

# Assessing and Teaching the Components of Spelling: CoST Dashboard

The **CoST Dashboard** is suitable for students in Year 3 and above. It is an innovative and evidence-based resource for implementing structured, multi-tiered teaching informed by valid and reliable Australian standardised spelling error analysis data.

The **CoST Dashboard** is a robust assessment and instruction resource to help build teacher capacity and improve student learning. It has been extensively trialled over several years in a variety of Australian and UK school settings, including in randomised control trials (e.g., Daffern & Fleet, 2021; Law et al., 2022). Results of these trials have demonstrated significant gains in students' spelling scores on standardised tests.



## **Explicit and differentiated teaching activities suitable for Tier 1, Tier 2 AND Tier 3 instruction.**

Provide your students with engaging activities that are designed to target the learning needs of each student systematically and directly in your class. Activities explicitly target the phonological, orthographic and morphological components of spelling.

## **Flexibly print and use the activities on demand or refer to the activities as a guide for your teaching.**

The activities can be used to help your students build and/or consolidate their knowledge of spelling conventions and strategies. Print and use each activity for your students as needed, or simply refer to them as a guide. Examples of presentation slides are included to support explicit instruction.

## **Provide learning experiences for students that connect spelling with oral language, reading and writing.**

Connect spelling knowledge to reading, writing and other key learning areas through activities that make use of a range of texts and sentence-level writing.

## **Confidently implement curriculum-aligned learning experiences for your students.**

Each activity is aligned with the latest Australian Curriculum, Victorian and NSW English curriculums. Instructional notes such as learning intentions and answers for activities are also included. Audio files can also be accessed to support teachers with their explicit instruction.

## **Use valid and reliable assessment to inform instructional priorities.**

It is crucial that teachers use spelling assessments that have undergone scientific research to adequately test their validity and reliability. The CoST is a robust, empirically researched assessment. It is a valid and reliable measure of spelling ability using spelling error analysis, informed by Triple Word Form Theory. The CoST Dashboard can be used for diagnostic purposes and includes longitudinal data analysis after the first year. The Australian norms included with the CoST also allow for comparative judgments to be made.

## **Build your teaching capacity.**

The CoST Dashboard includes a variety of supplementary materials to support your professional learning. These include instructional notes, audio files, professional reading materials, suggested follow-up research references, lesson planning tools to support scoping and sequencing, handwriting instruction templates, and information videos.

### **View information video:**

Dr Daffern explains how to use the online CoST and navigate the Dashboard.

Duration: about 11 minutes.



<https://youtu.be/6MJqvkcylNc?si=g4yxFisqCA9qSdWq>

## **Access FREE coaching sessions with Dr Tessa Daffern.**

**How's the health of your spelling instruction?** The CoST Teacher Dashboard includes **FREE** Spell Check Appointments with Dr Tessa Daffern each year. These are live open Q & A coaching sessions, available to all CoST Teacher Dashboard members. In a collaborative setting, meet with Dr Tessa Daffern via Zoom for a health check on your spelling instruction. You can ask her questions about:

- Teaching spelling and using metalanguage
- Scope and sequencing
- Monitoring progress
- Differentiation
- Review tasks
- Syllabus/curriculum alignment



# What schools say about the CoST Dashboard

## Teachers have told us:

- *The CoST Dashboard is absolutely incredible! Thank you for developing such a useful tool.*
- *Our teachers are loving the Dashboard and finding it very user friendly and supportive.*
- *I love how the Dashboard automatically puts the students in groups with a focus.*
- *The data is so interesting!! It gives us a really good insight into student spelling strategies and where their strengths and areas of development are.*
- *You've been a huge help, and all the teachers are really pleased with the assessment & Dashboard and the level of detail it provides.*
- *We are developing some really good practices thanks to your resources and the research behind them.*
- *I hope that you get to see how much of a difference you're making to these young minds as well as how you are reinspiring our teachers to be empowered to teach spelling with efficacy and deep content knowledge!*
- *I have been itching to share our spelling data for 2024 NAPLAN, reflective of our work with you across 2022 and 2023 in particular: NAPLAN Spelling Year 3 2024 = 30% increase of students achieving top 2 bands from 2023. NAPLAN Spelling Year 5 2024 = 12% increase of students achieving top 2 bands from 2023*
- *We've been looking at our data and the Dashboards and our teachers are pumped!!*

## Professional Learning Workshop with Dr Tessa Daffern

### Maximising Multi-tiered Spelling Instruction Using the CoST Dashboard

This one-day Professional Learning Workshop aims to build teacher capacity by introducing teachers to an explicit, structured and multi-tiered approach to teaching spelling. Delivered by Dr Tessa Daffern, this workshop provides a thorough overview of the research underpinning the CoST, the importance of following standardised assessment protocols and interpreting the results. Dr Daffern also explains essential metalanguage for explicit teaching, how to monitor progress, maximise the use of the CoST Dashboard resources, and implement high quality instructional techniques. Teachers are given practical advice and ample opportunities for practice to ensure the successful implementation of the CoST Dashboard in their school. As an interactive professional learning experience, this workshop prepares participants to confidently use and maximise the benefits of the CoST Dashboard to improve student learning in spelling.



