1. Chapter 11 was about spelling, word study and handwriting. In society, the ability to correctly spell identifies the educated. Because spelling has such an impact on today's society, people have mixed emotions about spelling. Good readers are usually good spellers and vice versa. Spelling is an extremely hard subject to teach and learn because the English consists of a plethora of other languages. English spelling has three primary informational characteristics that children need to learn in order to spell. These are alphabetic, pattern and meaning. Alphabetic refers to the child's understanding that words are written from left to right. Patterns refer to the child understanding that words are not always written from left to right. The meaning refers to the child being able to recognize the common spelling of derivationally related words. There are 5 stages of spelling development—precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional and conventional. Children progress through these stages until they are avid spellers. Assessments for spelling in the K-1 grades are then addressed. High-frequency words are words that we constantly use over and over again. Spelling activities such as making words, word walls and word study activities are then given. The most common spelling errors children make and how to evaluate them is the next topic. After finding errors teachers must assist the children with their spelling. There are nine given ways in which teachers can promote spelling in early-childhood classrooms—teacher modeling, labeling the classroom, word categories, pattern charts, interesting words, word sorts, bulletin board dictionary, spelling big book and 'have-a-go'. Examples of how parents can help their children grow as spellers are next listed. English language learners acquire spelling through the relationship between sound and symbol patterns. So it is not uncommon for children to mix and match their first language with English spelling. Special needs learners take the same steps in learning spelling as with other children; teachers just need to pay more attention on what they are getting confused with and help them along. Children in the 4th grade should understand the concepts of plurals, possessives, suffixes, vowels and capitals. Handwriting is the next topic. Believe it or not, children begin writing by the age of three. Handwriting instruction can be either formal, direct instruction or incidental instruction. Manuscript and cursive handwriting are both introduced. Teaching left-handed writers can be a complex task. Evaluating handwriting was the last subject noted.

2. "In fact, over 600 different ways to represent the 42 phonemes in English have been documented" (p.434). This is an astonishing statement. I guess this is why learning English is the hardest language because there are so many words out there that mean the same thing. I knew English was the hardest language to learn but I did not know the actual statistics. Crazy!

3. Today going to the computer lab was fun. I enjoy getting out of the classroom and changing the scene up a bit. I was surprised to find that visual was my lowest score. I always thought visual was my best way of learning. It's neat to see how it changes over time. Having the students test and see how they score in the beginning of the year compared to how they score at the end of the year will be interesting and fun for them.

4. I remember doing a different types of Learning styles test. It was called the VARK. Instead of 3 areas there are obviously four. I looked quick online and could not find nor remember which each for what the acronym stood for. But it's interesting...try it out if you want! just google VARK and it should come up.

5. We went over Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Even as of last year I have only heard of 8, so it was interesting to find there are indeed 9 and I believe 2 more on the way. I also found it was neat that Gardener himself is working with a staff member at BU!

Comments

1. I enjoyed reading your summary. I especially liked the realization that, "Spelling is an extremely hard subject to teach and learn because the English consists of a plethora of other languages." This is important for teachers to know and to share with students.
2. Yes, this stat is awesome and overwhelming at the same time. We must ease students into the learning of this most complex educational subject.

3. A useful tool that I am glad to have introduced to all of you.

4. Thank you for the suggestion of a new cite to investigate. I will do so and get back to you in another entry or in class.

5. Yes, her name is Joan and she is a professor of nursing and works right here in McCormick! I am currently learning about her work and her collaborations with Dr. Gardner who is a full professor at Harvard.

1. Good summary. I thought it was interesting that the text came right out and said that the ability to spell correctly identifies the educated!

2. It really is a crazy statistic! I never realized either until I read this chapter.

3. I agree that testing learning styles is a great way to learn more about your students and be able to teach them more effectively.

4. I've never heard of VARK, but I will look it up!

5. I think it would be very interesting to talk to someone who is actually working with Gardner!

1. I loved your summary! It has all the information that is in the chapter but summed up without missing a thing!

2. When I read that I couldn't believe it either. For us who do speak English already learning another language like Spanish or Italian seems difficult. It is definitely worse for those trying to learn English because it is the hardest language to learned.

3. I think it is also important and exciting for all of us to know not only our own learning styles but our students as well!

4. I never heard of VARK before but it seems interesting! I'll make sure to google it!

5. It is so interesting that someone is working with Gardnber from Bloom! It's hard to believe multiple intelligences have come such a long way with two more on the way!!
1. Chapter 11 was about spelling, word study and handwriting. She talks about the 3 layers of english spelling and the 5 stages of development in spelling giving their characteristics, significance of each, and examples. Farris writes about high frequency words and instruction for word study. There are strategies for solving words given. For example look at the way they sound, look, connect them and inquire. You can use word walls as activities. In assisting children with spelling, you can label the classroom, have bulletin boards, and use interesting words. There is also information on plurals, suffixes, possessives, handwriting development and evaluating it. Very informative chapter.

2. "Within their own settings, young children practice and play with graphic symbols as a way to both organize their world and express their thoughts and feelings" (p.438).

I agree with this quote and any way that children can express themselves is wonderful and communicating through their drawings and playful activities says a lot about them and how they are viewing their world.

3. I enjoyed the reading of The Fall of Freddie the Leaf. It is a wonderful way to address the real life situation of humanity in a gentle way to the children who have so many questions. I liked the part that made us think of diversity and how you can show the differences in skin color around the room. The point you made brought it into perspective when you asked what happens when a chinese person is cut in the arm? she bleeds. What happens when an african american person is cut in the arm? she bleeds. Case and point we should think in terms of race as the human race.

4. Normally I am not interested in history- I have always thought it to be boring. Lately I have been appreciating and finding it fascinating, so it was interesting to hear in class about the naturalists you mentioned and their great influence that directly affects things we do today like John Muir's activism saving wilderness areas.

5. I agree with Yopp and Yopp that rhyme in song should be encouraged like it says on page 444. I know the children at my day care love the song Down By the Bay!

