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THE ANALYSES AND COMPARISONS OF
FIVE ELEMENTARY SPELLING PROGRAMS

Presented to the
Graduate Faculty
University of Nebraska
at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Education

University of Nebraska at Omaha
by
Richard Hindalong

August 1984

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FIELD PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the Graduate Faculty, University of
Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree Specialist in Education, University of Nebraska
at Omaha.

Supervisory Committee

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Chairman
July 19, 1984
Date

TO MY WIFE

CONNIE

For without her untiring love, loyalty,
and devotion this study would not have
been completed.

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Chapter I

ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Spelling is one of the principal components of any elementary school program of language arts or English. Educationally, as well as socially, poor spelling is generally considered a sign of illiteracy. Whether this is justified or not, people do raise conclusions about a person's education and intelligence on the evidence of his/her spelling abilities. Therefore, strong spelling programs continue to be desired as an integral part of an elementary school curriculum.

To develop strong spelling skills is a challenge that faces both teachers and students. There are many methods and strategies used in elementary classrooms. However, while some of these approaches are successful and valid, some may be more damaging than good.¹

A review of the spelling literature reveals that this area of the curriculum has been researched much more often than other areas. Apparently, there is a great interest among educators in the development of strong spelling programs. Therefore, it is imperative that educators become aware of the latest in spelling research and identify those approaches, techniques,

and theories that will best fit their curricular needs to enhance student achievement. In reference to spelling research, Ernest Horn's statement in 1960 is still true today:

While the existing evidence will be refined, enlarged and in some instances, corrected by new research, the chief problem of today appears to be a more critical and universal application of the evidence now available.

Historically, the Westside Community Schools (District #66) in Omaha, Nebraska has taken great strides in its research, adoption, and maintenance of all curriculum areas, and spelling has been no exception. However, according to the district's standardized achievement tests (the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills - CTBS), spelling scores have been at the bottom of the list when compared with the other curricular areas. Although these scores have been consistently above the national norm, spelling achievement is lower than all other curricular areas (see Tables 1 and 2). The tables reflect district means of national percentile scores for grades three and six during 1982 and 1983. Based on this information, spelling stands out as the curricular area the elementary schools in District 66 need to focus attention upon.

TABLE 1

District Means of the CTBS in Grade 3 in
the Westside Community Schools

<u>Subject</u>	<u>National Percentiles 1982</u>	<u>National Percentiles 1983</u>
Total Reading	67	76
Spelling	62	69
Total Language	72	80
Mathematics	79	80
Science	75	82
Social Studies	83	87
Total Battery	74	81

Source:

Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, District Norms
for the Westside Community Schools, Omaha, Nebraska,
March, 1983, 2.

TABLE 2

District Means of the CTBS in Grade 6 in
the Westside Community Schools

<u>Subject</u>	<u>National Percentiles 1982</u>	<u>National Percentiles 1983</u>
Total Reading	78	83
Spelling	68	77
Total Language	78	87
Mathematics	83	90
Science	78	89
Social Studies	77	90
Total Battery	81	88

Source:

Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, District Norms
for the Westside Community Schools, Omaha, Nebraska,
March, 1983, 3.

Currently, District #66 is piloting spelling programs for school year 1983-1984. These pilot programs involve the testing of four new spelling programs along with the present spelling program. The outcomes of these pilot programs will help establish a base for the 1984-1985 spelling adoption. The pilot programs are the Economy Press series, the Follet series, the Laidlaw series, and the McDougal/Littel series. The Economy Press program provides for a thorough, systematic study of words and spelling processes, while integrating spelling study with the overall goal of helping students to communicate clearly in writing.³ The Follet program emphasizes the use of word lists, provisions for a variety of learning styles and levels, and a consistent structure that utilizes basic spelling principals.⁴ The Laidlaw program stresses pupil mastery of basic vocabulary, the development of word building skills, and the application of spelling knowledge and skills to writing.⁵ The McDougal/Littel program emphasizes the spelling of words rather than the spelling of sounds, grouping words according to structural similarities and predictable patterns, focusing each lesson on a single constant element, and teaching all essential phonetic skills.⁶ All four pilot spelling programs were implemented at the beginning of the 1983-1984 school year with one teacher per grade level (1-6). The pilot teachers were randomly assigned to teach each

of the new programs. This means twenty-four teachers throughout the district piloted the new spelling series.

The Merrill spelling series has served District #66 for seven years. This program stresses that interest and skill in spelling proficiency is developed by: 1) mastery of basic lists of frequently used words; 2) exploration of the English language; 3) development of language and dictionary skills; and 4) application of these skills in various forms of written communication.⁷ This spelling series is used by all the elementary teachers in District #66 who are not implementing one of the new pilot programs.

Statement of the Problem

To make a decision of which program or programs to recommend for district-wide adoption during the 1984-85 school year, an evaluation of the spelling programs was needed. The problem was to identify the spelling program or programs to recommend for adoption in the 1984-1985 school year.

It was the purpose of this study to evaluate the comparative effectiveness of the four pilot spelling programs and the current spelling program in the West-side Community Schools (District #66).

Methodology to be Employed

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the spelling programs to determine which one best fits the criteria for final adoption. The scope of methods and criteria utilized were implemented according to the following sequential format:

1. A comprehensive review of the spelling literature and research was conducted to determine effective instructional methodology and technique.
2. A comprehensive review of spelling literature and research was conducted to determine effective spelling materials.
3. The spelling objectives and goals of the Westside Community Schools were reviewed and itemized.
4. A synthesis of the reviewed literature above (items 1, 2, 3) was completed to determine recommended:
a) learning objectives, b) material criteria, and c) instructional criteria.
5. The synthesized criteria were then submitted to the language arts committee to secure a consensus regarding the spelling objectives, instructional criteria and material criteria.
6. A content analysis of each program was conducted to identify program objectives.

7. The content analysis of each respective program was compared to identify the spelling objectives, instructional criteria, and material criteria included in the programs.

8. Through observations and interviews, each pilot program was analyzed according to their respective objectives perceived covered by the teachers and researcher.

9. Utilizing the CTBS standardized test scores, student performance in grades three and six were analyzed.

10. Recommendations of spelling program adoption for the 1984-85 school year were rendered on the basis of achievement and congruence or appropriateness of the program objective, instructional criteria and materials.

Delimitations

1. Individual or classroom means Intelligent Quotients will not be determined.

2. Socio-economic factors of students will not be determined.

3. Individual teacher experience or qualities will not be determined.

4. A numerical ratio of boy/girl relationships will not be determined.

5. Mean ages of students per classroom will not be determined.

Limitations

The spelling programs being piloted were chosen by the language arts committee according to previously established standards of pilot approval. Therefore, other programs will not be reviewed for this study.

Assumptions

1. Each spelling program under study has been developed professionally according to its own extensive research data base.

2. All related literature utilized in this study is a product of legitimate scientific research.

3. The CTBS test scores will be accurate and truly measure student performance as indicated numerically.

Definition of Terms

1. CTBS (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills) - The standardized testing bank utilized by the Westside Community Schools to help evaluate curriculum programming.

2. National Percentiles - Numerical indicators (1-99) which illustrate, on a percentage basis, how much better a student scores on a particular test compared to all other students nationwide.

3. Spelling Materials - The hardware, activities, and texts that are utilized and manipulated by students in learning to spell.

4. Spelling Techniques - The methods and philosophies that teachers may employ in order to promote spelling proficiency.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I - Introduction and Analysis of the Problem

Chapter II - Review of Related Literature

Chapter III - Methodology

Chapter IV - Presentation of Data, Findings and Results

Chapter V - Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

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Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

If elementary teachers with varied years of experience were asked to list ways of teaching spelling there would probably be a variety of responses. How spelling is taught ranges from focusing on word parts (syllables, homophones, and affixes) to emphasizing whole language development by incorporating spelling instruction with the other language arts. A considerable amount of controversy surrounds many existing and proposed spelling programs. This controversy focuses on several factors, including the relationship of writing to spelling and the regularity of sound-symbol correspondences in English.

Educators view the improvement of spelling ability as a definite basic need and are seeking methods and programs that will lead to better spelling instruction. This chapter will examine the spelling research to determine those theories that encompass effective instructional techniques as well as effective spelling materials.

Effective Instructional Methodologies and Techniques

The single most effective technique in learning to spell is followed when the student (under the

teacher's direction) corrects his/her own errors immediately after taking a spelling test. The corrected-test method allows the student to see which words are difficult, locate the part of the word that is troublesome, and correct the errors.¹ Johnson, Langford, and Quorn concluded that self-correction by the learner is the most influential variable affecting learning to spell and that a systematic method should be adopted to accomplish this.² Also, Allred, Blair and Rupley, Graham agreed that under the direction of the teacher, students should correct their own misspelled words. Immediately after taking a spelling test, the students should correct their spelling errors under tight control of the teacher. This corrected-test approach is appropriate because it allows students to see which words are difficult for them and allows them, first hand, to correct their own errors. This corrected-test method can be applied to both the pretest and the final test within any system.³

Learning words by the whole-word method is a better approach than learning words by syllables.⁴ A child learning to spell does not move in single-file from one aspect of the orthography to the next - from sounds and letters, to syllables, to words. Hodges stated that, "to spell involves developing an understanding

of the total framework of English orthography and the interrelationships among phonological, morphological, and other language factors which the orthography reflects".⁵ Johnson, Langford, and Quorn also acknowledged the fact that breaking words into syllables does not result in faster or more effective learning of word spellings. They reported that research backs the notion that:

"....spelling involves both habitual and cognitive components. The production of the next letter or letter cluster may be triggered off by the preceding grapheme, but the overall spelling is initiated on the basis of some plan (e.g., awareness of a general spelling rule) and confirmed by comparing the resultant image with the neurological equivalent of an image stored in one's visual memory (i.e., Does it look right?)."⁶

There exists conflicting research data with regard to the phonetic approach to teaching spelling. Collins suggested that words within lists should include various letters or better combinations for the same sound so that students will learn to make appropriate discriminations and select appropriate letter combinations when writing.⁷ Boylston concluded that, although English orthography is not consistent, there is a more consistent relationship between sounds and their letter representations than had previously been thought. Her conclusions, based on research conducted by Hanna, Hodges, Reedorf, Venezky, and Groff, indicated that the English spelling system is

regular enough to group words in lists that emphasize the teaching of sound-letter correspondences and word building characteristics.⁸ Also, Hodges suggested that learning to spell is, in large degree, learning about both the phonological and graphic structures of words.⁹ However, not all the research supports a phonetic approach to teaching spelling.

