

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

Book Code: ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4

Category: 6201010

Area Speling -

Cluster Spelling

Subject: Elementary Spelling

Publisher:

Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

Title:

Spelling Connections Grades K-8 Print Bid

Author: J. Richard Gentry, Ph.D.

Edition: 1st

Copyright: 2012

ISBN:

Publisher's Bid Information

Bid Level

Basal

Delivery Method

T

Reviewer Analysis

Level

Basal

Delivery Method:

Traditional-T

Recommended:

YES

NO

WITHDRAWN

Edit # _____ **Final** _____

Committee Members:

Vanessa R. Greenlee

Vanita A. Williamson

Signature of Reviewers

Signature of Commission Member _____

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

I. Tennessee Framework

Documentation

STRENGTHS: Zaner-Bloser Spelling Connections addresses the Tennessee learning expectations and standards for grades K-8.

Listed below are the specific Tennessee Guided Learning Expectations, Checks for Understanding, and Student Performance Indicators pertaining to spelling, followed by an explanation of how the Spelling Connections program addresses each standard.

GLE 0601.1.1 Demonstrate control of Standard English through the use of grammar and mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling).

A textbook dedicated entirely to the subject of spelling will obviously instruct students in “the control of Standard English through . . . spelling.”

SPI 0601.1.10 Identify the correct spelling of plurals and possessives.

Each grade level’s student edition contains a chapter devoted to the spelling of plurals.

CFU 0601.1.5 Spell correctly high frequency words, commonly misspelled words (appropriate to grade level), and words commonly used in content specific vocabulary.

A strength of the Zaner-Bloser Spelling Connection series is that each grade level edition contains an “appropriate to grade level” chapter devoted to “commonly misspelled words”.

The seventh and eighth grade editions contain chapters devoted to “content specific vocabulary” (“Media Words” and “Words from Names and Places” in the seventh grade edition, “Fine Arts Words,” “Words from Names and Places,” and “Commerce Words” in the eighth grade edition).

SPI 0601.1.18 Identify correctly and incorrectly spelled words in context.

Each grade level (1-8) has several learning activities and assessments devoted to this purpose. At the end of each unit, there is a content-related reading passage in which students identify correctly/incorrectly spelled words. The “Secret Agent Proofreader” activity on the Digital Resources CD serves a similar purpose. Additionally, there are questions in each unit’s Standardized Test Masters that address the standard of “identifying correctly and incorrectly spelled words in context.”

SPI 0601.1.20 Use knowledge of root words, affixes, syllabication, and/or spelling patterns as aids in determining meaning within context.

Each grade level’s student edition contains multiple chapters devoted to root words, affixes, syllabication, and spelling patterns.

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

MATTERS OF FACT: Grade K: student edition is not in a “tear-out” format.

In addition to addressing the Tennessee state standards specific to spelling, the Zaner-Bloser Spelling Connections series also addresses various other language arts standards, including but not limited to Writer’s Workshops and the study of analogies.

Writer’s Workshop: At the end of every sixth unit, there is a grammar, usage, and mechanics enrichment activity called “Writer’s Workshop” (for a total of 6 Writer’s Workshop lessons per grade level). For example, the six grammar, usage, and mechanics lessons taught in the eighth grade book are 1) adjectives and adverbs, 2) commas (dates, addresses, series, appositives), 3) subject/object pronouns, 4) capitalization, 5) subject/verb agreement, and 6) prepositions.

GLE 0801.1.1 Demonstrate control of Standard English through grammar usage and mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling).

Analogies- The skill of completing analogies is addressed through a spelling practice activity on Day 4 of each weekly spelling unit. The length of the analogy activities ranges from approximately 5-7 questions per unit. Below is a listing of the Tennessee standards incorporated into the analogy exercises.

SPI 0801.5.5 Choose a logical word to complete an analogy, using synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, categories/subcategories, whole/part, functions, verb forms, rhymes, scrambled words, and homophones.

CONCERNS: A weakness of the series is that although the Tennessee sixth grade spelling standards calls for students to “spell correctly. . . words commonly used in specific content vocabulary”, there are no chapters in Grade 6 devoted to content-specific word lists.