Workshop attendance for first-time users of the CoST Dashboard is strongly encouraged.

#### What the workshop covers

1 Day (6 Hours)

- A summary of the research underpinning the CoST Dashboard.
- An overview of the CoST assessment and administration procedures.
- An explanation of how to interpret the CoST results (standardised error analysis data).
- An overview of the CoST Dashboard structure and materials.
- Principles for successful and effective implementation including scoping and sequencing.
- Strategies for teaching the phonological, orthographic and morphological components of spelling.
- Examples of teaching cross-mapping skills for consolidation and deepening vocabulary knowledge.
- Video observations of teaching examples in action in authentic classroom settings.
- Demonstrations and practice activities to consolidate understanding.
- Examples of progress monitoring assessments to inform ongoing instructional decisions.

#### Who should attend?

This Professional Learning Workshop is for accredited schools only.

- Classroom teachers
- Stage leaders, literacy leaders and curriculum coordinators

**Enquiries:** [admin@literacyeducationsolutions.com](mailto:admin@literacyeducationsolutions.com)

# Assessing and Teaching the Components of Spelling: CoST Dashboard

## Subscription options

Subscription options	Description	Fee (incl. GST)
<b>CoST Dashboard Bundle 1 + Manual</b> First-time Purchase Requirement.	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Components of Spelling Test (CoST) Manual.</li> <li>Licence for the school to administer the CoST to one class each school year (policy: one manual per class).</li> <li>CoST online assessment for one class with an automated Analysis Report (Excel File).</li> <li>CoST Dashboard materials for single class access for the school year (e.g., printable tailored activities, explicit teaching slides; audio files, instructional notes and answers, lesson planning tools, handwriting templates, supplementary CoST data analysis).</li> <li>Two optional FREE one-hour live webinars with Dr Tessa Daffern ('Spell Health Check Sessions' are unstructured Q&amp;A conversations in Term 2 and Term 3).</li> </ul>	\$360 (for 1 class)  Discounts per class in a single order for: x 2 classes: \$330 x 3 classes: \$308 x 4 classes: \$297 x 5 or more classes: \$286
<b>CoST Dashboard Bundle 1</b> For subsequent purchase each year. That is, if school has satisfied the First-time Purchase Requirement. The licence policy is one manual per class.	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoST online assessment for <u>one</u> class with automated Analysis Report (Excel File).</li> <li>CoST Dashboard materials for a single class access for the school year (e.g., printable tailored activities, explicit teaching slides; audio files, instructional notes and answers, lesson planning tools, handwriting templates, supplementary CoST data analysis).</li> <li>Two optional FREE one-hour live webinars with Dr Tessa Daffern ('Spell Health Check Sessions' are unstructured Q&amp;A conversations in Term 2 and Term 3).</li> </ul>	\$110 Per class for the school year.  (current yearly subscription fee)
<b>CoST Dashboard Bundle 2</b> For subsequent purchase each year. That is, if school has satisfied the First-time Purchase Requirement*. The licence policy is one manual per class.  This option is designed to further expand and deepen vocabulary while support proofreading and editing alongside spelling.	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoST online assessment for <u>one</u> class with automated Analysis Report (Excel File).</li> <li>CoST Dashboard materials for a single class access for the school year (e.g., printable tailored activities, explicit teaching slides; audio files, instructional notes and answers, lesson planning tools, handwriting templates, supplementary CoST data analysis).</li> <li>x20 <i>Spelling Out Words</i> student reference workbooks (additional books if needed with Bundle 2: \$33 each).</li> <li>Two-year access to <i>Spelling Out Words</i> digital resources on the CoST Dashboard (printable Word Analysis Charts; annotated/worked examples of Word Analysis Charts; printable grapheme chart).</li> </ul>	\$700 Per class for the school year. With access to the <i>Spelling Out Words</i> digital resources for 2 school years. *First time, add CoST manual(s): 1 class=\$250 2 classes=\$220 each 3 classes=\$198 each 4 classes=\$187 each 5+ classes=\$176 each
<b>CoST Dashboard Professional Learning Workshop</b>  Strongly encouraged for first-time users. Available to schools using the CoST.	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full day: 6 hours (9am to 3pm AEST)</li> <li>Live webinar with Dr Tessa Daffern; or</li> <li>Face-to-face PL is available for 8 or more registrations in one order. Travel costs may be additional (contact us to discuss what works best for your school context).</li> </ul> Completion of the related Professional Development Workshop is strongly recommended with the first purchase of the CoST Dashboard.	\$330 Per person  \$220 Per person for 4 or more from one school (when booked in one order).

### Notes

The assumed class size is approximately 30 students.

The CoST resources and Professional Learning Workshops are available only for purchase by schools.

