

Typical Spelling Stage Ranges by Grade Level

This table shows the typical range of spelling stages for each grade level. The “X” shows the stage that is considered the end-of-year goal for each grade level.

In the Lumberton word study program, students’ spelling development is assessed at the beginning of each year, and this yields information about the child’s spelling stage. Students are placed into groups with classmates who have similar skill levels and are taught the spelling patterns and vocabulary concepts that will help move them to the next level.

Grade	Emergent	Early Letter Name	Middle Letter Name	Late Letter Name	Early Within Word	Middle Within Word	Late Within Word	Early Syllables & Affixes	Middle Syllables & Affixes	Late Syllables & Affixes	Early Derivational Relations	Middle Derivational Relations	Late Derivational Relations
K		X											
1					X								
2							X						
3								X					
4									X				
5										X			

The following page contains some basic information about each stage and what students are studying.

Emergent

This stage applies to students who are not yet doing actual writing. They might use random marks or scribbles rather than letters. Instruction focuses on the letters of the alphabet.

Letter Name – Alphabetic

Instruction starts with beginning and then ending consonant sounds and then moves to vowels with a focus on word families. Word families are words that have the same spelling from the vowel to the end. For example, the *-at* family includes words such as *bat*, *cat*, *fat*, *hat*, *rat*, *sat*, and so on.

Within Word Pattern

Students begin to learn the variety of long vowel patterns. There are a lot, so this stage lasts fairly long. They also study r-controlled vowels, such as *-ar* in the word *star*. They learn other vowel patterns that are neither long nor short, such as *-oi* and *-ou*. They study the hard and soft sounds of certain consonants such as *c* and *g*, based on the vowels that follow them. They learn consonant digraphs (eg: *sh*) and blends (eg: *st*) and study homophones and homographs.

Syllables and Affixes

Students learn rules for plural and inflectional endings (-s, -ed, -ing, etc.). Then they move to studying rules for how syllables are put together, including the sounds of stressed and unstressed syllables. Finally, they are introduced to base words and prefixes and suffixes. At this point, the focus is very much on vocabulary, as students learn how the prefixes and suffixes affect the meaning of the base word.

Derivational Relations

Students study how spellings and pronunciations might change when another word part is added (eg: *nature* and *natural*) They also study Greek and Latin word roots with a focus on both spelling and meaning.