



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Newsletter

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Dear Houghton Mifflin Reading Teacher,

Welcome to the **fifth issue** of the Houghton Mifflin California Newsletter!

In this issue, we will spotlight spelling, vocabulary, writing and more! Look for tips on using resources in *Houghton Mifflin Reading* to deliver instruction effectively.

Visit the Houghton Mifflin California Website!

Visit www.eduplace.com, click on state resources, then click on California.

 **Download** the previous 4 volumes of the Houghton Mifflin Newsletter

 **Sign up** to receive future editions online

 **Find** valuable resources to use with *Houghton Mifflin Reading*



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AUTHOR'S CORNER

Spelling Makes Sense: A Revolution in Reading and Vocabulary Instruction



Dr. Shane Templeton

Every parent wants their child to learn to read in order to succeed in school. Every teacher and school administrator in California is working to fulfill that wish, aiming for higher levels of literacy than have ever been achieved in California history. What most people do not realize, however, is that the key to reaching those higher levels may lie in a better understanding of spelling and spelling instruction. And while many people don't consider themselves strong spellers, the spelling system of English makes more sense than most of us think. We just have to know where and how to look for the clues.

Spelling knowledge is the foundation of students' ability to read more effectively: The more students understand the structure of words as they are written—their spelling—the more rapidly and accurately they will identify words when they read. This in turn leaves more brain space available for *thinking* during reading. Importantly, students' understanding of spelling will also help them grow their vocabularies as they read.

Our children will learn in the primary grades that, while there may not always be a one-for-one correspondence between letter and

sound, on balance there are more predictable spelling patterns according to which sounds are spelled than not. In the later elementary school years and beyond, students learn that spelling represents meaning in a strikingly consistent manner: Thanks to the way they are spelled, words that are similar in meaning look similar. This connection between spelling and meaning is not obvious when we look at words one at a time, as we traditionally have done, because we then invariably ask questions about sound: "Why is there a g in sign?" or "Why does column have a silent n at the end?" It is only when we group words together like sign-signature and column-columnist that the connection between spelling and meaning becomes obvious: Words that are related in meaning are often related in spelling as well, despite changes in sound.

Students' awareness of this spelling-meaning connection becomes a tool for growing vocabulary. For example, when a fifth-grade student misspells mental as mentle, her teacher could introduce the word mentality—which most students do not know until they are sophomores in high school—but this will do two things: It will help the student remember the spelling of

mental, and because the student knows the meaning of the word mental she can learn the meaning of the word mentality. Spelling and vocabulary instruction become two sides of the same instructional coin. This relationship between spelling and meaning suggests that we do not have to wait until students are in high school to teach so much of the vocabulary that is critical to reading, writing, and communicating—and which is also critical to learning across all subject areas in the curriculum. We can begin much earlier, and in the process, help our students develop a lifelong fascination with words.

Dr. Shane Templeton

Foundation Professor of Literacy Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno
Senior Author of *Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary*
Author, *Houghton Mifflin Reading California*

TEACHER'S TIPS

Many teachers have asked, "How are California teachers incorporating writing into their instruction?" Here are a few responses from "real teachers":

Katie Michels, Kindergarten, Garden Grove, CA

I use the Daily Message from the Opening Routines to model writing for my students. The writing center ideas allow my students to develop their writing skills each day. I have found the tools in *Houghton Mifflin Reading* are engaging and encourage activities for the emerging writers in my class. Near the end of the school year I do need to differentiate and extend the writing activities for my students. I reintroduce the wordless Phonics Library books (Themes 1–3). I make a blackline master copy of these stories. In a small group I revisit the comprehension skill and strategy associated with these titles. My students then become authors by retelling the story in their own printed words. I also make copies of the picture cards from the back of the Handbook for English Language Learners. My students cut out these pictures and the high frequency words and create rebus stories of their own.