Much of the recent research data stated that due to the nature of the English language, most attempts to teach spelling by phonic generalizations are questionable. Graham concluded that words to be studied should not be presented in syllabified form. The attempt to divide words into syllables or parts has not demonstrated any advantage over the whole-word method of presentation, and for some words, syllabication may have a negative effect. Students' attention should be directed to each word as a whole so that a correct visual image of the total word can be formed.¹⁰ Teaching spelling by sound is likely to result in phonetic misspellers.¹¹ The studies conducted by Johnson, Langford, and Quorm also purported the notion that the effectiveness of teaching spelling via phonic generalizations is highly questionable. They advocated that teachers become familiar with spelling patterns and draw the children's attention to them as they occur. However, they felt it a mistake to "teach" these generalizations. They concluded that children should

always work with complete words and that words which exemplify generalizations should not be clustered too closely together.¹²

Research has also concluded that pointing out hard spots in a word is not recommended. Direct experiments in marking hard spots have failed to show results as good as are obtained without the use of such devices. Single hard spots are exceptions and, what is hard for one person, may not be hard for another. Teaching hard spots is no guarantee that these abilities will be transferred to other words.¹³ Loomer reported that research as early as 1927 supports this notion. He found that the research, involving half a million spellings, revealed that students who studied words with hard spots premarked produced poorer scores than those who studied lists with the words unmarked. Ultimately, premarking the hard spots is not only useless but possibly harmful.¹⁴ Also, Hillerich noted that unless teachers plan to teach words made up only of beginnings - and with no vowels - teaching spelling using the "hard spot" technique offers no positive direction to instruction.¹⁵

In order to learn to spell, it is not necessary for children to learn the meaning of the majority of their spelling words. Loomer restated those conclusions set forth by earlier research conducted by E. Horn in 1960.

Horn stated that words taught in the first six grades are those most often used by children in writing and already familiar. Therefore, teaching the meaning of these words is a wasteful practice.¹⁶

When compiling words to form the basic spelling lists, it is of very little value to choose words from other subject areas. Research has proven that these words do little, if any, to increase spelling proficiency.¹⁷ Allred agreed with this conclusion and went even further to suggest that these words should only be taught within those subject areas only and not within the spelling class.¹⁸ Although such words may enhance students' vocabulary, utilizing such words in a spelling lesson only hinder the development of spelling skills.

Finally, as to oral spelling activities and continuous rote writing practices, research has noted only negative results. First, oral spelling activities alone does not support any substantial increase in students' ability to spell correctly because visual contact with the words is not presented.¹⁹ Second, writing words several times without intervening recall does not help to insure spelling retention.²⁰ Therefore, oral spelling and the rote writing of spelling words contribute nothing to skill in spelling.

These methodologies and techniques, as so presented, are only half of the entire theoretical base surrounding contemporary research regarding the teaching of spelling in American schools. Equally important is the research that involves effective spelling materials that directly manipulate students' development in spelling skill.

Effective Spelling Materials

Current research into the teaching of spelling not only concerns itself to technique and methodology, but examines material and program components that are most effective in delivering the utmost in instruction, as well. It is important, therefore, for educators to examine the following "material" criteria just as closely as "instructional techniques" criteria.

Spelling should be taught in list form.²¹ Presenting spelling words in list form, initially, is a more successful method than presenting spelling words in sentences or paragraph form.²² The presence of other contextual words reduces the necessity for the learning to attend to the intended spelling words, and distracts rather than facilitate word spelling skill.²³ If the student does not know the meaning of a word, or if the word is a homonym, then a sentence might be appropriate when presenting the word. However, additional attention to

meaning may detract from the student's effort to concentrate on the spelling of the word.²⁴

When choosing words to form spelling lists for elementary school children, the words of highest frequency in child and adult writing should have priority.²⁵ Word lists that make up approximately 2,800 to 3,000 well-selected words (and of high frequency in child and adult writing) have been developed by various researchers through the years and should be the basis for list development at the elementary level. Some of the more important and better known of these studies are those of Jones, Tidyman, Bauer, Fritzgerald, McKee, Rinsland, and Horn.²⁶

While the idea of learning words from spelling lists is highly recommended, the lists should also comprise words with which the learners are currently engaged and that are either providing spelling difficulties or are likely to do so. The words for class and individual spelling lists should come from three sources: words for which children ask the spelling; words that children misspell; and words that the teacher knows the children will need to spell. In all cases, it is best to restrict specific instruction to those words with which the child actually needs help.²⁷ When then selecting words for a spelling curriculum or evaluating those in a course of study or a textbook the following criteria is important:

1. Frequency of use - How frequently is the word used in writing?
2. Difficulty - How difficult is the word at various grade levels?
3. Geographic distribution - Is the word used universally throughout the U.S.?
4. Permanency - Is the word permanent in the language?
5. Spread - Is the word used in various kinds of writing?
6. Cruciality - Is it a word, the misspelling of which would penalize the writer?²⁸

Spelling programs that support the test-study-test method of instruction are superior to those programs that support the study-test-study method.²⁹ Conventional interpretation of the test-study-test research is that children first be given a pretest and study only those words that are misspelled.³⁰ These words should then be studied through a visual memory, kinesthetic approach to memorization. In addition, there should be at least one test of review to find out how study is progressing.³¹ Next, there should be given a final test with teacher notations indicating which words are misspelled. These words are then incorporated into future lessons.³² It has been found that the test-study-test procedure can account for ninety to ninety-five percent of a student's spelling achievement.³³ Loomer also found that the test-study-test method was best for

bright students in all grades, best for average students from the middle of grade three on, and best for slow students from the beginning of grade five on.³⁴ The conclusion is that spelling programs should be organized in this fashion, and if not, it is up to the individual teacher to organize it accordingly.³⁵

As previously eluded, a study technique should be provided to students during the study phase. This should be an efficient, systematic technique to study unknown spelling words. Allowing students to devise their own methods for studying spelling words is not advisable and without proper assistance, most students are not able to generate effective word-study habits. Table 1 provides a variety of word-study techniques that spelling programs may emphasize:

TABLE 3

Word Study Techniques

Fitzgerald method (Fitzgerald 1951):

1. Look at the word carefully.
2. Say the word.
3. With eyes closed, visualize the word.
4. Cover the word and then write it.
5. Check the spelling.
6. If the word is misspelled, repeat steps 1-5.

Gilstrap method (Gilstrap 1962):

1. Look at the word and say it softly. If it has more than one part, say it again part by part, looking at each part as you say it.
2. Look at the letters and say each one. If the word has more than one part, say the letters part by part.
3. Write the word without looking at the book.

Visual-vocal method (Westerman 1971):

1. Say word.
2. Spell word orally.
3. Say word again.
4. Spell word from memory four times correctly.

Horn method 1 (Horn 1919):

1. Look at the word and say it to yourself.
2. Close your eyes and visualize the word.
3. Check to see if you were right. (If not, begin at step 1.)
4. Cover the word and write it.
5. Check to see if you were right. (If not, begin at step 1.)
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 two more times.

Horn method 2 (Horn 1954):

1. Pronounce each word carefully.
2. Look carefully at each part of the word as you pronounce it.
3. Say the letters in sequence.
4. Attempt to recall how the word looks, then spell the word.
5. Check this attempt to recall.
6. Write the word.
7. Check this spelling attempt.
8. Repeat the above steps if necessary.

Source:

Steve Graham, "Effective Spelling Instruction",
The Elementary School Journal, 83:5 (May, 1983),
 p. 565.

Spelling programs should be designed so that approximately sixty to seventy-five minutes per week be allotted to spelling instruction. Although a few students may require more than seventy-five minutes per week, most students do not benefit from extended periods of study in spelling instruction.³⁶ Increases in time spent beyond seventy-five minutes are not associated with improved performance. Less than sixty minutes per week are associated with lower performance. Given a five-day school week it is recommended that spelling sessions last between ten and fifteen minutes daily.³⁷ Although the length of periods may be determined according to administrative mandates, some exorbitant time may then be devoted to developing skill in written expression.³⁸

Programs in spelling should contain writing activities. Spelling is for writing. It is not to develop skills in alphabetizing, recognizing double consonants, or identifying affixes and inflectional endings. These activities may contribute to a greater word sense or a wider vocabulary, but the odds are they don't contribute to greater power in spelling.³⁹ If spelling books are to be used, more usage and application of spelling words is needed. The direct link between spelling and writing needs to be emphasized.⁴⁰ Creative or independent writing allows students to become actively engaged

in the cognitive operations required in good spelling practices.⁴¹

Hodges stated that:

"....just as a substantial amount of knowledge about language is learned during the school years in situations outside of formal instruction, much of an individual's knowledge about spelling is learned throughout life by an interaction with written language wherever it is encountered."⁴²

Hillerich went on to say that since the purpose for learning to spell is to be able to write fluently and correctly, much practice in application is an essential part of any good spelling program. Also, instruction in how to proofread for specific items, along with practice in doing proofreading can help students spell more correctly.⁴³ Allred, Baird, and Read indicated that there is a need for texts to allow students to explore and manipulate words in a variety of tasks and writing activities that stress the use of cognitive skills such as comparing, classifying, predicting, and analyzing. These activities, combined with creating and examining their own written products, help students learn more about the structure of words and the structure of language.⁴⁴ Gentry emphasized the need for spelling programs to enforce written activities weekly, however, at the same time re-emphasize correctness, writing mechanics, and memorization. He contends that

the primary school teacher's main goal is to set the foundations for spelling growth.⁴⁵ Finally, Graham and Miller stated that spelling is an integral part of the writing process and not a discrete, separate skill. The language arts are highly interrelated, and students need a lot of practice using their spelling skills in context.⁴⁶

Spelling programs should provide activities such as games and fun activities. Spelling games promote student interest. Spelling, in itself, is not intrinsically motivating for most students. Games and special devices have often been used as a means of improving spelling attitudes. Most students enjoy games such as hangman, scrambled words, spelling bingo, etc.⁴⁷ However, Loomer suggested that games and special activities should only supplement rather than supplant systematic instruction.⁴⁸ Also, Allred stated that although spelling games indeed do stimulate interest, which is vitally important, they should be taught outside the instructional spelling period.

