

AVKO Sequential Spelling 1



by

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to:
All the members of the AVKO Educational Research Foundation,
but especially to the memory of one of its first members,

Mary Clair Scott

without whose work and devotion to the cause of literacy,
the AVKO Foundation might never have gotten off the ground,

Betty June Szilagyi

who was my first and by far my most important teacher,

Devorah Wolf

without whose encouragement and commitment
to the ideals of AVKO
this edition would not be possible,

Ann, Robert, and Linda McCabe

all of whom have sacrificed much of their time and energy
helping AVKO grow
as well as all those friends and relatives
who have been a source of encouragement.

May this book help you to help others improve their abilities to read and write.

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The Basic Concepts of Teaching Spelling by Word Families

Many teachers as well as home school parents have used the concept of teaching rhyming words that have the same letter endings to help their students learn to read. When they would introduce the word *at*, they would also teach *cat*, *bat*, *sat*, and maybe even *scat*. Unfortunately, parents and teachers have never had any source book for finding all the rhyming words with the same spelling patterns. In the latest academic jargon, word families are now called “rimes.” The consonants, consonant blends, and digraphs that precede the word family (or rime) are now called onsets. Use whichever term you wish with your students. In this book, we generally use the

terms *base* or *word family* rather than the new jargon word “rime.”

The Patterns of English Spelling (formerly *Word Families Plus*) is now available to be used as a resource book so that a parent or teacher can teach any word family. It is not just a simple collection of word lists. It consists of the complete patterns to help the students (and quite often the parents and teachers!) see the patterns that exist and to lock in on those patterns with their computer brains. For example, AVKO believes that if you can teach your students (or anyone) the word *at*, you can also teach them:

bat	bats	batted	batting		
cat	cats				
scat	scats				
flat	flats	flatted	flattling		
pat	pats	patted	patting		
spat	spats				
mat	mats	matted	matting		
rat	rats	ratted	ratting		
batter	batters	battered	battering	battery	batteries
flatter	flatters	flattered	flattering	flattery	
matter	matters	mattered	matterling		
battle	battles	battled	battling		
cattle					
rattle	rattles	rattled	rattling		

or for a more sophisticated example, from the word **act** you can build:

act	acts	acted	acting	active	action
fact	facts				
tract	tracts				traction
attract	attracts	attracted	attracting	attractive	attraction
distract	distracts	distracted	distracting		distraction
extract	extracts	extracted	extracting	extractive	extraction
subtract	subtracts	subtracted	subtracting		subtraction
contract	contracts	contracted	contracting		contraction

Perhaps the most important difference between the traditional approach to spelling and the AVKO (**A**udio-**V**isual-**K**inesthetic-**O**ral) approach is that we use the tests as a **learning** device and **not** as a method of **evaluation**. We believe that the natural method of learning is learning from mistakes, and that is why we want students to correct their own mistakes **when** they make them — so they can learn from them.

We developed the *AVKO Sequential Spelling Tests* to utilize the word family approach sequentially and to apply the very simple techniques of having students correct their own mistakes **when** they make them—not hours, days, or even weeks later.

**Use a Dry Erase Board
or Something Similar
to Give the
AVKO Sequential
Spelling Tests**

The First Day

On your first day of using Sequential Spelling, share with your students:

I have some good news and some bad news. First the bad news. Today and every day until we finish this book, we are going to have a spelling test.

The good news is that you will correct your own paper. But before we start, I want you to take out a sheet of paper and put your name on it. Did you spell your name correctly? Good. That's my first test. My next test is like a doctor's test. It's not for a grade so don't worry about it. Okay? Now write the following sentence:

We are all beginning to be good spellers.

If any of your students shows signs of struggling with the sentence, just ask them to try to spell just the word *beginning*. If they still find it difficult to put down anything, ask them to just put down—in any order—some of the letters that might be in the word *beginning*.

Now, collect the papers. On the 5th day, you will be able to demonstrate that your students, who, couldn't spell *beginning* on the first day, were able to correctly spell it without ever having seen or studied the word. And remember that according to Harry Greene's *The New Iowa Spelling Scale* (1954) only 8% of all public school 3rd graders can be expected to spell this word and just barely 60% of all public school 8th graders can spell the word *beginning*! We expect that you will point that out to your students on the 5th day.

If each student has his own copy of the *AVKO Student Response Book for Sequential Spelling*, have them open their books to page 3. Note the location of Day 1. It is in the *middle* column on page 3. This is so that when your students start in the left hand column on page one (which happens to be the 61st day!) you can point out to them that the author, Don McCabe, wanted them to make a mistake right away, just so that you could show them the AVKO motto on the bottom of their page:

Mistakes are Opportunities to Learn

Day 2 is in the middle column on page 5.

Day 3 is in the middle column on page 7.

Day 4 is in the middle column on page 9.