Prices as of May 2024; they may be subject to change in the future.

**Enquiries:** [admin@literacyeducationsolutions.com](mailto:admin@literacyeducationsolutions.com)

# A SAMPLE OF RELATED PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES BY DR TESSA DAFFERN

## Instructional print resources for school-based educators

- Daffern, T. (2023). [\*Spelling out words: Personal spelling and vocabulary reference book\*](#) (workbook for students in Year 3 above). Literacy Education Solutions. ISBN: 978-0-6483430-4-2
- Daffern, T. (2022). [\*The little compendium of Standard English spelling\*](#). Literacy Education Solutions Pty Limited. ISBN: 978-0-6483430-2-8 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition is now available for preorder on request)
- Daffern, T. (2023). [\*The components of spelling: Early Years \(CoSTEY\). Instruction and assessment for the linguistic inquirer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Manual\*](#). Literacy Education Solutions Pty Limited. ISBN: 978-0-6483430-5-9
- Daffern, T. (2021). [\*The components of spelling: 3-6. Instruction and assessment for the linguistic inquirer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Manual\*](#). Literacy Education Solutions Pty Limited. ISBN: 978-0-6483430-3-5

## Online assessment and instructional resources for school-based educators

- [The Components of Spelling: Early Years \(CoSTEY\) Online Assessment Tool](#) - **one component** (ideal for Foundation). Note: To be used in conjunction with the CoSTEY Manual.
- [The Components of Spelling: Early Years \(CoSTEY\) Online Assessment Tool](#) - **three components** (ideal for Year 1 and Year 2). Note: To be used in conjunction with the CoSTEY Manual.
- [The Components of Spelling: Year 3 and above \(CoST\) Online Assessment and Instruction Dashboard: Bundle 1](#) (Online Assessment and tailored instructional resources)
- [The Components of Spelling: Year 3 and above \(CoST\) Online Assessment and Instruction Dashboard: Bundle 2](#) (like Bundle 1 plus *Spelling Out Words*).
- [Suggested spelling assessment schedule](#)

## Selected book chapters

- Daffern, T. (2024). Teaching writing conventions. In E. Rata (Ed.), [\*Research Handbook on Curriculum and Education\*](#) (Vol. Part II Knowledge structures and the curriculum, pp. 228-244): Edward Elgar.
- Daffern, T. (2018) [\*Spelling assessment, learning, and instruction in VET\*](#). In: McGrath S., Mulder M., Papier J., Suart R. (eds) *Handbook of Vocational Education and Training: Developments in the Changing World of Work* (pp. 1429–1444). Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-49789-1\\_90-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-49789-1_90-1).

## Selected journal articles

- Daffern, T., Hogg, K., Callaway, N., Wild, H., & Kelly, S. (2024). [Supporting schools to implement an evidence-based and effective approach to teaching spelling](#). *Learning Difficulties Australia*, 56(3), 31-38.
- Daffern, T. (2022). [Empowering teachers with an evidence-based spelling pedagogy](#). *Practical Literacy: The Early and Primary Years*, 27(2), 14-18.
- Daffern, T., & Fleet, R. (2021). [Investigating the efficacy of using error analysis data to inform explicit teaching of spelling](#). *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties*. 26(1), 67-88. DOI:10.1080/19404158.2021.1881574
- Daffern, T., & Sassu, A. (2020). [Building morphological foundations](#). *Practical Literacy: The Early and Primary Years*, 25(3), 35-37
- Daffern, T., & Mackenzie, N. M. (2020). [A case study on the challenges of learning and teaching English spelling: Insights from eight Australian students and their teachers](#). *Literacy*, 54(3), 99-110. doi: 10.1111/lit.12215
- Daffern, T., & Ramful, A. (2020). [Measurement of spelling ability: Construction and validation of a phonological, orthographic and morphological pseudo-word instrument](#). *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 33, 571- 603. DOI: 10.1007/s11145-019-09976-1
- Daffern, T. & Critten, S. (2019). [Student and teacher perspectives on spelling](#). *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 42(1), 40-57
- Daffern, T. (2017). [Linguistic skills involved in learning to spell: An Australian study](#). *Language and Education*, 31(1), 307-329. DOI: 10.1080/09500782.2017.1296855
- Daffern, T., Mackenzie, N. M., & Hemmings, B. (2017). [Predictors of writing success: How important are spelling, grammar and punctuation?](#) *The Australian Journal of Education*, 61(1), 75-87. DOI: 10.1177/0004944116685319
- Daffern, T. (2016). [What happens when a teacher uses metalanguage to teach spelling?](#) *The Reading Teacher*, 70(4), 423-434 DOI: 10.1002/trtr.1528
- Daffern, T., Mackenzie, N., & Hemmings, B. (2015). [The development of a spelling assessment tool informed by Triple Word Form Theory](#). *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 38(2), 72-82.

## Multimedia: visit [Tessa Daffern's YouTube channel](#)