



BASIC WORDS SPELLING TASK

(INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL GROUP ADMINISTRATION)

Instructions for Administration and Scoring

About the Test

What is Measured	This test assesses the child's ability to spell simple, highly familiar words that may be encountered in primer books or in environmental print. The first two items are the child's own name and the word MUM; these are used as practice items to ease the child into the task, although they are scored. Of the remaining eight words, three are high frequency content words and five are high frequency function (or grammatical) words.
Age Range	This test is suitable for children in Reception Year and Year 1, and may be appropriate for older children who are experiencing reading and spelling difficulties. Also, while most preschool children will not have formally learned to spell, many have some ideas about writing and, even at this stage, their partial or invented spellings can be informative about their current and later literacy outcomes.
Scoring (accuracy)	Each spelling is scored for 'binary' accuracy, that is, one point for fully correct spellings or zero points for incorrect spellings, producing a score out of 9 (child's name is not scored). However, practitioners are encouraged to transcribe and qualitatively evaluate children's invented spelling attempts as these can provide excellent insights into individual children's notions about the spelling process, as well as about their level of mastery of the component skills that contribute to spelling ability.
Norms	Current English norms are available only for children in Reception Year and Year 1 as children typically reach mastery by the end of Year 1.
Materials for Administration	Participant Sheet and pencil or pen (as is typical in the child's classroom) for participant Basic Words Spelling Task Instructions Basic Words Spelling Task Score Sheet

Test Procedure

1. Test Introduction

Administrator says:

"We're going to practise some writing now. Here's a pencil and some paper, I will say a word and I want you to write it down for me."

2. Practice Trials

Practice Item 1: Child's name

Administrator says

"I'd like you to show me how you write your name..."

- 1) "Write your name here" *[the Administrator should point to the start point on the Participant Sheet].*

The child should be praised for whatever s/he produces in her/his attempt. For example, "That's a very good try!"

Practice Item 2: "Mum"

Administrator says

- 2) "Now let's try to write the word **MUM**. How would you write that?" *[the Administrator should point to the start of the second line on the Participant Sheet].*



NB: The child should be encouraged to try all items, even if s/he says s/he is unsure or does not know. The Administrator may say something to the effect of "It doesn't matter if you're not sure because you haven't learned to write yet, but how do you think we *might* write the word **MUM**?"

-The Administrator should encourage all attempts at invented spelling, including scribbles and drawings, and praise the child's efforts. The child should be encouraged to write one word per line.

-The Administrator should speak at a **comfortable rate**.

-**All 10 items** should be administered, even if the child is hesitant or decides to skip an item. **The test should NOT be discontinued.**

3. Conducting the test

The Administrator should follow (read aloud) the script specified for each item in the table below:

Item Number	Word	Script
1	Child's name (first and/or last)	"Write your name here" <i>[point to the start point on the Participant Sheet].</i>
2	MUM	"Now let's try to write the word MUM . How would you write that?" <i>[point to the start of the second line on the Participant Sheet].</i>
3	SUN	Now, how about the word SUN ? How do you think we might write SUN ?
4	DOG	How about the word DOG ? Have a go at writing DOG .
5	A	How about the little word A ? For example, 'This is A pencil'. Do you hear the word ' A '? Write A .
6	IN	Now try IN . For example, like 'playing IN the house'. Write IN .
7	TO	Now try TO . Like 'going TO school'. Write TO .
8	AND	Now try AND . Like 'apples AND oranges'. Write AND .
9	INTO	How about the word INTO ? For example, 'The dog goes INTO the house '.
10	BUNNY	Let's try the word BUNNY .

4. Scoring

- The Administrator should refer to the **Basic Words Spelling Task Score Sheet** to score the items.
- For each item in the ✓ / ✗ column the Administrator should:
 - write ✓ or 1 beside each **correct** response
 - write ✗ or 0 beside each **incorrect** response, and copy the child's invented spelling in the **Copy Error** column
 - write / if the child **skips/refuses to attempt** a word, and score x or 0.
- **One point** should be awarded for each **correct** spelling, and **zero points** for each **incorrect** spelling.