The reason for this is to try to prevent students from copying the base word that they had the day before and then just adding the -s, -ed, or -ing ending as the case may be. Just as students don't learn by copying from others, they don't learn by copying from themselves.

If your students don't have a Student Response Book, have them use a notebook with single sheets of paper. Use one sheet for each day's spelling lesson.

● *In the column marked 1st day, I want you to write the word "in" as in: "Come in. Come in." Now, I want everyone of you to try. At least guess what letter in begins with. If you don't get it right, it's no big deal! You may erase it and write it correctly. Isn't that why erasers are put on the ends of pencils?*

While your students are attempting to write the word *in*, one of them might look at another's paper. This is the time—not to jump on the student doing it—but to ask your students how much they are going to learn from someone else's mistakes.

Tell them once again that they are correcting their own papers. Try to impress upon them that it doesn't make any sense to cheat. And when you get to the word *sin*, you might even mention the fact that in every religion you know about, cheating is a sin.

After your students have attempted writing *in*, you now ask them what the first letter of *in* is. Hopefully they will shout out, "I!" Now, you show on the dry erase board just the letter I. Now you ask what the last letter of *in* is. Again, they might shout out, "N!"

On the dry erase board you now show the *-in*. It really doesn't matter what color you use for the I and the N. I personally like to use green for the word family patterns (rimes) to contrast later on with the black *beginning letters* that some academics call *onsets*. We at AVKO do not advocate using this special terminology. We use it here only so that you know we are aware of the latest academic jargon.

Depending upon the age of your students and their attitudes, you may try to get them to spell aloud the word with you (The oral

channel) as they trace over their corrected spelling (the kinesthetic channel).

● Then you give the second word, **pin**, as in "*Let's play pin the tail on the donkey.*" **pin**.

After your students have attempted the word **pin**, you again show the beginning **p** written in black and then the ending **in** written in green. They can see all three letters together that form the word **pin**. If you like, you may write first the word **in** with your green or purple, or red, or whatever color¹ dry erase pen. Then add the letter **p** in front of **in** to make **pin**.

● The third word is **sin**. Does anybody know the popular song, "*It's a Sin to Tell a Lie*"? **sin**

No, we don't believe in teaching a specific religious theology. That's why we used the non-religious, non-sectarian sentence above. But the word *sin* is in or should be in every student's vocabulary, even if they do not understand the concept. The point is teaching spelling and reading and that sounds are represented by letters and that letters represent sounds and the sounds represent words that represent ideas. If you want to call this a teachable moment and teach your students about sin, original sin, or whatever religious concept you feel you should teach now, then do it. Again, you should show the **in** in **sin** by having the **in** printed in green. Then, add the black letter **s** in front to change **in** to **sin**.

The last word for the first day contains a consonant blend. It also is liable to be missed by almost all your students. Don't worry about it. Before the year is out, all your students will automatically recognize the sound of **sp** and write **sp** when they hear it.

● *The last word for today is spin. "I would like to spin the wheel on the Wheel of Fortune."* **spin**.

¹ In our word lists we will also show the standard British spellings, which in this case is *colour*.

As you go through the procedure with **spin**, we recommend that you work through the word backwards! In other words, this time, ask what the last two letters are and then show **-in**. (On the dry erase board write **in** in green.) Then ask what letter comes just before the sound of **in**. Show the **pin** and ask your students if they can hear the word **pin** in the word **spin**. Ask for the first letter and then show **spin**. On the dry erase board just add first the **p** in front of **in** to make **pin** and then the **s** in front of **pin** to make **spin**.

Now tell your students that if they have made all their corrections they will receive a star on their paper. You should be able to quickly do that.

Now if some of your students wrote *pins* or *sipn* for *spin* and failed to catch their mistake and correct it, you should *NOT* give them a star. We recommend that you don't give them anything except encouragement that tomorrow they will have a chance to do better and get a star. But make sure that they correct their misspelling. Don't just put a check mark. Have them erase *pins* or *sipn* and spell *spin* correctly.

Second Day

Have your students take out their *AVKO Student Response Book for Sequential Spelling* and turn to page 5. If you are working with the paper, have them go to the second sheet where you had them write Lesson 2. The purpose is to keep them from seeing the words that they had the day before as a mental crutch.

Obviously, if your students have the *AVKO Student Response Book for Sequential Spelling* this problem does not exist because the second day slot is on page 5, the third day is on page 7, the fourth day on page 9, the fifth day on page 11, etc. You can begin by telling your students:

● Today, the first word is **I**. “**I** like you and **I** like being your teacher.” **I**.

