**Simultaneous Oral Spelling**

This is an effective **multi-sensory technique** originally developed by Gillingham and Stillman in 1956. It is especially helpful for **dyslexic** learners or learners with **literacy difficulties**.  Linking motor and tactile techniques with audio and visual techniques activates several neural pathways to the brain which improves the likelihood of the learner remembering the spelling. **SOS** works best when used to support teaching of spelling as part of a spelling programme.

**Cursive handwriting** is recommended because the word becomes a unit rather than separate units and the spelling is more likely to be retained in motor-memory. The learner is also less likely to reverse letters (e.g. b/d, p/q).

**Resources required:** Paper and coloured pens or a mini-whiteboard and coloured whiteboard pens

**There are several versions, but the following steps are commonly followed:**

1. **Teacher models** the spelling by reading the word, writing it while saying the letter names (not sounds) and then reading the word again.
2. The learner writes over the word saying each letter name **simultaneously** in **cursive handwriting**. Then they say the whole word aloud.
3. The learner should repeat the process of writing over the word and saying the letter names **until they feel confident**. Many learners enjoy writing over the word in different colours (**rainbow writing**).
4. Cover the original or flip over the mini-whiteboard.
5. The learner must now write the word **from memory** saying the letter names and whole word aloud.
6. Allow the learner to check their spelling against the model. They should mark the spelling **letter by letter** so that they focus on the detail of the word and so that they are still rewarded for getting a spelling nearly correct.
7. If the learner does not spell the word correctly, continue to practise the spelling and repeat step 6.
8. Finally, get the learner to repeat the process with their **eyes closed**.
9. Again, allow the learner to check their spelling against the model and mark letter by letter.
10. **Celebrate success**!