

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

**FINAL REPORT ON THE OTLA PHASE 6 (ENGLISH) PROJECT -
FINDING SPELLING STRATEGIES THAT WORK WITH ESOL
LEARNERS**

Sandwell College

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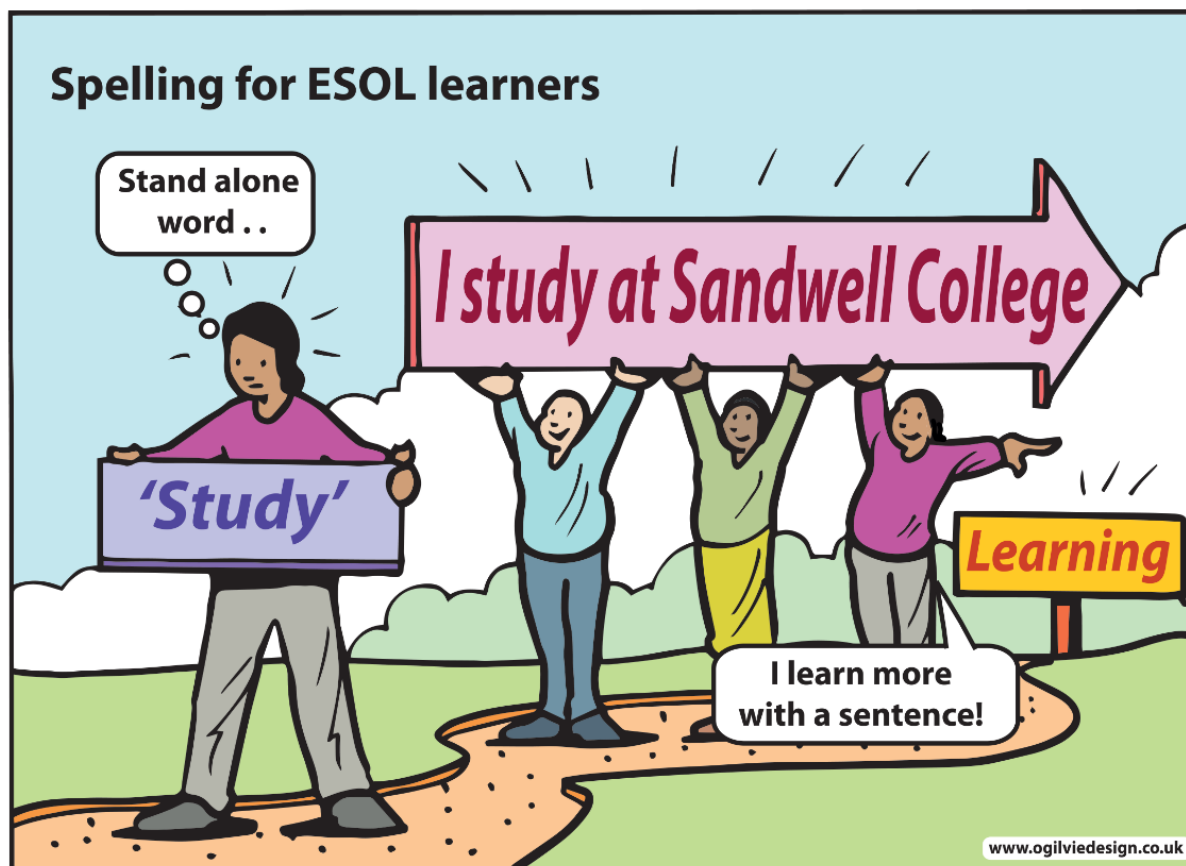


Contents

Final Report - Finding Spelling Strategies That Work with ESOL Learners	2
Appendix 1 – Word Board	8
Case Study - Learner A.....	10
Case Study - Learner B.....	35
References	52

Final Report - Finding Spelling Strategies That Work with ESOL Learners

Sandwell College



The ESOL teachers at Sandwell College shared a common concern about wanting to improve learner spelling across the 16-18 cohort. In this project teachers experimented with and evaluated a range of spelling strategies.

Summary

Three ESOL teachers implemented the use of a chosen spelling strategy with one of their teaching groups, to support the improvement of learners' spellings, word recognition and writing skills. Each lecturer chose their own approach and implemented their chosen strategy over a 9-week period. The teachers evaluated their strategy on a weekly basis to identify learner engagement, impact on progression, and progress made.

Rationale

In-house achievement data for ESOL Entry Level writing is high at 96%; however, ESOL learners frequently ask for spelling to be included in their individual learning targets. Students also frequently comment on spelling as an area they want to develop further. The majority of 16-18 ESOL learners at the college come from Iran, Iraq, Gambia, Eritrea and Albania, where most are not able to access an education which includes English, or have the opportunity to use a strategy to develop and

improve their spelling, word recognition and writing skills. This action research project enabled the teachers to develop the use of a strategy to develop spellings, promote progression and to firmly embed the use of the strategy into their practice.

Approach

- The Project Lead used her role as the Quality & Standards Manager and ESOL teacher to select the ESOL 16-18 provision to implement a spelling strategy to aid learners' development in spellings, word recognition and writing skills.
- The Project Lead delivered a session to introduce the OTLA action research project to enable the ESOL team to identify the scope of the action research project. This enabled the ESOL team to reflect and collaboratively work together to identify a common theme of interest to themselves and their learners. Staff were set the task of deciding the ESOL group they were going to be working with and the spelling strategy they were going to implement. They would then share this with the rest of the team the following week.
- The following week the ESOL staff shared their chosen spelling strategy with the team and the Project Lead. This meeting was quite unproductive and at times negative, which led to an additional meeting being held with just the participants involved in the project. To review the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment, learner engagement, progression and impact of the strategy, the project lead was going to carry out informal and developmental lesson observations. Staff were concerned about being observed; therefore, this activity was replaced with learning walks.
- The five participants involved in the project then met. This meeting enabled the project lead to resolve misconceptions, confirm the process and clearly clarify the purpose of action research. An OTLA project guide was provided to the participants, which included the following:
 - Project start and end dates, participants involved, partner institutions
 - Aim of the project
 - Brief description of what action research is
 - Examples of project evidence
 - Steer on teacher reflections
 - What Reflective Model (adapted from: Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D., Jasper, M., 2001) to guide staff with their reflections
 - Project schedule
 - Things to consider

Staff also received a notebook to use as a reflective journal to record their thoughts, student feedback and active notes to support their personal reflections.