Comments

1. Your summary is brief and misses some of the points that are important to the language arts. Please review a few of your classmates blog entries to see what they have produced.

2. Children need to be encouraged to express themselves in a variety of ways. Writing is just one of those ways.

3. I love your words that state, "we should think in terms of race as the human race." A very poetic way of expressing what I was trying to get at with my longer example of we all bleed red.

4. There are numerous books for children and others specifically for adults about John Muir and his life. He had a most profound affect on America and the national parks would not have been developed if not for him.

5. I love singing songs in class. I hope to do so with my guitar soon with "There was an Old Lady Who
Swallowed a Fly! Youngsters love the rhyme and fun of the language at play.

1. Very concise, right to the point summary. Covered just about all of the topics covered.

2. I agree, when children write they should be able to open their minds and be as creative as possible.

3. Very true. Children that young may have trouble coping with a death in the family or close friend. I agree it is also a great way to bring diversity into the lesson.

4. I agree I have always found history to be boring and not going to lie...I still do haha! But learning about John Muir was interesting.

5. All the classes I have observed love to sing. I think it is a great way for children to be entertained and learn from it at the same time.

Ashley Post on June 3 2008 (permalink)
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 9:50 PM by Ashley

1. Chapter 11 deals with spelling, word study, and handwriting. There are five stages in developing spelling: precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional spelling. Precommunicative consists of the children using letters randomly and they recognize words that have these letters in them. Prephonetic involves the children using 1-3 letters to represent the consonant sounds and at this stage the children are using these combinations to spell words. The book used the example of KR for car and KT for cat. With the next two levels, vowels are being used and by the time students get to the conventional spelling stage, there are few spelling errors and the children can edit their own work. Next up is the spelling and word study instruction. Here, the term, onsets-rimes are introduced. Using the example in the book, the word is cat and the onset would be "c". Following that would be the rime which is -at. Under spelling research, there are five strategies that students should learn when spelling and reading. First is sound - simply reading or writing words by just thinking about their sounds. Next is look - again reading or writing words by thinking about the way they look. Mean - reading and writing words by thinking of their meaning. Connect - using prior knowlege about a word to figure out new words and lastly, inquire - using other resources such as a dictionary or computer to learn more about the word. Next up are Word Walls and I love this idea. Word walls can be done in so many different ways. Words can be displayed according to blends such as -br and -pr. There is another type of word wall that is a Word Study. With this project, the wall can consist of homophones, hear and here, where and wear, for example. Ways of studying spelling is also mentioned. Students should look at the word, then they should say the word, cover up the word, write the word, and then compare their spelling of the word with the actual word. There are a few methods discussed about assisting children with their spelling. The few that I really liked were Labeling the Classroom. This is when the teacher, or even the students for that matter, can label items around the room. These items could include chalkboard, desk, trashcan, etc. Another method that I found to be interesting is Word Categories. The children can even do this on their own. Develop charts for categories such as animals- pig, dog, cat, colors- red, blue, green. The next section is about parents helping their students with their spelling. The parents can have their children label items in the house, the children can help write out the shopping list for food, and even spelling can be fun for them by playing word games like Scrabble and Boggle. When it comes to ELL learners and learners with special needs, don't forget that adjustments need to be made. They both need more time and special techniques to acquire the proper patterns of language, for example, saying the words slower and perhaps clapping the syllables out. Next is handwriting which is the most important. Teachers need to make sure that the writing is legible and fluent. Handwriting may be formal, direct instruction, or invidental instruction. When teaching handwriting, four strategies should be considered. 1) Allow your students to observe the letter being formed. 2) Describe to the students the steps to form the letter. 3) Have the students describe the steps to form the letter and 4) Have the students apply their newly formed knowledge into meaningful text. The last topic is cursive writing. The text says that it is important for the students to learn to read cursive writing before producing cursive writing on their own.
Eventhough this new writing style can be overwhelming, most students are interested in learning it because they call it the "grown-up" handwriting style. When assessing cursive writing, there are six factors to consider. 1) letter formation 2) spacing 3) Slant 4) Alignment 5) Line quality and 6) size. Make sure that legibility is taken into consideration also.

2. "...spelling knowledge is the engine that drives efficient reading as well as writing" ( pg. 434).

Without spelling, we can't do anything. We don't know what words say, which turns into not knowing what they mean, which ends with no knowledge of the most interesting things in the world. If we can't spell, how are we to write? How are we to express ourselves in only the ways that we know how? Most of all, how can priceless works be produced for all to experience?

3. My learning style inventory test told me that I am 40% visual and auditory learner. Nothing new to me :o) I've always been this way. I need to actually see things to understand what is going on and I need things explained to a "T" for me to understand. I think this test is a great start to learning about our students...well, when we actually get them :o)

4. The pictures that Dr.Walker passed out today are a great idea. I feel as though it's a great way to get the students ready for writing prompts. Simple pictures were taken and chosen by the students for them to come up with creative stories. This allows the student to use their imagination which I believe is important for children.

5. I would like to point out something that I learned. I'm excited about this because in the class right before Dr. Walker, digraphs where mentioned. Now, I'm sure I have been told what this was but for some reason I couldn't rememeber. While reading the text guess what I found? The meaning of digraphs. Digraphs are pairs of letter that represent a single speech sound, for example, -ph as in phase and -ea as in beat. I have seem to have lost he highlighted marking for digraphs so as soon as I find it again, I'll come back and repost it. :o) Sorry!

Comments

1. I like how you bolded the steps to spelling lessons that are truly interactive. Labeling the classroom is effective and was highlighted in the movie, The Color Purple. I have always used Scrabble, Upwords, Boggle, Password, etc. in my classroom to encourage the development of words.

2. Spelling correctly does help literacy evolve and to move forward.

3. I am happy that you liked and appreciate the Learning Styles Inventory. Use it and gain a deeper knowledge of your pupils.