Make sure that all your students use the capital I to spell the word. If any of them spelled the word **eye**, you know they have a good memory for words. Congratulate them on their great memories, but let them know that there are sometimes different spellings for the same sound, mostly because we have different meanings sometimes for the same sound. The **eye** is what you use to see with. The word **aye** is an old fashioned way of saying yes that we still use in meetings with the expression: All in favor, say “**Aye!**” It's not necessary to teach the word **aye** right now, but I think your students will enjoy learning this word. You're the teacher. You know your students. You can always add words or change words in any of the lists.

● The second word is **pins** as in: “*I don't like to sit on either **pins** or needles.*” **pins**.

Right from the beginning we will be showing the importance of the position of letters in words. Ask first for the last letter. If any student says “**z**”, you know they have great ears, but in our language we almost always use the letter **s** for the “**z**” sound when it makes a plural. We prefer that you don't bother with any formal grammatical explanation. Just have them write the **s** for the last letter. Then ask for the first letter. Most should be able to guess that the first letter is **p** in **pins**. Now, ask what two letters go after the **p** and before the **s**. Show the word **pins**. Have your students correct their own paper. Make sure they erase any error and spell the word correctly. And please make sure that they try. Some students are so afraid of making a mistake that they will want to wait until you have put the correct spelling on the dry erase board before they write. Please, please, please don't let them do that. They will not learn if they simply copy correct spelling. They will learn only if they

attempt to spell the word and then, and only then, correct any mistakes that they make.

- The third word is **sins** as in, “*There are two kinds of sins: sins of commission (bad things we do) and sins of omission (good things we don't do).*” **sins**. You might want to use this teachable moment to teach the meaning of **omit** which builds to **omission** just as **permit** builds to **permission** and **admit** to **admission**, etc. You might even want to have your students think about when it's wrong (a sin) to do nothing or say nothing.

Ask for the last letter. Ask for the two letters in front of the final **s**. Show the combination **-ins** in green. Then ask for the first letter. Show the **s** written in black. Show the entire word **sins** with the initial **s** in black and the final **ins** in green. Remember when I say black and green, I don't really mean you must use those specific colors. You may use whichever contrasting colors you enjoy using.

- The fourth word is **spins**. “*I like the way the wheel of fortune spins.*” **spins**.

Show the last three letters: **ins** in green. Ask what comes just before the **-ins**. Write in black the **p** that makes **pins**. Then ask for the first letter. Now show the whole word **spins**. The letters **sp** should be in black. The **ins** should be in green.

At this point, in effect, we have reviewed the four words we started with on the first day (**in**, **sin**, **pin**, **spin**) while introducing the final **-s**. Now we begin to build on the **/in/** sound as well as to review and reinforce the **in**.

To the students you might say:

Now, I'm going to give you a really tough word. Usually, this word isn't taught until the 6th grade, but I'm sure all of you are smart enough to handle it. Okay? Ready?

- Number 5 is **kin**. “*Relatives are often called kin. On the news, you often hear an announcer saying that the names of the*

victims of an accident are being withheld pending notification of the next of kin.” **kin**. Did everybody end the word **kin** with the word **in**? (Write the **in** with green.)

*Good. Now, can anybody guess what letter will come just before the **in** in **kin**?*

One of your students may have put the letter **c** as the first letter. That was an intelligent mistake. Very often the **/k/** sound is spelled with a **c** as it is in **cat**. Your students will eventually get the feel for words and know when they should use **c** and when they should use **k** for the **/k/** sound. Also, it doesn't hurt to help your students learn the meaning of **kin** and **next of kin**.

- Now we come to number 6 which is a word that usually isn't taught until the 3rd grade and that is the word **skin**. “*Skin comes in many beautiful colors.*” **skin**.

On your dry erase board you have just the **-in** in **kin** showing. Whether or not your students know the **sk** is immaterial. You are drilling on the **/in/** sound with real words that they could be coming into contact with in the real world outside basal readers. So you show the **k** in front of **in**, making **kin** which they just had a moment ago.

Now, when you ask everybody to make sure that they have **kin** and to put one letter before the **kin** in **skin**, you should notice the excitement that is generated when your students realize that they are going to spell **skin** correctly even before you write it on the dry erase board. Number seven is a word that normally isn't taught until the 4th grade, and statistically speaking less than half of a third grade class can spell this word,¹ but we believe all your students will be able to spell this word, if not now, on the final test in this class.

¹ Greene, Harry. *The New Iowa Spelling Scale*, Univ. of Iowa, 1954. This is also found in *The Reading Teachers List of over 5,500 Basic Spelling Words* published by AVKO.

● *Number 7 is **win**. “Everybody loves to **win**.” **win**.*

Show the **in** with green. Put the **w** in black.

The last word for the day is also a word that is usually not taught until late in the 4th grade.

● *Number 8 is **twin**. I wish I had a **twin** sister (or **twin** brother). **twin**.*

Show the **in**. Then show the **win** in **twin**. Show the **tw** and then the **in**. Show **twin**.

