

Rebecca Sitton's APPLESEED



PLANT THE SEEDS TO GROW SPELLING AND WORD-SKILL LITERACY.

A How-To Guide for the Selection of Sourcebook Activities

The Sourcebook is your source for creating your own spelling and word-skill program to complement *any* communication curriculum. There are more activities in every unit than you'll choose to use, so which should you select? It depends. To decide, you need to consider these variables, as well as the general guidelines that follow them.

Which activities best complement your current reading program?

For instance, if your reading program offers an insufficient phonics foundation for all or some students, select activities that are labeled *phonics* in the Sourcebook side margin to strengthen these students' ability to use phonics for both reading and spelling.

Which activities teach skills that will likely occur on standardized tests?

For example, identify practice reinforcers such as *Stretch It* to fortify students' ability to write a strong sentence, *Fix It* to heighten students' awareness of proofreading and editing, and skills featured in *Build Skillful Writers* that were chosen because of their frequency on such tests.

What skills are targeted on documents, such as your School Improvement Plan?

If vocabulary development is the target, frequently select activities labeled in the side margin *vocabulary development*, and emphasize tasks that feature homophones and homographs, multiple meanings, Greek and Latin etymologies, prefix/suffix practice, and idiomatic usage.

What word-skill experiences do your students lack?

For example, if the Sourcebook program is new to your school and students have little background with spelling rules and how to apply them to spell hundreds of words, then select activities that guide your students toward their discovery, and perhaps exercise the Sourcebook option to create an ongoing class book of words that uphold each rule. Do not hurry through this work, because it forms a powerful foundation that serves your students in times to come.

Are you using the Practice Books?

If so, note the correlated activities in each unit and select those. By the end of the school year, a student's Practice Book will have become a compilation of work that represents every major essential skill at that grade.

Which activities were selected in previous units?

If you recently worked with your class on letter-card word-making activities and this lesson format recurs in a unit, you might select it again if your students were motivated by the manipulatives, or bypass it if you do not wish to duplicate the format again so soon.

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A How-To Guide for the Selection of Sourcebook Activities (continued)

Also, keep these general guidelines in mind:

- ☞ Don't feel pressure to finish your Sourcebook. Use your judgment regarding students' needs to guide you, not the time frame of the school year. If you finish only two-thirds of the book, but you consistently engage your students in productive spelling and word work—not to worry!
- ☞ All skills, concepts, and words are carefully recycled within each level and from level to level. This is in alignment with learning theory—ongoing opportunities to learn essential skills in different venues and small increments is superior to a one-time major focus on a skill. To verify the extensive recycling, note the *Scope and Sequence Chart* which is located in the back of the Third Edition Sourcebooks and on the website for the Second Edition.
- ☞ No concept in a unit is more important than another, so do not always select, for example, the first concept in lieu of others. Simply do what you think best serves your students, knowing that the *Word Preview* and *Test Ready* sections should always be done. Further, Sourcebook options for differentiating practice abounds, so you may make different choices for different students.
- ☞ To select testing activities, do the *Cloze Story Word Test*, and use your judgment regarding the other assessments. However, each assessment provides you with critical performance feedback, as well as essential practice for your students. Do not feel you haven't the time for more testing. Testing is used in this program to gather information so that you can target your instruction and students' practice with areas of need.
- ☞ Teachers at a grade level can make group decisions regarding the selection of activities if more structure is desired. For teachers new to the profession, guidance in selecting activities might be provided by veteran teachers.
- ☞ And, finally—enjoy! Don't let the magnitude of your Sourcebook weigh heavily on you, just make your choices knowing that over time your students will gain visible competence to show you—and them—it's working!