Textbooks and programs must contain proper methods for student placement. Collins found that most students already know how to spell a substantial number of words at their grade level, the point at which most publishers tell teachers to begin instruction. Also, most students

already know how to spell a majority of words at the next grade level. She suggested that most spelling texts simply waste student time rather than provide the basis for instruction of new, unfamiliar words.⁴⁹

Spelling programs should include dictionary usage skills. Hillerich stated that any writer will use some words not appropriate for any spelling list. These words can be spelled correctly through the use of a dictionary. Therefore, spelling programs should provide dictionary skills - with all of its subskills and activities - as an essential element in the total program.⁵⁰

Should spelling programs promote an emphasis on spelling rules? The teaching of rules and the learning of principles of spelling have been quite controversial for more than fifty years. Loomer found that a researcher in 1931 examined twenty texts and that two presented no rules and four contained forty-eight rules. Others ranged in between the extremes.⁵¹ Nolen stated that in spelling, there is a place for mnemonic rules, especially if children are helped to figure out their own rules.⁵² Allred, however, summed it up by rendering a list of items pertaining to spelling instruction and rules:

1. Only a few rules should be taught. Those taught should have no or few exceptions.

2. Some rules should be taught, for children will generalize what they have learned and such generalizing should be directed as far as the spelling of English words permits.
3. Only one rule should be taught at a time.
4. A rule should be taught only when there is need of it.
5. The teaching of the rules should be integrated with the arrangements or grouping of the words in the textbook.
6. Rules should be taught inductively rather than deductively.
7. There should be ample reviews of the rules both in the grades in which they have been learned and in the following grades.
8. Tests of knowledge of the rule should insist not so much upon logical precision as on comprehension and ability to use the rule.

Spelling textbooks and curricular implementation of spelling programs must also take careful notice to developmental progress and readiness of learners. The developmental nature of spelling ability clearly indicates that children's spelling attempts need to be considered from their frame of reference, not the frame of reference of adults.⁵⁴ Collins recommended that teachers begin spelling instruction after students have received one year of phonics reading instruction. Once students have a solid symbol-to-sound foundation (reading), they will likely be better prepared to learn the sound-to-symbol translation (spelling).⁵⁵ Like oral language,

spelling proceeds from simple to complex activities, with a reshaping of cognitive structures at each level. Gentry stated that children must first conceptualize alphabetic principles, letter-sound correspondence, left-to-right orientation, and the child's first concept of "what is a word". He stated that accuracy in spelling is a gradual process that develops through trial and error, imitation of correct models, performance, and practice. Students will definitely make mistakes before development is allowed to occur.⁵⁶ Also, he stated that learning to spell must be treated as a complex developmental process that begins at the preschool and primary school levels. Spelling programs must engage students in the kinds of cognitive activity that lead to spelling competency, and at the right time.⁵⁷ Allred compiled the following list of criteria relating to spelling readiness:

1. Have the ability to write and name all the letters of the alphabet correctly.
2. Be able to copy words correctly.
3. Be able to write his or her own name without copying.
4. Be reading at about a second-grade reading level or better.
5. Be able to enunciate words clearly,
6. See that words are composed of different letters.
7. Have a beginning phonetic sense and recognize the common letter-sound combinations.

8. Be able to write a few simple words from memory.
9. Ask for words he or she is in doubt about and be able to express a few thoughts in writing.
10. Demonstrate a desire and interest in learning to spell.

Conclusion

In conclusion, along with all the contemporary research pertaining to effective spelling instructional methodologies/techniques and effective spelling materials, to assure outstanding instruction in spelling other strategies need to be implemented. Collins noted these as good classroom management strategies and that teachers should:

1. Establish worktime rules and implement them the first day of class, after giving clear simple statements and examples of the rules.
2. Continuously monitor all student work, providing regular feedback on performance.
3. Work with groups rather than individual students to increase teacher-student contact time.
4. Maintain direct eye contact with students as much as possible.
5. Use reinforcement techniques in a strategic manner (i.e., reinforce students showing desired behavior) so that behavior problems are prevented.
6. Teachers should be organized so that time spent with students is devoted to academic learning. With good organization, spelling lessons can be covered in 20 minutes a day.

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Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Textbooks and carefully developed or selected programs of study typically dictate a modal approach to teaching. It is, therefore, imperative that school personnel select the most appropriate materials which are backed by research and teach to the curricular objective.

Spelling, as a basic program of study, is certainly an area where research of methodology and selection of materials is vitally important. To properly choose the correct set of materials and learning procedures for a given group of students, a carefully structured, yet systematic, approach to analysis is necessary to assure that intended goals are met and excellence prevails.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the comparative effectiveness of four pilot spelling programs, along with the current spelling program, for grades one through six in the Westside Community Schools (District #66). Based upon the conclusions and results of this study, a recommendation for adoption for the 1984-1985 school year will be rendered. This study was sequential and was implemented through nine phases.

The first phase involved extensive, yet thorough, research review of two areas: 1) effective instructional methodology and technique, and 2) effective materials and instrumentation. An abundance of spelling literature was available; therefore, it was essential that this information be itemized for clarity and evaluation purposes.

The second phase involved reviewing and itemizing the spelling objectives and goals of the Westside Community Schools for grades one through six. These objectives and goals were established by the elementary language arts committee during the 1976-77 school year and remained as a basis for the new spelling adoption. By the establishment of these guidelines, spelling programs would, at least, upgrade a student's ability to spell, establish consistency among the elementary schools, and channel teaching methods toward research supported guidelines.

Phase three of this study involved synthesizing the reviewed literature relating to both effective instructional methodology/technique and effective materials along with the objectives and goals of the Westside Community Schools. This synthesis then established a foundation for criteria by which the pilot spelling programs were evaluated.

The fourth phase of the study involved submitting the synthesized criteria to the elementary language arts committee for approval. This was important so that a consensus regarding the spelling objectives, instructional criteria, and material criteria were formed. It is most important that when programs are evaluated, the criteria be consistent, open, and understood.

A content analysis of each pilot program, along with the present spelling program, was conducted to make up the fifth phase of this study. The programs analyzed for content were (in alphabetical order by publisher):

1. Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Follett Spelling, c. 1984.
2. Laidlaw Brothers Publishers, Success in Spelling, c.
3. McDougall, Littell and Company, Building Spelling Skills, c. 1984.
4. Merrill and Company, Spelling for Writing, c. 1976.
5. The Economy Company, Keys to Spelling Mastery, c. 1984.

The analysis of each program involved studying the programs' teacher's manuals, marketing brochures, and related "information" pamphlets. The purpose was to develop an itemized list of what each program offers to students as well as defining each program's approach to the teaching of spelling. Based on this information, it was then possible to objectively analyze and evaluate each program according to the established criteria.

The sixth phase of this study involved evaluating each of the five spelling programs, based upon their content analyses against the identified spelling objectives, instructional criteria, and material criteria as previously established. This process simply involved listing the items in the synthesis in chart form against the respective spelling programs and making denotations accordingly (see Appendix A). The spelling program with the most denotations was the one that most appropriately matched the given objectives and criteria.

The next phase, number seven, involved direct observations of each of the five programs in progress, as well as the collection of data based on teacher interviews. Therefore, each teacher in all grades (one through six) who was piloting a new spelling program was observed twice in their teaching of spelling with their "own" pilot program. Altogether, twenty-four teachers were observed to assess whether or not, each pilot program was being taught according to the outlined instructional strategies and whether program objectives were being met. (Appendixes B, C, D, and E illustrate what the observer used as a base to effectively evaluate each observation). Furthermore, observations were conducted at each grade level (one through six), for

the present spelling program with the same documentation as the pilot program (see Appendix F).

Following each final observation, interviews were conducted with each pilot teacher, along with teachers of the present program, to gather data regarding their views of the spelling program they taught. The interviews were conducted using an eighteen item questionnaire format (see Appendix G) with each item being weighed against a five level response mode (one being "Does Not Describe Program", and five being "Good Description of Program"). The same questionnaire was used for each of the five programs with six responses possible for each item. The eighteen items of the questionnaire were designed utilizing the research criteria that was established regarding the teaching of spelling. Purposely, these items or statements were presented in both positive and negative form to improve the validity of the responses. (Items 1-6, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, and 17 have positive implications, while items 7, 9, 11, 12, 15, and 18 have negative implications).

The eighth phase of this study involved comparing standardized student performance under the pilot spelling programs with the standardized performance last year under the present spelling program. The comparisons involved third and sixth graders and were based upon

results of the spelling portion from the comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) standardized test. Specifically, each student's national percentile score in spelling on the CTBS last year was compared to this year's national percentile score in spelling. All student scores (grades three and six), within each pilot group, were then averaged and compared to the same group's average from last year. Based on this information, it was then possible to analyze which of the four pilot programs most effectively enhanced student achievement in spelling. The numbers of students involved in the comparisons are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Numbers of Students Used in Test Score Comparisons

<u>Program</u>	<u>Grade 3</u>	<u>Grade 6</u>
Economy	13	24
Follet	18	21
Laidlaw	25	14
McDougall, Littell	17	20

The ninth, a final phase, involved recommending a spelling program for the 1984-85 school year. The recommendation was rendered on the basis of achievement, program objectives, instructional criteria and materials. This phase will be fully presented in Chapter V of this study.

Chapter IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA, FINDINGS, AND RESULTS

Based upon the research design from Chapter III the following is a presentation of data, findings, and results. This information was gathered and analyzed according to the nine phases as described within the methodology chapter.