4. A picture is worht a thousand words is a cool adage and can be an interesting tool to promote writing.

5. Diagraphs are pieces of the word puzzle. Add to the blog with another comment to complete your thoughts.

Wednesday, 06/04/2008 3:38 PM by DAVID

1.) Nice summary. I like how you bolded important words.

2.) I wrote something along the same lines in my rde. Spelling is a very important skill for students to learn.
3.) I thought the website was wrong in my learning style personally. I am glad it worked for you though.

4.) I enjoyed it pictures too. They are a great spring board for writing.

5.) I did not know that either.

Post on June 3 2008 (permalink)
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 9:47 PM by Kylie

1. In chapter eleven of Farris discusses the main topic of spelling, word study, and handwriting. First Farris talks about the five stages of spelling development; they include precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional. Also, students do need to develop their auditory and sound/symbol relationship skills before moving on to conventional. Next, Farris has a simple spelling test for kindergarten and first grade students. The test consists of ten words: back, feet, step, junk, picking, mail, side, chin, dress, and road. Farris covers in-depth teaching high-frequency words, spelling and word study. Next, Farris covers handwriting; manuscript handwriting which combines circles and lines to form the letters. Farris emphasizes providing opportunities for students to write and practice their handwriting. Also, Farris, like always, really covers ELL and special needs students and their developmental stages.

2. “Spelling is learned by special needs learners in the same developmental steps as with other children” (p.457). I like this quote because so often you are told that there is differentiated instruction for students with special needs, ESL, and ELL students. For once there is a process that is across the board for every child. I think that activities or tactics of teaching may be slightly different but this quote really shows how students are the same and not diverse or different for once.

3. I really liked the online test we took today about our individual skills. I think that this is easy for high elementary education students to do and it can really help you, as a teacher, know how to teach that student better. I do not think I was too surprised when I realized that I was pretty much equal across the boarder because I don’t tend to lean a lot in one way from another. I know this is just one kind of test but I wonder its accuracy and comparability to other tests that people have designed for you to take that relate to the same topic.

4. For the past two days we have been reading The Fall of Freddie of the Leaf. It is an abstract book that centers on death and a way for children to learn about the death and dying process. I think the intent of the book is good and is a good way to share with your child as a parent. I am kind of undecided on whether I feel that this book has a place in the classroom and also designing a lesson or activities on the book. Personally, I think that religion is such a touchy subject in schools and included with that people have such a diverse way of dealing with death that it would be hard, as a teacher, to answer questions that may contradict a parents teachings.

5. One thing that really stood out to me, in the book, was on page 446. Research is saying that in comparing fourth through eighth grade students who received formal instruction through a basal textbook series and compared all the students who received no formal spelling instruction. Their findings indicated that there were no significant differences between the two groups. I don’t know whether I just find it hard to believe or I never thought that to be true. I found the research and
1. A fine summary. I like how you pay attention to Farris' coverage of ELL and ESE students and their special needs.

2. I love your realization of the developmental process of spelling. You express its significance very nicely as you make the connection to differentiation for all. Very true.

3. I am pleased that you found the Learning Styles Inventory activity worthwhile. I hope you will find it useful in your teaching.

4. The story got you thinking. We never specifically discussed religion or contradicted parents'/guardians' teachings either. We simply present the abstract concept of death and through bibliotherapy students are exposed to existential thoughts, the newest multiple intelligence. Whenever students have a death in a family, or neighbor, or pet, etc. they are better prepared to deal with and overcome the sadness they naturally feel. Remember, use what you feel matches your teaching style and do what you feel is best for your students.

5. Farris includes this data to support the modern teachings that are frequently questioned by older educators and parents/guardians. The facts are proven through these statistics and research.

Wednesday, 06/04/2008 11:39 AM by DAVID

1. Great summary. Everything that Farris has talked about is very important for us to know and pay attention to. All of our students need our undivided attention but the ones who are struggling need even more attention.

2. Very true. Things start to get very confusing and frustrating when lessons have to be written in eight different ways.

3. I agree. The test really didn't tell me anything I didn't know already but it was interesting to see if I had changed at all. This is a great thing to do with our students right from the very start so we can modify and adjust our lessons to fit the needs of the students.

4. I think the book was done in a cute way. It almost portrayed death as a peaceful thing. However, reading it in the classroom isn't really such a great idea.

5. Very interesting to know because I didn't understand that myself. You would think that there would be some type of difference. Maybe we're missing something.

Thursday, 06/05/2008 9:46 AM by Ashley

1.) Conventions of writing consist not only of grammar, but also spelling and handwriting as well. There are five stages of spelling development: precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional. The first stages are developmental and therefore only temporary and only last until the child learns the conventions. By assessing students spelling errors patterns, teachers can specify instruction they can implement for each student.

   Manuscript and cursive handwriting are important for children to learn. Without these skills students writing productivity can be reduced and they can become frustrated with writing. Manuscript writing consists of circles and lines to form letters. It is produced in late kindergarten and early first grade.
Cursive handwriting is transitioned in the middle of second grade or the beginning of third grade. Teachers should watch to make sure students are using the correct writing grasp, paper position, and their handedness. Handwriting should be evaluating by letter formation, spacing, slant, alignment, line quality, and size. Teachers should provide many opportunities for students to practice their handwriting and spelling in order for students to develop and maintain those skills.

2.) “The current trend is to promote the integration of spelling and writing instruction” (pg 447). I think this is a great idea because it applies spellings in a real life situation. The textbook continues to say that schools are moving away from spelling textbooks, however from my experience, Southern Columbia Elementary is still using spelling textbooks to teach spelling. Students learn their spelling through memorization and practice. Students get bored with this form of instruction. I agree with Farris that spelling and writing should be integrated.

3.) I felt like Farris was incorrect in saying that manuscript writing begins in late in kindergarten. From my experience, a large majority of children start manuscript writing before they even enter Kindergarten.

4.) I am glad Farris mentions how important writing grasp is to the writing process. My mother is a school psychologist and she has ingrained in me the importance of children’s writing grasp. If you hold the pencil or pen correctly, it actually stimulates a nerve in your finger that helps with creativity.

