



Resource Guide

NONWORD SPELLING

What is Nonword Spelling?	Nonword Spelling assesses a child's ability to spell words that they have never seen. A nonword is a word that is not a real word and has no meaning. Since these words are not real, a child is not able to pull the spelling of the word from long-term memory and is required to use their knowledge of phoneme-grapheme relationships and encoding strategies in order to spell the word correctly.
Segmenting phonemes	Phoneme segmentation is the ability to break words down into individual sounds. To be able to spell nonwords, children must be able to segment phonemes. Begin by saying a nonword and have the child segment the word into individual phonemes, using sound tiles. Ex: say "om", help the child identify the two phonemes (sounds) that they hear- /o/ and /m/
Mapping graphemes	Once a child can identify the phonemes (sounds) that they hear within a nonword, repeat the word and have them go back and map the graphemes (letters) to those individual sounds. Ex: using "om" from above, children know they hear the /o/ and /m/ sounds. Have them determine which letters make each sound- o and m.
Write the letters	When children can determine the phonemes heard, map the graphemes to those individual sounds, they are ready to write the letters to spell the word. Once the word has been spelled, encourage the child to blend the word to check for accuracy.
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Benchmark Milestones

NONWORD SPELLING

Benchmark milestones are specific goals that children are expected to achieve at certain stages of their early literacy development

BOY- Beginning of the Year; MOY- Middle of the Year; EOY- End of the Year

First Grade	BOY & MOY	1st-20th %tile: Can spell limited or no three-phoneme nonsense words Ex: dif 21st-40th %tile: Can spell some three- and four- phoneme nonsense words Ex: flim 41st-99th %tile: Can spell five-phoneme nonsense words Ex: frosp
	EOY	1st-20th %tile: Can spell limited or no four-phoneme nonsense words Ex: flim 21st-40th %tile: Can spell some five- phoneme nonsense words Ex: frosp 41st-99th %tile: Can spell more five-phoneme nonsense words Ex: libtasp