

Spellchecking



Lesson outline

1. Explaining why it is important to improve spelling
2. Techniques to improve spelling
3. Tips per age
4. Spelling Checklist
5. The Proofreading or Editing Wheel

1. Explaining why it is important to improve spelling

Spell checking may sound like a repetitive and strenuous task for students of all age. Before you teach them how to develop this skill, it can be useful to introduce the topic by talking about why it is important to improve one's spelling.

a) Spell checking is a skill that needs to be developed

It happens to everybody to struggle with the spelling of some words. After all, there are spelling difficulties and orthograph exceptions in all languages. In addition, spontaneously correcting one's spelling as they write requires multitasking: this can be especially challenging for learners with learning disorders. This is why it is important to train students to look out for errors, giving just one instruction at a time.

b) Correct spelling helps you being understood by others

Students sometimes feel that orthograph is too complicated, therefore it is important to teach them that proper spelling helps them being understood by others. The following paragraph can support your point: "It is not only at school that spelling is important: at work, proper spelling will make you look more professional. While in "real life" spelling mistakes might be ok sometimes, it is a good thing to learn to avoid them while you are at school. First, if you feel more comfortable with spelling, you will feel more comfortable writing. Also, it is easier for other people to read what you write when there are less spelling mistakes."

c) Computers can help only to an extent

Students might think that automatic correctors are enough to have good spelling. It can be useful to spend some time over this aspect, especially with older students.

Automatic correctors are available on every text typing program and smartphones nowadays. However, they can be trickier to use than they might think. Sometimes, they can propose several spellings for the text typed. They might propose several ways to correct grammar. In both cases, students need to have a sense of the proper spelling or grammar to use. This is why, even in an era of automatic text correction, it is essential to learn as much as one can about spelling and grammar.

2. Techniques to improve spelling

Improving one's spelling might look like a lot of work. Focusing on one's own mistakes does not sound particularly fun. The good news is that when students learn how to learn from their mistakes, they will light the way to success! Here is a

a) Learning from your mistakes

Your teacher points at your mistakes to help you identify them. When you are at home, read what they corrected on your test. Make sure you understand why they corrected you. To make sure you remember it in the future, or if it is a recurring mistake, write it on a piece of paper. Read these corrections aloud or write them several times, whatever helps you the most to remember them. Over time, you will remember how to avoid these mistakes.

b) Do not hesitate to ask questions

When the teacher corrects exercises or tests in class, listen carefully. Write down anything you do not understand. Try to think about it. If you do not understand the correction, ask a friend or your teacher until you feel confident!

c) How to proofread for spelling mistakes

The good thing is that once you have learnt spell checking techniques, the more you use them, the easier it will become over time!

1. A good way to check for any spelling or grammar mistakes is to use a spelling checklist. There are several spelling checklists at the end of this lesson, depending on your level.
2. In addition to general proofreading techniques, you need to learn what you struggle the most with. There are probably words you often spell incorrectly, more than others. Try to make a list of these words. When you are spell checking, make sure to look for any mistake on these words in particular!

3. Tips per age

Age	Tip
6-8	Spell checking might be more difficult for younger students and might be more tiring as well. Encourage them to focus on checking the spelling and grammar of the notion you want them to study in the lesson (vocabulary, tense, etc).
8-10	For this age range, encourage the student to mark the text as they proofread with a pencil. For example, they can connect the verb to the subject or the adjective to the noun to check that they are in the appropriate form.
10-12	At this age, students understand more about the notions or words they struggle with. Support them in creating a checklist that focuses on these challenges in particular.

Age

12-14

14-16

Tip

Students this age write longer text. In addition to spell checking, support them in managing the coherence of their text. For spell checking, they can make a list of their biggest difficulties to make sure they do not lose too much energy when proofreading.

Encourage older students to create their own spell checking grid. During exams, they might not have time to check everything as they write longer texts. At this stage, they generally know more about their weaknesses. You can provide support in tackling them.



4. Spelling checklist

a) Basic Checklist

BASIC SPELLING CHECKLIST

- ☐ I checked that all my sentences have ending marks (. ! ?)
- ☐ I started all sentences and proper nouns with a capital letter (ABC)
- ☐ I spelled words correctly
- ☐ I have read every paragraph to check for errors
- ☐ I did my best 😊