5.) I loved the book The Fall of Freddie the Leaf. I want to buy this book and use it in my classroom.

Comments

1. Good summary, I think you covered the main points.

2. I think spelling and writing should be integrated as well. I have seen it done both ways, with a separate spelling book, and with a language arts book that combined the two, and I think that teaching spelling alone is becoming out of date.

3. I agree that many children begin to write before they enter kindergarten. When I observed at my old elementary school, the Pre-K students were not only writing, but were learning contractions! I was completely amazed!

4. Wow! I never knew that, but that is great to know!

5. I also would like to buy The Fall of Freddie the Leaf. It is a wonderful story that can stimulate so much conversation and learning.

http://bloomu-summer.sytec.passhe.edu/webapps/lobj-journal-bb_bloo/blog/2008Summer62...
2. I am pleased that you agree with Farris that writing and spelling are best taught in an integration.

3. I agree that Farris is incorrect with manuscript starting in K. Many students are much younger and their scribbling is very close to real letter development if not right on target.

4. How fascinating; I knew the grip was important in developing writing but never have heard that proper grasps trigger creative thoughts. A wonderfully enlightening thought from your mom's experiences.

5. Dear Freddie, what a lovely story of the seasons of life!

Christine (permalink)  
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 5:50 PM by  Christine

1. Chapter eleven of Farris is about spelling, word study, and handwriting. Spelling is hard for students to learn and teachers to teach because the English language is easier to speak than it is to write. There are 42 phonemes in English that can be represented 600 different ways. There are three parts to English spelling: alphabetic, pattern, and meaning. Alphabetic spelling is reading a word from left to right by sounding it out. Pattern spelling is when children realize that not all words are the same because of their letter combinations. The meaning part of spelling is where students have to find the common base of a word to spell it. There are five developmental stages of spelling. They include: precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional. The precommunicative stage is when a child recognizes that words are made up of letters. In the prephonetic stage, children use consonant sounds to spell words such as FT for feet. Children add some vowel sounds and more consonants to a word in the phonetic stage. The transitional stage is when children’s spelling is close to correct and can be recognized by the reader. The final stage, the conventional stage, is when children spell their words correctly. Word study is used to group words into categories of similar or different words. Activities with homophones and homographs are ways to practice word study. Homophones are words that sound the same but have different meanings. Homographs are words that are spelled the same but are pronounced differently. Handwriting is an important part of writing and spelling. Children begin to learn handwriting at a young age when they are drawing lines and circles. Two types of handwriting are manuscript and cursive. Manuscript handwriting is what is known as printing. This type of handwriting is easy for children to recognize because it is how most environmental print is displayed, such as the names of their favorite restaurant or store. Some children hold on to manuscript writing throughout their school years. Cursive writing is the continuous, linear motion of a pencil on paper from the first to last letter of a word. Children must be taught the style of cursive writing before trying to make words. Handwriting should be evaluated by the following six factors: letter formation, spacing, slant, alignment, line quality, and size.

2. “Good readers are often good spellers, but, unfortunately poor readers are usually poor spellers.” (433) I related to this quote because I feel that my love for reading as a child improved my ability to spell words. I always read books outside of school when I was in elementary school. I believe that so much reading really does help with spelling in the elementary grades because children have more exposure to words.

3. This chapter briefly discussed word walls. I was glad to see that Farris states that word walls need to be in alphabetical order. I have seen word walls in classrooms where the words are not in alphabetical order instead the words are randomly placed on a board or written on a poster.

4. The manuscript section of this chapter talks about how children hold onto printing throughout their school years. The book states that ten percent of adults print their signatures. I found this to be interesting because I also sign my name in a mixture of manuscript and cursive.

5. I liked that we found of our learning styles in class today. This is something I have done many times before but
this is the first time I have taken the test online. I liked that we all shared what our learning styles were. I am interested to see if mine changes the next time I take the test.

Comments

1. A fine summary. Can you imagine teaching students, "...42 phonemes in English that can be represented 600 different ways!"? We need to integrate the concepts and focus on the ones that students demonstrate need to be practiced. Too much focus on the dry husk of language development often turns students off from caring about their learning.

2. I agree and am glad that you have also experienced this reading/spelling connection.

3. My word wall has always been grouped by the alphabet. This way students can easily retrieve the words. I even color-coded my words per quarters to assist them in locating the various powerful vocabulary words that we were learning to use.

4. I am astounded that adults mix the manuscript and cursive. I am from the old-school on this one, I feel adults need to sign legal documents in cursive.

5. I am pleased that you felt the assignment of the online Learning Styles Inventory was worthwhile. Use it for yourself and your pupils.

Wednesday, 06/04/2008 11:23 AM by DAVID

Iarissa (permalink)
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 5:20 PM by Iarissa
Updated on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 5:21 PM by Iarissa