SPI 0601.1.10 Identify the correct spelling of plurals and possessives.
Grade 6 does not formally address possessives.

ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4-249-6201-1001-YES-Basal-----8/8/2011 @ 1:59:20 PM

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

II. National Standards or Industry Standards

Documentation

STRENGTHS: Common core standards are both addressed and assessed.

Listed below are the specific Common Core Standards pertaining to spelling, followed by an explanation of how the Spelling Connections program addresses each standard.

CC.6.L.2 Conventions of Standard English: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

In Zaner-Bloser's Spelling Connections, there are two regularly repeating activities that center on correct spelling in writing.

1) On Day 5 of each unit there is a "Word Hunt" activity, which is comprised of an interdisciplinary text (language arts, technology, math, social studies, science, or art) that students use to find examples of the spelling rules learned in that particular unit.

2) In every sixth unit there is a Writer's Workshop activity that connects new learning to the rules of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

CC.6.L.2.b Conventions of Standard English: Spell correctly.

A textbook dedicated entirely to the subject of spelling obviously addresses the standard of teaching students to "spell correctly."

MATTERS OF FACT: No comment

CONCERNS: No comment

ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4-250-6201-1002-YES-Basal-----8/8/2011 @ 1:59:04 PM

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

III. Program Design

Documentation

STRENGTHS: Zaner-Bloser Spelling Connections addresses all aspects of building a solid spelling foundation for students. Instruction is based on the developmental stages of spelling beginning with the alphabetic/letter name, moving to phonetic knowledge and spelling patterns. Cross-curricular studies are also included.

The Teacher’s Edition addresses on level, below level, and above level students with a specific word list for each level. Included in each unit is a 3 or 5 day planner where spelling is connected to thinking, phonics, reading, and writing. The last day is assessment/review and extension. Each unit includes The Science of Spelling, which focuses on the week’s spelling principle and provides background information for teachers. Pretest and Posttest differentiated assessments are also included.

The images in the program are free of bias. Of the images surveyed, 70% were pictures of females and 30% were pictures of males. 60% of the people depicted in these photographs appeared to be white, and 40% appeared to be nonwhite.

Technology components are A) designed to support sound instructional practices and are B) researched based.

A. Sound Instructional Practices- The Spelling Connection technology components employ the following sound instructional practices: closed word sorts, open word sorts, cloze sentences, proofreading drills, vocabulary/phonics practice, crossword puzzles, and dictation.

B. Research Based- According to the digital resources product information, “Word sorting, one of the core instructional strategies in Spelling Connections, is a research-based method to develop automatic control of spelling patterns. Sorting words in a particular pattern is an effective technique for focusing students’ attention on the spelling patterns and on variations among those patterns within the English spelling system.”

The program components interface and complement one another well. All supplemental resources support the same on-level, below-level, and above-level lists that are offered in the Student Edition. The Spelling Support for English Language Learners and Audio Conversations CD complement the tips and strategies offered in the first pages of each unit of the Teacher’s Edition. Students have access via the online games to the same practice activities teachers would use in class from the Digital Resources CD.

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

The Spelling Connections series uses a very systematic approach. Instruction follows a similar pattern from week to week. Day 1 is for a pretest, introduction to the words, and Connections to Thinking; Day 2 is for Connections to Vocabulary; Day 3 is for Connections to Reading; Day 4 is for Connections to Writing; and Day 5 is for Assessment, Extension, and Transfer.

The opening pages of the teacher's edition state that the spelling word lists in Spelling Connections are "based on exhaustive research led by author J. Richard Gentry, Ph.D., a leading authority on spelling development and literacy instruction for over thirty years." External research indicates this to be true. In addition to Spelling Connections, Dr. Gentry is the author of eight books on the science of spelling and literacy. He serves on editorial review boards for two scholarly journals, *The Reading Teacher* and *Reading & Writing Quarterly—Overcoming Reading Difficulties*. He holds a Ph.D. in Reading Education from the University of Virginia.