The project participants implemented their spelling strategy from the week commencing 23 September to Friday 06 December. The approach each teacher used was:

Teacher 1 - Word cards used with a pre-entry group (Step Up) who are working towards their Entry Level 1 exams. The 'look, cover, write, check' method was used to practise spellings. This teacher targeted regularly used common words appropriate

for pre-entry learners. The teacher provided learners with sentences to help create a narrative, rather than a standalone word that had no meaning for them. For example: 'I live in Birmingham'. The word 'live' alone does not really have any meaning to the learners. However, in a sentence it helps learners to see its importance. This approach from week 3 changed to using a word board which consisted of sentences instead of the word cards. Learners were provided with different sized cover cards to support them in using the strategy.

Teacher 2 – This teacher wanted a pre-entry group to learn the spellings of the 12 months. Learners were tasked to rearrange letters to spell out the months. The teacher introduced a spelling bee competition where learners individually verbally spelled the months. A spelling test was introduced and learners gave feedback using thumbs up and thumbs down cards later on in the project. In the last few weeks of the project the teacher turned the focus to learners correctly writing and spelling their address using the same strategy.

Teacher 3 – Here the teacher gave Entry Level 1 learners 15 topic-based spellings per week. Learners used the 'look, say, cover, write, check' method to practise. The teacher introduced an outcome star to record learners' confidence and actual spelling test score. Learners worked in groups to test each other on their spellings before having a spelling test

- Teachers completed 2 project peer observations. This gave teachers an opportunity to showcase their project and share effective practice. Following the peer observation there was a professional dialogue, which promoted reflection and evaluation and an opportunity to receive constructive feedback on their approach.
- Each participant had 2 learning walks which were carried out by the Project Lead. The Head of Section for ESOL also carried out learning walks. The scope of the learning walk was to review the impact of the action research project on learning and the learners.
- The Project Lead formally met with each participant on 3 occasions, twice during the project and once following the project.

Professional learning: Evidence of changes in teaching, learning and assessment practices

The approaches used in classroom sessions enabled learners to actively participate in learning their spellings and demonstrate their learning and progression: this was evident in learning walks. Teachers reflected on their practice and further developed and tweaked their spelling approach, enabling staff to focus their reflections on a specific aspect of their teaching, making it more relevant to their own personal development.

Teachers designated one classroom session (1 hour and 15 minutes) per week to enable learners to use their spelling approach to develop their spelling skills. This one session per week promoted a routine for learners who knew which was their spelling-focused day and came to lessons prepared for this. In these lessons, teachers commented on how learners engaged with their spellings and took

ownership of their learning from when they arrived in class, where normally they would await instruction from the teacher for details of the starter activity.

All the participating teachers found that even though time constraints were involved, being part of the action research project was extremely beneficial. It allowed them the opportunity to use evidence-based practice to trial TLA strategies in the classroom to accelerate the progress learners made. Most teachers said the project has re-ignited their passion and given them the confidence to take risks and try something different and new.

The ESOL department has supported the project and the teachers involved have said they will continue with the productive work carried out to date with the aim of involving the newer members of the team in the coming academic year. They will consider carrying out action research to develop other aspects of learners' English skills.

Evidence of improved collaboration and changes in organisational practices

All staff reported more effective relationships and collaboration. The completion of peer observations enabled staff to have more professional dialogue about teaching, learning and assessment practices.

A training session in January focused on post-16 phonics for second language learners, which provided staff with phonics-based approaches to support the development of learners' spelling, writing skills and progression.

Two teachers from the project presented their findings at the teach meet held at the college, #TMSandwell. Following the presentation there was interest from internal and external English practitioners at the OTLA Project stand. Internal staff were asking for more information regarding the project and the use of the word board. Other ESOL and Functional Skills practitioners were keen to implement the same, or a similar approach.

Evidence of improvement in learners' achievements, retention and progression

Most learners have been actively engaged and focused with learning their spellings and welcome the designated lesson time to practise them. A learner said *"Wednesday is spelling day. I like it."*

Learners who used the word board, where a sentence was practised rather than a standalone word, made the most progress. With this approach, learners had autonomy over the words in the sentence they needed to practise to enable them to write the full sentence correctly. These learners can now form personal sentences with more ease and proficiency. By the end of the project, learners had significantly better writing skills in December, compared to learners' writing skills from the previous academic year.

As the word board approach resulted in learners having to learn and write a full sentence, this enabled the teacher to quickly identify learners who potentially had learning difficulties. Learning difficulties are usually not assessed at the pre-entry

level; however, the teacher was able to direct the LSA accordingly to provide more focused in-class support.

All learners who participated in the project have improved their handwriting, letter formation, pronunciation of words and the recall of letters and words. The word board group has seen the greatest results in the overall improvement of writing and spelling skills. Where the spelling bee was used, learners can more confidently recognise the letters G/J and I/E.

The learners who were learning the spellings of the months moved to learning the spelling and layout of their address. As learners were visually familiar with this, they were able to identify their address from a selection of addresses, and learnt the spelling and layout of their address more quickly than the spellings of the months. They could also verbally spell their address with more ease. The impact of this is that learners can now confidently complete the first part of the Entry Level 1 written assessment.

Learner confidence has increased and learners enjoyed the challenge of the project. The teachers involved at the start thought learners wouldn't enjoy practising their spellings as much as they did. The Project Lead got a round of applause from one of the groups involved as a thank you for letting them participate.

Beginning the project at the start of the academic year has improved learner collaboration and peer support more quickly and positive learner relationships have been observed by teachers and the lead.

A number of learners involved in the project are looked after children and have Personal Education Plans. At review meetings learners have been talking about learning spellings and how they enjoy doing it. They can see the impact this has had on their writing skills and have mentioned this in their review meeting with the ESOL Head of Section and their social worker.

The teachers working with pre-entry learners have seen the impact of developing the spellings and writing skills of learners and the progress learners have made with their writing. The focus in term 1 is generally on speaking and listening skills to prepare learners for their exam. However, moving forward, staff will incorporate more reading and writing activities to develop these skills more effectively from the start of the academic year.