1. Chapter 11, Spelling, Word Study, and Handwriting is a very inclusive chapter that focuses readers attention on the many various aspects on spelling and also handwriting development. Farris begins by discussing spelling and the three primary characteristics or tools that children in order to spell conventionally. These primary factors are alphabetic, pattern, and meaning. There are five stages of spelling that have been developed through research and accepted as predictable among students. Students generally develop spelling habits beginning in the 1) precommunicative stage- letters are used at random; 2) prephonetic- letters are used to represent the consonant sounds; 3) phonetic- letters closely resemble the sounds; 4) transitional- vowels are used; and finally 5) conventional spelling- spelling is overall correct. Farris discusses in length the various instructional activities that teachers should focus on to enhance spelling skills which include activities focusing on rhyme, syllable manipulation, onset and rime and also phonemic awareness. Pages 444-445 highlight different classroom activities that have been shown to help enhance these skills. The current trend in spelling instruction is to integrate instruction with writing, focusing on the high frequency words rather then independent spelling textbooks. When working with spelling approaches to use and are valuable to a teacher are described in the text; using a morning message, making words (rather then invented spelling), software programs, word walls, word study activities (categorization and grouping), and finally teaching students spelling study methods like the "look, say, cover, write, compare" approach. Farri identifies common spelling errors among early spellers and also activities and ideas for teachers with students who struggling with this concept. Ell's and special needs learners are identified as high-risk for developing spelling problems and the suggestion for both groups of learners is to combine visual and auditory activities and also have students repeat the new words. Guidelines for spelling instruction in the classroom as well as dictionary and its usage in the classroom is recapped in the chapter before Farris moves on to handwriting. Handwriting instruction can either be 1) formal, 2) informal, or 3) incidental but formal instruction should begin in Kindergarten or First grade. The steps for a direct handwriting instruction include teacher modeling, description of steps to forming the letter, student
practice, and application of the new skill. Students should be given opportunities to use a variety of writing instruments as well as taught how to correctly grip a pencil. The two forms of manuscript writing taught are generally either the Zaner-Bloser manuscript or the D'Nealian manuscript before cursive instruction begins between second and third grade. Problems in the area of handwriting arise with left-handed students and also students whose fine motor skills are not yet developed adequately. Farris closes his look at handwriting instruction by identifying what teachers need to assess in their students writing. First, legibility needs to be promoted by the teacher to all students. The six factors that teachers should also focus their assessment on with manuscript and cursive writing are 1) letter formation, 2) spacing, 3) slant, 4) alignment, 5) line quality and 6) size.

2. "By waiting to introduce cursive at the beginning of third grade or even later, fewer students revert to using manuscript in upper-elementary and middle school" (p. 469). I chose this quote because it really applied to my own handwriting instruction. I remember learning cursive early, in my opinion too early and was forced to use it in third grade only which was when I wasn't very developed in my handwriting and fine motor skills. When instruction ended and I failed to have any teachers later in my education that asked for cursive writing I lost the skill. Had I been taught cursive later and required to use it longer I think I would have retained it and not lost that skill.

3. It was interesting to read the statistics on the usage of the high frequency words. I actually heard about a story in another course I am taking about a story passage that consists of just the high frequency words, it would be a fun way to show the students how important those words really are and something for them to have on their desks to refer to for spelling in their writing.

4. I loved the idea on page 472 of the text about incorporating cursive writing into a calligraphy art lesson. I hate cursive writing (because I can't do it) but I loved learning calligraphy from my late grandmother. And if you could incorporate art into the lesson and have students write a word and then create an associated art project it is even more motivating rather then a boring handwriting lesson.

5. I missed class today because I chaperoned a field trip with my practicum class to the Susquehanna river in Williamsport. I was able to stay after class today and catch up on what I had missed during class and I thought it was really cool to take the learning modality test and discover what kind of a learner I am, turns out I am very visual (65%) and not at all kinesthetic. I appreciated this time to catch up on the lesson and look forward to hearing the class journal being read to recap what I missed.

Comments

1. Your summary really covers the chapter thoroughly. After reading your summary, I realized that I forgot to include a few small details in mine so it was good reminder of the things I missed.

2. I agree with you here about cursive writing. I too lost the skill when teachers stoppped asking for it. That is why I was glad we got the cursive writing handouts in class.

3. I too was interested while reading about high frequency words. I was amazed by the percent of the words we use in our writing.

4. I think that calligraphy would be a great way to incorporate art in teaching handwriting.

5. I also wrote about enjoying the learning style test today. I am interested to see if the results will change the next time I take the test.

Tuesday, 06/03/2008 6:04 PM by Christine
1. Your summary is superb. I like how you mention the two dominant types of cursive styles currently being taught in America. Be sure to know which one the school system in which you become employed uses.

2. Your schema matches the current thinking about teaching students to use cursive by late second grade and early third grade. The students need time to practice this new form of writing and develop skills. Later they may choose to revert back to manuscript writing if they so choose but they still have the ability to write in a the adult manner, cursive.

3. I love using word games like the one you describe that focuses on the importance of high-frequency words. Student gain a great deal from these types of realizations.

4. What a lovely memory of your grandmother. Caligraphy can really add a sense of richness to lessons and life as in wedding invitations, etc.

5. Thank you for telling the students of where you were and notifying them that you indeed did make up for your lost time with us. Learning from field experiences as so impotent to students. I am pleased that you had this opportunity and appreciate your notifications prior to the trip; a very respectful act.

m Melissa (permalink)
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 4:57 PM by Melissa
Updated on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 5:14 PM by Melissa

1. Chapter 11 begins by introducing the concept of spelling and how reading, like the other language arts, plays a major role in the development of spelling. The only problem with this is that good readers are usually good spellers and poor readers are usually poor spellers. This chapter suggests ways for children to become better spellers and that begins with practice. Having a strong sense of phonemic awareness also assists in becoming a better speller as well. When learning how to spell, there are three characteristics that children need to learn. First is the alphabetic which says that words are written left to right and students know the sounds of words, thus being able to "sound them out". Second are understanding the patterns in which groups of letters make as well as sounds syllables make such as VCCV and VCV. Finally the meaning layer says that children must be able to understand the derivation of words, or their base, in order to build upon and create new words from that word chunk. We also learned about the four stages of spelling development which include the precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional. Children go through each one of these stages before they are able to master the process of spelling. Like everything else we do in life, spelling must be a process we build upon in order to master in the end. Teaching children to spell may not be the easiest thing to do but when we incorporate good literature into lessons it can teach skills that will help children become better spellers. This includes books that teach good phonemic aware through the use of activities that focus on rhyme, syllable manipulation, onset-rhyme manipulation, and also phoneme manipulation. The book also suggests spelling activities such as making words, working with word walls, and even word study activities where students use their knowledge of both homophones and homographs to point out differences among groups of words. The development of handwriting is also a process that begins as a young child and develops into the ability to write in cursive. Children must be encouraged to use crayons and pencils at a young age in order to strengthen their fine motor skills to be able to write in both manuscript and cursive. Activities such as fingerpainting and playing with clay all assist in the development of a child's fine motor skills. If a child is has good handwriting, that child will in fact become a better writer because there is nothing to hold them back from the writing process. Children with bad handwriting are less likely to be good writers. Teachers must provide ample reading and writing opportunities for students of any age in order for these necessary skills to be developed and maintained throughout their lives.