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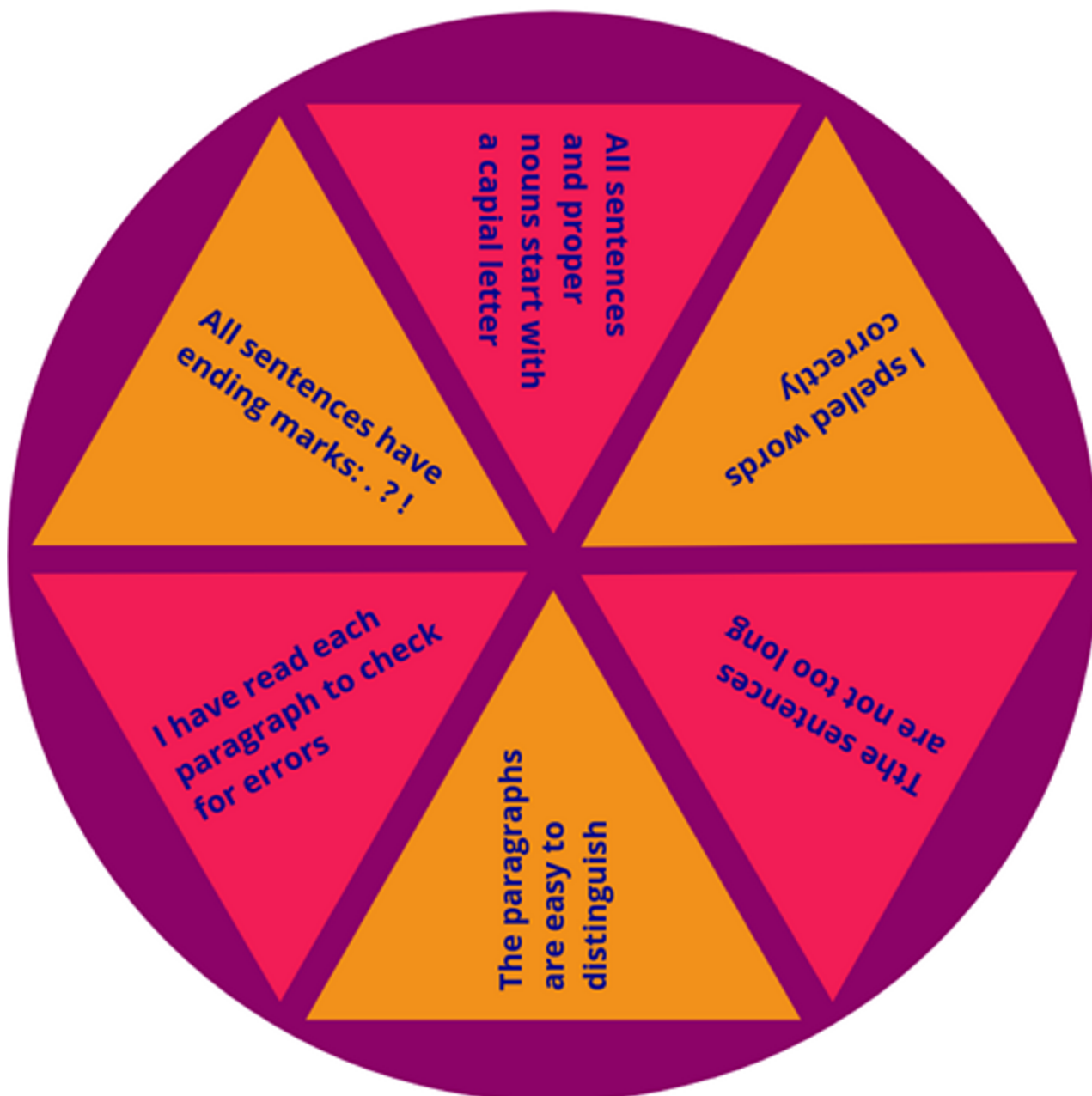
b) Advanced spelling checklist grid

<u>Category</u>	Action	
<u>Verbs</u>	1. Identify all the verbs in the text	
	2. Identify the subject for each verb	
	3. Check that you use the proper conjugation according to the subject	
	4. Check that you use the proper tense	
Nouns	Check that you use singular or plural according to the text	
Punctuation	1. Check that there is a capital letter at the beginning of each sentence	
	2. Check that there is appropriate punctuation at the end of each sentence (for example: <u>.</u> , ! , ? , ...)	
	3. Check that you use commas properly	
Tackle your own challenges	1. Make a list of words you often misspell, and check if they are correct	

Coherence of the text (for older students)	1. Check that each sentence has a clear meaning	
	2. Check that the meaning of a paragraph is coherent (one idea per paragraph)	
	3. Check that link words are used appropriately	
	4. Check that that the text you wrote matches the logic of your outline or draft	

4. The proofreading or editing wheel

- Print the proofreading wheel on sturdy paper
- Cut both sides and attach the back to the front with a brass paper fastener
- Have your students spin the wheel to proofread their writing



FRONT

THE PROOFREADING WHEEL

Turn the wheel to check you proofread everything!

BACK

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