

**IDM**  
**(Individually Designed Materials):**

*Fundamentals of Spelling*

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for IDM: *Fundamentals of Spelling*

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# **IDM (Individually Designed Materials):** *Fundamentals of Spelling*

## **INTRODUCTION**

*IDM: Fundamentals of Spelling* covers core spelling concepts from Grade 2.0 to Grade 7.0. The program develops a student's competence and confidence in fundamental spelling concepts. In addition to high-frequency words, there is a strong emphasis on phonic and morphological concepts. Morphological concepts emphasize prefixes, suffixes, and root words.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### *Academic Objectives*

The objectives of IDM are to increase the learner's accuracy, fluency, and understanding of the spelling words and concepts covered by most core curricula and most standardized spelling achievement tests. This fluency and understanding of vocabulary is a prerequisite to higher-level writing and other written expression activities. While this spelling program is lean and efficient, all spelling words are presented in a sentence context to ensure both accuracy and understanding.

## *Affective Objectives*

Affective learner changes are an important outcome of the IDM programs. For all students, and for low achievers in particular, consistent demonstrations of academic success will positively impact the learner's self-concept.

In this IDM program, learners take responsibility for preparing for curriculum-embedded assessments, and learners determine when they are ready to be evaluated. These experiences provide teachers with the opportunity to ensure that student responsibility is both practiced and recognized. The end product should be gains in both academic competency and self-confidence as an independent learner.

## **PREREQUISITES**

This IDM program provides individually prescribed practice in spelling. The spelling program has been developed and tested to support the total language arts program, and will complement and support other core reading and written expression goals. The following skills are necessary prerequisites for learner success in this IDM program.

- Fluency with the letters and sounds of the alphabet.
- Legible handwriting.

- The ability to phonetically decode 3-letter, phonetically regular words. While not a critical prerequisite, this blending skill will help the spelling instruction contribute substantially to reading competence.

### **FIELD TESTING**

The IDM programs in math and language arts were developed by Alan Hofmeister, as the result of a search for intervention procedures applicable to all students, including those with achievement skill deficits. Utah State University researchers conducted research which identified math computation and spelling as areas of frequent failure.

After observing teachers, it was determined that as high as 90% of interactions with pupils were either negative or neutral when the students were not progressing in specific curriculum areas in accordance with teacher expectations. The teachers involved in these observations had extensive inservice training in the importance of positive teacher-student interactions. A need for alternative instructional procedures to support teachers and help students gain proficiency in math computation and spelling became vital. IDM uses CDs because the equipment can provide needed practice without verbally or nonverbally expressing disappointment, frustration, or criticism. CD players are a low-cost way to reduce the pressure on limited computer time at school and at home. Additionally, CD equipment is often readily available at home.

IDM was extensively and repeatedly field tested to determine student gains and teacher reaction. Researchers conducted a series of validation studies with students in regular classrooms. In the math studies, the students were at least one year below grade level in math computation. The students were randomly placed in control and experimental groups, and were given a computation pretest. The experimental group then received 8 weeks of instruction. The students in the control group received regular math instruction. Post tests were administered, and the results showed that the experimental group made a 3.5-month gain beyond the control group during the 8-week treatment.

Teachers were asked to rate various aspects of the IDM programs. Their responses indicated that 88% felt that the programs were valuable, met individual student needs, and could be managed with minimal teacher preparation. Teachers reported that students accepted full responsibility for their independent work. Student's increased sense of responsibility was identified as a major element in the success of the program.

A similar study was conducted with spelling CDs and achieved similar findings. In spelling, the low achievers gained one grade level for every 10 weeks they were in the program. The IDM programs provided all students the opportunity to improve and allowed low achievers to close the gap with their peers.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT**

Placement Tests are used to ensure that individual needs are addressed and that the student has a "high-success" start in the program (see the Blackline Masters). The placement test also provides a measure of present grade-level performance. The student is placed to the nearest half-grade (e.g., 3.5, 4.0, 4.5). These grade level scores should correlate well with most standardized achievement tests.

### **PLACEMENT TESTING**

#### ***Getting Ready***

Have the following materials ready:

- Copies of the test
- Pens (to discourage erasures)
- A Test Response Sheet (see the Blackline Masters)

#### ***Administration***

The tests may be administered to students individually or in groups.