Phase One

Spelling research has found the following to be effective instructional methodologies and techniques:

1. To allow the student to correct his/her own spelling list on the pretest is a most important factor leading to spelling growth.
2. Teaching spelling by the whole word method is more effective than teaching spelling by syllables.
3. Drawing students' attention to the "hard spots" within a word is of little value to spelling growth.
4. Repeated writing of the spelling words and writing of words "in the air" are not meaningful or helpful to students in learning to spell words.
5. It is not important to spend time with word meanings.
6. Attention to visual and structural similarities, as well as addition of affixes will improve spelling performance.

7. Rules taught should have wide application with few exceptions. Emphasis must be on teaching the child to learn the ways that words are spelled and not depend upon any one approach to spell.
8. Words from curricular areas are of little value in developing spelling ability because they usually are not words the students are most often called upon to write.

Spelling research has found the following to be effective material content in spelling programs:

1. The words in the spelling program should reflect the known information as to which words are most frequently and likely to be used by students.
2. Spelling programs should present the word in list form.
3. Word lists which demonstrate predictable patterns of related words and are presented simultaneously enhances learning and retention.
4. The "test-study-test" method of instruction is superior to the "study-test" method.
5. Spelling programs should provide a systematic approach to the study of each word.
6. Spelling programs should allow for an allotted time of 60-75 minutes per week.

7. Spelling programs should allow students to use words in written work so the spelling list does not appear to be the end product. Practice in application (writing) is an essential part of a strong spelling program.
8. Spelling programs should enhance students' interest toward spelling improvement and develop a positive attitude in learning to spell (enrichment activities, games, etc.)
9. Spelling programs should provide dictionary skill work activities.

Phase Two

The following is an itemized review of the spelling objectives and goals as established by the elementary language arts committee for the Westside Community Schools:

1. The spelling words of highest frequency in child and adult writing should be studied.
2. The words should progress from easier to more difficult words.
3. The student must correct his/her own spelling test under the direction of the classroom teacher.
4. The test-study method (utilizing a pretest) is the best approach to each lesson.
5. The students should learn to spell words wholistically.
6. A technique for learning to spell words must be provided for students.

Phase Three and Four

Synthesizing the effective instructional methodologies and techniques, effective material content, and the spelling goals and objectives of the Westside Community Schools into one report was important to serve as a basis for this implementation study (see Appendix H). The report was accepted by the elementary language arts committee and signed by Sandra Acquazzino, the committee's chairperson.

Phase Five

The following is an itemized content analysis of each pilot spelling program along with the present program. Generally, all programs have eight grade levels of instruction, use a text book approach, and claim to base their programs on research.

Content Analysis

ECONOMY

1. Word lists presented are those words most frequently used by students in writing.
2. Dictionary skills, along with a spelling dictionary, are provided in each student's text.
3. In the Word Building strand (available in each lesson) plurals, inflections, contractions, compounds, affixes, and prefixes are included in vocabulary development activities that help students

discover the many ways that new words can be formed, spelled, and used.

4. Students are given the opportunity to use their spelling words in writing. Punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and sentence and paragraph construction skills are included.
5. Standardized test formats are used in six week reviews.
6. Content-related lessons present subjects of special interest.
7. Additional words and activities are presented in a "Spelling Challenge" section.
8. A five-day weekly lesson plan is offered.
9. Word lists are presented structurally and phonetically.
10. An eight-step study method is offered for students to study the word lists.
11. Weekly testing sessions involve the rise of pre-tests, practice tests, and post tests.
12. Self-correction of tests is not endorsed.
13. There are six review tests utilized every six weeks.
14. Teacher's Edition:
 - a. Lesson plans follow a consistent format and are easy-to-read.

- b. Dictation sentences are provided for each lesson.
- c. Teaching procedures are given for each section.
- d. Special reference sections supplement the lesson plans.
- e. Additional practice activities are available.
- f. Teaching procedures allow for individual differences.

Content Analysis

FOLLETT

1. Word lists are developed according to student usage and frequency.
2. Challenge words are provided and taken from other content areas (i.e. math, science, social studies, etc.)
3. Students are encouraged to use a variety of learning styles to develop spelling competency.
4. The test-study-test method of weekly instruction is advised.
5. Special vocabulary development activities are presented.
6. Activities corresponding to spelling principles are presented.
7. Dictionary skills and activities are used.
8. Proofreading skills are a major component to each of the thirty-six units.

9. Handwriting activities are presented.
10. Independent writing activities are offered.
11. Each text includes a spelling dictionary.
12. Take-home word lists are provided along with a letter explaining proper usage.
13. A three-day, four-day, or five-day lesson plan structure is offered for each weekly unit.
14. Word lists are organized both structurally and phonetically.
15. A "Six-step" study method is offered for students to study the word lists.
16. Weekly testing sessions involve the use of pre-tests and post tests.
17. Self-correction of the pretest is advised.
18. Spelling rules are found throughout the text.
19. Teacher's Edition:
 - a. Suggestions for administering, correcting, and recording test results and activities are clear.
 - b. Duplicating masters are available.
 - c. Charts for student progress both for teachers and students are available.

Content Analysis

LAIDLAW

1. Word lists are based on current, high frequency written word use.
2. Functional techniques for learning how to spell are based on sound and structure patterns.
3. Word building techniques that students can use to form new words are based from known words.
4. Proofreading skills, dictionary usage skills, and writing mechanics skills are presented in each lesson.
5. Spelling skills relate to functional and creative writing.
6. A variety of learning modes to suit all students is used to cover necessary content.
7. A three-day, four-day, or five-day lesson plan structure is offered for each weekly unit.
8. A five-step study method is offered for students to study the word lists.
9. Weekly testing sessions involve the use of pretests, practice tests, and post tests.
10. Self-correction of tests is advised.
11. There are six review tests with a frequency of one every six weeks.

12. Grammar and usage of skills are presented throughout each text.
13. The program utilizes enrichment activities.
14. Handwriting materials are based from the Zaner-Bloser models.
15. Teacher's Edition:
 - a. Objectives are stated.
 - b. There are alternative activities along with supplementary activities available for all units.
 - c. An evaluation plan is available.
 - d. Sentences for dictation purposes are available.
 - e. Duplicating masters are available.

Content Analysis

McDOUGAL LITTEL

1. Words are presented in list form where focus is on the spelling of whole words and affixes, not on the spelling of individual sounds.
2. Spelling skills are taught not through phonics, but through the study of spelling patterns.
3. The program systematically guides students through a self-correction of the pretest.
4. "Word Practice" activities require students to examine the spelling words closely and write each word.

5. "Word Power" activities extend the application of spelling words beyond basic practice to integrate spelling with other language arts skills.
6. "Word Search" activities expand the basic list by introducing additional words that illustrate the spelling pattern.
7. Dictionary skills, along with a spelling dictionary, are provided in each text.
8. A handbook section offers definitions and explanations of the structure of words, the function of words, and the sounds of words.
9. Handwriting practice activities are available in each text.
10. A suggested amount of time of 60-75 minutes per week is directly advised.
11. Four-day and five-day weekly lesson plans are recommended.
12. A six-step study method is offered for students to study the word lists.
13. Weekly testing sessions involve the use of pre-tests and post tests.
14. Self-correction of tests is advised.
15. There are four review tests at six-week intervals.
16. Grammar, usage, mechanics, and proofreading skills are presented.

17. Enrichment activities are offered.
18. Teacher's Edition:
 - a. Detailed, step-by-step instructions for presenting lesson objectives, pretests, and spelling patterns are provided.
 - b. Answers to questions are overprinted in color.
 - c. Directions are available for the use of supplemental duplicating masters.
 - d. Suggestions for introducing additional words and activities are available.
 - e. Context sentences are provided for testing the spelling words.

Content Analysis

MERRILL

1. Word lists are based on words most frequently used (Level B) to least frequently used (Level H).
2. The suggested amount of time devoted to spelling instruction is 60-75 minutes per week.
3. Weekly lessons are presented on optional five-day plans, four-day plans, or a total individualized plan.
4. Word lists are organized in a random fashion with no structural or phonetic patterns.

5. Dictionary skills, capitalization, punctuation, proofreading, and revising are all essential parts of this program which is designed to improve written communication.
6. A five-step study method is offered for students to study the word lists.
7. Weekly testing sessions involve the use of pretests, practice tests, and post tests.
8. Self-correction of the pretest is recommended.
9. Students are to use a progress chart to gauge their improvement throughout the year.
10. On the pretest, students are to write each misspelled word on his/her pretest sheet.
11. A placement test is available and advised to be used to find students' instructional level when individualizing the program.
12. Enrichment activities are available.
13. Many extended writing activities are presented and highly stressed.
14. Handwriting examples are from the Zaner-Bloser models.
15. There are five review tests at six-week intervals.
16. A five-step study method is offered for students to study the word lists.

16. Teacher's Edition:

- a. Suggestions for administering, correcting, and recording test results and activities are clear.
- b. Duplicating masters for word lists are available.
- c. Additional teaching methods are presented.