2. "parents should encourage their young children to use invented or temporary spellings in their writing to promote an atmosphere of acceptance for such creation; at the same time, parents should reassure the young writers that they too, will develop the perceptual ability needed to distinguish correct from incorrect spelling" (p
438). I think it is important for parents, as well as teachers of young children, to let children experiment with writing and equally as important to encourage it as well. We must praise their invented spellings, but also try and make them aware of the correct way to spell words, without discouraging them from writing. In time, and with practice, they will be able to become good spellers and it is our job to move them in the right direction.

3. The learning style activity today really opened my eyes to the type of learner that I am. I always thought I was a visual learner but the test told me something completely different. I am by far an auditory learner. I guess you learn something new about yourself every single day.

4. Today we also finished our second read-a-loud book, "The Fall of Freddie the Leaf", and I will definitely use this book in my classroom when a child is dealing with a death in the family or even the school community. It is a book that can introduce so many interdisciplinary topics such as diversity or science that its use is multifunctional. We have all had to deal with a death of a loved one and I know that even hearing the book today made me think back of someone close that I have lost and its always reassuring to hear something that reminds you they are in a better, peaceful, place.

5. I think the section that talks about left-handed children is extremely interesting because I never knew that handwriting instruction would be different for these children. I also think it is interesting to think about how one becomes left or right handed. I work at a daycare and many children ages 3, 4, and 5 still use both hands when coloring or painting. Others already have a dominant hand. Just the other day a little girl was coloring with her left and I asked her why she used that hand and she said it was the one she liked to use. But when I asked her to write with her other hand, she said it was too hard and wouldn't color with it. In this instance, she has chosen to be dominant with her left hand.

Comments

1. Really great summary, you discussed a lot of things I read in the chapter but didn't write in my summary so it was good to read this and really remember everything discussed since there were so many important points made.

2. I agree, if teachers or parents overemphasize spelling in the beginning it will become frustrating for writers and affect their motivation to write. That isn't our shouldn't be our goal as teachers.

3. I talked about the learning style test in my RDE as well, I really found the results interesting and very true to how I prefer to be taught throughout my education.

4. I am going to finish this story tonight, Dr. Walker is lending it to me. So far I found the book refreshing in its approach, whenever a family member of mine passes I am given the standard phrase "I will pray for your family". Well, I am an atheist and that makes me uncomfortable so this book seems like a new way to talk about the idea with a class of students that doesn't have to center around religion.

5. Yes, I knew left-handed students wrote differently but I never anticipated the challenges this may pose to a teacher. That's great that you had the opportunity to observe this where you work and apply the information from the textbook and class to your everyday experiences.

Tuesday, 06/03/2008 5:28 PM by Larissa
1. I agree with Larissa, a superb summary. I like how you incorporated the VCCV, and VCV concepts. A most important concept for students to develop their awareness of word development.

2. We must assist parents/guardians to help their children and nurture learning in a fun/family way.

3. I am pleased that the Learning Style Inventory produced some thinking about your own learning. This is super for your students, too.

4. Sadness is part of life. We need to use our rich resources to teach bibliotherapy and assist children in all aspects of life and death.

   I am pleased that you mentioned the second read aloud story.

5. I am glad that you are considering the left-handed student in a different light. Yes, they bring challenges to teaching writing, but nothing that cannot be overcome.

Lisa (permalink)
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 4:12 PM by Lisa

1. Chapter 11 begins with how to teach spelling. There are three different layers of spelling; alphabetic, pattern, and meaning. Children begin to learn how to spell by creating or inventing their own spelling of a word. They spell a word exactly how it sounds to them. Children go through different stages when learning how to write. They include precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional. When students enter kindergarten, teachers can test their spelling. They would test it by administering a spelling test of ten words. They would do this by saying the word for the student and then asking them to say the sounds that they hear. By the end of first grade, they should be able to successfully spell all ten words. High frequency words are words that the students use most often in their writings. A phonemic awareness test can be administered to determine the child’s readiness for spelling. Farris recommends focusing on rhyme, syllable, onset-rime, and phonemic manipulation to develop phonemic awareness skills. In the second and third grade, basic vowel patterns and simple patterns should be developed. Research shows that spelling is improved through writing and reading rather then memorizing. Some ways to introduce spelling in early-childhood classrooms would be teacher model, labeling the classroom, word categories, and pattern charts. It is important that parents help their child with spelling at home. The more that they review and use the words, the more natural spelling will come to them. Special needs children follow the same pattern when learning to spell. The teacher needs to be more selective with the words. A teacher should not introduce formal rules for spelling until the child had mastered their sight words. Dictionary skills are important not only for learning how to spell but also to find the meaning of words and to find out how to say the word. Lastly this chapter talks about handwriting. At around age, three children produce manuscript letters in three steps: vertical lines, horizontal lines, and circles. Improving fine motor skills will help improve their handwriting skills. Some students will have difficulty with handwriting because of lack of fine motor skills. They may not be able to grip a pencil or have severe shaking in their hands.

2. “…children create or invent their own spelling.” (435) This is a method that a lot of early childhood teachers follow. In my other classes, we have talked about inventive spelling and how it
really helps encourage children to be creative and not worry yet about the spelling of the words.

3. I like how Farris talks about including parents in helping their child learn how to spell. This is important for all subjects not just spelling. The students are with their parents more then the teacher.

4. I think that handwriting is very important to improve at a young age. The longer a child takes to write neatly, the harder it will be to change their habits.

5. I though it was interesting to look at the Saner-Bloser Simplified Cursive font. I have been writing in print for so long that I have forgotten the proper way to make some on the cursive letter, especially the capitals.

Comments

1. very deep summary- I can totally tell that you read the chapter and this is a great review.

