ZB Spelling Connections

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RESEARCH AND STAGES OF SPELLING DEVELOPMENT

K-8

For Kindergarten and Grades 1–8

ZB Zaner-Bloser

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In addition to writing the popular books **The Science of Spelling**, **Breaking the Code**, **Spel…Is a Four-Letter Word**, **Teaching Kids to Spell**, **My Kid Can't Spell!**, and **The Literacy Map**, Dr. Gentry continues to conduct workshops that have helped thousands of school districts throughout the United States adopt better practices for spelling instruction. A popular speaker at educational conferences nationwide, Dr. Gentry has spent much of his entire, successful career finding better ways to teach spelling.

I myself am a struggling speller. I have a personal record of 252 scores of 100 on the Friday spelling test, but I've always struggled with spelling in my own writing. I know what it's like for a child who scores 100 on the Friday test, but the following week misspells those very same words in his own writing. Spelling is complex. There are many better ways to learn spelling than memorizing a list of words.

Dr. Gentry began his career as a classroom teacher. Later, he earned his Ph.D. in Reading Education from the University of Virginia and served as professor of elementary education and reading at Western Carolina University, where he directed the reading center. As a result of his spelling research and educational experience, he has become a well-known authority on how spelling ability develops and how it contributes to a child's writing and overall literacy development.

THE STAGES OF SPELLING DEVELOPMENT AND THE RESEARCH BEHIND GRADE

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Kindergarten

For a complete bibliography, see pages 9, 10, and 11 of this document.

The new *Spelling Connections* embraces a research base calling for children in emergent literacy to create developmentally appropriate spellings that will enable them to write for their own purposes, even as they learn correct spellings. A compelling body of research now supports children's use of what the researchers term "invented spellings" at emergent levels. Generating these non-adult spellings is a developmentally appropriate activity (International Reading Association, 1998). This research reports how the act of generating spellings actually enhances children's letter knowledge and phonemic awareness skills, solidifies knowledge of sound-symbol relationships, and leads to success with reading in first grade (Juel, 1994; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Spelling Connections also resonates with research-based Vygotskian concepts such as teaching in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), as well as scaffolding techniques (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976), including scaffolded writing (Bodrova & Leong, 1998). The program also helps teachers use research-based techniques such as Elkonin Boxes, or "letter boxes," which employ tangible objects or physical actions to teach children challenging mental concepts such as segmenting sounds in words or making sound-symbol matches (Elkonin, 1963; Galperin, 1969; Clay, 1993; Bodrova & Leong, 1998).

In particular, the research base for *Spelling Connections for Kindergarten* includes a deep and broad perspective of developmental aspects of learning to spell that grew out of Piagetian theory underpinning the notion that aspects of cognitive development proceed by way of qualitative stage-like change. This theory aligned with

- Charles Read's classic studies of children's classification of speech sounds (1971, 1975);
- research conducted by Carol Chomsky (1970);
- a body of developmental spelling research conducted by Ed Henderson and a group of researchers at the University of Virginia (Beers, 1974; Gentry, 1977, 1978; Henderson, 1981; Henderson & Beers, 1980; Templeton, 1979; Zutell, 1979; reported in Gentry, 2000a).

These seminal works began to identify developmental guideposts to when certain accomplishments with spelling might be expected. Spelling, we learned, was not merely memorization of correct spellings, but a more complex acquisition of many aspects of word knowledge gained over time. Over the years, these findings have received widespread acceptance by researchers (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Read & Hodges, 1982) and practitioners (International Reading Association, 1998) and has been extended to incorporate aspects of development in reading (Ehri, 1997) and writing (Bodrova & Leong, 1998; Gentry, in press).

A synthesis of this research base led to the Gentry Writing Scale (Bodrova & Leong, 1998; Gentry, in press). (The Gentry Writing Scale appears on pages 2–5.) This scale, which goes far beyond assessing stages of developmental spelling, will help you lead your students to make important connections between spelling and reading and writing. Originally described as a "writing scale" in a kindergarten research project by Bodrova and Leong (1998), the Gentry Writing Scale not only measures developmental stages of spelling (Gentry, 1977, 1982, 2000a) but also tracks reading and writing development by helping you see evidence of the child's changing concept of the alphabetic

principle. The scale demonstrates how emergent readers and writers use the underlying knowledge sources you teach for spelling when they read and write. These include concept of word, segmenting sounds in words, recognizing letters, and learning how letters relate to sounds. In addition to phases of word learning and reading, the scale is backed by research showing how spelling stages are, in fact, writing stages in kindergarten (Bodrova & Leong, 1998; Gentry, in press).

