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## HOMEWORK ACCOMODATIONS

Until your child's reading, writing, and spelling skills have reached grade level, provide the following 3 accommodations during homework time. These accomodations will help reduce the amount of time and frustration.

### 1. Read everything out loud to your child.

Their reading will **NOT** get any better by having them read to you every night for 20 minutes. If you want them to learn, then read the material **to** them.

### 2. Ask each homework question out loud, let them answer it out loud, and you write it down.

That's called "acting like a scribe," (when I explain it to a child, I call it "acting like a secretary") and it is a very common accommodation. If they tell you the wrong answer, write down that wrong answer. In other words, you are **not** changing their answers. You are strictly getting rid of print for awhile.

If they have to write a book report, let them listen to the book on audio (or you read it to them), let them compose their report out loud, and you write it down.

If they have to write a story, let them dictate it, and you write it down.

Then all the teacher has to do is accept dictated homework.

Do **NOT** have them copy what you wrote down. They do not learn anything by copying it, so it is wasted time.

### 3. Ignore the weekly spelling test.

Children with dyslexia cannot learn to spell by memorizing a list of words. Even if, after spending a huge number of hours trying to learn them, they can do "okay" on [Friday's](#) test, they

cannot retain them from one week to the next. So give it up.

They will become a very good speller by using the Barton System, but you'll be teaching spelling a very different way. They'll be learning to spell by sounding out words and applying some very reliable spelling rules. Does it really work? Yes. Here's an email I recently received from a teacher proving that:

I have been using your program for 3 years and I love it! I have seen results that are amazing! When my principal asked our staff to reflect on one practice that has made a difference, I told her it was my working for 30 minutes each day in small groups using the Barton System – and the data proves the impact it has on spelling.

In August, according to the FAIR spelling assessment:

7 students < 20<sup>th</sup> percentile  
9 students 21<sup>st</sup> percentile to 49<sup>th</sup> percentile  
5 students > 80<sup>th</sup> percentile

In December, every single student made significant gains except the two who were already at the 91<sup>st</sup> and 98<sup>th</sup> percentile.

1 student < 20<sup>th</sup> percentile  
2 students 21<sup>st</sup> to 49<sup>th</sup> percentile  
6 student 50<sup>th</sup> to 79<sup>th</sup> percentile  
12 students > 80<sup>th</sup> percentile

The most significant gains were made by my lowest 2 reader/spellers. One went from 19<sup>th</sup> percentile to 49<sup>th</sup> percentile. The other went from 19<sup>th</sup> percentile to 69<sup>th</sup> percentile. And two of my good readers who had been poor spellers went up 68 percentile points each.

Debbie Sanders  
Thunderbolt Elementary  
Fleming Island, FL

So stop wasting precious time on the teacher's weekly spelling list. Tell your child that they'll be learning a very different way of spelling from you, and within a year, they'll be spelling as well as the other kids. Between now and then, you will both just ignore the grade on Friday's test because you are not going to study for it.

Or, if their teacher is caring and flexible, perhaps you could convince them to give your child the Barton Weekly Spelling Tests instead of the regular spelling test.

Let your child take the spelling test but do not have it graded.

If you provide those 3 accommodations during homework time, you will no longer face nightly tears and battles, homework will take a reasonable length of time, and now you'll have plenty of time for tutoring, time for your child to develop their gifted areas, and time for them to just "be a kid."

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