#### ***Scoring***

A Placement Test is scored after all parts are completed by the student. For most students this will be after a single session, but some students may require more sessions to complete the placement process.

*The instructions to students are as follows:*

***"You should have a pen ready and a paper numbered from 1 - 10. I will say the number and the spelling word, a sentence using that word, then I'll repeat the word again. Write the spelling word as quickly as you can, next to the number. If you want to change a word, cross it out and write the word again. If you can not spell a word, move along with me to the next word. Let's get started!"***

***"One: WEB -- the spider made a WEB. Spell WEB."***

(Allow no more than 10 seconds to write each answer.)

***Two: PLAYING -- the child is PLAYING with the ball. Spell PLAYING."***

(Follow the scoring and placement procedures on the *Individual Student Record B* see the Blackline Masters.)

## Individual Placement Chart

### Assessment & Placement Procedures

Start placement testing at subtest A1.

Continue testing through higher and higher subtests, until the student scores less than 80% correct on a test.

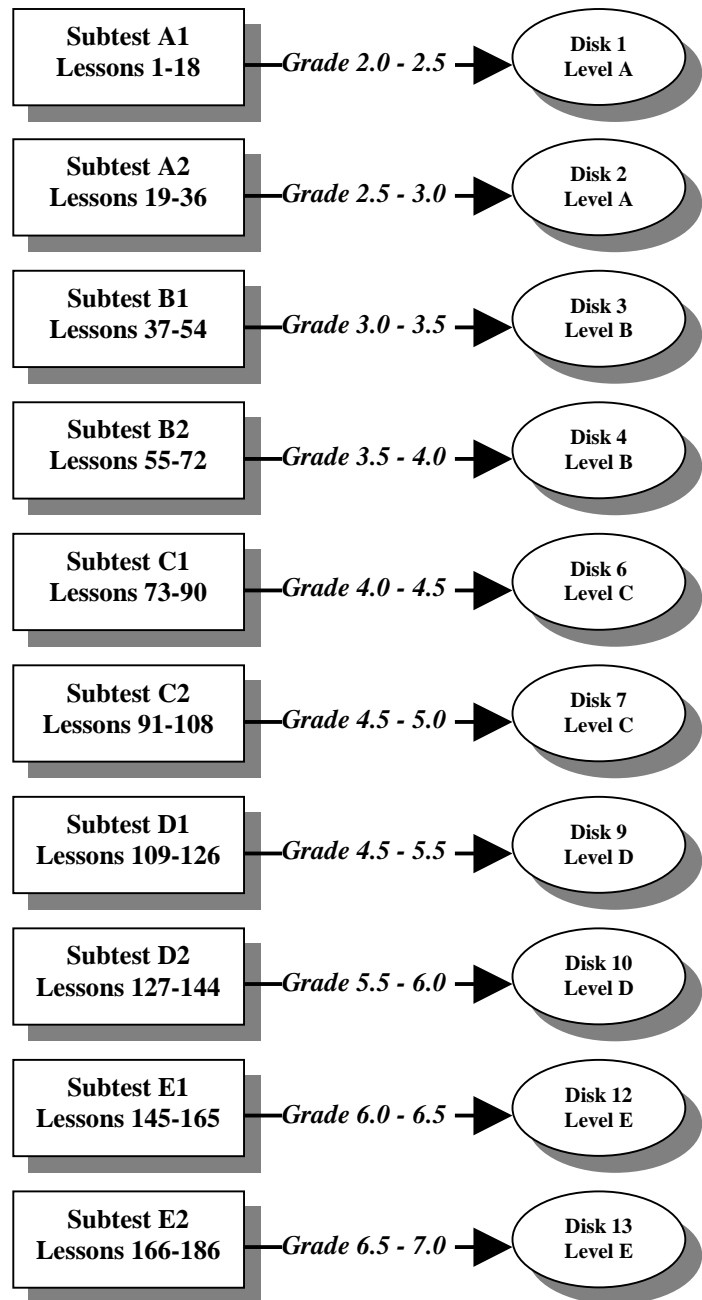
Place the student in the disk level which corresponds with the last subtest where that student scored 80% correct or better.