If you have time, you might point out that the words **twin** and **twice** and **two** start with the letters **tw**. For a laugh, you can count one, **twoo**, **twee**. Tell them we don't pronounce the **w** in **two** except to be funny and to help remember the difference between **to**, **too**, and **two**.

The Third Day

We begin the third day by having your students take out their **AVKO Student Response Book for Sequential Spelling** or by having them go to the third sheet that has been marked Lesson 3. We feel that it is easier to have students open a response book to page 7 than it is to keep track of loose sheets of paper, but it can be done with the loose sheets successfully.

On this third day, you will begin the slow process of programming your students' God-given computer brains to form the ending **-ed** correctly. There is no need at this time to encumber a student's mind with rules about doubling consonants. All we want to do is to have the student form the habit of spelling **/ind/ -inned**. This way, when the rules for doubling letters are presented in their regular reading books, the students will find it easier to understand them. But, for now, please do not go into any lectures about short vowels and long vowels. It's not at all necessary. In fact, it generally tends to confuse students.

However, if a student asks about the rules, tell him that you will discuss the rules right after the lesson—and keep your word.

You can start by saying:

● *Number 1 is **thin**. “My father was so **thin**, you couldn't see him if he turned sideways.” **thin**.*

First you show the **-in**, then the **th-**. If by some chance your students don't know about the letters **th** having a single sound, then now is the time to tell them. They will get plenty of practice recognizing and spelling the **th** sound. Please don't try to teach your students the difference between the voiced and unvoiced **th** sounds. Just correctly pronounce the words, and they will learn to spell both **th** sounds with **th**.

● *Number 2 is **pinned**. “I remember getting **pinned** to the mat in ten seconds by a really great wrestler.” **pinned**.*

Again you write the green **-in-**; then say and “double the n and add ed to get **-inned**”; then with your black pen write the **p-** in front to get the full word **pinned**.

● *Number 3 is **sinned**. “Everybody has sinned sometime.” **sinned**.*

Write in green **-in- -inned** add s in black in front to get **sinned**.

● *Number 4 is **I**. “Do I like you? Of course I do. I.”*

Write: **I**. Show that the word **I** is always capitalized. (Only in English is the word for the 1st person singular nominative always capitalized. Strange! We capitalize **I** but not me or my or mine -- just **I**. Strange!) As a bonus you might want to give them the word **eye** and point out that the shape of the word looks something like two eyes and a nose in the middle. And as an added bonus you can even give the word “**aye**” as in “**Aye**, **aye**, sir” or “All in favor say ‘**aye**’.” You might even want to teach the opposite of **aye** which is **nay**.

● Number 5 is **shin**. “My baby brother used to kick me in the **shin**.” **shin**.

Write: **-in**. Put **sh-** in front to get **shin**.

If your students haven't learned the /**sh**/ sound is made with the two letters **sh**, now is the time to tell them. They will get almost as much practice using the **sh** in their spelling as you will keeping your students quiet while you're talking on the phone. Sh-h-h!

● Number 6 is **skins**. “How many rabbit **skins** does it take to make one mink coat?” **skins**. You should be able to get a groan from your students when you say the answer should be zero. Mink coats should be made from minks and not rabbits.

Write: **-in-** Add an **s** to get **-ins** Put **k** in front to get **-kins**. Put **s** in front to get **skins**.

● Number 7 is **wins**. “Jack **wins** more than he loses.” **wins**.

Write: **-in- -ins wins**

● Number 8 is **twins**. “There were two sets of **twins** in our family.” **twins**.

Write: **-in- -ins -wins twins**

● Number 9 is **be**. “I wonder what I'm going to **be** when I grow up.” **be**.

Write: **-e be**

● Number 10 is **begin**. “It's time to **begin** learning to spell.” **begin**.

Write: **-in** Show just **be-**. Ask your students what letter should be between the **be-** and the **-in**. Then show: **begin**.

● Number 11 is **chin**. “I really took it on the **chin**.” **chin**.

Write: **-in ch- chin**.

If your students don't know that the letters **ch** have a sound of their own, the sound you hear at both the beginning and the end of the word **church**, now's the time to tell them. When two letters have but one sound,

they are called digraphs. The most common digraphs are: **th**, **ch**, and **sh**.

● Number 12 is **she**. “**She** is my best friend.” **she**.

Write: **-e sh- she**

The Fourth Day

The fourth day we begin by having the students take out their **AVKO Student Response Book for Sequential Spelling** and open it to page 9 or by having them take out their special spelling folder and going to the fourth sheet labeled Lesson 4.

Then give the following words in sentences as shown or make up your own sentences. Remember, after each word is given, you should write the word correctly on your dry erase board and let your students immediately correct any mistake that they might have made. You might want to use color to help your students recognize the patterns that are in the words. For example, when you give the correct spelling of *spinning*, you might first write using green the base **in**. Then “double the **n**” and add **ing** to get **inning**. Then put a black **p** in front of **inning** to get **pinning** and then a black **s** to get **spinning**.