Writing to the literature content is an integral part of the program. On Day 5 of each unit there is a "Word Hunt" activity, which is comprised of an interdisciplinary text (language arts, technology, math, social studies, science, or art) that students use to find examples of the spelling rules learned in that particular unit.

In every sixth unit there is a Writer's Workshop activity that connects new learning to the rules of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

The program's instructional strategies reflect best explicit teacher practices and appropriate research-based methods.

Instruction follows a similar pattern from week to week. Day 1 is for a pretest, introduction to the words, and Connections to Thinking; Day 2 is for Connections to Vocabulary; Day 3 is for Connections to Reading; Day 4 is for Connections to Writing; and Day 5 is for Assessment, Extension, and Transfer.

This day-by-day, step-by-step format relates to the program as a whole in that spelling is not taught in isolation, but rather as within the context of all areas of literacy, including reading, writing, thinking, speaking, listening, and vocabulary.

Every sixth unit contains a writing lesson which teaches the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing).

The word sort activities on the Digital Resources CD are particularly engaging. One such activity is called "Sentence Band". For each correct answer, a new band member and instrument are added to the band. Completion of the activity results in a trendy song. Another activity is "Agent

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

Proofreader”, where students use traditional proofreading marks to identify and correct spelling/usage errors in a secret agent’s file. When all the errors are found, a giant red stamp marks “Case Closed” on the file.

Differentiated instruction is a program strength. Each unit’s word list is divided into three levels: below level, on level, and above level. Associated with the different levels within each list are differentiated pattern practice activities, differentiated word sorts, differentiated assessments, and learning center activities.

Assignment to a particular level of mastery for the unit is determined by a pretest (above-level 90 -100% correct, on-level 50-85% correct, or below-level <50% correct). The different levels of spelling lists/practice activities etc. are marked by a symbol (circle, square, or diamond) instead of the words below level, on level, or advanced to protect student confidentiality.

Differentiation is provided for English Language Learners as well. Three to four alternate teaching strategies are provided each unit for teachers to use with ELL students. The strategies are tailored to the students’ mastery of English (Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, or Advanced High).

Higher order thinking skills (creating, evaluating, analyzing) are encouraged through activities such as the following:

- A. Word Sorts, which encourage students to analyze and categorize words according to their spelling rules
- B. Writing Activities, which encourage students to create biographical sketches, essays, e-mails, etc. using the spelling words being studied
- C. Homework Assignments, which (in grades 7-8) provide opportunities for students to create advertisements, crossword puzzles, newspaper articles, etc. using the spelling words being studied.

MATTERS OF FACT: Grade K: Each letter is dedicated to two pages in the student edition for a total of 56 pages.

Grade 1: Each student edition contains 35 units and every 5th unit is reserved for review only. (No assessment is present in Grade 1.)

Grade 2-8: Each student edition contains 6 sets of 6 units for a total of 36 units. Every 6th unit is reserved for assessment and review.

Strategies for teaching spelling to English language learners is biased towards students of Spanish-speaking backgrounds.

CONCERNS: Program does not address the advanced learners at the kindergarten grade level.

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

There is no explicit information in the Teacher's Edition on how materials correlate to Bloom's Revised Taxonomy.

ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4-251-6201-1003-YES-Basal-----8/8/2011 @ 1:59:04 PM

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

IV. Assessment

Documentation

STRENGTHS: Ample assessment opportunities are provided. Assessment begins with a pretest which is provided for each unit. There are two posttest assessment options including two different standardized test formats. One format is based on the SAT-10 and requires students to read individual sentences and determine which word, if any, is misspelled. If a misspelling is identified, students choose the correct spelling, and the other format targets students' attention on a specific word and asks whether the word is spelled correctly.

Each unit contains a writing prompt (narrative, descriptive, expository, or persuasive/argumentative) for an authentic assessment. Grading rubrics are included for the teacher. Additionally, at the end of every five units there is a "Words for Assessment" list, which provides new, unseen words to "confirm that spelling mastery has taken place."