Following Linnea Ehri's research, the scale shows how spelling stages dovetail with phases of word learning and reading. (Ehri demonstrated how the Gentry scale corresponds almost perfectly with her own pre-alphabetic, partial alphabetic, full alphabetic, and consolidated alphabetic phases of word learning. [Research reported in "Learning to read and learning to spell are one and the same, almost," (Ehri, 1997).] This scale is also compatible with other independent but similar studies, such as the work of Darrell Morris (1981).

The Gentry Writing Scale will help you identify levels of emergent reading, writing, and spelling as you follow each child's progress from one level to the next. The scale makes it easy for you to consider each child's development based on his or her use of letter approximations versus real letters, completeness of phonemic representation, qualitative differences in invented spelling, sophistication of sound-symbol correspondence, and representation of the alphabetic principle (Gentry, in press). The scale will help you follow five stages in the child's knowledge and application of how print works in writing. (Keep in mind that the child's writing stage likely impacts his or her strategies for reading.)

Note: A child is considered to be in a particular stage when **more than half** of his or her developmental spellings fit the criteria for that stage.

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Gentry Writing Scale

*Stage 0 is the minimal competency expected at the beginning of kindergarten.
It describes non-alphabetic writing.*

Indicators in Child's Writing

- Scribbled or approximated letter forms; "wavy" or "loopy" writing

- No true distinguishable alphabetic letters

- No developmental or created spelling

- Little awareness of how print "works"

- Does not write his/her name

Instructional Recommendations for Transitioning to Stage 1

- Use poetry and rhymes to help the child notice prominent sounds, phonograms, and rhyming words

- Use oral activities to promote phonemic awareness

- Read aloud and discuss stories

- Model reading, engage in shared reading, and do repeated readings of easy-to-read material

- Begin teaching letters and sounds

- Teach the child to write his/her name

- Encourage the child to use letters in his/her name (and newly learned letters) to represent messages and in place of scribbles and "wavy" or "loopy" writing

- Accept what he or she can do to build confidence

- Allow the child to write for his/her own purposes

- Look at the child's independent writing to assess growth and foster the child's expanding literacy knowledge

Stage 0 (Non-Alphabetic Writing)
Scribbling and the use of letterlike forms characterize the writing of Stage 0 spellers.

Gentry Writing Scale

Stage 1 Spellers

Stage 1 is the minimal competency expected by mid-kindergarten.
It describes writing that is pre-alphabetic. Pre-communicative spelling is typical of this stage.
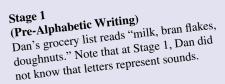
Indicators in Child's Writing

- Writes in letters that appear to be random with no matches to sounds

- Uses known letters, such as those in the child's name

Instructional Recommendations for Transitioning to Stage 2

- Sort picture cards based on sounds

- Have the child match pictures by beginning sounds, then letters

- Teach letters of the alphabet

- Read aloud and do book talks

- Do shared and interactive reading with beginner-oriented text

- Encourage the child to do independent reading of wordless books, picture books, easy alphabet or letter books, caption books, and easy decodable books

- Help writers attend to initial sounds in spoken words by modeling the sound as you elongate and accentuate it

- Model how to stretch out sounds in words

- Use Elkonin Boxes (see Teacher Edition page T173) to help the child segment the sounds in words

- Encourage the child to match prominent sounds in words with a letter that "says" the sound

- Model the process of connecting a prominent sound within a word to a letter

- Do sound-matching activities first and move to the more difficult tasks such as isolating sounds and segmenting sounds in words (Yopp & Yopp, 2000)

- Use poetry and rhymes to help the child notice sounds, phonograms, and rhyming words. Focus especially on learning letters and sounds in prominent positions in words (e.g., initial and ending letter/sound positions)

- Build confidence by using the writer's attempts to convey messages he/she wishes to write as a vehicle for individualized teaching. Continue supportive literacy activities in reading and phonological awareness

- Encourage the child to write for his/her own purposes

- Look at the child's independent writing to assess growth and foster the child's expanding literacy knowledge

Stage 1
(Pre-Alphabetic Writing)
Dan's grocery list reads "milk, bran flakes, doughnuts." Note that at Stage 1, Dan did not know that letters represent sounds.

