



## How To: Master Spelling or Sight Words: Cover-Copy-Compare

This intervention promotes the acquisition of spelling or sight words. The student is given a sheet containing words to practice. The student studies each word on the sheet, covers the word briefly and copies it from memory, then compares the student-copied word to the original correct model (Joseph et al., 2011; Skinner, McLaughlin & Logan, 1997).

### Materials:

- *Cover-Copy-Compare Worksheet* (attached)
- *Cover-Copy-Compare Log* (attached)

**Procedures:** Here are the steps of Cover-Copy-Compare for spelling or sight words:

1. *[Teacher] Create a Cover-Copy-Compare wordlist.* The teacher selects up to 10 spelling or sight words for the student to practice during the session and writes those words as correct models into the left column of the *Cover-Copy-Compare Worksheet* (attached). The teacher then pre-folds the sheet using as a guide the vertical dashed line ('fold line') dividing the left side of the student worksheet.
2. *[Student] Use the Cover-Copy-Compare procedures.* During the Cover-Copy-Compare intervention, the student is trained to follow these self-directed steps for each word:
  - Study the spelling or sight word (model) that appears in the left column of the sheet.
  - Fold the left side of the page over at the pre-folded vertical crease to hide the original word ('Cover').
  - Copy the word from memory, writing it in the first response blank under the 'Student Response' section of the Cover-Copy-Compare worksheet ('Copy').
  - Uncover the original correct model and compare it to the student response ('Compare'). If the student has written the spelling/sight word CORRECTLY, the student moves to the next item on the list and repeats these procedures. If the student has written the spelling/sight word INCORRECTLY, the student draws a line through the incorrect response, studies the correct model again, covers the model, copies the model again from memory into the second response blank under the 'Student Response' section of the sheet, and again checks the correctness of the copied item..
  - Continue until all words on the sheet have been copied and checked against the correct models.
3. *[Teacher] Log: items mastered by the student.* The teacher should formulate an objective standard for judging that the student using Cover-Copy-Compare has 'mastered' a particular spelling or sight word (e.g., when the student is able to copy a word from memory without error on three successive occasions). The teacher can then apply this standard for mastery to identify and log items mastered in each session, using the appropriate *Cover-Copy-Compare Log Sheet* (attached).

**Variations:** Here are two adaptations of the Cover-Copy-Compare technique that teachers may want to consider:



- *Have the student respond orally.* One modification of Cover-Copy-Compare that may make it even more effective is to have the student respond orally. The student covers the original word and spells out the word aloud (subvocally) rather than putting it in writing (Skinner, Bamberg, Smith, & Powell, 1993). Because students can often respond more quickly by stating rather than writing their response, oral responding can speed the task and result in a larger number of effective learning trials in the time allocated.
- *Adapt CCC for foreign-language vocabulary.* Students can acquire foreign-language vocabulary via Cover-Copy-Compare (Carter, Won, & Mayton, 2013). The teacher prepares a folder. On the outside of the folder is a master list of 15 foreign vocabulary paired with corresponding terms in English. Inside the folder is a Cover-Copy-Compare sheet with only foreign vocabulary terms appearing on the left side of the page. From the master list on the cover of the folder, the student studies the first foreign word and its English equivalent. Next, the student opens the folder (hiding the master list) and--from memory--writes the English equivalent next to the foreign term that appears on the Cover-Copy-Compare sheet. Finally, the student refers back to the master list to check his or her response. If incorrect, the student copies the correct English equivalent twice next to the foreign-language term on the CCC sheet before advancing to the next item.

## References

Carter, S. L., Won, C., & Mayton, M. R. (2013). Enhancing foreign language competency using the cover, copy, compare technique: An exploratory evaluation. *Education and Treatment of Children, 36*(2), 105-116.

Joseph, L. M., Konrad, M., Cates, G., Vajcner, T., Eveleigh, E., & Fishley, K. M. (2011). A meta-analytic review of the cover-copy-compare and variations of this self-management procedure. *Psychology in the Schools, 49*(2), 122-136.

Skinner, C. H., Bamberg, H. W., Smith, E. S., & Powell, S. S. (1993). Cognitive cover, copy, and compare: Subvocal responding to increase rates of accurate division responding. *Remedial and Special Education, 14*(1), 49-56.

Skinner, C. H., McLaughlin, T. F., & Logan, P. (1997). Cover, copy, and compare: A self-managed academic intervention effective across skills, students, and settings. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 7*, 295-306.



# Worksheet: Cover-Copy-Compare Student:

Date:

Spelling Words/Sight Words/Math Facts	Student Response
1.	1a.
	1b.
2.	2a.
	2b.
3.	3a.
	3b.
4.	4a.
	4b.
5.	5a.
	5b.
6.	6a.
	6b.
7.	7a.
	7b.
8.	8a.
	8b.
9.	9a.
	9b.
10.	10a.
	10b.

Fold Line



## Cover-Copy-Compare Log: Mastered Items

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ School Yr: \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom/Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of CCC Worksheet: \_\_\_ Math Facts \_\_\_ Spelling Words \_\_\_ Sight Words

List Name/Description: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cumulative Mastery Log:** During the intervention, log each mastered item below with date of mastery.

Item 01:

Date:

Item 11:

Date:

Item 02:

Date:

Item 12:

Date:

Item 03:

Date:

Item 13:

Date:

Item 04:

Date:

Item 14:

Date:

Item 05:

Date:

Item 15:

Date:

Item 06:

Date:

Item 16:

Date:

Item 07:

Date:

Item 17:

Date:

Item 08:

Date:

Item 18:

Date:

Item 09:

Date:

Item 19:

Date:

Item 10:

Date:

Item 20:

Date:



## Cover-Copy-Compare Log: Mastered Items

Item 21:	Date:	Item 34:	Date:
Item 22:	Date:	Item 35:	Date:
Item 23:	Date:	Item 36:	Date:
Item 24:	Date:	Item 37:	Date:
Item 25:	Date:	Item 38:	Date:
Item 26:	Date:	Item 39:	Date:
Item 27:	Date:	Item 40:	Date:
Item 28:	Date:	Item 41:	Date:
Item 29:	Date:	Item 42:	Date:
Item 30:	Date:	Item 43:	Date:
Item 31:	Date:	Item 44:	Date:
Item 32:	Date:	Item 45:	Date:
Item 33:	Date:	Item 46:	Date: