Dear Family,

As a school district, we have adopted a spelling series called Sitton Spelling for students in 2nd-6th grade. Sitton Spelling does not use the traditional methods used in the past to teach spelling and it is not how many of us learned to spell. Many of us took a pretest on Monday, received a spelling list, study throughout the week and took a final test on Friday. We learned and practiced words in isolation. Meaning we studied words practiced them by themselves, alone, not in the context of a sentence or paragraph. We learned to memorize words. The Sitton Spelling program offers students a chance to learn words in context while applying essential spelling skills to become better spellers in all writing opportunities.

Each Sitton Spelling unit starts with a word preview giving the children a short list of words.  For 4-7 days, they will work with those words, learning skills associated with them and taking many opportunities to practice the words.  At the end of the unit, the students will be tested on the skills.  The test is a “fill in the blank” paragraph. Students fill in the blanks using the short list of words practiced during the week as well as words introduced and practiced from previous weeks. The paragraph is read aloud to students.

Many parents ask how they can help their students study for the test at the end of the unit. Each grade level has a Core Word List. These words are tested throughout the school year. This list includes all Core Words that occur at your student’s current grade level, as well as every Core Word that occurred at earlier grades. The Core Words are a research-based list of the most frequently occurring words in English writing, which are targeted for practice and mastery. Words from the Core Word List your student has not yet mastered will be sent home on a Words to Learn sheet and should be practiced. The words listed on the Words to Learn sheet are called your students spelling words. Spelling words are sent home every few days, not on any specific day, and will be retested randomly throughout the school year. Retesting students on the words they missed previously ensures that they develop true mastery of these words. This is a much more effective learning strategy than cramming for a test and likely forgetting the spellings later. Ask your student for the grade level Core Words List and encourage them to share their Words to Learn sheet. Studying these two items with your 2nd-6th grade student will assist them with spelling success. If you are not sure where to find these items, please contact the classroom teacher.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Nelson