Tracy Yust, Third Grade, Woodland, CA

I like to integrate content area writing into my Language Arts block, and the Houghton Mifflin website, www.eduplace.com, has been a great resource to help me develop my curriculum. Within the Social Studies section of the website I found a tool to involve my students in expository writing. The documents are called "Interactive Lesson Summaries," and these PDF files are very easy to download. I used these summaries to introduce my students to a lesson focusing on national and cultural holidays. The information in the summaries helped my students create reports on the holidays we were studying. Many of my students used additional library and media resources to add more information to their reports. I will continue to use these lesson summaries to help enhance my writing instruction and as a tool to integrate my curriculum.

Nicole Falice, Fifth Grade, Antioch, CA

As I began using the *Houghton Mifflin Reading* program I struggled to find a consistent time frame to teach the Reading Writing Workshop within each theme. I wanted my students to see writing as a process that takes place over time. After many false starts and failed schedules I found that by working on one formal writing piece over the course of a theme, my students were able to produce more in-depth writing products. I read aloud the Student Writing Model during the theme launch, so my students know the writing domain. As we work through the stories in the theme I conduct mini-lessons to develop process writing, grammar skills, and six-trait language. I have also found that when we work through a writing domain over a 5-6 week block of time my students have ample opportunities to conference with me and have peers edit their work. Taking time to complete one formal piece of writing each theme has given me time to conference with students more effectively, and I am able to grade their papers over time to help inform my lessons. As an added bonus, this lesson structure has also allowed me to interweave other content areas into the students' writing focus.

COMPONENT SPOTLIGHT

Vocabulary Leveled Readers

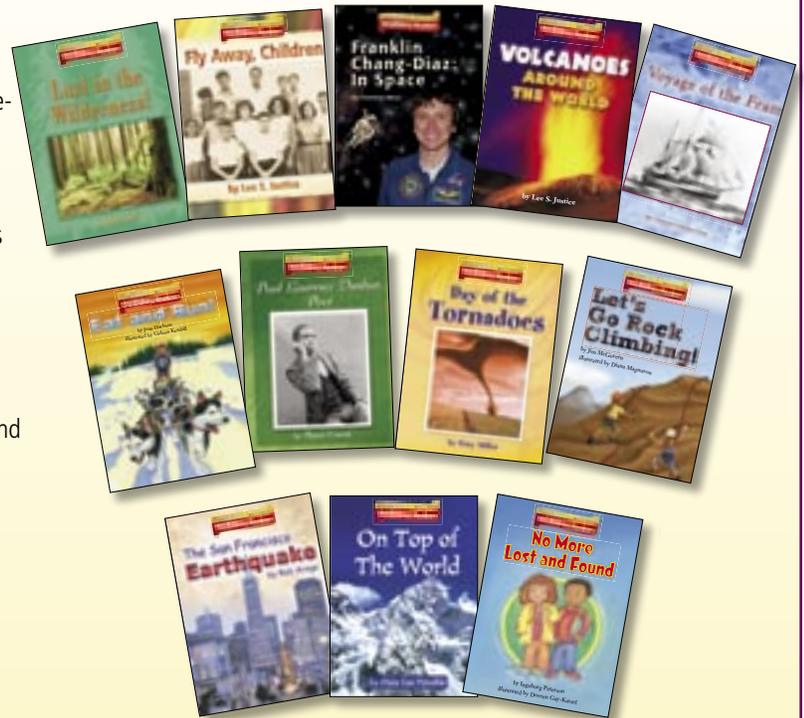


Vocabulary Readers support the robust vocabulary instruction in **Houghton Mifflin Reading** and build fluency and independence through nonfiction text.

- **Vocabulary Readers** are developed to align with each grade-specific anthology selection in **Houghton Mifflin Reading**.
- Lessons for before, during, and after reading in addition to selection summaries save teachers valuable prep time.
- Support for English learners and oral language development is built through three levels of language acquisition.
- Each classroom selection contains age- and grade-appropriate nonfiction text to meet the diverse needs in any classroom.

Vocabulary Readers provide accessible text, engaging visual support, multiple encounters with key vocabulary, and opportunities to deepen and expand word knowledge—a valuable addition to **Houghton Mifflin Reading** classrooms!