Gentry Writing Scale

Stage 2 Spellers

*Stage 2 is the minimal competency expected by the end of kindergarten.
It describes writing that is partial alphabetic. Semi-phonetic spelling is typical of this stage.*

Indicators in Child's Writing

- Begins to use letters to represent sounds

- Uses partial letter-matches to sounds (i.e., not all sounds are represented by letters)

- Focuses on prominent sounds, especially consonants (e.g., *boat* is spelled **BT**)

- Long vowels and other letter name spellings are employed (e.g., *eighty* is spelled **AT**)

- Uses a few memorized spellings that make messages readable (e.g., *my motor boat* is spelled **MY MR BT**)

- Limited knowledge of letter-sound matching and how letters work in words

- Growing, but incomplete, knowledge of the alphabetic system

Instructional Recommendations for Transitioning to Stage 3

- Read aloud and do book talks

- Introduce and model more advanced beginner-oriented text

- Encourage independent reading of wordless books, picture books, easy alphabet or letter books, caption books, and easy decodable books. Move to higher levels than in Stage 1

- Do shared and interactive reading with beginner-oriented text

- Model how to stretch out sounds in words

- Sort picture cards based on sounds

- Use letter tiles for making words

- Work with onsets (e.g., *c* in *cat*) and rimes (e.g., *at* in *cat*)

- Continue the use of Elkonin Boxes (See Teacher Edition page T173)

- Have students match pictures by beginning sounds, then letters

- Continue to teach letters of the alphabet that have not yet been mastered

- Encourage the child to connect each sound in a word to a letter

- Use poetry and rhymes to help the child notice sounds, phonograms, and rhyming words. Focus especially on medial sounds. This focus on medial sounds will help the child move from **BT** to **BOT** to spell *boat*

- Accept partial alphabetic spelling, but model full alphabetic spelling by helping the writer connect all sounds in a word to a letter

- Begin to help the child focus on four basic high-frequency phonics patterns: consonant-vowel-consonant (as in *cat*), consonant-vowel (as in *he*), consonant-vowel-consonant-silent e (as in *bike*), and consonant-vowel-vowel-consonant, (as in *beat*)

- Do word sorts to help the child read and recognize the phonics patterns described above. Continue through stages 2, 3, and 4 until the patterns are mastered

- Encourage children to write for their own purposes

- Look at the child's independent writing to assess growth and foster the child's expanding literacy knowledge

Stage 2
(Partial Alphabetic Writing)
Leslie used Stage 2 spelling to label Humpty Dumpty. Stage 2 spellings are often abbreviated.

Gentry Writing Scale

Stage 3 Spellers

Stage 3 is the minimal competency expected by the middle of first grade.
It describes full alphabetic writing. Phonetic spelling is typical of this stage.

Indicators in Child's Writing

- Writes a letter for virtually every sound in a word to create spellings that are very readable phonetically but not necessarily close to the correct spelling (e.g., *eighty* spelled **ATE**, *motor boat* spelled **MOTR BOT**)

- Intersperses correct spellings of first-grade words and words important to the child (e.g., names of family members) in writing

- Phonetically able to write anything he/she can say

Stage 3 (Full Alphabetic Writing)
This sample shows that Stage 3 spellers represent all the surface sound features in words. *This Tooth Fairy* story reads, "One night I was in my bed and the tooth fairy came."

Instructional Recommendations for Transitioning to Stage 4

- Read aloud and conduct book talks

- Introduce and model more advanced beginning to middle level first-grade texts

- Encourage independent reading of books at levels 3–8 or C–H. (Match books to child for easy reading)

- Continue to teach phonics explicitly

- Model how to stretch out sounds in words to get all the sounds in the word and full alphabetic spellings

- Use letter tiles for making words

- Help children move from Stage 3 spellings, such as **BOT** for boat, to spelling in chunks of phonics patterns, such as **BOTE**. Introduce word sorts with patterns such as *-oat* and *-ote*. Continue this type of word analysis through Stages 3 and 4

- Continue working with basic patterns such as consonant-vowel-consonant (as in *hop*) for short vowels and consonant-vowel-consonant-silent e (as in *hope*) for long vowels. (Once Stage 3 writers internalize basic patterns such as these, they move into Stage 4)

- Focus on high-frequency word families and other chunking activities

- Work with onsets (e.g., *c* in *cat*) and rimes (e.g., *-at* in *cat*)

- Focus attention on medial vowels

- Do word sorts

- Use word walls to teach sight words

- Model conventions for basic capitalization and punctuation

- Encourage the child to write for his/her own purposes

- Look at the child's independent writing to assess growth and foster the child's expanding literacy knowledge