Learning from this project

Prior experiences of learning and assessing spellings would be via homework tasks and spelling tests; the approaches adopted in the project have enabled learners to be more active and responsible for their learning and progress.

The word board, consisting of sentences and varying sizes of cover cards, has been highly effective in enabling learners to learn spellings and improve the sentence structure and writing of learners. Learners can see and learn how the words are applied in a sentence, and this increases their spoken and written vocabulary.

Where some learners made progress with spelling and verbally spelling the months of the year, the majority of the months were too complex for pre-entry learners. This was similar to the group who on a weekly basis were given topic-based words to learn. There is less commonality compared to the learners' address and the words used in the word boards, which impacted the learners' overall progress and learning.

Generally, ESOL learners are given standalone words from topics, which are not effectively reinforced or recalled when the next topic is introduced. Level-appropriate sentences using the target vocabulary give learners a narrative and a purpose for the word, thus improving learners' understanding, recognition and commitment to long-term memory. The word board learners can independently transfer their personal details to the learnt sentences, which further reinforces their learning and confidence in writing.

The word board approach has reinforced the importance of repetition in language learning, especially at the lower levels. Because of time constraints, exam preparation and a need to achieve, or maintain high achievement rates, this is often overlooked or not effectively reinforced.

The learners involved in the project have enjoyed and fully engaged in the project. The learners had thought the only way to learn spellings was to write the word over and over again. We have seen how learners at the pre-entry level who can't spell their name or write the alphabet embrace the project and make progress from their starting point. Staff have seen increased learner engagement and motivation.

Management need to ensure that the benefits of using word boards with pre-entry and Entry Level 1 learners are fully embedded into the department's practice to promote the development of learners' writing skills and progression to the next stage of study.

The pre-entry teachers learned that even though they have high expectations of their learners, the learners themselves are capable of so much more. With the positive approach, execution and assessment of their approach most learners have made high levels of progress compared to their initial starting points.

Following the success of the word board, the two teachers who used the spelling bee method will incorporate this into their teaching, learning and assessment practices to support the development of learners' skills in preparing for their exams and their next steps.

Appendix 1 – Word Board

My	name	is	Tim.				
I	am	16	years	old.			
I	am	from	London.				
I	live	in	Birmingham.	I	am	happy.	
I	am	a	student	at	Sandwell	College.	
I	study	English.					
I	go	to	college	from	Monday	to	Friday.
I	like	my	class.				
My	friends	and	teachers	are	nice.		
My	lessons	are	good.				

We	learn	a	lot	about	English.		
I	like	to	practise	spellings.			
I	like	reading	and	writing.			
I	don't	like	speaking	and	listening.		

Case Study - Learner A

Reflective Journal

Before I began the project research, I had decided I wanted to use word cards to teach and improve spellings with my pre-entry group (Step Up) that are working towards their entry 1 exams.

Rather than choose words for spelling practice that had no meaning to them, I decide to use common words that they would need to use all the time. I also thought the best way to do this is through sentences. I thought the sentences will help to create a narrative rather than words that have no meaning to them when they stand alone. Example: 'I live in Birmingham'. The word 'live', alone does not really have any meaning to the learners. However, in a sentence it will help them to see its importance.

I also decided I would first engage the learners by asking them to arrange the words into sentences. I would then ask them to learn the spellings. I hadn't decided on one strategy for learners to do this but had many in mind. I wasn't sure what would work the best for the group.

To test if the spelling cards and strategy worked, I would first dictate the sentences to them and they would have to write them down. Then I would introduce the spelling cards and give them ten minutes to learn the spellings. I would then test the learners again by dictating the sentences to them and asking them to write the sentences on a new piece of paper. This was so I could compare the tests and see if the learner's spellings have improved.

The sentences I decided to begin with are:

1. My name is Tim.
2. I am 16 years old.
3. I am from London.
4. I live in Birmingham.
5. I am happy.

I felt these words and sentences would be commonly used by the learners. I decided to use the name, 'Tim' and age, '16' in the sentences rather than the learners' information. This is because all the learners can spell their own name, and I wanted to challenge learners to spell words from sounds when I'm dictating the sentences. I also thought that I may change this at a later stage and ask learners to replace these words with their own personal information.

Week 1

Monday 23rd September 2019

As planned at the start of the lesson I dictated sentences so that learners could listen to them and write them down. I then gave them the spelling cards and groups asked them to sort them into the sentences they have just heard. Once I was happy with the words being organised correctly into sentences, I gave the learners different options to learn the spellings. These options included:

- Breaking the word into syllables and memorising and writing it down
- Covering the word card and saying the letters
- Looking at the word, covering it, writing it and checking it
- Writing and copying the word over and over again

I felt the activity was received positively. The learners looked more confident during the second dictation test.

Tuesday 24th September 2019

I decided to test the learners again. This time I didn't give the spelling cards out. I dictated the sentences from the previous day. I wanted to see if the learners had improved by being able to spell the words without being shown the words first.

I wasn't sure what the test sheets would prove. I had a feeling some learners wouldn't retain the information and would actually get more incorrect spellings than the test at the end of yesterday's spelling session.

Meeting with Harminder

I discussed how the spelling session and tests went with Harminder (project Lead). We both came to the conclusion that I was using too many spelling strategies. How would I be able to identify which strategy worked? I decided to go with what most of my learners were using the, 'Look, Cover, Write and Check' method.

Wednesday 25th September

I checked the spelling tests and found that most learners overall made an improvement in their spellings. A lot of the learners had more spelling mistakes in the third spelling test than the second. I expected this as the third spelling test was taken the day after without any spelling revision. However, when I compared the first test with the third, most learners had made some improvement.

I decided to continue to use the same words and sentences for spellings next week with two additional sentences to challenge stronger learners. I also decided to use only the, 'Look, Cover, Write and Check' method as the spelling learning strategy.

Week 2

Monday 30th September 2019

I began by giving learners the word cards from the previous week. They again organised the words into sentences. I explained that I have two new sentences to challenge them if they wanted. This is because some learners now found the words from the previous lessons too easy and not challenging enough. I gave the groups of learners the additional cards and they again organised these into sentences. As before, the learners practised the spellings but this time they only used the, Look, Cover, Write and Check method that I first demonstrated on the white board.

Once the students had completed practising the words for 10-15 minutes, they were given a test (test 1).

During this activity and after I felt that I should have tested the learners first by dictating the two new sentences and asking them to write the words. This would have been good to gauge their starting point. I will remember this for next time, when I decide to include more words.

Tuesday 1st October 2019

I tested the learners by dictating all 7 sentences from yesterday. I explained to weaker students that their challenge was to correctly spell the words from the first five sentences but they could give the additional words a try.

Wednesday 2nd October 2019

Meeting with Harminder

I met with Harminder and we discussed how things were going. I told her that I felt that the spelling activity and strategy were being received really well by the learners, and after checking the spelling tests most learners were making an improvement.

Week 3

Monday 7th October 2019

Peer observation being carried out by Satpal

This week I began by re-visiting the, Look, Cover, Write and Check method with the learners. I demonstrated this on the white board using images to aid learners in the strategy that they would be using. During this activity some learners were using the spelling strategy and others were resorting to copying the word. I had to keep reminding them to use the Look, Cover, Write and Check method.

Once the students had practised the words for 10-15 minutes, they were given a test (test 1).

Tuesday 8th October 2019

Peer observation being carried out by Chipo

I tested (test 2) the learners by dictating all 7 sentences from yesterday. They were given no time to practise the spellings.

Wednesday 9th October 2019

I spoke to Satpal about my peer observation and we both agreed that some learners needed more support in using the, Look, Cover, Write and Check method.

I decide that instead of just the word cards, I would use a word board with a blank card to cover the words. I'm hoping that this will encourage learners to use the Look, Cover, Write and Check method to learn spellings.

Peer observation of Chipo's lesson (12:30) and spelling strategy

Week 4

Monday 14th October 2019

This week I began by giving the students a spelling test (Test 1). I dictated 9 sentences, 2 of them were new sentences. The learners didn't get a chance to practise learning these new sentences. However, when I was collecting the tests at the end, I noticed that the more able students were correctly spelling most of the words in the new sentences too. This led me to add an additional sentence during the spelling practice period.

I re-visiting the, Look, Cover, Write and Check method with the learners but this time I demonstrated using the word board and pink cover card. Each learner was given a word board and pink cover card to practise their spellings. Learners used the pink cover card to cover the word that they found difficult to spell and used the Look, Cover, Write and Check method to practise the spelling.

I found that this worked better than the individual word cards from last week. Learners were also able to take the word boards and pink cover cards home to practise their spellings.

Once the students had practised the words for 10-15 minutes, they were given a test (test 2).

Tuesday 15th October 2019

I tested (test 3) the learners by dictating all 10 sentences from yesterday. They were given no time to practise the spellings.

Wednesday 16th October 2019

I have marked and checked the spelling tests. I have noticed an overall improvement but I feel that more time can be taken to help students learn the new spellings.

I will continue to use the same 10 sentences for the spelling test next week.

Week 5

Monday 21st October 2019

This week I wanted to begin with the learners using their word boards and coloured pink card squares to practise spellings from the last week, the same 10 sentences. However, I accidentally gave learners a word board containing 11 sentences. This means learners practised additional spellings.

I again went over how to use the word board and the Look, Cover, Write and Check method to practise the spellings. I differentiated the amount of sentences learners needed to practise according to learner ability. The weakest students in the class were only practising spellings in the first 3-5 sentences.

At the end of the spelling session, I gave learners a spelling test (Test 1).

Tuesday 22nd October 2019

I tested (test 2) the learners by dictating all 11 sentences from yesterday. They were given no time to practise the spellings.

Wednesday 23rd October 2019

I have marked and checked the spelling tests.

I met with Harminder again and I showed her the spelling tests for students from week 1 to week 5. Most students had shown some sort of improvement, and some students had shown a massive improvement in their spellings.

I explained to Harminder that I had moved from word cards to a word board and I felt that this worked better for a few reasons. The word boards can be taken home easily and they encourage students to use the Look, Cover, Write and Check method.

I will continue to use the same 11 sentences for the spelling test when students return from half term break. I feel that students may need to re-visit the spellings after a long break.

Week 6

Monday 4th November 2019

Students return to college after half-term break.

At the start of the session I began by asking students to take out their spelling word boards. A lot of students had either forgotten them at home or misplaced them. I had to give new word boards. I again reminded learners of the Look, Cover, Write and Check method to practise the spellings. I differentiated the amount of sentences learners needed to practise according to learner ability. The weakest students in the class were only practising spellings in the first 3-5 sentences.

When I was observing students practise their spelling I noticed that a lot of students have now moved from covering a word with their pink cover card to covering whole sentences. Some students actually preferred turning over the word board and trying to memorise the spellings and word order in all 11 sentences. They wrote the sentences in their note books and checked spellings by turning the word board over.

At the end of the spelling session, I gave learners a spelling test (Test 1).

Tuesday 5th November 2019

I tested (test 2) the learners by dictating all 11 sentences from yesterday. They were given no time to practise the spellings.

I marked and checked the spelling tests. I noticed that more and more students have become confident with the spellings in all 11 sentences. Some students are still struggling with the same key words they do every week.

Wednesday 6th November 2019

I have decided that next week I will introduce an additional sentence. I will also give learners the option of using the pink cover card to cover a word or a sentence, or just turning the entire word board over.

Week 7

Monday 11th November 2019

This week I began with Test 1. I asked students to listen to the sentences and write the words and sentences on their paper. I dictated the 11 sentences from last week, plus an additional new sentence that the students were not expecting.

After this I gave students their new word boards with 12 sentences to learn. I reminded learners of the Look, Cover, Write and Check method to practise the spellings. This time I gave learners a longer pink, cover card and demonstrated how to use it to cover whole sentences. Again, I differentiated the amount of sentences learners needed to practise according to learner ability. The weakest students in the class were still only practising spellings in the first 3-5 sentences.

At the end of the spelling session, I gave learners a spelling test (Test 2).

Tuesday 12th November 2019

I tested (test 3) the learners by dictating all 12 sentences from yesterday. They were given no time to practise the spellings.

Wednesday 13th November 2019

I marked and checked the spelling tests and noticed that some learners had improved their spellings from the new 12th sentence that was introduced this week. I will allow one more week for students to practise spellings the words in all 12 sentences.

Week 8

Monday 18th November 2019

Observation by Satpal

Students started by taking out their spelling word boards with 12 sentences. As usual I reminded learners of the Look, Cover, Write and Check method to practise the spellings. I differentiated the amount of sentences learners needed to practise according to learner ability. The weakest students in the class were only practising spellings in the first 3-5 sentences.

Most students were covering whole sentences or the whole text. A few students were practising key words that they had misspelt from previous weeks.

Students were given 10-15 minutes to practise. At the end of the spelling session, I gave learners a spelling test (Test 1).

Tuesday 19th November 2019

I tested (test 2) the learners by dictating all 12 sentences from yesterday. They were given no time to practise the spellings.

I marked and checked the spelling tests. I have noticed a lot more students are now achieving 100% in their spelling tests.

I feel students enjoy the spelling test each week and they like the challenge of learning new words. During the lesson one of the learners enthusiastically said, "Can we have more sentences to learn?"

I wanted to introduce just 1 new sentence next week, but I might introduce 3 new sentences.

Wednesday 20th November 2019

Observed Chipó's lesson

Week 9

Monday 25th November 2019

This week I started with Test 1. I asked students to spell the 12 sentences from last week which I dictated to them. I also dictated 3 additional new sentences.

The students then had their usual time (10-15 minutes) to practise the spellings with their new boards that included the additional 3 sentences.

The new Word Boards only had 13 sentences as I was only planning on giving learners 1 additional sentence. However, after feedback from learners, I decided to include more sentences. Learners had said they wanted more sentences and wanted to be challenged.

At the end of the session I gave the students Test 2. I dictated all 15 sentences.

Tuesday 26th November 2019

I tested (test 3) the learners by dictating all 15 sentences from yesterday. They were given no time to practise the spellings.

I marked and checked the spelling tests. I have noticed a lot more students have gained 100% on spellings in the last 12 sentences but have still made mistakes with spellings in the 3 new sentences.

Wednesday 27th November 2019

Meeting with Harminder to complete the project.

Final Thoughts

I began this project not sure about what particular spelling strategy to use, as naturally I would familiarise students with a variety of spelling strategies in class. I would have normally asked students to use the strategy that works best for them. It took some time getting used to using only one strategy with the students.

Over the weeks I developed the materials that worked well with the students' progress. For example, I moved from using the word cards to the word-boards. The word-boards were a lot more accessible and easier to use. I also extended the size of the pink cover cards.

During the weeks I noticed that the students got into a routine of learning new spellings and taking tests. The feedback I got from learners was always positive. They enjoyed the challenge. The only negative comments I received were from some of the more -able learners who wanted additional sentences and spellings to learn.

Looking back at all the tests and learners' work, I have noticed an improvement in spellings and handwriting. I believe the routine of using the start of the lesson time to practise spellings, followed by a test has helped to encourage students to do better. Often students have compared test results and challenged themselves to do better. However, there has been the odd student who hasn't made much improvement, and I believe this is due to a lack of motivation to study and attend lessons.

Tirhas, who I have chosen as my case study has shown a vast improvement from her initial assessment, and even her first spelling test. She feels a lot more confident about constructing sentences and giving personal information. It has also improved her confidence to speak about herself. She uses the sentences from the spelling sessions as a framework to construct sentences about herself. She can now correctly spell many more words than when she first started the class.

Overall, using the look, Cover, Write, Check spelling strategy during a dedicated spelling practice session has helped students to improve their spellings. Both the LSA (Learner support assistant) and I feel that it has benefited the learners.

Case Study A

The case study learner is 18 years old and comes from Eritrea. She arrived in the UK in July 2019 and began studying at Sandwell College in September 2019. Before starting college, the learner completed an initial assessment to assess her reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. I decided to improve learner spellings to give learners a sentence to practice instead of a standalone word. There was clear evidence of progress the learner made in relation to their spellings, please see below. The learner also developed their word recognition and handwriting.

Evidence of learner A's progress can be seen from:

Word Board (Appendix 1)

Case Study A - Teacher Reflections

Case Study A - Learner initial assessment

Case Study A - Learner Spelling Tests

Case Study A - Learner initial assessment

ESOL WRITING ASSESSMENT

LEARNER TO COMPLETE

1. About myself, my friends, my family (or write your name, or your address, or the alphabet)

~~Bithena Bithewed~~

1st My name is Thomas Bithewed

I came Eithena.

2. About my country / about living in England

3. What I did yesterday / What I did last weekend

4. Why I want to come to College / My plans for the future

Writing assessment - ESOL levels (assessor to complete):

Wt/E1.1a	Ws/E1.1a	Step Up	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wt/E2.1a	Ws/E2.1a	Entry 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ws/E3.2a	Ww/E3.1a	Entry 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ws/L1.1a	Ws/L1.2a	Entry 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ws/L2.1a	Ws/L2.4a	Level 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>

Case Study A – Learner Spelling Tests

Monday 23rd September 2019.

Tirhas Kesete

1. My name is temu Tim.
2. I am ~~616~~ years ~~old~~ years old years
3. I am ferom landin from London
4. I live in Bekingam Birmingham
5. I am happy. ✓

Write the number of the Question in this column

Monday 23rd September 2019.

Do not write in this margin

Tit has

- 1 My Name is Tim ✓
- 2 I am 16 years old ✓
3. ~~I am from London.~~ I am from London ✓
4. I am ~~from~~ ^{live in} Birmingham ✓
5. I am happy ✓

Tuesday 24th September

Titbas

1. My name is Tim ✓
2. I am 16 ^{years} old ✓
3. I am from London. ✓
4. I live in Birmingham ✓
5. I am happy. ✓

Mondy 30th septber 2019.

1 my name is Titbas

2 My name is Tim. ✓

3. I am 16 years old. ✓

3. I am ~~for~~ from London. from

4. I live in Birmingham. ✓

5. I am happy ✓

6. ~~I~~ I am a student at Sandwell College Sandwell College

7 I Study English College

litbas

Tuesday 1st October 2019.

- 1 My name is Tim ✓
- 2 I am 16 Years old ✓
- 3 I am from London ✓
- 4 I Live in Birmingham ✓
- 5 I am happy ✓
- 6 I am Student at Sandwell College
Student Sandwell College
- 7 I ~~Study~~ English ✓

Monday 7th October 2019.

Timmas.

1. My name is Tim. ✓
2. I am 16 years old. ✓
3. I am from London. ✓
4. I live in Birmingham. ✓
5. I am happy. ✓
6. I am a student at ~~Sam~~ Sandwell College. ✓
7. I study English. ✓

Sandwell

Titbas

Tuesday 8th October 2019

- 1 My name is Tim. ✓
- 2 I am 16 years old. ✓
- 3 I am from London. ✓
- 4 I Live in ~~Birmingham~~ Birmingham. ✓
- 5 I am happy. ✓
- 6 I am a student at Sandwell College. ✓
- 7 I study English. ✓

14/10/2019.

My name is Tithas.
Test 1

1 My name is Tim. ✓

2 I am 16 years old. ✓

3 I am from London. ✓

4 I live in Birmingham. ✓

5 I am happy. ✓

6 I am a ~~student~~ student at ~~Sandwell College~~ Sandwell College. ✓

7. I study English. ✓

8 I go to college from Monday to Friday. ✓

9. I like my class.

I like my class.

my name is Tim.

14. / 10 / 2019.

Test 2.

1 my name is Tim. ✓

2 I am 16 years old. ✓

3 I am from London. ✓

4 I live in Birmingham. ✓

5. I am happy. ✓

6. I am a student at Sandwell College. ✓

7 I ~~study English~~. Study English. ✓

8. I go to College from Monday to Friday. ✓

9. I like my class. ✓

10 my friends and teachers are nice.

Study friends.

My name is Thomas

15/10/2019

TEST 3

1. My name is Tim. ✓
2. I am 16 years old. ✓
3. I am from London. ✓
4. I live in Birmingham. ✓
5. I am happy. ✓
6. I am a student at Sandwell College. ✓
7. I study English. ✓
8. I go to college from Monday to Friday. ✓
9. I like my class. ✓
10. My friends and teachers are nice. ✓
friends

my name is Tithas

21/10/2019

name

1 my name is Tim.

2. I am 16 years old. ✓

3 I am from London. ✓

4 I live in Birmingham. ✓

5 I am happy. ✓

6 I am a student at Sandwell College. ✓

7 I study English. ✓

8. I go to college from Monday to Friday. ✓

9. I like my class. ✓

10. my friends and teachers are nice. teachers

11 my lessons are good. ✓

friends

My name is Titbas.

22/10/2019.

1 my name is Tim. ✓

2 I am 16 yeats old. ✓

3 I am from London. ✓

4 I Live in Birkmingham. ✓

5 I am happy. ✓

6. I am a Student at Sandwell College. ✓

7 I Study English. ✓

8. I go to College ~~at~~ from monday to friday. ✓

9. I like my Class. ✓

10. my friends and teachers are nice. ✓

11 my Lessons are good. ✓

friends

ft:

Case Study - Learner B

Case Study B

The case study learner is 18 years old and comes from Iran. She arrived in the UK in June 2019 and began studying at Sandwell College in September 2019. Before starting college, the learner completed an initial assessment to assess her reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. I decided to improve learner spellings via a spelling bee strategy and getting learners to spell the word out verbally. I chose the months of the year as this I believe is important for learners to know and it would support learners with their Entry 1 maths qualification. Just before the project ended, I decided to change the spellings to the learner's address. There was clear evidence of some progress made in relation to the learner spelling the months of the year; however, the learner made quicker progress with learning the spelling of their address.

Evidence of learner B's progress can be seen from:

Case Study B - Teacher Reflections

Case Study B - Learner initial assessment

Case Study B - Learner Spelling Tests

Case Study B - Address spelling test

Case Study B – Teacher Reflections

Week 1

Students were given a spelling test for all 12 months of the year. I then gave them cut outs of each letter for all 12 months of the year. Students then rearranged the letters in class to spell the words January to June. Students worked in pairs and verbally practised spelling out the words. Students were given time to practise and towards the end of the lesson they took part in a group spelling bee. For the spelling bee students took turns to say the letters, for example, the first student would say 'J', and the next 'a' and so on until the word January is spelt out. When one learner got the letter wrong, they were required to sit down and the group will start from the top.

My feelings

During the class, I was worried because students struggled to understand exactly what they were doing and why they were doing it. Upon reflection I felt that the process was just too long and that I did not give students enough time to practise before the spelling bee took place. Turn taking was something the learners found too hard to follow. I felt that it was too hard for the students to follow each other by saying the next letter as well as doing the spelling bee in a group. At one point, stronger learners started to feel frustrated and looked discouraged when weaker learners kept getting the next letters wrong, which meant that they whole group had to spell the word again from the start. Lastly, I felt that doing the spelling bee in a group made tracking individual spelling targets and progress difficult as individuals were just saying one letter of the words rather than the spelling of the full word.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Students enjoyed the idea of using cards and making words. From students' feedback one student said that the strategy was better than having a spelling test on paper.✓ Students were challenged and worked hard to avoid letting their peers down in the group spelling bee.✓ The strategy promoted team work and helped to build turn taking skills.✓ The strategy allowed students to practise saying the letters of the alphabet correctly as most students struggled with letters 'J, G, A and I'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The process was too long and not enough time was given for students to practise spelling before the group spelling bee.• Some students got frustrated when weaker learners kept getting the letters wrong as it meant that the whole group had to start the spellings from the start.• Group spelling bee made tracking individual progress difficult.

Week 2

Students were given the words January - June and they had to cut out each letter themselves. Students organised the cut outs to make the words. Students practised spelling out the words in pairs. Students then were given a week to go and practise spelling out the words at home.

My feelings

During the task, I felt that students enjoyed cutting the letters out themselves. They listened to music as they did. I felt that all students were organised and knew exactly what they were doing and why they were doing it. Upon reflection I felt that even though the process was long, students enjoyed it and did not feel under too much pressure to try and learn the spellings and be able to spell the words on the same day.

The music in the background made the whole process relaxing and students sang along as they cut and rearranged the letters.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Students seemed relaxed and one student in particular (Maria) worked really well with music in the background as she sang along to some English songs.✓ Students were challenged as they needed to pronounce the letters of the alphabet correctly in order for them to be able to spell the words.✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the pronunciation of the letters of the alphabet correctly as well as learning to spell the months of the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most students were worried about doing the spelling bee in front of the class.• Most students were worried about being videoed during the spelling bee the following week. Most students preferred pictures but not videos.• The process was a little too long as the students had to cut out each letter.

Conclusion

All students knew exactly what they were doing and why they were doing it. They enjoyed cutting out the letters themselves prompting them to learn the letters as they do the cutting. Students worked well and enjoyed the process.

Action Plan

For next week, I am going to:

Introduce a tracking sheet which I am going to use to track and compare students' progress every week.

Introduce a spelling bee champion and the most improved student of the week to make the spelling bee competitive and fun for students. This will also encourage students to work hard and practise their spellings at home.

Week 3

Description

Students organised the cut outs to make the words January- June. Students practised spelling out the words individually and in pairs. Students then took part in an individual spelling bee. I took videos of some students. I tracked students' results using a tracking sheet as this was their first time doing the spelling bee individually.

My feelings

I felt that students were determined to be able to spell most of the words correctly. It was evident that most but not all had practised the words at home prior to the spelling bee. I felt that the spelling bee was a success.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Students were challenged as they needed to pronounce the letters of the alphabet correctly in order for them to be able to spell the words.✓ I was able to record results for individuals using the tracking sheet✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the pronunciation of the letters of the alphabet correctly as well as learning to spell the✓ months of the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most students did not have the• confidence to stand up and do a spelling bee in front of the whole class.• Some students did not practise using their cards at home and their results reflected it• Most students did not want to be taken a video. They preferred photos.

Conclusion

This week the spelling bee was a success and I was pleased with how the students worked. All students knew exactly what they were doing and why they were doing it. Some students practised the words at home; however, it was also evident that some students did not practise at all and this reflected on their results.

Action plan

For next week, I am going to:

To compare students' progress as this week was the first week doing individual spelling bee and

identify the most improved learner. Both the spelling bee champion and the most improved learner will receive a small prize.

Week 4

Description

Students organised the cut outs to make the words January – June. Students practised spelling out the words individually and in pairs. Students then took part in an individual spelling bee. I took videos of some students. I tracked students' results using a tracking sheet as this was their first time doing the spelling bee individually.

My feelings

At this stage of the project, I felt that students were now in a routine and knew that every Wednesday they must bring their cut outs, practise spelling and take part in a spelling bee. As soon as they walked in, they got their spellings out and started practising straight away. I felt that students were determined to be able to spell most of the words correctly. I was pleased to see such determination to do well from students.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 4 students scored the highest score of 4/6. Some students improved their scores from last week's results.✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the pronunciation of the letters of the alphabet correctly as well as learning to spell the months of the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 students were not able to spell a single word - some students are still not practising their spellings at home.• None of the students were able to spell February.• Some students lacked the confidence to take part in a spelling bee in class.

Conclusion

This week results reflected that some improvement from individual learners were made. 4 students scored 4/ 6. However, 5 students were not able to spell a single word for two consecutive weeks, this week and last week. Two learners, who scored 0 last week, scored 3 this week. The strategy seems to be working for some students but not for everyone. I feel that for those who have not progressed from last week, not practising at home may be the reason why they have not progressed so far. Students need to be constantly reminded to practise their spellings at home in order for them to do well in the spelling bee.

Action plan

For next week, I am going to:

Introduce students to feedback cards. Students will give feedback using the 'thumb ' feedback cards. This is a good way to get feedback from learners. Being a very low level class, most students are not able to express themselves verbally or in writing, however, showing thumbs up or thumbs down will be the simplest way for them to give feedback.

Week 5

Description

This is the first week of students spelling the last 6 months of the year July - December. Students arranged the letters in class to make the words July - December. They then worked in pairs and verbally practised spelling out the words. Students took part in an individual spelling bee. Students' progress was tracked and compared. A spelling bee champion was identified and students gave feedback using they 'thumbs' feedback cards.

My feelings

I felt that students worked well today. Jess observed the lesson and because she is one of their teachers, students wanted to 'show off their spelling skills in front of her. I felt that more learners were willing to do the spelling bee in front of the class and I felt that this was because of Jess' presence at the time. As a result, students worked extra hard this week and the results of individual learners reflected the work that was put into practising for the spelling bee.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Scores were considerably high given that it was the first week for spelling July - December.✓ More students were willing to do the spelling bee in front of the whole class. Students were motivated because Jess was observing the lesson.✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the pronunciation of the letters of the alphabet correctly as well as learning to spell the months of the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There was no written task to consolidate spellings.

Conclusion

This week, learners were extra determined to get the spellings right. I was happy with the results this week. Overall, for me, this week was the best week of doing the spelling bee. Students seemed to enjoy themselves, they worked extra hard and results were much better than in previous weeks considering the fact that it was their first week spelling July - December. Jess suggested that I add a written assessment after the spelling bee which I felt was a great idea.

Action plan

For next week, I am going to:

Introduce students to a new spelling book. Students will do a written spelling test to consolidate their spellings for the months of the year. I also felt that this strategy will allow me to see if students are able to verbally spell as well as write the words. It is also a good way to help students to improve their writing skills.

Week 6

Description

This is the second week of students spelling the last 6 months of the year July-December. Students arranged the letters in class to make the words July- December. They then worked in pairs and verbally practised spelling out the words. Students took part in an individual spelling bee. Student's progress will be tracked and compared each week. Students then did their first written spelling test. A spelling bee champion was identified and students gave feedback using they 'thumbs' feedback cards.

My feeling

Students had 2 weeks of practise because they had half term. Because they had much longer to practise, I was expecting much better performances. However, I felt that that this was not the case. It felt as though students had gone back to the start in terms of progress. None of the students practised at home and the biggest and most popular excuse was 'I forgot'. Harminder came in to observe the lesson. I felt that the practise in pairs in class went well. I also felt that students worked better every time when there is someone new observing the lesson.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ A written spelling test was included.✓ A few students scored better compared to the previous week.✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the pronunciation of the letters of the alphabet correctly as well as learning to spell the months of the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The written test was not a true reflection of some individual student's ability as some students copied from one another.• Some students lacked motivation after a week off.• Little progress was made this week.

Conclusion

Arsh become the spelling bee champion while Dawit became the most improved learner of the week. This week has been quite hard and it felt like the students were starting again after a one week break. Students did not practise at home in the past 2 weeks and the results for this week reflected this. I feel that I need to get the students back into the routine of doing their spellings every night for 15 minutes before bed.