There are several self-evaluation activities on the digital resources CD. Students complete digital games, activities, etc. and receive immediate feedback as to whether their responses are correct or incorrect.

Formative Instructional Practices for teachers can be found throughout the program.

Pretests are provided for the On Level Words for each unit. Thus, from the beginning of each unit's focus of study, teachers can determine whether students are above-level (90-100% correct), on-level (50-85% correct), or below-level (<50% correct) for that particular spelling skill.

The program encourages teachers to allow students to self-check their pretests, citing the research basis for doing so. A mini-lesson on how to correct using the Circle/Dot Technique is included on page 13 of the student edition of the textbook.

Summative assessments for Spelling Connections are both valid and reliable.

They are valid because the posttests for each unit are given as sentences, instead of only the spelling words, so students can be clear on which use, homophone, etc. of a particular word is being tested. Posttest sentences are also available on CD, so interference from a particular teacher's pronunciation and speech patterns is lessened. The sentences used on the posttest sentences are sentences students have seen before in the word sort and practice activities. Thus, the posttests are assessing what they are intended to assess.

The summative assessments for Spelling Connections are reliable in that there are A) pretests and

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

posttests for each unit, and B) multiple forms of the assessments (dictation sentences and standardized-test style multiple choice items for each unit).

Students receive immediate feedback when playing the online games or using the digital resources about whether or not their answers are correct, but there does not seem to be a diagnostic component to the program in that the student is not provided with numeric feedback about his/her level of mastery (such as a screen reporting the percentage of correct answers, etc.)

The program includes black line masters for each differentiated word list to send the words home to parents and a brief letter suggesting activities that parents can conduct with their children that week to facilitate mastery of the new learning.

Assessment reflects strategies and formats correlated to any applicable Tennessee assessments.

MATTERS OF FACT: Spelling Connections also includes an Audio Posttest Sentences CD to use for ELL and make-up spelling tests.

CONCERNS: Rules and principles of spelling are not formally assessed.

ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4-252-6201-1004-YES-Basal-----8/8/2011 @ 1:59:04 PM

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

V. Other Comments

Documentation

STRENGTHS: Other notable strengths: 1. Zaner-Bloser Spelling Connections Digital Resources is a positive component to this program. It is compatible with any interactive white board or classroom projector and offers engaging whole-group activities to enhance teaching and learning. Included are the following: interactive word sorting for modeling and student practice, proofreading exercises to reinforce visual learning, sentence completion and crossword puzzle games. Spelling bees for whole-class test preparation are included as well.

2. Audio conversations for ELLs are included. This audio CD contains recording of conversations for each instructional unit. The print transcript of each conversation is included on the eResources CD.

MATTERS OF FACT: No comment

CONCERNS: No comment

ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4-253-6201-1005-YES-Basal-----8/8/2011 @ 1:59:04 PM

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

VI. List of Components Reviewed

Documentation

The following components were received and reviewed:

Grade K: Spelling Connections Teacher Edition

Student Edition

ABC Poem and Picture Charts

Grade 1-8: Student Edition

eBook Student Edition

Teacher Edition with Word Sort CD-ROM

eBook Teacher Edition CD-ROM

Teacher Resource Book

Standardized Test Masters

Spelling Support for ELL

Audio Posttest Sentences CD

eResources-(Teacher Resource Book, Standardized Test Masters, Spelling Support for English Language Learners, and Audio Conversations for English Language Learners) all on CDs

Digital Resources CD-ROM-Interactive White board Ready Word Sorts, Sentence Band, Proofreading, Spelling Bees, Crossword Puzzles, Unit Word Lists, Open Word Sort Templates, Spelling Dictionary, including online games

ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4-254-6201-1006-YES-Basal-----8/8/2011 @ 1:59:04 PM

TEXTBOOK SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Spelling K-8

Consensus Review

VII. State Textbook Commission Members Comments

Documentation

STRENGTHS:

MATTERS OF FACT:

CONCERNS:

ZB-6201010-SPELCONN_Gr4-8--4-255-6201-1007-YES-Basal-----8/8/2011 @ 1:59:04 PM