Stage 4 Spellers

Stage 4 is the minimal competency expected by the end of first grade.
It describes consolidated alphabetic writing. Transitional spelling is typical of this stage.
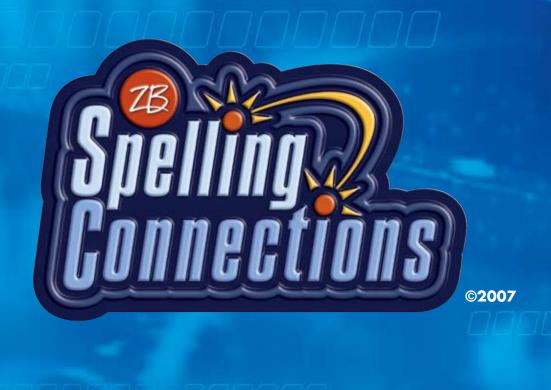
Indicators in Child's Writing

- Writes with spelling patterns in chunks of letters that mark vowels and show evidence of phonics knowledge

- Spells syllables and one-syllable words in chunks of letter patterns such as consonant-vowel-consonant-silent e (as in *cave*) and consonant-vowel-vowel-consonant (as in *heat*), though word knowledge may be incomplete (e.g., the child may write **BOTE** for *boat*)

- Uses developmental spellings that look more like English spelling (e.g., *fried* is spelled **FRIDE**)

- Writes a majority of developmental spellings in chunks

Instructional Recommendations for Continued Growth

- Integrate spelling instruction in reading and writing anchored in studies of developmentally appropriate word lists and patterns

- Provide comprehensive, research-based spelling instruction

- Teach spelling and word-specific knowledge to enable the writer to determine if it's *mene* or *mean*, or *seperate* or *separate*

Stage 4 (Consolidated Alphabetic Writing)
Writing stories using developmental spelling helps set the foundations for later spelling competency. This story includes Stage 4 spelling.

Spelling Connections

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RESEARCH FOR GRADES

1-8

Spelling Connections provides the curriculum and resources you need to deliver effective, explicit, research-based instruction in spelling. More than 25 years of spelling research and research synthesis have contributed to the success and effectiveness of *Spelling Connections*. No other program offers the extensive research perspective outlined below. *Spelling Connections* is not about trends, fads, or gimmicks. It is solidly grounded in research.

How does this research-based program differ from other methods of teaching spelling?

Spelling Connections is based on a comprehensive, consolidated synthesis of research underscoring the fact that learning to spell is complex. Any contention that spelling ability is gained easily, either by memorizing, learning rules, recycling "high use" writing words, focusing on writing and teaching spelling in use, or "catching" spelling from reading, is NOT supported by research. The research base for *Spelling Connections* covers a spectrum of spelling issues and practices and reflects the complexity of spelling as well as the important connection of spelling to reading and writing (Gentry, 2004).

Is it necessary to teach spelling explicitly or is there a more effective way for children to learn word-specific knowledge?

There are two competing theories regarding instructional approaches for spelling acquisition (Allal, 1997). The first calls for specific instruction in spelling, and *Spelling Connections* fits into this category. The other stance calls for integrating spelling in writing and reading instruction. There is little or no empirical research base for the latter theory (Allal, 1997). While the aim of that approach—to teach spelling within the context of communication—might seem desirable, research has not come forth to support abandoning explicit instruction and simply integrating spelling into the teaching of reading and writing.

The assumption that extensive reading and writing, perhaps with some strategic intervention, will lead students to function well with this skill has a long-standing history of NOT being supported by research. In an important synthesis of research in spelling entitled "Learning to Spell in the Classroom," Allal reports, "Approaches integrating spelling acquisition in text production do not yet constitute a well-recognized option validated by long-term empirical research in the classroom" (1997, p. 145). It makes sense to pay attention to research! Before Smith inaccurately theorized that children learn to spell by reading (1998), spelling researcher Margaret Peters published findings from spelling research and admonished, "A great many children do not manage to 'catch' spelling as they read" (1985, p. 25).

That being said, complex issues are rarely black and white. We have learned much from attempts to teach spelling within the authentic context of communication, and there are, indeed, functional, social, and contextual advantages to CONNECTING spelling to writing and reading. These advantages include increasing reading vocabulary and fluency, as well as developing proofreading skills and better spelling habits in writing. We would not have you teach spelling in isolation. Rather, we have made powerful connections to reading and writing in every unit.

I tried word lists before. Why weren't they effective?