Example:

A student scored 10/10 on Subtest A1, then scored 8/10 on Subtest A2, and then scored 6/10 on Subtest B1. You would place the student in Disk 2 Level A.

This student would have a grade 2.5 achievement score at the beginning of instruction.

This student should have a "high-success" start in the program (i.e., 80 - 90% success). If this does not happen, start the student at an earlier level.



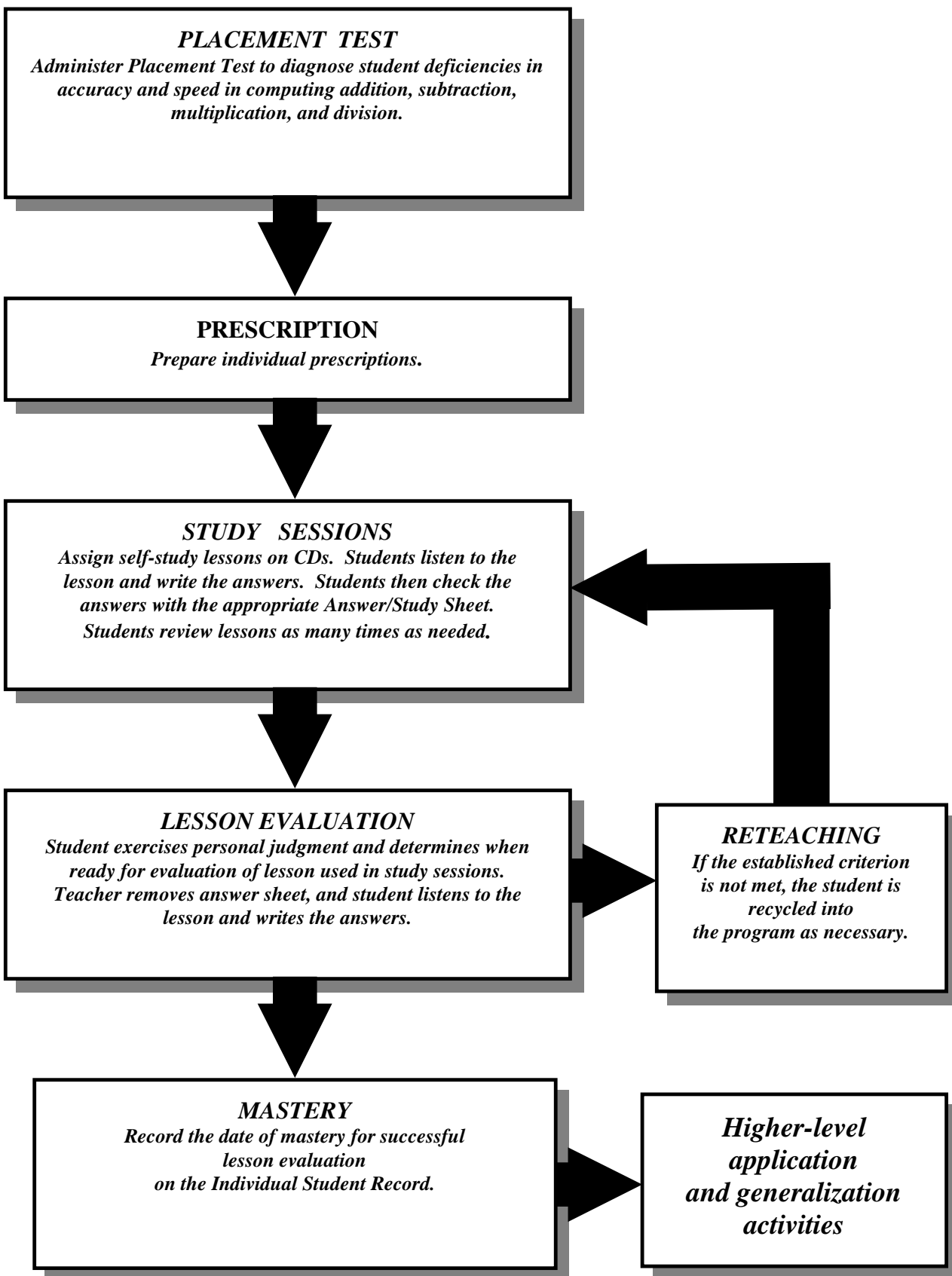
You may monitor students as individuals or prepare a class profile that records the initial lesson placement and progress when each student correctly writes all spelling words in a lesson. Masters for a *Class Profile* and an *Individual Student Record* sheet are provided in the Blackline Masters. All problem words should be recorded for review purposes.