1. **thins** A painter sometimes **thins** his paint with turpentine. **thins**

2. **pinning** Are you good at **pinning** a tail on a donkey? **pinning**

3. **sinning** Is it a sin to misspell **sinning**? **sinning**

4. **spinning** Have you ever seen a **spinning** wheel? **spinning**

5. **shins** It's no fun to get kicked in the **shins**. **shins**

6. **skinned** Trappers **skinned** the animals for their furs. **skinned**

7. winning I enjoy **winning** a lot more than I do losing. **winning**

8. inner Your **inner** voice tells you right from wrong. **inner**

9. be I wish you would **be** more careful. **be**

10. begins I hope this **begins** to make some sense to you. **begins**

11. chins When Jim is at the gym, he **chins** himself 10 times. **chins**

12. we Do we know where **we** are going? **we**

13. bee It's no fun to be stung by a **bee**. **bee**

14. see What do you **see** when you close your eyes? **see**

15. tree Did George Washington chop down a cherry **tree**? **tree**

Now might be the time to talk about homophones, words that sound exactly alike but have different meanings as well as different spellings.

in/inn We found an **inn** and went **in** to have a meal.

/eye/aye I got a black **eye** because I forgot to say, "**Aye, aye, sir**" to the captain.

be/bee/Bea Could it **be** that Aunt **Bea** was stung by a **bee**?

we/wee/oui We heard a **wee** French lad answer yes by saying, "**Oui, oui, madame.**"

see/sea/si Can you **see** the **sea** from the window? **Si, si**, señor.

In some cases, words sound the same due to the dialect, such as pin/pen. You use a pin to hold things. You use a pen to write with. Pigs are kept in a pen. You can wear a pin.

The Fifth Day

On the 5th day we begin with Lesson 5.

Give the following words in sentences as shown or make up your own sentences. Remember, after each word is given, you should write the word correctly on your dry erase board and let your students immediately correct any mistake that they might have made.

1. thinned We **thinned** the carrots and the beets for grandpa. **thinned**

2. thinner Jack Sprat was quite a bit **thinner** than his wife. **thinner**

3. sinner If you've never committed a sin, can you be a **sinner**? **sinner**

4. spinner I put a little **spinner** above my hook when I go fishing. **spinner**

5. fins Fish have **fins** instead of legs. **fins**

6. Mr. Skinner Hey, mister! Have you seen **Mr. Skinner**? **Mr. Skinner**

7. winner You're a **winner** and not a loser. **winner**

8. be What do you want to **be** when you grow up? **be**

9. inning How many outs in an **inning**? (6! 3 for each side) **inning**

10. beginning Shall we start all over from the **beginning**? **beginning**

Before giving the correct spelling of **beginning**, check your students' papers to see if they have learned to spell this word. Almost every student should have spelled *beginning* correctly. Now, compare this spelling to the misspellings you collected on the first day. Tell your students you are proud of them. Tell them that they have learned a difficult word without ever having studied the word. Tell them that just by paying attention and by correcting their

mistakes they are learning and learning a great deal.

11. **chinned** Jim **chinned** himself ten times in the gym. **chinned**

12. **we** **We** should always try our best to be good. **we**

13. **wee** The wee lad has an eye for **wee** lasses. **wee**

14. **be** Have you ever been stung by a **bee**? **bee**

15. **see** What do you **see** outside your window? **see**

16. **trees** Lumberjacks cut down **trees** to make lumber. **trees**

17. **free** Who said, "**Free** at last"? **free**

18. **agree** I **agree** with you. **agree**

19. **disagree** I hope you don't **disagree** with me. **disagree**

20. **fees** We had to pay all kinds of different **fees**. **fees**

The Sixth Day

On the 6th day we begin Lesson 6

Give the following words in sentences as shown or make up your own. Remember, after each word is given, you should write the word correctly on your dry erase board and let your students immediately correct any mistakes they have made.

1. **thinning** My uncle's hair is really **thinning** on top. He's almost bald. **thinning**

2. **thinnest** My Aunt Bea is the **thinnest** woman I have ever met. **thinnest**

3. **sinners** We all are **sinners**. Some more than others. **sinners**

4. **spinners** When I go fishing I bring along some special **spinners**. **spinners**

5. **tin** Have you ever heard of a cat on a hot **tin** roof? **tin**

6. **Skinner's Inn** Has anybody been in **Skinner's Inn**? **Skinner's Inn**

7. **winners** I like games in which there are a lot of **winners**. **winners**

8. **inner** Your **inner** ear is very important for your balance. **inner**

9. **bee** Anything sweet will attract a **bee**. **bee**

10. **beginnings** I really enjoy new **beginnings**. **beginnings**

11. **chinning** **Chinning** yourself is good exercise if you can do it.