Phase Six

Table 5 illustrates how each of the five spelling programs related to the identified spelling objectives, instructional criteria, and material criteria based upon the content analysis of each program. An "X" in each box refers to a favorable relationship between spelling program and individual criteria. The following percentages disclose how the spelling programs matched with the given criteria:

A. Economy	19/23	82.60%
B. Follett	17/23	73.91%
C. Laidlaw	21/23	91.30%
D. McDougal	22/23	95.65%
E. Merrill	20/23	86.95%

TABLE 5

Instructional and Material Criteria
Along with District Objectives for
the Implementation of a New
Spelling Program

	Economy	Follett	Laidlaw	McDougal	Merrill
I. District Objectives					
A. The spelling words of highest frequency in child and adult writing should be studied.	X	X	X	X	X
B. The words should progress from easier to more difficult words.	X	X	X	X	X
C. The student must correct his/her own spelling test under the direction of the classroom teacher.		X	X	X	X
D. The test-study method (utilizing a pretest) is the best approach to each lesson.	X	X	X	X	X
E. The students should learn to spell words wholistically.				X	X
F. A technique for learning to spell words must be provided for students.	X	X	X	X	X
G. The program should provide for growth and maintenance of spelling ability.	X		X	X	X
H. The time allotted for the study of spelling should be between sixty and seventy-five minutes per week.	X	X	X	X	X
II. Effective Instructional Methodologies/Techniques					
A. To allow the student to correct his/her own spelling list on the pretest is a most important factor leading to spelling growth.		X	X	X	X
B. Teaching spelling by the whole word method is more effective than teaching spelling by syllables.				X	X
C. Drawing students' attention to the "hard spots" within a word is of little value to spelling growth.	X	X	X	X	X
D. Repeated writing of the spelling words and writing of words "in the air" are not meaningful or helpful to students in learning to spell words.	X	X	X	X	X

	Economy	Follett	Laidlaw	McDougal	Merrill
E. It is not important to spend time with word meaning.	X	X	X	X	X
F. Attention to visual and structural similarities, as well as addition of affixes will improve spelling performance.	X	X	X	X	
G. Rules taught should have wide application with few exceptions. Emphasis must be on teaching the child to learn the ways that words are spelled and not depend upon any one approach to spell.	X		X	X	
H. Words from curricular areas are of little value in developing spelling ability because they usually are not words the students are most often called upon to write.	X		X	X	X
III. Effective Material Content					
A. The words in the spelling program should reflect the known information as to which words are most frequently and likely to be used by students.	X	X	X	X	X
B. Spelling programs should present the word in list form.	X	X	X	X	X
C. Word lists which demonstrate predictable patterns of related learning and retention.	X	X	X	X	
D. Spelling programs should allow for an allotted time of 60-75 minutes per week.	X	X	X	X	X
E. Spelling programs should allow students to use words in written work so the spelling list does not appear to be the end product. Practice in application (writing) is an essential part of a strong spelling program.	X		X		X

- F. Spelling programs should enhance students' interest toward spelling improvement and develop a positive attitude in learning to spell (enrichment activities, games, etc.)
- G. Spelling programs should provide dictionary skill work activities.

Merrill				
McDougal				
Laidlaw				
Follett				
Economy				
X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X

Phase Seven

Based upon direct observations and interviews with the teachers using the four pilot spelling programs, along with randomly selected teachers using the present programs, the degree each program was being taught according to the publisher's outlined instructional strategies were calculated (see Appendix I). These calculations were then changed to percentages. Each percentage was based upon the total number of positive implications or findings over the total number of findings for each program. Findings that were vague (i.e. somewhat, sometimes, partially) were counted as half value. The following reveal these percentages:

A. Economy	87/140	62%
B. Follett	76/108	70%
C. Laidlaw	78/108	72%
D. McDougal	67.5/120	56%
E. Merrill	60.5/108	56%

Also, teachers were interviewed or asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their views of the spelling program they were using. The following pages reveal the results of those inquiries.

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

 X Economy Follett
 Laidlaw McDougal
 Merrill

	Bad Description	1	2	3	4	5	Good Description	Average
1. The words used in the spelling program are those students would most frequently use.					5	1		4.17
2. The challenge words are words frequently and likely to be used by students.			3	1		1		3.60 1 NR
3. The word lists have predictable patterns to simplify learning.						5		5.00 1 NR
4. The text recommends that students correct their own pretests.						5		5.00 1 NR
5. The spelling program can be covered in 60-75 minutes per week or less.					1	5		4.83
6. The text stresses a systematic way to study spelling (study steps).						6		5.00
N 7. The text stresses breaking the word into syllables.		1	1	2				3.25 2 NR
8. The text motivates pupil interest.		2				4		4.00
N 9. The text stresses spending time on word meanings.			3	3				3.50
10. The text provides for the systematic review of words.					5	1		4.72
N 11. The text draws attention to hard spots in words.					6			4.00
N 12. Repeated writing of the words is recommended.			1	5				3.83

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are pilot-ing.

_____ X _____ Economy _____ Follett		Des				Desc	Av
_____ Laidlaw _____ McDougal							
_____ Merrill		1	2	3	4	5	
13. The text contains suggestions for using the words in writing.					5	1	4.17
14. The spelling rules presented have wide application with few exceptions.					5	1	4.17
N	15. The final test provides for writing the spelling words in sentences or paragraphs.				4	1	4.20 1 NR
16. The program provides options for slow and accelerated learners.					4	1	4.20 1 NR
17. A larger percentage of my students are getting all the words correct than with the previous system.				3	2		3.40 1 NR
N	18. A high degree of emphasis is placed on phonics in learning to spell.				5	1	4.17

N = Statement that disagrees with research

NR = No Response

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☒ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☐ Merrill

	Bad Description	1	2	3	4	5	Good Description	Average
1. The words used in the spelling program are those students would most frequently use.					6			4.00
2. The challenge words are words frequently and likely to be used by students.		5						2.00 1 NR
3. The word lists have predictable patterns to simplify learning.					5	1		4.17
4. The text recommends that students correct their own pretests.					5	1		4.17
5. The spelling program can be covered in 60-75 minutes per week or less.					2	4		4.67
6. The text stresses a systematic way to study spelling (study steps).					1	5		4.83
N 7. The text stresses breaking the word into syllables.	3	3						1.50
8. The text motivates pupil interest.			1	5				3.83
N 9. The text stresses spending time on word meanings.		1	5					2.83
10. The text provides for the systematic review of words.			3	3				3.50
N 11. The text draws attention to hard spots in words.			4	2				3.33
N 12. Repeated writing of the words is recommended.			4	2				3.33

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☒ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☐ Merrill

	Bad Description				Good Description	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
13. The text contains suggestions for using the words in writing.			3	3		3.50
14. The spelling rules presented have wide application with few exceptions.			1	5		3.83
N 15. The final test provides for writing the spelling words in sentences or paragraphs.	3	3				1.50
16. The program provides options for slow and accelerated learners.			6			3.00
17. A larger percentage of my students are getting all the words correct than with the previous system.				3	1	3.20 1 NR
N 18. A high degree of emphasis is placed on phonics in learning to spell.			5	1		3.17

N = Statement that disagrees with research

NR = No response

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☒ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☐ Merrill

	Bad Description	1	2	3	4	5	Good Description	Average
1. The words used in the spelling program are those students would most frequently use.					5	1		4.17
2. The challenge words are words frequently and likely to be used by students.				1	3			3.75 2 NR
3. The word lists have predictable patterns to simplify learning.					2	4		4.67
4. The text recommends that students correct their own pretests.		2	3					2.60 1 NR
5. The spelling program can be covered in 60-75 minutes per week or less.						6		5.00
6. The text stresses a systematic way to study spelling (study steps).					3	3		4.50
N 7. The text stresses breaking the word into syllables.		4	1					2.20 1 NR
8. The text motivates pupil interest.				2	4			3.67
N 9. The text stresses spending time on word meanings.	2			4				2.33
10. The text provides for the systematic review of words.				1	5			3.83
N 11. The text draws attention to hard spots in words.		3			2			2.80 1 NR
N 12. Repeated writing of the words is recommended.		2	4					2.67

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☒ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☐ Merrill

	Bad Description				Good Description	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
13. The text contains suggestions for using the words in writing.		1	5			2.83
14. The spelling rules presented have wide application with few exceptions.		2			4	4.00
N 15. The final test provides for writing the spelling words in sentences or paragraphs.	4	1				1.20 1 NR
16. The program provides options for slow and accelerated learners.		4	2			2.33
17. A larger percentage of my students are getting all the words correct than with the previous system.				3	3	4.50
N 18. A high degree of emphasis is placed on phonics in learning to spell.			1	2	3	4.33

N = Statement that disagrees with research

NR = No Response

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☒ McDougal
☐ Merrill

	Bad Description	1	2	3	4	5	Good Description	Average
1. The words used in the spelling program are those students would most frequently use.					2	4		4.67
2. The challenge words are words frequently and likely to be used by students.			1	2	3			4.33
3. The word lists have predictable patterns to simplify learning.						6		5.00
4. The text recommends that students correct their own pretests.						6		5.00
5. The spelling program can be covered in 60-75 minutes per week or less.						6		5.00
6. The text stresses a systematic way to study spelling (study steps).				1	5			4.83
N 7. The text stresses breaking the word into syllables.	3		3					2.00
8. The text motivates pupil interest.				5	1			4.17
N 9. The text stresses spending time on word meanings.	3		3					2.00
10. The text provides for the systematic review of words.				3	3			4.50
N 11. The text draws attention to hard spots in words.	5		1					1.33
N 12. Repeated writing of the words is recommended.	2		4					2.33

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☒ McDougal
☐ Merrill

		Bad Description				Good Description	Average
		1	2	3	4	5	
13. The text contains suggestions for using the words in writing.					2	4	4.67
14. The spelling rules presented have wide application with few exceptions.				2	4		3.67
N	15. The final test provides for writing the spelling words in sentences or paragraphs.	2		4			2.33
16. The program provides options for slow and accelerated learners.					6		4.00
17. A larger percentage of my students are getting all the words correct than with the previous system.			1	1	2		3.25 2 NR
N	18. A high degree of emphasis is placed on phonics in learning to spell.		3	3			2.50

N = Statement that disagrees with research

NR = No Response

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☒ Merrill

		Bad Description					Good Description	Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	1. The words used in the spelling program are those students would most frequently use.			1	2	3		4.33
	2. The challenge words are words frequently and likely to be used by students.	4			2			2.00
	3. The word lists have predictable patterns to simplify learning.	4		2				1.66
	4. The text recommends that students correct their own pretests.	1	1			4		3.83
	5. The spelling program can be covered in 60-75 minutes per week or less.		2			4		4.00
	6. The text stresses a systematic way to study spelling (study steps).		1			4		3.33 1 NR
N	7. The text stresses breaking the word into syllables.	2		4				2.33
	8. The text motivates pupil interest.	1	3	1				1.66 1 NR
N	9. The text stresses spending time on word meanings.			4	2			3.33
	10. The text provides for the systematic review of words.		2			3		3.16 1 NR
N	11. The text draws attention to hard spots in words.			2	4			3.67
N	12. Repeated writing of the words is recommended.				5	1		4.17

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☒ Merrill

	Bad Description				Good Description	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
13. The text contains suggestions for using the words in writing.	1		2		2	2.83 1 NR
14. The spelling rules presented have wide application with few exceptions.		1	2	2	1	3.50
N 15. The final test provides for writing the spelling words in sentences or paragraphs.	2	2	1		1	2.33
16. The program provides options for slow and accelerated learners.	1	3			2	2.83
17. A larger percentage of my students are getting all the words correct than with the previous system.		1			2	2.00 3 NR
N 18. A high degree of emphasis is placed on phonics in learning to spell.		1	2	2	1	3.50

N = Statement that disagrees with research

NR = No Response

When totaling the averages for both positive and negative statements, the following was calculated for each program:

	<u>Pos. Ans. Rating</u>	<u>Neg. Ans. Rating</u>
A. Economy	4.31	3.83
B. Follett	3.73	2.61
C. Laidlaw	3.82	2.59
D. McDougal	4.42	2.08
E. Merrill	2.92	3.22

Phase Eight

Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9 illustrate national percentile scores of students who used the pilot spelling programs during the 1983-84 school year. Their scores were then compared to their 1982-83 scores to measure improvement. All the students used the Merrill Spelling program during the 1983-83 school year.

