



Pearson

# Compare SPELL-Links with OG-based programs



## How does SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing™ compare with commercially available Orton-Gillingham-based programs? We're glad you asked!

While SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing shares some common features with OG-based programs — explicit, systematic, cumulative, multi-sensory, and structured literacy — it also has a unique program philosophy that provides *many distinctive advantages* for learners.

*“In the NICHD-funded research on specific learning disabilities (SLDs) involving language that I directed as principal investigator for over 25 years (cross-sectional, longitudinal, genetic, brain imaging, school-based and clinic-based interventions) our interdisciplinary team published evidence showing that not all reading and writing disabilities are the same. Findings showed that dysgraphia (impaired letter production), dyslexia (impaired word decoding/reading and word encoding/spelling), and oral and written language learning disability (OWL LD; impaired syntactic skills for language by ear, mouth, eye, and/or hand) differed, yet all three SLDs benefit from spelling instruction as in SPELL-Links.”*

— Virginia W. Berninger, PhD Professor Emerita, University of Washington

**SPELL-Links™**  
to Reading & Writing

**SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing™**  
**Class Links**  
for Classrooms™

## Compare the programs

Feature	OG-Based	SPELL-Links
<b>Instruction Directionality and Organization</b>	<p><b>Print to Speech</b></p> <p>Instruction is organized by letter patterns, begins with a letter, and teaches in the direction of letter to sound. The practitioner teaches one corresponding sound for a letter. Reading is introduced before spelling if spelling is included. Instructional time is spent only or mostly on reading (decoding, word recognition, comprehension).</p>	<p><b>Speech to Print</b></p> <p>Instruction is organized by sounds and by letters, begins with a sound, and teaches in the direction of sound to letter. Students learn common and other allowable spellings for a sound. Spelling is introduced first and as a gateway to reading. Instructional time is spent on both spelling and reading (decoding and word recognition), first at the word level and then with immediate application to connected reading and writing.</p>

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<b>Instruction Model</b>	<b>Stage/Developmental Model</b> Instruction typically begins with phonological awareness, progresses to orthographic knowledge, and ends with morphological knowledge in later stages of instruction.	<b>Connectionist/Multi-Linguistic Model</b> Phonological, orthographic, semantic, and morphological instruction is integrated throughout the program across all grades to facilitate neural functional connectivity of the language literacy network.
<b>Instruction Entry Points</b>	<b>Pre-determined</b> Entry points are limited. From that point, instruction, sequence, and pacing are determined by the program and are the same for all students.	<b>Prescribed</b> Specific lessons and entry points within each lesson are uniquely prescribed for each student, providing differentiated instruction and pacing through targeted intervention plans.
<b>Teaching Philosophy</b>	<b>Practitioner imparts knowledge</b> Students are told how our language system works.	<b>Students acquire knowledge through active analysis</b> Students discover how our language system works through active analysis and processing of word forms in a highly structured context.  Carefully constructed activities and step-by-step presentation, questioning, and scaffolding by practitioners leads students to identify, demonstrate, and articulate patterns and rules in their own words.
<b>Syllable Types</b>	<b>Man-made conventions for printed words</b> A great deal of attention and instructional time is allotted to marking vowel and consonant letters within a word to determine where to break a word into syllables based on its visual patterns.	<b>Biologically inherent syllable separations of spoken language</b> The focus of instruction for syllables is based on direct mapping of spoken syllables with their corresponding letters; words are broken into syllables based on the natural syllable separations of spoken language.
<b>Phonemes</b>	<b>Man-made conventions</b> Some combinations of phonemes are artificially taught as a single speech sound unit, for example, consonant clusters and vowel + /r/ are taught as single phoneme units.	<b>Biologically determined</b> Phonemes are taught in a manner that mirrors the innate and neurologically established phonological system of English.
<b>Phoneme Production When Decoding</b>	<b>Segmented phonation</b> Phonemes are pronounced separately before blending the sounds together into a word.	<b>Continuous phonation</b> Phonemes are pronounced with continuous phonation, no pausing between sounds, reducing demands on working memory and making it easier to blend the phonemes together into a word.
<b>"Sight" Words</b>	<b>Taught separately</b> Sight words are introduced, practiced, and assessed separately as whole words.	<b>Integrated instruction</b> Irregularly spelled words are layered within lessons to fully connect the spelling of a word with its sounds and meaning.