12. **wee** **Wee** means small. Leprechauns are called the **wee** folk. **wee**

13. **we** Today, **we** know that leprechauns really don't exist. **we**

14. **be** If you will **be** good, you might get a surprise. **be**

15. **seen** Is it true that children should be **seen** and not heard? **seen**

16. **treed** The hounds **treed** the raccoon. **treed**

17. **frees** A governor sometimes **frees** persons wrongfully committed. **frees**

18. **agrees** Nearly everyone **agrees** with you. Salt water is hard to freeze. **agrees**

19. **disagrees** Nobody **disagrees** with their boss. Well, almost nobody. **disagrees**

20. **flee** To run away is to **flee**. Can a flea **flee**? **flee**

Note: Your language books give explanations and rules about apostrophes. You don't need to interrupt the giving of the spelling words to give an explanation. All through this series of Sequential Spelling the -'s form is used with a word following it. The children's/students'

computer brains will be properly programmed without rules. However, if either you or your students want the rules, freely share them.

The Seventh Day

1. **bin** A **bin** is a place to store things. We used to have a coal **bin**.

2. **in** Welcome. Come on **in**.

3. **inn** There's an **inn** across the street that serves really good food. **inn**

4. **spin** I love to watch figure skaters, especially when they **spin** around. **spin**

5. **tins** We try to recycle all our **tins**. **tins**

6. **skinny** Jack Sprat was a really **skinny** man. **skinny**

7. **winning** I enjoy **winning** much more than losing. **winning**

8. **be** I would **be** really surprised if you missed this word. **be**

9. **inner** Do you know who belongs to the **inner** circle? **inner**

10. **beginner** Can you find the word **inner** in the word **beginner**? **beginner**

11. **chin** I think a dimple in the **chin** is rather cute. **chin**

12. **wee** Do you know what the **wee** hours of the morning are? **wee**

13. **we** **We** should have been in bed long before midnight. **we**

14. **bee** Some people are allergic to **bee** stings. **bee**

15. **seeing** Thomas believed that **seeing** is believing. **seeing**

16. **treeing** The dogs were **treeing** two little squirrels. **treeing**

17. **freed** Do you know when Lincoln **freed** the slaves? **freed**

18. **agreed** For once, everybody in our family **agreed** with me. **agreed**

19. **disagreed** I don't know why everybody **disagreed** with me just now. **disagreed**

20. **flees** If a flea runs away, the flea **flees**. **flees**

The Eighth Day

Give the word. If you can, make up a sentence for the word. or just repeat the word. To keep the cost of this book to a minimum, from here on in we just give the words and leave the rest to you.

1. **thinner**

2. **ins**

3. **inns**

4. **spinning**

5. **tin**

6. **skins**

7. **winner**

8. **be**

9. **being**

10. **beginners**

11. **chins**

12. **we**

13. **wee**

14. **bees**

15. **see**

16. **trees**

17. **freeing**

18. **agreeing**

19. **disagreeing**

20. **fleeing**

Starting with the 9th day (See page 18), each spelling test will have 25 words. Some days the tests are easier than others, but don't panic on days like the 126th day when the word *arrangements* is presented.

REMEMBER: AVKO is *not* concerned about teaching the spelling of any one word *per se*. AVKO *is* concerned with the teaching of basic sounds for both spelling and reading. In the case of words like

range, ranges, arrange, arranges, arrangement, arrangements, what is important is the teaching of the *-ange* ending, the plural ending and the *-ment* suffix as well as the initial consonant sounds and consonant blends.

REMEMBER: Please **speed** your students through the tests. Give the word. Put it in a sentence. Say the word. Spell the word. Have the students (if you can) trace the corrected spelling as they spell it aloud in group chorus. Go on to the next—but make sure your students make an attempt at the spelling *before* you give the correct spelling. **Copying** your spelling does *not* help them learn. **Correcting** their own misspelling *does*.

Immediate Feedback

The most common mistake made in administering the **AVKO Sequential Spelling Tests** is to give the entire test and then correct. This method just *won't* work.

- Give each word separately.
- Say the word. Give it in a sentence.
- Let the student/s attempt the spelling.
- Give the correct spelling. Let each student correct his own.
- Then give the next word. Repeat the process of immediate student self-correction.

Grading

If your school demands that a grade be given for spelling, we would recommend that the tests for grading purposes be given at a separate time and that the students be graded on their learning of the spelling of the sounds—not the words as the suggested tests for grading purposes are constructed to do. AVKO gives permission to duplicate (for classroom purposes only) the tests that

come after the 40th, 80th, 120th, 160th and 180th days. Read the sentences to your students. All they have to do is fill in the blanks. Notice that you are not testing on the whole word. You are testing only on the spelling patterns taught. That is why the initial consonants or blends are given to the student. Note: You can use these as a pre-tests as well as a post-test to show real gains. How you grade these tests is up to you. Or use the 0-2 wrong = A, 3-4 = B, 5-6 = C, 7-8 = D. We don't expect that you'll have any E's.