Spelling researcher Allal writes, "Study of word lists is very widespread in elementary schools, but many teachers do not apply the principles that assure instructional effectiveness" (1997, p. 136). Practices that lead to problems include no individualization, badly designed exercises, developmentally inappropriate words, words that aren't relevant to writing, too many worksheets, and testing words with no teaching at all. Even though we anchor our program with word lists, we have worked hard to make sure you avoid the pitfalls of bad practice. For example, *Spelling Connections* provides options for differentiating instruction and the word list. Our word list is thoroughly researched, and all words were carefully selected with the developmental appropriateness of the type and timing of instruction in mind. We provide research-based study strategies and activities, and we have carefully designed exercises relevant to the learner and connections to writing and reading. This ensures that the skills learned will be reinvested in reading and writing situations.

How were words chosen for each Spelling Connections word list?

The spelling words and the way they are organized for study are vital to a good spelling program. Common sense tells us a spelling program must teach the words that students use in their writing (E. Horn, 1960; Hollingsworth, 1965; T.D. Horn, 1969; Graves, 1981; Smith and Ingersoll, 1984). A good spelling program will identify these words by using both studies of children's writings (Rinsland, 1945; Smith and Ingersoll, 1984) and studies that note how often particular words appear in print (Thorndike and Lorge, 1944; Kucera and Francis, 1967; Carroll et al., 1971; Fry et al., 1985). Other considerations should include the word's degree of difficulty, universality, permanence, and application to other areas of the curriculum.

We conducted the most thorough word analysis ever accomplished to develop the word lists in *Spelling Connections*. In all, 22 published word lists and vocabulary studies were analyzed.

The result was a list of more than 7,800 words in six important categories: Basic Words, Content Words, Review Words, Challenge Words, Champion Challenge Words, and Assessment Words. Following is a detailed summary of the word study done for *Spelling Connections*.

Writing Level

The words that students learn to spell should be the same words that they use in their writing. We consulted all the important analyses of students' written vocabulary, including Smith and Ingersoll's landmark 1984 study. In addition, we compared modern lists with classic lists such as Rinsland's to determine the enduring importance, permanency, and frequency of each word in students' writing.

Reading Level

Spelling Connections helps students build their writing vocabularies with words they know from their reading. To find out when students might encounter a word in their reading, we consulted lists of words found in children's and adults' reading material. These lists helped determine whether to include a word on the list, and if so, in which grade to place it.

Spelling Proficiency Level

Spelling proficiency is a measure of how difficult it is to spell a word and is based on how many students can spell the word correctly at a particular grade level. Spelling proficiency is an important clue to the grade level at which a word would best be taught. Rather than rely on obsolete data, we developed our own proficiency list based on the most current word usage.

Other Criteria

Additional data helped determine how and when words should be presented for study. Gates' list of "Spelling Difficulties in 3876 Words" identified the common misspellings of many words. Several lists helped determine spelling "demons" and the most frequently misspelled words in each elementary grade. The BORN (Barbe-O'Rourke-Nault) word list was used to determine which words are no longer in common use.

How can I be sure words are presented at the appropriate grade level?

Research provides clear evidence that spelling should be taught systematically (T.D. Horn, 1969). The right words must be presented at the right time. Because spelling growth is a developmental process, the organization of words and their placement makes a difference in how easily students learn to spell them. The *Spelling Connections* word list is organized according to principles set forth by linguistic, cognitive, and developmental theory.

- Early in a spelling curriculum (Grades K–2), emphasis should be placed on the alphabetic principle, i.e., how letters correspond to sounds.
- At the third and fourth grade levels, emphasis should be placed on structural patterns, visual patterns, and relationships of letters within words (Henderson and Templeton, 1986; Read, 1986). Sound-by-sound spellings become secondary to visual coding.
- Fifth and sixth grade children spell new words by comparing them to known words. At this stage, instruction must focus on word derivations, vocabulary study, and spellings related by meaning.
- Mature spellers should focus on how spelling is related to meaning and word derivation (Henderson and Templeton, 1986), as well as known words (Marsh et al., 1980).

Is it important to organize words by spelling patterns?

Presenting words by patterns or relationships helps students learn and retain the words (Read and Hodges, 1982). The patterns should cause students to focus on word similarities rather than differences. When students see patterns or relationships, they find it easier to learn new information (Bloom, 1956). When words are grouped to show common structural characteristics or letter patterns, students can see relationships.

