

Level A

Foundation Skills for Competent Spelling

	Definition	Area Addressed
Auditory Skills	<i>The ability to listen to auditory information, process and make sense of that information and use it effectively.</i> Includes the areas of:	
Phonemic Awareness, Discrimination	The ability to hear likenesses and differences in sounds and words and to isolate sounds in words. i.e. phonemic awareness .	This is necessary for correct articulation, spelling and reading the language
Pattern	The ability to repeat auditory patterns and to break sentences into words.	This is necessary for syllabification and spacing of words in written communication.
Analysis, Synthesis/Closure	The ability to break words into their component sound groups and to put parts of words together to make a whole word.	This occurs when we “sound out” unfamiliar words in reading and spelling. For synthesis: Putting 4 sounds or 4 phonemes together to make words. For analysis: Pulling 4-letter words apart into their single sounds.
Completion	The ability to fill in missing pieces of auditory information so that sense is made of incomplete information.	This is necessary for prediction in reading and spelling. Students complete sentences/words by inserting the missing information.
Association	The ability to associate new facts with information already known.	This assists reading comprehension and encourages the reasoning skills needed to select appropriate options, a skill needed for both “invented” and proficient spelling.
Sequential Memory, Following Instructions	The ability to rehearse and repeat information in the given sequence and the ability to follow given instructions within the student’s sequential memory space.	Spelling requires the placement of letters in the correct sequence. Students need to be able to hold and work with information in sequence, if they are to spell correctly.
Figure Ground	The ability to focus on the important information (figure) and disregard the unnecessary information (ground).	Students with poor figure ground often “lack concentration”. They find it difficult to stay on task and “flit” from one auditory stimulus to another. Students are required to follow instructions against background noise within the room.
Comprehension	The ability to understand auditory information in instructions and stories.	

Visual Skills	<i>The ability to look at visual information, process and make sense of the information and use it effectively.</i> It consists of the areas of:	
Discrimination	The ability to see likenesses and differences in visual information.	This is necessary if students are to see differences in letters and words. (a/d, b/d, bed/bad, etc.) Discriminating objects/pictures, shapes, letter elements, letter shapes and words.
Pattern	The ability to recognize and repeat visual patterns.	This aids the recognition of similarities and differences in visual patterns of letter sequences (spelling).
Constancy	The ability to see that, whilst there may be slight differences in the visual information given, the salient information remains constant.	This is necessary if letters/words are to be recognized as the same even though the script may be different. n n n n N n n n .
Association	The ability to relation new visual information to other known visual information. This includes the ability to classify and organise given visual information.	This aids comprehension and understanding of new material including writing. We learn by associating/integrating new information with known information.
Figure Ground	The ability to focus on the important information (figure) and disregard the unnecessary information (ground).	Students with poor figure ground often “lack concentration”. They find it difficult to stay on task and “flit” from one auditory stimulus to another.
Completion	The ability to fill in missing information so that sense is made of given, incomplete information.	This is absolutely essential if students are to be able to correctly form letters and numbers. Writing involves completing an incomplete shape.
Memory	The ability to remember what has been seen.	This is necessary for proof reading.
Sequential Memory	The ability to remember visual sequential information. The ability to “tag” information so that it may be rehearsed in the auditory channel.	This is essential for competent spelling.