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<b>Nonsense Words</b>	<p><b>Stand-alone activity</b></p> <p>Practice with decoding nonsense words and decoding words outside of meaningful context.</p>	<p><b>Integrated with instruction</b></p> <p>Nonsense words are used by students to demonstrate internalized learning.</p>
<b>Multi-Modal</b>	<p><b>Look, say, write</b></p>	<p><b>Say, hear, write, read</b></p>
<b>Auditory and Prosodic Components</b>	<p><b>Not typically included</b></p> <p>Instead, visual cues are used with focus on the practitioner’s artificial facial expressions such as scrunching the nose or circling the mouth with a finger to differentiate between vowel sounds. Artificial pronunciation of unstressed syllables is used, with all syllables in a word equally stressed and pronounced without schwas by the practitioner.</p>	<p><b>Included</b></p> <p>Explicit auditory phoneme discrimination and prosodic awareness instruction, both critical for struggling readers and writers and multi-language learners, is included to establish strong phonological representations of English phonemes and words.</p>
<b>Motoric Component</b>	<p><b>Artificial arm movements &amp; hand and finger movements associated with sounds</b></p> <p>Arm movements include air or sky writing. Hand movements include “tapping,” “pounding,” or “bumping” fingers or hands to represent sounds or syllables; “finger spelling” is used to represent sounds and then letters.</p>	<p><b>Authentic motor associations with sounds</b></p> <p>Spoken sounds are associated with simultaneous writing of corresponding letters on paper to foster development of neural functional connectivity between the phonological and orthographic systems and to strengthen motor memory for authentic writing.</p>
<b>Simultaneous Oral Spelling</b>	<p><b>Used</b></p> <p>Students are taught to say letter names with simultaneous writing of corresponding letters to spell a word.</p>	<p><b>Not used</b></p> <p>Students are taught to say letter <i>sounds</i> with simultaneous writing of corresponding letters to spell a word.</p>
<b>Tactile Component</b>	<p><b>Includes unrelated tactile and sensory experiences</b></p> <p>Tactile experiences may include modeling letters with clay, writing in sand, shaving cream, or on bumpy surfaces.</p>	<p><b>Not included</b></p> <p>The focus of instruction is on developing motor memories and orthographic input associated with authentic writing.</p>
<b>Declarative vs. Procedural Knowledge</b>	<p><b>Declarative knowledge</b></p> <p>Students are directly taught specific language patterns and expectancies and are expected to memorize decontextualized information such as A Apple “a” and “p” says /p/. Rules are memorized for the pronunciation of letters and location of syllable stress based on letter patterns.</p>	<p><b>Procedural knowledge</b></p> <p>Students discover specific language patterns and expectancies while immediately receiving explicit instruction and extensive practice in applying their newly acquired knowledge and skills to reading and writing. Students learn to apply a single strategy of flexing vowel and consonant sounds and syllabic stress to correctly read a word.</p>

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<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Focus on rate of reading</b> Instruction focuses on achieving fluency through speed.	<b>Focus on accuracy and automaticity of reading</b> Instruction focuses on achieving fluency through accuracy and well-established and integrated phonological-orthographic-semantic representations of words.
<b>Drill Work</b>	<b>Used as method of instruction</b> Drill work included in each lesson.	<b>Not used as method of instruction</b> Drill work is minimal, if any. All lessons focus on the meta-linguistic application of skills to spell and read both familiar and unfamiliar words within meaningful contexts.
<b>Meta-Cognitive and Executive Function Components</b>	<b>One core meta-cognitive strategy</b> Instruction typically emphasizes one core strategy: break words into syllables.	<b>14 meta-cognitive strategies</b> Instruction emphasizes using multiple strategies for independent problem solving when spelling and reading words.

For more information on SPELL-Links or to place an order, visit **PearsonClinical.ca**.