

Zapper

"Spelling Zappers are helping to improve the spelling of frequently used words and as a result, pupils are becoming more adept and confident in correct spelling"

- OFSTED (Sheffield Primary School)

"When you've been ZAPPED, the words really stick in your head"

- Melissa, Y5

1. We are using ZAPPERS alongside our current school spelling strategy (x5 spelling games/activities, for 10–15 minutes daily, followed by a spelling test of a specific rule), to help children learn the Y3/4 and Y5/6 Statutory Spelling lists (SSL) —i.e. the words we are not teaching as part of a spelling rule, and personalised "tricky" words.
2. Children will initially have the same set of 5 words from the SSL, and 4 "tricky" words, although the rate at which they progress through the list will depend on how quickly they are learning their spellings. These lists can easily be differentiated, by giving a child more or less words to focus on. The SSL words themselves cannot be differentiated.
3. When they first receive their ZAPPER, allow the children to draw, decorate and personalise their ZAPPER. By doing this, the children should feel more invested in their ZAPPER and more engaged with their learning. These will be laminated and kept for the year.
4. **The whole school spelling strategies should be secure.** Before first introducing the ZAPPERS for the SSL and "tricky" words, classes should practise using ZAPPERS and the strategies on a class set of tricky words (perhaps the words commonly spelt incorrectly in writing).
 - Little Word Detective: e.g. **everywhere**
 - Syllables: e.g. **re — mem — ber**
 - Say it Silly: e.g. **pe/ op / le**
 - Silly Sentence: e.g. because = **Boys Eat Cabbages And Ugly Slimy Eels**
 - Highlight the tricky bit: e.g. **awkward**

Discuss which strategy would be best for that word. If the word is friend, some children may choose Say it Silly, or Little Word Detective as they've spotted the little word "end" within it. Others may construct a Silly Sentence.

5. Now, show the children the multi-sensory way of learning the word. How many senses can they use? The more the better. Seeing, saying, hearing and feeling the words as they write. The 4C's encourage all of these. **Copy** the word... **cover** the word and write it... **close** your eyes and write it again... **check** your spellings. The closed eyes activity shows muscle memory in action. The children will be saying the strategy as they learn. If it's a hard word, they might need to copy the word a few times; they could use different colour pens, playdough etc... Encourage joined handwriting to help muscle memory. Children can practise in their blue A5 spelling books.
6. When they've learnt some words, they can have a ZAPPING partner, and ask their partner to ZAP them! If they write the word correctly, their partner puts a small Z in one corner of that word's grid. They can then ask to ZAP another word. The same word cannot be ZAPPED more than once in a day. The next day, the children can practise again and ask to be ZAPPED on some different words.
7. When all 4 corners are filled (after a few days) the next Z goes across the whole square. When all the words have a larger Z on the grid, the child gets awarded their **BRONZE** award.
8. To gain their **SILVER** award, the children have to spell all the words in their ZAPPER correctly in one go, for the teacher or teaching assistant. A large Z is then put across all the squares in the grid.
9. To achieve their **GOLD** award, children must use their target words (correctly spelt) in their writing. Once this has been demonstrated and evidence shown the teacher, the award can be made. This is showing that the children can apply what they have learnt in their learning.
10. Once a grid of 9 spellings has been successfully completed, a new grid should be printed out and taped over the top of the old grid, and new words added in.
11. Photocopies of the ZAPPERS can be sent home as homework, but never the actual ZAPPER itself.