



Ask a Sitton Specialist

Dear Fred,

Many teachers have discovered that it is well worth taking the time and effort each school year to explain the how, what, and why of *Sitton Spelling* to parents. Teachers are well aware of the benefits reaped when parents learn early on that the program emphasizes long-term mastery of words, not for a Friday test, but for a lifetime of accurate spelling.

Acquainting parents with the program can be accomplished in a number of ways:

- Many teachers have commented that it is most helpful to introduce the program at Open House or Back-to-School Night. This allows parents the opportunity to become familiar with the program, its benefits, and how it differs from a customary spelling program. More importantly, it gives teachers the chance to explain to parents how they can become involved in helping their children improve their spelling skills.
- One savvy teacher invited the parents of last year's students to share their experiences with the program, along with how much progress their children made throughout the school year. The teacher discovered that having other parents talk about the program from their point of view was a sure-fire way to lend instant credibility to the program, as well as to foster support.
- Other teachers have found it useful to send home an explanatory letter the first day of school.
- Another option for introducing parents to the program is through the Tutor Me CD-ROM Parent Introduction or the Sourcebook Series Overview DVD.

No matter how the program is introduced, you will want to be sure parents receive a copy of the Introducing Spelling Blackline Master (found in each Sourcebook), a copy of the Words to Learn sheet with Ideas for Word Study copied on the back, as well as an example of a Take-Home Task.

Explain to parents that for each unit, they will receive a Take-Home Task and later, a Words to Learn sheet with their child's spelling words, with the Ideas for Word Study on the back side.

Teachers should also read the Parents as Partners Teaching Notes toward the end of their Sourcebook. This section of the Sourcebook is chock full of ideas and suggestions to help keep parents informed and involved. After all, encouraging parent-child spelling partnerships at the beginning of each school year is sure to increase student success!

How do we get parents to support Sitton Spelling instruction in the classroom this fall?

Fred Mays
2nd Grade Teacher