2. I think that inventive spelling is a great thing and I never knew about it before college. I have seen first hand how the interuptions of spelling and grammar affect a child's writing process. Inventive spelling is a good problem solver.

3. I agree- parent involvement is SO important in a students development.

4. This is a good topic that needs to be addressed because people who don't know how important it is might say "well the child doesn't even know how to spell yet" which can really stunt the writing process if no action is taken.

5. I thought the same thing- I have learned to combine a little of both and to see the right way of doing is such a realization.

Kylie

1. Your summary is very clear and concise. I like how you mention the connections of fine motor skills and handwriting development.

2. Use it sparingly as a support to developing real spelling based on phonemic awareness and phonics. Invented spelling is especially nurturing for the really young students as they are free to use their imaginations and creativity unencumbered by the rules of spelling that are ar beyond their developmental stage.

3. Parent/guardian collaborations with the students and teacher are essential to promoting deep learning and to develop sound skills.

4. Neatness does count. Be sure students realize this becasue all too frequently the author cannot read his/her own handwriting. How will this be assessed on a standardized state mandated test? Poorly!
5. Use the Web resources and texts in your school district to assist you to relearn the letter formations. You, as the teacher, must have mastery in order to instruct the students in a professional way.

Stephanie (permalink)
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 3:48 PM by Stephanie

1. Chapter 11 deals with spelling, word study, and handwriting in the classroom. First and foremost, it is a proven fact that reading plays a major role in the development of spelling. When dealing with English spelling, there are three primary informational characteristics that children need to learn in order to spell conventionally. These three different ways are alphabetic, pattern, and meaning. Farris then moves on to talk about the different levels of spelling development. The different levels include: precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional. Each level gives us characteristics, significance, and examples. The chapter discusses the simple spelling test for kindergartners and first graders as well as high frequency words. The text then goes on to show that teachers need to be aware of the different errors in spelling, as well as the different ways to instruct the child so they do not make the same mistakes again. Some different spelling activities are: making words, word walls, word study activities, and spelling study methods. Farris then gives examples about different spelling error categories. When assisting children with spelling, you could model spelling, label the classroom, pattern charts, spelling big book, and Have-a-Go's are just a few ways to aide the child. It also gives suggestions of how parents can help their children in spelling. Farris moves on from there to tell how you can assist an ELL or special needs student in their development of spelling. The second half of the chapter talks about handwriting development. By age three children can already do some form of manuscript writing which deals with vertical lines, horizontal lines, and circles. Formal handwriting should begin at the end of kindergarten or at the start of first grade. Some things to consider when handwriting are the writing instruments, gripping of the paper, and placement of the page. Manuscript handwriting or printing, requires the use of independent strokes to form letters. The text then touched briefly on letter reversals. Cursive writing is the next topic, cursive has a flowing style that maintains a continuous, linear motion of pencil on paper from the first to the last letter of the word. Cursive begins to be taught mid second grade to early third grade. The text then discusses some different issues with cursive such as: legibility, left-handed children, and some special problems. When evaluating handwriting, consider the following: letter formation, spacing, slant, alignment, line quality, and size.

2. "Reading plays a major role in the development of spelling" (Pg. 433). I agree with statement fully, I can see this statement come to life with my grandparents. They love to play scrabble, and they love to read. When I play against them, it is amazing at some of the words that they come up with and are able to spell. Myself on the other hand, I do not like to read at all, and I am noticing that I would probably be a better speller if I did read more.

3. I really enjoyed the Mad Lib activity. It is activities like this that keep learning fun. Not only are your having fun, but you are also working on grammar. As we all have learned, grammar should not be taught in isolation. For that reason, I will try to use some of these fun activities in my own classroom.

4. We just finished our read aloud book, One Morning in Maine, which is a fiction book. Dr. Walker told us that the next book would be a non-fiction book dealing with real life situations. I believe the new book's title is, The Fall of Freddie the Leaf. I like how Dr. Walker is switching up the genres because you get a taste of different types of books. Then after you have read a certain genre, Dr. Walker says you can decide whether or not you like it. Also, by using different genres, you are able to touch on all six of the language arts.

5. Dr. Walker also showed us a video segment from School House Rock: Grammar. He said that showing videos is good, but you need to show them in 7 to 10 minute segments. He said that you could have the kids reflect on what they saw, predict, or simply just talk about it. I think this is a great idea. I know when I was in school, a lot of teachers would show us videos pretty much the whole way through either as a reward or a filler. I think that by showing videos in segments, it will keep everyone engaged.

Comments

1. Your summary included all of the main facts. It also provided some detail and example which
are both important to include in a summary.

2. I agree with this statement as well. The more kids read the more words they will come across. More reading also improves writing skills as well.

3. I enjoyed the mad lib activity too. That was the first time I did something like that and it was a lot of fun. Something I might use in the classrooms.

4. I like the read aloud books too. I can not remember the last time I had a teacher read a book to us like that. I is nice to have a change.

5. I also remember watching whole videos in elementary class. We would all loose interest very fast. It is a good idea to only show it in 7-10 minute segments.

1. Your summary is masterful and includes all salient points Farris refers to in this chapter.

2. I love Scrabble and have played since I was a little child. This is a fun and productive game to have in the classroom, too. Boggle, Upwords, Probe, and Password are other games that students love and learn a great deal from interactions with their peers and teachers.

3. Madlibs are fun and productive learning, too.

4. Thank you for recognizing the fact that I am modeling the various genres of literature. This variety allows students exposure and then they have schema for future learning.

5. Yes, segment the showing of videos and encourage students to think and express themselves related to the specific content. Make these experiences true learning not entertainment.