In addition, word lists should be organized to help students perceive the elements of meaning as well as the words' visual elements. For example, *sign*, *signal*, and *signature* share both meaning and visual similarities. Word lists that take into account both similarities aid analogical reasoning, which enables students to learn new words by perceiving their similarities to known words. This strategy is especially important to the mature speller (Marsh et al., 1980). By organizing word lists according to a visual principle, *Spelling Connections* aids analogical reasoning, spelling retention, and the visualization of correct spellings.

Spelling and **Thinking**

Spelling and **Phonics**

Spelling and **Vocabulary**

Spelling and **Reading**

Spelling and **Writing**

Spelling and **Technology**

Which works best—memorization of lists or analysis of spelling patterns by word sorting and other exercises—or should you teach spelling rules?

Spelling Connections includes all of the above with correct balance. In a comprehensive review of spelling research, Graham (1983) validated the use of word lists to anchor the spelling program in a structured approach "planned, modified, and monitored on the basis of assessment information" (Graham, 1983, p. 563, reported in Allal, 1997, p. 135). Graham outlined five research-based principles in his synthesis:

1. Do use word lists but not arbitrary lists. Construct lists to reflect words and patterns likely to be used by writers at developmentally appropriate grade levels and to teach a few key rules.
2. Pretest and have students self-correct.
3. Teach students to use a research-based word study technique. Our look-say-see-write-check technique is directly based on a method Horn validated (Horn, 1954).
4. Use the "test-study-test" cycle.
5. Use spelling games and other alternative activities to increase motivation and to take advantage of the social context of learning.

Each of these research-based strategies has been built into *Spelling Connections*.

Why do some students score 100% on the test but later misspell the same words in their writing?

Spelling Connections doesn't just assess for memorization in Assessment and Review Units (Grades 2–8); it tests comparable words that fit the patterns or concepts being reviewed. By asking students to spell words not previously studied, we are able to assess deeper spelling knowledge and provide the help each learner needs.

Is learning to spell a developmental process? What does the research say about that?

Spelling is not just a matter of acquiring habits. Spelling develops (Read, 1986). A large body of research on developmental spelling has provided a better understanding of the spelling process and how it is acquired (Read, 1975; Gentry, 1977, 2004; Henderson and Beers, 1980; Read, 1986). Instruction in *Spelling Connections* reflects the most recent understanding of children's developing cognitive and linguistic strategies for spelling.

The program acknowledges that "creative" or "developmental" spelling is the result of a valid thinking process and enhances early spelling development. It also enables students to apply what they have learned about spelling in their writing. The long-standing but antiquated view that spelling is memorization is replaced with the view that spelling is a complex cognitive process.

Learning to spell is systematic and orderly. It progresses in stages, much like learning to speak does. Several developmental stages have been identified at the early levels of spelling (Gentry, 1977, 1982; Beers, 1974; Henderson and Beers, 1980; Read, 1986).

Early on, children create "words" by stringing together random letters (Gentry, 1977). Next, they recognize that letters represent sounds. They segment language by producing phonetic spelling, i.e., spelling sound by sound (Beers, 1974; Read, 1975; Gentry, 1982). When spelling is influenced by reading and formal spelling instruction, simple and concrete spelling strategies give way to complex abstract representation.

At least four stages of developmental spelling are illustrated in Gentry's discussion of a child who progresses from *precommunicative* spelling (Stage 1), in which invented spellings lack letter-sound correspondence, to *semi-phonetic* spellings (Stage 2), which partially map letters to sounds, to *phonetic* spellings (Stage 3), which completely map the letters to the sounds of words, to *transitional* spellings (Stage 4), which show conventions of English spelling and the influence of a visual-coding strategy (Gentry, 1987).

Spelling Connections for Kindergarten incorporates the latest research on developmental aspects of learning to spell and its relationship to the development of emerging readers and writers. *Spelling Connections for Kindergarten* gives credence to the research that validates the use of developmental spelling (Gentry, 1997; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; International Reading Association, 1998). Not only do we explicate the research base for developmental spelling (which is now considered best practice), we show teachers how to lead young students to move from lower to higher stages even as they learn correct spellings. This is ground-breaking work for a basal spelling program using the cutting-edge sociocognitive framework for writing instruction inspired by the research of Vygotsky (1978) and clearly articulated in new research showing how instruction leads development (Brodrova and Leong, 1998; Gentry, 2004, 2005, 2006). We are proud to be the leader in bringing this methodology into classrooms. Our primary program is a force in leading children to knowledge of sounds and letters, phonemic awareness, and phonics, and it promotes children's learning and fluency in both reading and writing.

Bibliography can also be found at www.zaner-bloser.com

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