



This year marks the 50th anniversary of Spelling Through Morphographs!

In 1976, Spelling Through Morphographs (originally titled Morphographic Spelling) was published by E-B Press. Authored by Siegfried Engelmann and Bob Dixon, this program was the first spelling program to utilize the morphographic analysis of words to teach spelling. The program has been published by McGraw-Hill since 1982 and is widely used.

We asked Maria Collins, a longtime DI teacher, trainer, and consultant, to recall the early days when the program was first used. Here is her story:

I first was introduced to Morphographic Spelling when I used it to teach spelling to 12 -14 fourth & fifth graders at Coburg Elementary School in Coburg, Oregon in 1977. I had only galleys to use at the time. I was amazed at how the students worked & performed. I used the point system designed by the authors.

The following year I used the program to teach spelling to 6th, 7th and 8th graders in a Learning Center in Corvallis, Oregon. When the sixth-grade teachers saw the change in their at-risk students' spelling & writing skills, they asked me to come and give a presentation on the program...

I went back to our middle school and gave a presentation to the sixth-grade teachers. They voted to adopt the Morphographic Spelling for their spelling program.

The following year, one of the teachers asked to have a conference with me. She showed me the results of her students' scores on the standardized reading test. While the students had always made a year's gain in reading scores, the year of the Morphographic Spelling, her students made two years gain in reading comprehension! She was amazed!

I next used Morphographic Spelling in methods classes I taught in language at a couple of universities out west and in the Midwest. The student teachers loved using the programs with their teachers.

We implemented a program for at-risk students at Oak Park & River Forest High School in Oak Park, IL from 1988-92. Along with the Corrective Reading and Math programs, we also utilized Morphographic Spelling, Spelling Mastery (depending on student placement) and Expressive Writing.

An ESL teacher saw me teaching the programs and asked if I would train her, which I did.

She then asked if I would teach 15 of her ESL students the Morphographic Spelling program as she had her schedule full teaching the Direct Instruction Reading programs.

I agreed and these 15 students (from 8 countries) challenged me on every point I did not give them! They were industrious and conscientious about their performance. The ESL teacher reported that she also saw a great improvement in their reading comprehension!

I have trained and consulted on this amazing spelling program across 25 states in the US, including using it in the Baltimore Curriculum Project (1996-2001) and in Milwaukee, WI from 2001-2010 as well as Philadelphia 2010-2012.

I have witnessed the improvement of students' spelling skills across all grades from 4th - 12th grade. The gains are, in part, based on the design of the program as well as good training & consulting.

Students must be appropriately placed in the program. If they do not place in this program, Spelling Mastery A, B or C may be more appropriate.

When you get good training and use the program carefully, following the script, you, too, will find amazing results!- Dr. Maria Collins

With the right training, placement, and support, schools can replicate these results and build lasting instructional capacity.

Connect with us to learn how to get started: <https://bit.ly/4nd1G7v>