The tables also illustrate other information. The average of all scores for both the Merrill (control) program and the pilot (experimental) programs were calculated for each grade level. Then, the amount of decrease/increase was calculated for each grade level by subtracting the two averages. Finally, to find the total average percentile point increase for each of the four pilot programs, each grade level percentile point decrease/increase was averaged.

TABLE 6
National Percentile Comparisons of Students -
Economy vs. Merrill

----- Third Grade -----			----- Sixth Grade -----		
<u>Student</u>	<u>Merrill 82-83NP</u>	<u>Economy 83-84NP</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Merrill 82-83NP</u>	<u>Economy 83-84NP</u>
1	36	28	1	40	72
2	36	68	2	55	91
3	93	94	3	60	38
4	31	32	4	20	29
5	45	42	5	45	50
6	56	68	6	72	91
7	56	58	7	95	91
8	93	94	8	24	34
9	31	58	9	45	56
10	14	16	10	22	18
11	93	94	11	66	64
12	64	94	13	55	81
13	64	36	14	98	91
			15	50	64
			16	72	96
			17	72	72
			18	50	50
			19	50	50
			20	95	81
			21	50	56
			22	95	91
			23	60	69
			24	60	64
Average				58.17	64.75
Decrease/ Increase					
				+5.39	+6.58
Total Average Percentile Point Increase +5.99					

TABLE 7

National Percentile Comparisons of Students -
Follett vs. Merrill

Third Grade			Sixth Grade		
<u>Student</u>	<u>Merrill 82-83NP</u>	<u>Follett 83-84NP</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Merrill 82-83NP</u>	<u>Follett 83-84NP</u>
1	56	58	1	98	91
2	19	21	2	60	72
3	50	82	3	20	21
4	56	74	4	55	44
5	93	70	5	4	4
6	56	94	6	66	91
7	45	18	7	72	91
8	64	94	8	28	21
9	90	49	9	60	81
10	90	49	10	32	29
11	64	58	11	78	81
12	56	94	12	66	96
13	36	36	13	15	23
14	93	94	14	28	29
15	56	68	15	78	56
16	27	7	16	72	81
17	90	94	17	78	91
18	64	36	18	95	91
			19	45	56
			20	40	33
			21	24	56
Average				53.05	58.95
Decrease/ Increase					+5.90
Total Average Percentile Point Increase					+2.70

TABLE 9

National Percentile Comparisons of Students -
McDougal vs. Merrill

Third Grade			Sixth Grade		
Student	Merrill 82-83NP	McDougal 83-84NP	Student	Merrill 82-83NP	McDougal 83-84NP
1	64	36	1	28	44
2	45	28	2	60	91
3	90	94	3	24	38
4	64	82	4	72	72
5	19	5	5	98	96
6	50	68	6	66	72
7	90	94	7	50	50
8	90	94	8	78	91
9	64	68	9	24	58
10	50	58	10	62	96
11	93	94	11	66	81
12	31	36	12	36	50
13	64	58	13	78	91
14	93	94	14	95	91
15	64	68	15	95	96
16	64	68	16	72	91
17	45	32	17	66	75
			18	13	29
			19	95	96
			20	95	81
Average	63.53	63.35		64.15	74.45
Decrease/ Increase		-.18			+10.30
Total Average Percentile Point Increase +5.06					

Each of the four pilot spelling programs showed an increase in student achievement when compared to the previous year's spelling program (Merrill). The following illustrates the degree of those increases:

	<u>Total Avg. Percentile Pt. Inc.</u>
A. Economy	+5.99
B. Follett	+2.70
C. Laidlaw	+4.72
D. McDougal	+5.06
E. Merrill	Control

In summary, the spelling programs were then rated numerically according to the following criteria: program identification with material, instructional, and objective criteria; teacher/program observations; positive teacher feedback; negative teacher feedback; and student achievement. A rating of one (1) is high, while a rating of five (5) is low. Table 15 illustrates this thoroughly.

TABLE 10
 Ranking of Spelling Programs
 According to Evaluative Criteria

	Economy	Follett	Laidlaw	McDougal	Merrill
A. Material, Instructional, and Objective Criteria	4	5	2	1	3
B. Program and Teacher Observations	3	2	1	4	5
C. Positive Teacher Feedback	2	4	3	1	5
D. Negative Teacher Feedback	5	3	2	1	4
E. Student Achievement	1	4	3	2	C
Total Means	3.00	3.60	2.20	1.80	3.50

C = Control Program (No Ranking)

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was designed to evaluate five spelling programs to determine which one would be most appropriate for program adoption in grades one through six in the Westside Community Schools. The basic format of this study was to combine spelling research with the practical needs of the district to determine which program was most suitable.

A comprehensive review of the spelling literature and research was conducted to determine effective instructional methodology/technique and effective spelling materials. Also, the spelling objectives and goals of the Westside Community Schools were reviewed and itemized. A synthesis of these three criteria was formed and, consequently, secured a consensus of approval by the district's language arts committee.

To identify each program's objectives material format, a content analysis was conducted. Each content analysis was then compared to the synthesized set of district objectives, instructional criteria, and material criteria to determine the degree of relationship.

Through observations and interviews, each of the five programs was analyzed according to respective objectives perceived covered by the teachers and researcher. Also, data was gleaned regarding the teacher's perceptions of each program's positive and negative characteristics.

Utilizing the CTBS standardized test scores, student performance in grades three and six were analyzed. National percentile scores from those students who participated in the four pilot programs during the 1983-84 school year were compared to last year's scores when under the current spelling program. A determination of which program brought forth the highest increase in average percentile score was then made.

Finally, all of the mentioned analyses and comparisons were organized, itemized, and given numerical rankings so that one of the five spelling programs would stand out to be recommended for program adoption.

Conclusions

1. Spelling programs can be analyzed most effectively according to research criteria along with the practical needs of school districts.

2. When each of the five spelling program's content analysis was compared to material, instructional, and objective criteria, the McDougal, Littell program ranked first. Laidlaw ranked second, Merrill ranked third, Economy ranked fourth, and Follett ranked fifth.
3. When each of the five spelling programs was analyzed to measure how accurately teachers were implementing the programs according to the publisher's outlined strategies, Laidlaw ranked first. Follett ranked second, Economy ranked third, McDougal, Littell ranked fourth, and Merrill ranked fifth.
4. When analyzing each program according to positive teacher feedback, McDougal, Littell ranked first, Economy ranked second, Laidlaw ranked third, Follett ranked fourth, and Merrill ranked fifth.
5. When analyzing each program according to negative teacher feedback they were ranked in reverse order. Therefore, McDougal, Littell was ranked first because of the lowest raw score. Laidlaw was ranked second, Follett ranked third, Merrill ranked fourth, and Economy, with the highest raw score, ranked fifth.

6. When analyzing the four pilot spelling programs against the current (Merrill) spelling program to determine highest student achievement, Economy ranked first, McDougal, Littell ranked second, Laidlaw ranked third, and Follett ranked fourth. Merrill was not ranked because it was the control program.
7. Overall, when analyzing and comparing all five spelling programs against the given criteria, McDougal, Littell ranked first, Laidlaw ranked second, Economy ranked third, Merrill ranked fourth, and Follett ranked fifth.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that based upon this study's complete analysis of the five spelling programs, that the McDougal, Littell Spelling Series be adopted in grades one through six in the Westside Community Schools for school year 1984-85.
2. It is recommended that program monitoring and evaluation be implemented in the future to insure positive educational outcomes.
3. It is recommended that similar studies such as this one be used for future program adoptions, not only in the area of spelling, but in other disciplines, as well.

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- F. Spelling programs should enhance students' interest toward spelling improvement and develop a positive attitude in learning to spell (enrichment activities, games, etc.)
- G. Spelling programs should provide dictionary skill work activities.