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Proper implementation of IDM will reduce teacher intervention time and increase student independence in fully using the program (see the *Instructional Sequence* chart on the following page).

The students play an active role in determining how many study sessions are needed and when they are ready for evaluation. It is essential to the program that the students be allowed to judge when they are ready for an evaluation following study sessions for a particular lesson. This procedure places the responsibility for achievement on the student. ***When students demonstrate increased responsibility and independence, teachers must consequently recognize such increased responsibility.*** Teachers should ensure that students' increased independence and increased responsibility for their own learning are also shared with parents in a timely manner. Do not wait for regularly scheduled teacher-parent conferences and report cards to share such important information.

# ***INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE***



Unscheduled calls to parents by a teacher should not be limited to "bad news."

Involve other teachers and the principal in recognizing student success.

Each time the student listens to an audio lesson, a paper will be necessary for writing answers. The paper should be prepared in advance by either you or the student. It should contain the student's name, date, and the lesson identification number. The paper should be numbered by the student, based on the number of spelling words in a particular lesson on a given *Answer/Study Sheet* (see the Blackline Masters). The CD will remind the student to have a lettered paper ready and to use a pen.

### **RETEACHING PROCEDURE**

When the student does not have ALL the answers correct on a lesson evaluation or does not meet the criteria established by you, encourage study by first pointing out the problems that were answered correctly. Provide guidance to ensure that the criteria will be met on the next attempt. Many spelling lessons exemplify a specific phonological or morphological concept--identify and discuss the concept. If the student failed to meet criteria on the first trial, the student continues to practice the lesson presented on the CD. Words that present

problems should be reviewed systematically. Difficult words should be revisited monthly after initial mastery.

### **APPLICATION AND GENERALIZATION ACTIVITIES**

One of the major objectives of this IDM program is the development of fluency and accuracy in spelling. Fluency and accuracy are critical prerequisites necessary for successful participation in higher-level, language arts activities. Presenting words in isolation (without a sentence context) has modest value except in systematic reviews when teachers are sure the words are understood. Initially, all spelling must be presented and practiced in sentence contexts.

Students can demonstrate an understanding of words by preparing their own sentences. Each sentence should be as concise as possible and should be so constructed that very few other words could replace the spelling word, e.g.:

*"He has a CLOCK" (would be a poor sentence).*

*"He tells time with his CLOCK" (would be better).*

These sentence development activities could be done in cooperative learning settings where different sentences are developed, evaluated, and revised in small groups.

The next level of application would be the use of new spelling vocabulary in other writing activities.

**CONCLUDING NOTE:  
INSTRUCTIONAL ACCESS WITH DIGNITY  
FOR THE LOW ACHIEVER**

Many low achievers have two characteristics: First, they have not achieved the competency and confidence in the "gateway" prerequisites to the higher curriculum concepts in math and language arts. Second, they have a history of failure and low expectations of success. Overcoming this history of failure experiences will require a massive number of success experiences in the academic area in which the student previously failed consistently.

The IDM programs provide:

- a. Individualized placement tests ensuring that all instructional experiences are "high-success" (i.e., at least 80-90% success).
- b. Extensive high-success practice is essential if the needed fluency is to be achieved. The use of the "audio-tutorial" format allows students to practice with privacy and dignity and to take responsibility to determine when they will be evaluated. Many low achievers fear even the well-intentioned scrutiny of teachers and peers.

- c. This IDM program is a tool whereby the necessary practice each child needs is provided without risk of adverse comments--comments that often unintentionally add to feelings of failure and discomfort.

*Appropriate implementation of the IDM programs should ensure that 90% of teacher-student interactions are positive.*

***First, the student must succeed!  
Second, this success must be recognized  
by persons the student considers important.***