high-low).

Philo was very interested in electronics. When he was a teenager, he found a stash of science magazines. He studied them carefully. He learned that scientists were trying to make a new machine. It would use electricity to send and show pictures. He thought about it. He talked with his science teachers. One day he drew a picture on the chalkboard. It showed how a television could work. Philo Farnsworth's plan was the first idea that worked.

**Ask your student to read the passage aloud by themselves.**

**Dictate the following list of words, one at a time, to your student, asking them to write the words on a piece of paper.**

interested  
science

magazines  
studied

electricity  
pictures

thought  
teachers

television  
idea

**If you answer "Yes" to these three questions, your student is ready to begin Ancient Achievements.**

- ✓ Can my student write for 10 minutes at a time?
- ✓ Was my student able to read the paragraph aloud without sounding words out or pausing?  
Note that the paragraph is written at the minimum reading level for *Ancient Achievements*.
- ✓ Was my student able to spell correctly eight of the ten listed words?

If you answer "No" to any of the questions above, try the readiness guidelines for the previous level, *American Spirit*.



Check if your student is ready for

## Modern Milestones

In *Modern Milestones*, students are introduced to a new way of marking word patterns that emphasizes how prefixes and suffixes are added to base words to enhance or change their meanings. Passages on artists, musicians, scientists, and others who have influenced our world since early modern times provide opportunities for students to practice new word patterns in a meaningful context. If your student can spell most words that they can read (although they may be uncertain about how those words change when adding various prefixes or suffixes) and if they are ready to study specific word patterns, they may be ready for *Modern Milestones*.

*Read the passage below to your student, asking them to follow along.*

The Chinese were the first people to print books. Their language uses thousands of characters instead of a simple alphabet. For many years they carved each page into a wooden block. Later, each character was carved from clay. The characters were baked so they would harden. Next they were fastened onto iron plates. A page was printed from each plate. Thankfully the clay characters could be used over and over! The process was a challenge. Still, it was easier than copying books by hand.

*Ask your student to read the passage aloud by themselves.*

*Dictate the following list of words, one at a time, to your student, asking them to write the words on a piece of paper.*

thousands	carved	harden	iron	process
alphabet	wooden	fastened	thankfully	challenge

*If you answer “Yes” to these three questions, your student is ready to begin Modern Milestones.*

- ✔ Can my student follow written instructions and work independently?
- ✔ Was my student able to read the paragraph aloud without sounding words out or pausing?  
Note that the paragraph is written at the minimum reading level for *Modern Milestones*.
- ✔ Was my student able to spell correctly eight of the ten listed words?

If you answer “No” to any of the questions above, try the readiness guidelines for the previous level, *Ancient Achievements*.