Merrill		
McDougal		
Laidlaw		
Follett		
Economy		

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM

KEYS TO SPELLING MASTERY (ECONOMY)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the unit?_____
2. Do the students correct their own pretests?_____
3. Is the pretest corrected one word at a time?_____
4. Do students write any misspelled words on their study sheets?_____ (reproducible sheet at end of manual)_____
5. Do students do the Spelling Clues and Watch Out! activities in the text?_____
6. What is done to insure that students use the eight study steps on the words misspelled?_____
7. Do the pupils complete the practice activities?_____
8. Are More Practice activities from the teachers manual used?_____
- *9. Are the duplicating masters used?_____
- *10. Is a check test given during the week?_____
- *11. Do pupils correct the check test?_____
- *12. Do they write any words they misspell on their study sheets?_____
13. Do students complete Dictionary or Word Building and Spelling Challenge activities?_____
14. Do pupils complete Written Expression or Review activities?_____
15. Does the teacher administer and correct the final test?_____

- *16. Are the Variety Day activities used? _____
17. Is spelling used three times a week or five times
a week? _____
18. Are the review activities used at the end of each
six weeks? _____
19. Is the program individualized in any way? _____
20. How much time is spent on spelling per week? _____

*Optional Activities

APPENDIX C

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM

FOLLETT

1. Is the pretest given on Monday?_____
2. Do the students correct their own pretest?_____
3. What is done to insure that students use the recommended study steps?_____
4. Is Section B (Using the Words) used?_____
- If used, what day is it used?_____
5. Is Section C (Other Word Skills) used?_____
- If so, what day?_____
6. Is Section D (Review) used?_____
- If so, what day?_____
7. Is the take home list utilized?_____
8. Are the parent letters used?_____
9. Do the students record their own progress?_____
10. Are Blackline Masters available for student use?_____
11. Are students who score less than 50% on the pretest given core words only?_____
12. Are students who score 100% on the pretest given the challenge words?_____
13. Do students use the suggested writing activities (Levels 3-8) given in the teacher's manuals?_____
14. Do students use the seven (7) steps suggested in the teacher's manual for suggested writing activities?_____

15. Are the review words given at the end of each six
units? _____
16. What is done with the results of the review? _____
17. How many days per week is spelling taught? _____
18. How much time per week is spent on spelling? _____

APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM

SUCCESS IN SPELLING (LAIDLAW)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the unit? _____
2. Do students correct their own pretest? _____
3. Is the "Unit Opening" used before the pretest in each developmental unit? _____
4. Is part A used in each developmental unit? _____
5. Is part B used in each developmental unit? _____
6. Is the "Progress test" used for each developmental unit? _____
7. Is part C used in each developmental unit? _____
8. Is there a "mastery test" used for each developmental unit? _____
9. How much time is spent on spelling each week? _____
10. Which management plan is used? (refer to p.T6 in Teacher's Edition).
 - A. _____ Five Day
 - B. _____ Four Day
 - C. _____ Three Day
 - D. _____ Other - explain _____
11. Are the "review-and-evaluation" units used? _____
12. Are the steps in "Learning to Spell a Word" near the front of the pupil's text emphasized? _____

- *13. Are duplicating masters (levels 2-8 used for additional) review, practice, and enrichment activities? _____
- *14. Are the teaching annotations in the teacher's edition used for each developmental unit? _____
In what way? _____
- *15. Does the teacher allow for self-directed learning in parts A, B, and C of the developmental units? _____
16. Does the teacher administer and correct the mastery test? _____
17. Do the students compile a list of misspelled words after each developmental unit which may be used for the "review-and-evaluation" unit? _____
- *18. Do the students use the "Words of the Week" activity at various times? (see p. T7 of the teacher's edition) _____

*Optional Activities

APPENDIX E

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM

BUILDING SPELLING SKILLS (MCDUGAL LITTELL)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the spelling unit?_____
2. Do students correct their own pretest?_____
3. Does the teacher write the correct spelling of the word on a board, chart, or overhead projector?_____
4. Do students cross out the entire misspelled word on their pretest and write it correctly?_____
5. Does the teacher focus on the whole word rather than on individual sounds or syllables?_____
6. How does the teacher insure that students use the six step study plan?_____
7. Is any attempt made to vary instruction?_____
- If so, what is done?_____
8. How much time is spent on spelling per week?_____
9. Do students understand the spelling generalization presented in the lesson?_____
10. Can students apply the generalization to other words?_____
11. Do students find their own words in the Word Search?_____
12. Do all students do the dictionary work?_____
- *13. Do students who make few or no errors omit any activities?_____
14. Do students use the handbook at the back of the text?_____
15. Do students do the suggested writing activities in the text?_____

16. Does the teacher use writing suggestions from the manual? _____
17. Are parents provided a copy of the master word list? _____
18. Do the students record their pre and final test? _____
- *19. Does the teacher use the Beginning and End-of-Year tests and the Mastery Tests? _____
20. Does the teacher use the class record chart? _____

*Optional Activities

APPENDIX F

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM

SPELLING FOR WRITING (MERRILL)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the unit?_____
2. Do students correct their own pretest?_____
3. Does the teacher administer the placement test at the beginning of the year?_____
4. Are duplicated pretest sheets used for the pretest?_____
5. Does the student record his/her pretest and final test scores?_____
6. How does the teacher insure that students use the "Study Method"?_____
7. Do the students spell correctly those words on the pretest that were misspelled?_____
8. Does the teacher administer a final test?_____
9. Does the teacher use a check test between the pretest and final test?_____
10. Which management plan is used (refer to P1 11 in L.A. curriculum guide-Merrill Spelling)?_____
 - A. _____ Plan I
 - B. _____ Plan II
 - C. _____ Plan III
 - D. _____ Plan IV
11. Are activities assigned to students from the book?_____

If so, how?_____

- *12. Are extended activities from the teacher's edition assigned? _____
- *13. Are students placed at different levels in the room? _____
14. Does the teacher use the uniting activities provided by the book? _____
15. How is assigned activity work corrected? _____
16. Are students encouraged to study their words at home as well as at school? _____
- *17. Do students share their written work with each other? _____
18. How much time is devoted to spelling each week? _____

*Optional Activities

APPENDIX G

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☐ Merrill

	Bad Description				Good Description	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. The words used in the spelling program are those students would most frequently use.						
2. The challenge words are words frequently and likely to be used by students.						
3. The word lists have predictable patterns to simplify learning.						
4. The text recommends that students correct their own pretests.						
5. The spelling program can be covered in 60-75 minutes per week or less.						
6. The text stresses a systematic way to study spelling (study steps).						
7. The text stresses breaking the word into syllables.						
8. The text motivates pupil interest.						
9. The text stresses spending time on word meanings.						
10. The text provides for the systematic review of words.						
11. The text draws attention to hard spots in words.						
12. Repeated writing of the words is recommended.						

PILOT SPELLING PROGRAMS

Indicate your answer on the following scale by checking the box which best describes the program you are piloting.

☐ Economy ☐ Follett
☐ Laidlaw ☐ McDougal
☐ Merrill

	Bad Description				Good Description	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
13. The text contains suggestions for using the words in writing.						
14. The spelling rules presented have wide application with few exceptions.						
15. The final test provides for writing the spelling words in sentences or paragraphs.						
16. The program provides options for slow and accelerated learners.						
17. A larger percentage of my students are getting all the words correct than with the previous system.						
18. A high degree of emphasis is placed on phonics in learning to spell.						

APPENDIX H
Guidelines for Implementation of a
New Spelling Program
in the
Westside Community Schools
Omaha, Nebraska

To establish guidelines and procedures for a spelling curriculum it is best to analyze those materials and techniques that have been practiced in the past and have proven to be educationally beneficial through intensive spelling research. Also, it is equally important that those materials and techniques fit within the framework of those objectives set forth by the local school district. The following is, therefore, a synthesis of those objectives established by the Westside Community Schools along with the qualities of effective spelling materials and effective methodologies and techniques.

The elementary spelling and language arts committee of the Westside Community Schools together established the following objectives to serve as a base for the elementary spelling program:

- 1) The spelling words of highest frequency in child and adult writing should be studied.
- 2) The words should progress from easier to more difficult words.

- 3) The student must correct his/her own spelling test under the direction of the classroom teacher.
- 4) The test-study method (utilizing a pretest) is the best approach to each lesson.
- 5) The students should learn to spell words wholistically.
- 6) A technique for learning to spell words must be provided for students.
- 7) The program should provide for growth and maintenance of spelling ability.
- 8) The time allotted for the study of spelling should be between sixty and seventy-five minutes per week.

Spelling research has found the following to be effective instructional methodologies and techniques:

- 1) To allow the student to correct his/her own spelling list on the pretest is a most important factor leading to spelling growth.
- 2) Teaching spelling by the whole word method is more effective than teaching spelling by syllables.
- 3) Drawing students' attention to the "hard spots" within a word is of little value to spelling growth.
- 4) Repeated writing of the spelling words and writing of words "in the air" are not meaningful or helpful to students in learning to spell words.
- 5) It is not important to spend time with word meanings.


- 6) Attention to visual and structural similarities, as well as addition of affixes will improve spelling performance.
- 7) Rules taught should have wide application with few exceptions. Emphasis must be on teaching the child to learn the ways that words are spelled and not depend upon any one program to spell.
- 8) Words from curricular areas are of little value in developing spelling ability because they usually are not words the students are most often called upon to write.

Spelling research has found the following to be effective material content:

- 1) The words in the spelling program should reflect the known information as to which words are most frequently and likely to be used by students.
- 2) Spelling programs should present the word in list form.
- 3) Word lists which demonstrate predictable patterns of related words and are presented simultaneously enhances learning and retention.
- 4) The "test-study-test" method of instruction is superior to the "study-test" method.

- 5) Spelling programs should provide a systematic approach to the study of each word.
- 6) Spelling programs should allow for an allotted time of 60-75 minutes per week.
- 7) Spelling programs should allow students to use words in written work so the spelling list does not appear to be the end product. Practice in application (writing) is an essential part of a strong spelling program.
- 8) Spelling programs should enhance students' interest toward spelling improvement and develop a positive attitude in learning to spell (enrichment activities, games, etc.)
- 9) Spelling programs should provide dictionary skill work activities.

This synthesized report of district elementary spelling objectives, along with research data regarding effective spelling theory and materials, is accepted as a basis by which an implementation study for adoption will be conducted.