Action plan

For next week, I am going to;

Give Arsh a more challenging task. Arsh has been the best speller so far. He will use his letters to make 4 or more letter words next week.

Week 7

Description

This week students spelt all 12 months of January - December. Students arranged the letters in class to make the words July- December. They then worked in pairs and verbally practise spelling out the words. Students took part in an individual spelling bee. Student's progress was tracked and compared each week. Students then did their first written spelling test. A spelling bee champion was identified and students gave feedback using they 'thumbs' feedback cards.

My feeling

This week, I wanted to challenge and give them all the 12 months to spell at one go. I felt that the words were too many for some students and they got confused. The spelling bee was evidently hard for some students this week, however, one student managed to spell all 12 months correctly. 4 more students scored between 9 and 11 in the spelling bee which I felt was very impressive. The written spelling test produced better results compared to the spelling bee.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Spelling all 12 months of the year was challenging. Students also had to spell the months in the correct order.✓ A written spelling test was included.✓ A written spelling test produced better results compared to the spelling bee✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the pronunciation of the letters of the alphabet correctly as well as learning to spell the months of the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The written test was not a true reflection of some individual student 's ability as some students copied from one another.• Some students found spelling all 12 months too challenging and a few got confused.• Some students felt a little bored of spelling the same words for 7 weeks. A few students said that they want to try spelling different words for next week.

Conclusion

This is the last time we practised spelling the months of the year. The students enjoy doing spellings however, most students expressed that they wanted to try spelling other things. After spelling the same words for 7 weeks, I felt that the students were starting to get bored which then bought me to the decision of changing spellings from spelling January - December to practising spelling addresses and postcode as well as practising writing addresses in the correct format.

Action plan

For next week, I am going to change the spellings from spelling the months of the year to spelling their full addresses.

Week 8

Week 1 – Addresses

Description

Students were given a blank piece of paper to write their addresses. They then had to identify their addresses from the cut outs of different addresses. Students then practised saying out their addresses. They then had to cut out each letter of their addresses. Students then organised the cut outs to make their addresses. Students practised spelling out each letter to themselves and with a peer. Students were given a week to go and practise spelling out their addresses at home. Students will have a spelling bee in the following week as well as written test to check progress.

My feelings

At this stage, students knew exactly what they needed to do. I felt that the atmosphere was great and the music in the background helped students to relax. The process was short and students were given the opportunity to try and spell out each letter of their addresses to themselves as well as in a pair. I felt that it was beneficial for students to work in pair and organise their addresses in the correct format starting with the house/flat number, street/road name, area, city and postcode.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Results for both the spelling bee showed some improvement for all learners.✓ Students were challenged as they needed to be saying the letters of the alphabet correctly in order for them to be able to spell out the letters in their addresses✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the correct format of writing their address including postcode.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most students were worried about doing the spelling bee in front of the class.• Most students were worried about being videoed during the spelling bee the following week. Most students preferred pictures but not videos.

Conclusion

Most students failed to spell their addresses in the initial task and I felt that there was need for students to practise spelling their addresses correctly and writing their addresses in the correct format. They enjoyed spelling new words this week. They worked hard and worked well in their pairs.

Action plan

Three students were able to write their addresses correctly the first time and in the correct format. For next week, I am going to add England and United Kingdom to the spellings for these learners.

Week 9

Week 2 – Addresses

Description

Students rearranged the letters in class to make their addresses. Students then worked in pairs and verbally practised spelling out their addresses. Students took part in an individual spelling bee. A spelling bee champion and most improved learner were identified. Students then did a spelling test. Results were tracked and compared.

My feelings

I feel that students found spelling their addresses easier than spelling the months of the year. Results from both the spelling bee and the written task indicated that all students made some progress which I was very pleased with.

Evaluation

Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Results for both the spelling bee showed some improvement for all learners.✓ Students were challenged as they needed to be saying the letters of the alphabet correctly in order for them to be able to spell out the letters in their addresses.✓ The strategy allowed students to learn the correct format of writing their address including postcode.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No competition spirit, which defeated the whole purpose of a spelling bee.

Conclusion

This is the last week of students doing the spellings as part of this project. Spellings were much better compared to their spellings last week, both in the spelling bee and in the written task. I am going to continue using this strategy to help my students with spellings. I intend to continue enhancing the strategy and adding on features to the strategy, for examples breaking down words into syllables to help students with their spellings both written and verbally.

Case Study B – Initial Assessment

✕ ESOL WRITING ASSESSMENT

LEARNER TO COMPLETE

1. About myself, my friends, my family (or write your name, or your address, or the alphabet)

my name is Farnaz Abbasi my dater hi muhammad Abbasi

my dater shi Parisa Ahnoud Khesravi

2. About my country, about living in England

iran is big my hawic is irar

iran is sifi ~~big~~

3. What I did yesterday / What I did last weekend

my to hoom

~~was~~ wach tiri

4. Why I want to come to College / My plans for the future

Langoich english

Writing assessment - ESOL levels (assessor to complete):

Wt/E1.1a	Ws/E1.1a	Foundation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wt/E2.1a	Ws/E2.1a	Entry 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ws/E3.2a	Ww/E3.1a	Entry 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ws/L1.1a	Ws/L1.2a	Entry 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ws/L2.1a	Ws/L2.4a	Level 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>

Case Study B – Spelling Tests

Week 1 FarnaZ Abbasi

Jenury January

Februry February

mach March

APrilt April

may ✓

Gun June

Guli July

ogust August

september

1/12

otoxber

Nov^eber

Dacimber De^cember

Week 6

Farnaz Abbasi

July

July

~~oct~~ ~~ago~~ August

August

September ✓

October ✓

4/6

November ✓

December ✓

Farnaz Abbasi week 7.

Janu^ary January

febrivary February

march ✓

April ✓

may ✓

Jang June

Juliy July

Agost August

september ✓

October ✓

Nov@nber November

December ✓

6/12

Case Study B – Address Spelling Tests

Farnaz Abbasi Week 1

B67 6DA

Write your full name and your full address on this envelope.

Week 2

15 claredon Road ✓

^{SP}smathwick

Birmingham^{SP} Farnaz Abbasi

B67 6DA

References

Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D, and Jasper, M. (2001) *Critical Reflection in Nursing and the Helping Professions: A User's Guide*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.