- High-interest nonfiction topics
- Fountas–Pinnell guided reading levels
- Support for below-level readers
- Oral language development for English learners
- Audio CDs



UNIVERSAL ACCESS:

"Graphic Organizers create "power pictures" you remember and store." (Sprengr, 1999 ASCD)

Graphic organizers have been widely researched for their effectiveness in improving learning outcomes for various students. They are valuable instructional tools that can be used flexibly for both reading and writing instruction.

- As part of the writing process, they add organization to thoughts generated by brainstorming. Since many graphic organizers use short words or phrases, they are particularly ideal for the struggling student and English Learners.
- Graphic organizers show the order and completeness of a student's thought process. Consequently, teachers can provide appropriate instruction and/or intervention based on the student's strengths and weaknesses, as evidenced in the graphic organizer.

Benefits of Using Graphic Organizers for Writing

- Help the brain organize isolated information into a unified schema.
- Provide a tool to organize ideas/concepts for writing.
- Demonstrate the relationship among key parts and the whole.
- Link new information to prior retrievable information.
- Create a schema that is culturally constructed and changes with experience.
- Demonstrate relationships in ways words alone cannot convey.

How to Introduce a Graphic Organizer

- Model its use with a specific type of writing; e.g., Story Map for Personal Narrative.
- Fill out the graphic organizer as you model the "Think Aloud": "I think this relates so I will list it underneath."
- Let students practice – first in small groups, then pairs, then independently.
- Use different color markers or pens to ensure participation by all students.
- Students can work independently once they are familiar with the purpose.

Be sure to check out the printable Graphic Organizers at www.eduplace.com!

Also available in Spanish!

TEACHERS ASK...

Why have *Guided Reading Levels* not been indicated on *Houghton Mifflin's Leveled Readers*?

Where do you suggest our teachers put *Guided Reading labels* on their books?

Guided Reading Levels are an approximation of a text's difficulty in relation to other texts. They are adjusted after use with many different children in different locations.

You should expect some variation in the reading levels. You may find that a book is a little easier or harder for your students and may want to adjust the level of a book up or down after you have used it many times and feel an adjustment is needed. For example, a book about the desert will be easier for students in Tucson or books about the ocean may be easier for children living by the seashore.

The levels are not printed on the books to allow for changes and also to allow teachers to place the letter indications in less obvious places if they so choose. You can have the levels on the books for your use by penciling in the level on the inside or back cover or by placing a sticker on the back. When a level changes, you can just change the sticker. The level indication is for your reference only. If children notice them and comment, explain that the letters help you find good books to help them learn how to read and they need not be concerned about them.

Teachers are concerned about using leveled books when they feel the pressure of "No Child Left Behind" to use grade level materials. How can I, as a Reading Specialist, assure them that it is appropriate to use a gradient of leveled books?

Not all children can read grade level materials, though we all wish that they could. If you use grade level materials, it does not mean all the children are actually reading them or will be able to read similar level materials.

When you use a gradient, start with a book the child can read successfully with your teaching support and then bring the reader forward to grade level. If you continue to use only grade level materials, the children will not expand their reading powers and will not be able to read the grade level materials for themselves. Children build fluency and independence by practicing at their current reading level.

Use grade level materials for reading aloud and for shared reading to include all the children in common grade level experiences. Some children will simply not yet be able to process the print for themselves and will need other supportive text in order to get to the grade level goal. In other words, the pressure to get children to grade level is best met by starting where the learners are and bringing them to the goal.

NEW FROM HOUGHTON MIFFLIN *History–Social Studies AND Historia y Ciencias Sociales*

Teach the Core, Extend for More!

Houghton Mifflin History-Social Science incorporates a revolutionary instructional design that helps you fit social studies into your busy day!

This Core/Extend Lesson structure makes it easy:

Teach the Core:

- Core lessons are concise and easy to fit into your day.
- Core lessons cover all the California History-Social Science Standards.

Extend For More:

- Extend lessons dig deeper into important content.
- Extend lessons provide leveled activities to enhance every Core lesson.
- Extend lessons motivate and excite students!

Make the Most of Every Moment with Houghton Mifflin History-Social Science!