Questions most frequently asked concerning Sequential Spelling

1. What are those asterisks (*) and exclamation marks doing next to some words?

The asterisks merely serve as a reminder to the teacher that the word so marked has a **homophone** (same pronunciation, different spelling), has a **heteronym** (same spelling, different word and different pronunciation), or does not follow the normal pattern. For example, *gyp* ** should logically be spelled “*jip*.” But instead of *j* we use the letter “*g*.” Instead of *i* the letter *y* is used. Likewise, the word *proper* ** should logically be spelled “*propper*” just like *hopper*, and *copper*, and *stopper*, but it isn't.

2. Why don't the words used follow grade levels? *Scatter* is a 7th grade word in our school's regular spelling text.

As a general rule, regular spelling texts pick grade levels for words according to when the words first begin to occur in the curriculum. This would seem to make sense, but it does bring about some rather odd sequences. Since the word *ice* may not occur in the curriculum until the fourth grade when it appears in the science class,

its introduction is delayed until that time even though *nice* may occur in the first grade and *twice* in the second grade, and *price* in the fifth and *rice* in the sixth.

AVKO believes in teaching the phonics necessary for decoding through the back door of spelling and without preaching rules that may or may not be useful. We teach the word *scatter* only after the *-at* sound has been taught in 30 different words, after the *-atter* sound has occurred in eight words, and directly after the initial *c* in *cat* and the consonant blend *sc* in *scat*. Then we teach *scatter*.

3. Why do you have so many words that are outside the vocabulary of average adults, such as the word “tat”?

We don't believe it hurts anyone to learn a new word—but that is not why we use it. We use the word *tat* as an added practice in sounding out spellings of words having the initial */t/* sound and practice in spelling the ending *-at*. It also gives the student a pleasant surprise and ego boost when he discovers he can spell a word that he believes he has never heard nor seen before—just because he knows how to spell the sounds.

4. Should I count off for sloppy handwriting?

Since the students get to correct their own spelling, they should be expected to write clearly and legibly. In fact, we recommend that these sequential spelling tests be used for handwriting practice because the patterns, being repetitive, can be a help in developing legible handwriting. We further recommend that if your students print, that they use D'Nealian® manuscript. If your students write, we strongly recommend D'Nealian® cursive. Another excellent system is the Italic by Getty-Dubay. But whichever system you use or your school system requires, we believe that **writing must be legible**. So, yes, by all means, take off for sloppy handwriting (provided

the student has no physical disability and has sufficient fine motor skills to write legibly).

5. Do I have to use all the words that are in the tests? May I drop some? May I change some?

No, you don't have to use them all. You can drop some. You know your students better than we do. Yes, you can substitute other words for the ones we have selected. *The Patterns of English Spelling* is your best reference to select from. If for example, you would rather start with the *-at*, *bat*, *rat*, *cat*, *sat* family, be our guest. You can use your pencil to write in your choices. Every class is different. Don't be afraid to trust your own judgment.

6. Can I give the same test more than once during the day?

Yes. If your students can profit from that, fine. We recommend, however, that you allow a minimum of two hours to pass between re-tests. We also recommend that the absolute maximum number of times that Sequential Spelling be given is four times in one day, whether repeats or new lessons.

7. I have a child who is a 5th grader. May I use Sequential Spelling 1 to start one hour, Sequential Spelling 2 to start the 2nd hour, 3 for the third, etc.? I want my child to become as good a reader and speller as soon as possible.

Why not? If it works, it works. If it doesn't, then try something else. You could try going through four days of Sequential Spelling 1 every day until it is finished and then move through four days of Sequential Spelling 2 every day, and continue on through four levels of Sequential Spelling in six months.

8. Why are some words in bold print?

The words in **bold print** are those that are the most commonly used words and the most important to learn. You will also

notice that some words (like the word **doesn't**) don't follow regular patterns and are repeated many times throughout the series. If your students learn to spell any of the words that are not in bold face, that is so much gravy. What we want the students to learn is to spell the most common words and to learn the most common patterns that occur in words. You will discover that most of these patterns consist of only two, three, or four letters. A big word like *misunderstandings* can be broken into the following patterns: *mis/un/der/st/and/ing/s*.

9. Do I have to teach all the homophones and heteronyms listed?

Absolutely no. We have listed them for your convenience. If you wish to teach them, fine. If you don't, fine. We only ask that when they come up that you definitely use the word in a sentence that helps the student pick the right word. For example, don't just say **billed**. The students may think about the word **build**. Instead, Say something like: "**billed**. *We were billed for extra carpeting.* **billed**."

