

Tactile Ways to Practice Spelling

Marie Rippel

The best methods of teaching spelling cater to multiple learning styles. They address all three of the main learning channels: visual (seeing), auditory (hearing), and kinesthetic (doing). Unfortunately, the kinesthetic (or “tactile”) channel winds up neglected in many cases.

There are a number of effective tactile ways to practice spelling. Some of these include:

- Building new spelling words with the letter tiles
- Dictating phonogram sounds and writing the phonograms
- Practicing "rule breakers" by writing in big letters with the pointer finger in the air and on the desktop.

Here are two enjoyable ways that activate kinesthetic learning pathways to bring spelling practice to life:

Use tactile surfaces for practicing phonograms and "rule breaker" words. Excellent surfaces include sand in a shoebox lid, a sheet of very fine sandpaper, fabrics like burlap, velvet and corduroy, rice poured into a baking pan, a plush carpet square, and even snow.

Place squishy substances into a sealed plastic baggie. This creates a no-mess surface. The student then uses her finger to “write” through the bag. Some of the best substances include shaving cream, pudding, liquid soap, and glue.

Tactile ways to practice spelling don't have to be costly, complicated, or messy. In fact, you probably already have some of these items around your house already.

So go ahead. Have fun with spelling--it's worth it!

Biographical Information

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Marie Rippel is the author of [All About Spelling](#), the multisensory spelling program that is guaranteed to work.