Tammy (permalink)
Created on Tuesday, 06/03/2008 12:56 PM by Tammy

1. Chapter 11 is titled "Spelling, Word Study, and Handwriting." It is stated in the introduction that reading plays a major role in the development of spelling while good readers are usually good spellers and unfortunately poor readers are usually poor spellers. Farris first discusses English spelling which has three primary characteristics which include alphabetic, patter, and meaning. These three characteristics are described in layers. Alphabetic refers to the fact that there are a good number of words in English for which the spelling is primarily left to right with a straightforward matching of letters and sounds. The next layer is the patter layer which provides information about sounds that a group of letters represent within a syllable and patterns across syllables. Lastly, the third layer is the meaning layer which provides information through consistent spelling of meaning elements within words regardless of sound change. Farris goes on to discuss the five stages of development including precommunicative, prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional. Precommunicative is when letters are used randomly. Prephonetic is when one to three letters that represent consonant sounds are used compared to the phonetic stage when letters used closely resemble sounds contained in a word. The fourth stage of spelling development, transitional, is when vowels are contained in every syllable. The last stage, conventional, is the stage when there are few spelling errors and spelling is mostly accurate. Later in the chapter Farris discusses the seven different categories of spelling errors which is essential to all teachers. The seven spelling errors are vowel omission, vowel substitution, vowel addition, consonant omission, consonant substitution, consonant addition, and letter reversal. One of the next parts in the text went over handwriting which I felt was very informative. While
teaching handwriting to young students it is important to utilize four basic strategies within every lesson for it to be effective. The four strategies include, (1.) allow the students to observe the letter as it is formed, (2.) describe for the students the steps in making the letter, (3.) have the students describe the steps in creating the letter, and (4.) conclude the lesson by having the students apply the new handwriting skill in a meaningful context. With teaching handwriting, there are various aspects that must be touched upon including the different types of writing instruments and even the way the child hold the pencil. Also, cursive and manuscript handwriting, legibility, and left-handed students are also aspects that are important in the teaching of handwriting. Finally, Farris described the ways of evaluating handwriting which includes letter formation, spacing, slant, alignment, line quality, and size.

2. "Writing is, for most, laborious and slow. The mind travels faster than the pen." (page 431)

-I chose this quote because there is so much truth behind it. Writing may become laborious at times but the outcome of the final draft if well worth the work that was put into it. I know for myself sometimes I feel I have so many things to write about and when it comes time to put it all down on paper, most of the ideas become overlooked. In these cases, the mind does travel faster than the pen!

3. I enjoyed the part in the textbook on spelling activities especially the word spelling activities on word homophones. I think homophones can be very confusing to younger students and with practice and various activities they would be much easier to understand and recognize in writing and reading.

4. I really loved doing the mad libs in class yesterday! It was a fun way for not only our class but in our future classes to review the parts of speech while having fun as well!

5. In reflection to the spelling activities in the text, word walls are something that are used in a lot of classrooms. They are a great way to review vocabulary, spelling, and initiate word patterns or chunking. This is another great activity I plan to use in my classroom that will engage the students in an activity but help them review and learn as well!

Comments

1. Excellent summary, it was extremely thorough and you included all of the main points from the chapter.

2. I agree with you here. I know even myself, I have to type my rough drafts on the computer because I can type much faster than I write and this is an easier way for me to get my ideas on paper quicker.

3. This is an extremely difficult concept for children to understand and in order to be able to spell words correctly, they have to know the context or meaning of that word to do so.

4. Me too! I think they are something we will all try and incorporate into our own classrooms as well.

5. Word walls are very popular and I plan to use them in the future as well!

Tuesday, 06/03/2008 5:20 PM by Melissa

1. I agree with Melissa, a fine overview of the chapter. You capture the essence of all of the main ideas really well.

2. Yes, the mind is working at warp-speed while the hand slowly scrolls trying to keep up. This is why pre-writing is so important to the process, or as Collins states - type 1 and 2 to develop a plan of action.

3. I agree with your conclusion regarding homophones. They are confusing to many students and need special attention for retention.
4. I am pleased that you enjoyed and found the Madlibs to be productive work. Students love them and learn from them, too.

5. Word Walls are required in most states as they directly connect to effective teaching practice and allow the visual learners an opportunity to gaze upon words being learned and words they have already been learned. Play games with the word wall, make it an active part of the classroom not just another bulletin board that remains more decorative than purposeful.
1. Your summary was very good I think because of the detail you used. I liked how you pointed out the unrealistic expectation of perfect spelling. We should have high standards but our kids are not perfect. I also liked the part you said about help for an individual child.

2. I agree that this is a good quote. It is definitely easier to read and flows well when spelling is used correctly. Other students will be able to read what they have written, not just their made up spelling.

3. I think that the justifications given was fabulous as well! Very practical to include how to score the spelling too.

4. Agreed. They can be confusing and if they are addressed at a younger age then older people would not be holding onto false thinking.

5. I also included this in my last RDE that Mad- Libs was a fantastic way to let them "play" with grammar! Fun and educational.

Tuesday, 06/03/2008 1:28 PM by Julie

1. Your summary was very well worded, but I feel you could have expanded on a few of the concepts in the text.

2. I agree with this statement, most children can read what they have written because they wrote it, and spelling is not as important to the piece as the meaning they are trying to get across. Don't forget to cite the page you got the quote from.

3. I also liked that they gave reasons for the words, and that it showed us how to grade them.

4. I agree as well, if you address a topic at a young age and reinforce it, most of the misconceptions at an older age will disappear.

5. I also had this in my RDE and feel that I will definitely be using them in my own classroom.

Tuesday, 06/03/2008 3:54 PM by Stephanie

1. As usual, your summary is well-worded and presented in a clear manner. I especially like that you included thus significant sentence from the text, "Teachers should assess student spelling error patterns to determine individually what type of help would be best for each child." I agree that we must provide assistance that best meets the needs of each learner.

2. Yes, proper spelling and neatly written manuscript or cursive writing are signs of respect to the readers of one's work.

3. Great educators are always able to justify their practice. I love that Farris is showing you reasons behind words selected for the K and first graders.
4. Yes, let's include homophones and homographs in our instruction and expand on to prefix, suffix, affix, synonyms, and antonyms. Let's be sure to connect this instruction to student need and some aspect of prior knowledge.

5. Madlibs rock!

   Wednesday, 06/04/2008 9:34 AM by DAVID