10. Why are there references to *The Patterns of English Spelling* at the bottom of the pages?

This book contains all the words that share a common spelling pattern placed on the same page (or pages in the case of families like the -tion family). In our Sequential Spelling Series we list most of the words in each family, but not all. If a teacher wants to include more or to give special assignments to the gifted students, we have included the page references. This book may be purchased from the AVKO Educational Research Foundation, 3084 Willard Rd., Birch Run, MI 48415. Or, if the teacher (or parent) becomes a member of the AVKO Educational Research

Foundation (www.avko.org/membership) access to its pages are free.

Membership as of 2008 is only \$25.00 annually for individuals, \$100.00 for schools and institutions. The E-books available for free download to members are worth over \$400.00.

In celebration of AVKO's 35th anniversary, AVKO has added a page of sentences using the most common words that share the same pattern as the page opposite it.

11. Can I use the words in Sequential Spelling for composition?

Yes, of course. Having your students create sentences out of the words is good exercise for their minds and will allow you to determine if they truly understand what the words really mean. You may also have them write the entire sentence that you dictate. That will help you help them learn to handle the problems created by speech patterns, such as the "wanna" instead of "want to" and the "whacha gonna" for "what are you going to," etc. You also might want to use AVKO's book *Speech to Spelling* to help you help your students to solve that problem. As the teacher, you know your students and how many sentences they can handle as homework. You might even want to set time limits such as: Write as many sentences using today's spelling words as you can in 10 minutes.

12. What if all my questions have not been answered here?

You can E-mail the author Don McCabe at DonMcCabe@aol.com or call 1-866-285-6612.

	1st day	2nd day	3rd day	4th day
1.	* in	* I	thin	thins
2.	** pin	pins	pinned	pinning
3.	sin	sins	sinned	sinning
4.	spin	spins	* I	spinning
5.		kin	shin	shins
6.		skin	skins	skinned
7.		win	wins	winning
8.		twin	twins	inner
9.			* be	* be
10.			begin	begins
11.			chin	chins
12.			she	* we
13.				* wee
14.				* bee
15.				* see
16.				tree

* Homophones:

in	Come on in.
inn	They spent the weekend at a country inn.
I	I really love chocolate.
eye	My brother got a black eye.
aye	All in favor, say, "Aye!"
be	We will all be there.
bee	I hate to be stung by a bee.
Bea	My Aunt Bea had a party.
we	We all went to her party.
wee	She called the baby boy a wee lad and the girl a wee lass.
oui	The French say "oui" for yes.
see	I can see you.
sea	A sea is bigger than a lake; smaller than an ocean.
si	In Spanish, the word for <i>yes</i> is <i>si</i> .

** In *some* dialects: pin/pen.

pin	You pin the tail on the donkey. Pins and needles.
pen	You keep pigs in a pig pen. You write with a pen.

The complete -in family is found on p. 123 in *The Patterns of English Spelling*; the -inner family on p. 635; the -e & -ee families on pp. 304-305.

	5th day	6th day	7th day	8th day
1.	thinned	thinning	thin	thinner
2.	thinner	thinnest	* in	ins
3.	sinner	sinner	* inn	inns
4.	spinner	spinners	spin	spinning
5.	fins	tin	tins	tin
6.	Mr. Skinner	Mr. Skinner's	*inn	skins
7.	winner	winners	winning	winner
8.	* be	* bee	* be	* be
9.	inning	innings	inner	being
10.	beginning	beginnings	beginner	beginners
11.	chinned	chinning	chin	chins
12.	* we	* wee	* wee	* we
13.	* wee	* we	* we	* wee
14.	* bee	* bees	* bee	bees
15.	* see	* sees	seeing	* see
16.	trees	treed	treeing	trees
17.	free	* frees	freed	freeing
18.	agree	agrees	agreed	agreeing
19.	disagree	disagrees	disagreed	disagreeing
20.	fees	* flee	* flees	fleeing

*** Homophones:**

sees She sees everything that happens in our neighborhood.
 seas Lakes are smaller than seas. Oceans are bigger.
 seize The police wanted to seize my uncle's car.

flee To flee is to run away.
 flea A flea is a little insect that lives on animals.

flees A flea flees from insecticide.
 fleas Fleas flee from insecticide.

levy/levee The state decided to levy a tax to pay for the building of a levee.
 frees A robot frees a worker from working.
 freeze Water will freeze if it's below zero outside.

See p. 16 for in/inn, ins/inns, we/wee/oui, be/bee/Bea.

The complete -in family is found on p. 123 in *The Patterns of English Spelling*; the -inner family on p. 635; the -e & -ee families on pp. 304-305; the -inny skinny & innie Minnie family on p. 704.