Elementary Language Arts and Spelling
Chairperson

APPENDIX I

OBSERVATION GUIDES

TO ASSESS THE EXTENT THE

TEACHERS IMPLEMENTED THE PROGRAMS

AS DESIGNED

KEYS TO SPELLING MASTERY (ECONOMY)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the unit?
6 - Yes
1 - No
2. Do the students correct their own pretests?
6 - Yes
1 - No
3. Is the pretest corrected one word at a time?
3 - Yes
4 - No
4. Do students write any misspelled words on their study sheets?
3 - Yes
4 - No
5. Do students do the "Spelling Clues" and "Watch Out!" activities in the text?
6 - Yes
1 - No
6. What is done to insure that students use the eight study steps on the words misspelled?
6 - Yes (2-when introduced; 3- periodically;
1 - every four or five weeks)
1 - No
7. Do the pupils complete the practice activities ?
7 - Yes
0 - No

- *8. Are More Practice activities from the teacher's manual used?
- 1 - Yes
 - 3 - No
 - 3 - Sometimes
- *9. Are the duplicating masters used?
- 5 - Yes
 - 0 - No
 - 2 - Sometimes
- *10. Is a check test given during the week?
- 1 - Yes
 - 5 - No
 - 1 - At beginning of year only
- *11. Do pupils correct the check test?
- 0 - Yes
 - 7 - No (teacher corrects)
- *12. Do they write any words they misspell on their study sheets?
- 2 - Yes
 - 5 - No
- *13. Do students complete Dictionary or Word Building and Spelling Challenge activities?
- 6 - Yes
 - 1 - No
- *14. Do pupils complete Written Expression or Review activities?
- 6 - Yes
 - 1 - No
- *15. Does the teacher administer and correct the final test?
- 6 - Yes
 - 1 - No
- *16. Are the Variety Day activities used?
- 2 - Yes
 - 3 - No
 - 1 - Sometimes
 - 1 - Once

17. Is spelling used three times a week or five times a week?

7 - 5 times/wk.

18. Are the review activities used at the end of each six weeks?

6 - Yes

1 - No

19. Is the program individualized in any way?

1 - Yes

2 - No

4 - Somewhat

20. How much time is spent on spelling per week?

1 - 60 min./wk.

2 - 75 min./wk.

2 - 100 min./wk.

1 - 120 min./wk.

1 - 165 min./wk.

*Optional Activities

FOLLETT

1. Is the pretest given on Monday?
6 - Yes
0 - No
2. Do the students correct their own pretests?
4 - Yes
1 - No
1 - Usually
3. What is done to assure that students use the recommended steps?
6 - Yes (4 - each step is covered thoroughly in class;
2 - parents are informed; 1 - use of a posted chart)
0 - Does not use
4. Is Section B (Using the Words) used?
6 - Yes (2 - MON.; 3 - TUES.; 1 - THURS.)
0 - No
5. Is Section C (Other Word Skills) used?
6 - Yes (1 - MON.; 3 - TUES.; 2 - WED./THURS.)
0 - No
6. Is Section D (Review) used?
5 - Yes (1 - MON.; 4 - THURS.; 1 - WED./THURS.)
1 - Sometimes
7. Is the take home list utilized?
4 - Yes
2 - No (books and majority missed go home only)
8. Are the parent letters used?
2 - Yes
3 - No
1 - Beginning of year only
9. Do the students record their own progress?
2 - Yes
4 - No

10. Are Blackline Masters available for student use?
- 5 - Yes
 - 1 - No (books go home)
11. Are students who score less than 50% on pretest given core words only?
- 1 - Yes
 - 4 - No
 - 1 - A few
12. Are students who score 100% on the pretest given the challenge words?
- 5 - Yes
 - 1 - No
13. Do students use the suggested writing activities (Levels 3-8) given in the teacher's manuals?
- 0 - Yes
 - 5 - No
 - 1 - Sometimes
14. Do students use the seven steps suggested in the teacher's manual for suggested writing activities?
- 2 - Yes
 - 3 - No
 - 1 - Partially
15. Are the review words given at the end of each six units?
- 5 - Yes
 - 1 - Not consistently
16. What is done with the results of the review?
- 6 - Recorded (1 - saved for conference; 1 - weighted heavily for grades; 4 - sent home)
17. How many days per week is spelling taught?
- 1 - Two days
 - 2 - Three days
 - 1 - Four days
 - 2 - Five days
18. How much time per week is spent on spelling?
- 4 - 60 min./wk.
 - 2 - 75 min./wk.

SUCCESS IN SPELLING (LAIDLAW)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the year?
6 - Yes
0 - No
2. Do students correct their own pretests?
6 - Yes
0 - No
3. Is the "Unit Opening" used before the pretest in each developmental unit?
3 - Yes
1 - No
1 - Sometimes
1 - Afterwards
4. Is Part A used in each developmental unit?
5 - Yes
1 - No
5. Is Part B used in each developmental unit?
5 - Yes
1 - No
6. Is the "Progress Test" used for each developmental unit?
5 - Yes
1 - No
7. Is Part C used in each developmental unit?
5 - Yes
1 - No
8. Is there a "mastery test" used for each developmental unit?
5 - Yes
1 - No
9. How much time is spent on spelling each week?
3 - 60 min./wk.
2 - 75 min./wk.
1 - 50 min./wk.

10. Which management plan is used?

- 5 - Yes (1 - 5 day; 4 - 3 day)
- 1 - Other

11. Are the "review-and-evaluation" units used?

- 6 - Yes
- 0 - No

12. Are the steps in "Learning to Spell a Word" near the front of the pupil's text emphasized?

- 3 - Yes
- 3 - No

*13. Are duplicating masters (Levels 2-8) used for additional review, practice, and enrichment activities?

- 3 - Yes
- 3 - No

14. Are the teaching annotations in the teacher's edition used for each developmental unit?

- 1 - Yes
- 0 - No
- 5 - Sometimes

*15. Does the teacher allow for self directed learning in Parts A, B, and C of the developmental units?

- 5 - Yes
- 1 - No

16. Does the teacher administer and correct the mastery test?

- 5 - Yes
- 1 - No (students to altogether)

17. Do the students compile a list of misspelled words after each developmental unit which may be used for the "review-and-evaluation" unit?

- 0 - Yes
- 6 - No

18. Do the students use the "Words of the Week" activity at various times?

- 1 - Yes
- 3 - No
- 2 - Sometimes

* Optional Activities

BUILDING SPELLING SKILLS (McDOUGAL LITTELL)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the spelling unit?
 - 5 - Yes
 - 1 - No
2. Do students correct their own pretest?
 - 6 - Yes
 - 0 - No
3. Does the teacher write the correct spelling of the word on the board, chart, or overhead projector?
 - 2 - Yes
 - 3 - No (1 - on paper; 2 - use books)
 - 1 - Sometimes
4. Do students cross out the entire misspelled work on their pretest and write it correctly?
 - 5 - Yes
 - 2 - Erase
 - 1 - No
5. Does the teacher focus on the whole word rather than on individual sounds or syllables?
 - 4 - Yes
 - 1 - No
 - 1 - Both
6. How does the teacher insure that students use the six step study plan?
 - 5 - Yes (4 - at beginning of year/reinforce periodically; 1 - weekly)
 - 1 - No
7. Is any attempt to vary instruction?
 - 3 - Yes (various dittos; different games: various activities)
 - 3 - No
8. How much time is spent on spelling per week?
 - 4 - 75 min./wk.
 - 1 - 40 min./wk.
 - 1 - 40-60 min./wk.

9. Do students understand the spelling generalization presented in the lesson?
- 5 - Yes
 - 1 - No
10. Can students apply the generalization to other words?
- 3 - Yes
 - 2 - No
 - 1 - Rarely
11. Do students find their own words in the Word Search?
- 5 - Yes
 - 1 - No
12. Do all students do the dictionary work?
- 3 - Yes
 - 3 - No
- *13. Do students who make few or no errors omit any activities?
- 2 - Yes
 - 3 - No
 - 1 - Sometimes
14. Do students use the handbook at the back of the text?
- 3 - Yes
 - 1 - No
 - 2 - Sometimes
15. Do students do the suggested writing activities in the text?
- 3 - Yes
 - 3 - No
16. Does the teacher use writing suggestions from the manual?
- 1 - Yes
 - 4 - No
 - 1 - Sometimes
17. Are parents provided a copy of the master word list?
- 2 - Yes
 - 4 - No

18. Do the students record their pre and final test?

0 - Yes

6 - No

*19. Does the teacher use the Beginning and End-of-Year tests and the Mastery Tests?

3 - Yes

3 - No

20. Does the teacher use the class record chart?

4 - Yes

2 - No

*Optional Activities

SPELLING FOR WRITING (MERRILL)

1. Is the pretest given on the first day of the unit?
5 - Yes
1 - No
2. Do students correct their own pretests?
5 - Yes
1 - No
3. Does the teacher administer the placement test at the beginning of the year?
2 - Yes
4 - No
4. Are the duplicated pretest sheets used for the pretest?
5 - Yes
1 - No
5. Does the student record his/her pretest and final test scores?
2 - Yes
4 - No
6. How does the teacher insure that students use the "Study Method"
3 - At beginning of year only
3 - Does not use
7. Do the students spell correctly those words on the pretest that were misspelled?
5 - Yes
1 - No
8. Does the teacher administer a final test?
5 - Yes
1 - No
9. Does the teacher use a check test between the pretest and final test?
1 - Yes
5 - No

10. Which management plan is used (refer to P1 11 in L.A. curriculum guide-Merrill Spelling)?
 0 - Yes
 6 - No described plan
11. Are activities assigned to students from the book?
 3 - Yes (1-written work only; 2-assigned Wed./due Fri.)
 3 - No
- *12. Are extended activities from the teacher's edition assigned?
 2 - Yes
 4 - No
- *13. Are students placed at different levels in the room?
 2 - Yes
 4 - No
14. Does the teacher use the unit activities provided by the book?
 5 - Yes
 1 - No
15. How is assigned activity work corrected?
 3 - By teacher
 3 - By students
16. Are students encouraged to study their words at home as well as at school?
 6 - Yes
 0 - No
- *17. Do students share their written work with each other?
 4 - Yes
 1 - No
 1 - Sometimes
18. How much time is devoted to spelling each week?
 1 - 45 min./wk.
 1 - 60-75 min./wk.
 1 - 75 min./wk.
 1 - 90 min./wk.
 2 - 120 min./wk.

* Optional Activities