***Introduction to Spelling/Vocabulary/Sentence Units***

Why Spelling Lists? Well, in the age of *spell check*, being able to spell well may not be as important as it once was. However, the ability to spell (without the assistance of a computer) still matters. If you can’t spell capably, your reader may not understand what you’re trying to express. Also, spelling errors can be embarrassing and even make you look less intelligent and skilled than you actually are. I’ve made several extremely embarrassing, highly visible spelling errors that led me to be the target of jokes. Not cool! So, perhaps I can help spare you some embarrassment later in life. There’s a saying among English teachers that goes, “Better to be red inked now than pink slipped later.” “Red ink” refers to ink teachers use to correct students’ papers. Receiving a “pink slip” is common way employees are notified of being let go from a job. So the saying means, it’s better to learn difficult, sometimes boring things like spelling now than have to suffer the consequences later for not having learned them.

In addition, these units are so much more than just spelling lists. They will help you build your vocabulary and your ability to choose descriptive words for your writing. Several of the words on these lists were chosen because they are commonly misspelled; however, most of them were selected because they are more descriptive substitutes for common words, words like “smart,” “dumb,” “give,” “get,” “gross,” etc. The thesaurus that follows the S/V/S units will show you that within these units, for example, there are 12 words for “smart” and 8 words for “dumb.” Also, several words were added because they are suggested by Common Core study guides. So, if you study and learn the words throughout this year, by the end of the year your vocabulary will be far more advanced than most people your age. Also, at the end of each unit is a sentence pattern that we’ll be working with for the week. These patterns should help develop your ability to write using a variety of sentences.

**How to Use spellingcity.com**

1. First, type [www.spellingcity.com](http://www.spellingcity.com) to access the site

2. Click on “Login” at the top and then enter your username and password in the student section.

3. After you have been logged into your account, click “Assignments” in the top left corner of the screen.

4. Click on the link to the week’s spelling/vocabulary/sentence unit and then complete the assignments in any order you choose. There will be 5 each week.

5. When completing the activities, you may find it helpful to use headphones. Several activities and the tests say the words they want you to attempt.

6. For most activities, you must complete them entirely and perfectly to get any credit. They’re either a 100% or 0%, complete or incomplete.

7. For the sentence writing activity, you only need to write 9 sentences, the 4 example sentences at the bottom of the unit’s page and 5 original sentences. Each sentence should use a spelling word and follow the week’s sentence pattern. Each sentence will be scored on a 5 point scale as follows:

* 1 point: the spelling word is spelled correctly.
* 1 point: the spelling word is used correctly.
* 1 point: the sentence pattern is at least attempted.
* 1 point: the sentence pattern is attempted and correctly executed
* 1 point: the entire sentence is grammatically correct

So, 9 total sentences at 5 points apiece equals 45 points. This will be reduce to a 10 points assignment.

* 45-44/45 converts to 10/10
* 43-39 converts to 9/10
* 38-34 converts to 8/10
* 33-30 converts to 7/10
* 29-25 converts to 6/10
* Less than 25 points leads to a Homework Room Do Over at a 30% reduced grade (7/10 max)

8. Click on “My Records” in the top left corner to review what you’ve completed and what scores you’ve earned on tests and sentence writing activities.

9. If you’re having trouble completing an assignment or navigating the website, try clicking on the “Videos/FAQs” tab. If you’re not at school and still having trouble, email me at [martinr@unit11.org](mailto:martinr@unit11.org).

10. Activities will be due before class every Monday. Tests will be taken during class on Mondays. The test will include a spelling pre-test (which does not count for a grade unless you score 100%), followed by a spelling test and vocabulary test which will count for a grade.