

ESSENTIALspelling

Year 4



In these cases, you might like to focus on the **Major Gaps** section during the **Practise** and **Apply** parts of the lesson. In rare cases, you may feel that it is more appropriate for certain children to tackle this work during the **Teach** section.

The **Practise** sections are generally straightforward and resource light so that teachers do not have to spend time copying and cutting, or explaining rules of games. However, several example resources are included and these could be adapted to work with other sequences. Homework is not mentioned but could be given to fit the sequence.

Likewise, the **Apply** sections follow a regular pattern of children discussing their learning and spelling words in the context of short dictations. Occasionally, an **Apply** section will contain an extended writing activity to challenge the children to choose and use words independently and in context. Spelling tests are not mentioned, but dictations will show whether learning has been assimilated. If single word tests are given, spaced recall is more helpful than testing children on lists of words from that week. In other words, throwing in words from previous weeks will help children bring words from short term into long term memory. A low stakes, manageable way of creating spaced recall opportunities is 'spelling tennis'. This is where children work in pairs to select 10 words from their partner's personal list of spellings and words from previous weeks. They then take it in turns to 'test' each other on these words and can mark these between themselves. This makes spelling tests more relevant to individuals. After any kind of dictation or test, it is imperative that children talk through successes and mistakes with a partner: "I remembered to double the consonant here, but I forgot to include an 'e' there."

It is important that children are able to articulate their learning throughout the sequence and that teachers address any difficulties or misconceptions along the way. This resource is designed so that children can build on prior learning, make connections with existing knowledge and learn strategies that will help them develop their spelling competence. It is through explaining what they have learnt about the patterns and processes of spelling that they will improve their ability to spell accurately.

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International Phonetic Alphabet (non-statutory)

The table below shows each symbol of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and provides examples of the associated grapheme(s). The table is not a comprehensive alphabetic code chart; it is intended simply as guidance for teachers in understanding the IPA symbols used in this document. The pronunciations in the table are, by convention, based on Received Pronunciation and could be significantly different in other accents.

Consonants	
/b/	bad
/d/	dog
/ð/	this
/dʒ/	gem, jug
/f/	if, puff, photo
/g/	gum
/h/	how
/j/	yes
/k/	cat, check, key, school
/l/	leg, hill
/m/	man
/n/	man
/ŋ/	sing
/θ/	both
/p/	pet
/r/	red
/s/	sit, miss, cell
/ʃ/	she, chef
/t/	tea
/tʃ/	check
/v/	vet
/w/	wet, when
/z/	zip, hens, buzz
/ʒ/	pleasure

Vowels	
/ɑ:/	father, arm
/ɒ/	hot
/æ/	cat
/aɪ/	mind, fine, pie, high
/aʊ/	out, cow
/ɛ/	hen, head
/eɪ/	say, came, bait
/ɛə/	air
/əʊ/	cold, boat, cone, blow
/ɪ/	hit
/ɪə/	beer
/i:/	she, bead, see, scheme, chief
/ɔ:/	launch, raw, born
/ɔɪ/	coin, boy
/ʊ/	book
/ʊə/	tour
/u:/	room, you, blue, brute
/ʌ/	cup
/ɜ:/	fern, turn, girl
/ə/	farmer

This chart is adapted slightly from the version provided on the DfE's website to support the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Revisit, Explain, Use

Explain that a homophone is a word that sounds the same as another but is spelt differently, e.g. *mail, male; to, too, two*.

Show homophones (e.g. *bare/bear, mail/male, see/sea*). Together, orally compose sentences that use the words in context.

Share examples from children's independent writing of words where homophones are misspelt.

Teach, Model, Define

Teach the differences in meaning for common homophones / the homophones with which the children struggle. Colour the graphemes that are different in each pair.

Model how the use of mnemonics can be used to aid spelling of these words such as *red berry* and *you bury things underground*
a piece of pie and *please make peace*
eat meat and *meet in the street*

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Practise, Explore, Investigate

- Play homophone bingo by creating boards using the homophone pairs below.
- Create a memory game by copying the words below onto card and chopping them up. Children then take it in turns to find pairs of homophones.
- Pose the question: "How can we remember the different meanings homophones?" Allow discussion and then the child to invent their own mnemonics for common pairs of homophones.

Minor gaps

Consolidate words from Y2 non-statutory list of homophones, plus two or three of the highest-frequency examples from Y3/4 non-statutory examples: *there/their/they're, here/hear, quite/quiet, see/sea, bare/bear, one/won, sun/son, to/too/two, be/bee, blue/blew, night/knight*

Major gaps

Ensure over-learning of three key pairs of homophones from the child's independent writing: *here/hear, to/too/two, be/bee*, and create personalised mnemonics with the child to help secure these words.

Apply, Assess, Reflect

Devise two sentences that include examples of common homophones. Show the child the sentences. Invite them to choose the correct homophone. For example:

- *You must meet/meat Mr Jones. Heel/he'll cell/sell you a cheep/cheap motor car.*
- *I hear/here he has some grate/great cars at the moment.*

Dictate a sentence, for example:

"I threw a ball and it went right through the window."
"When Jasmine came to tea, she ate two pancakes."

Analyse errors and talk about why they might have been made. Read out two pairs of homophones and ask the children to create new sentences, using the given words.

Year group	Statutory statement	Non-statutory examples
1	• N/A	
2	• Homophones	<i>there/their/they're, here/hear, quite/quiet (not homophones technically but often confused), see/sea, bare/bear, one/won, sun/son, to/too/two, be/bee, blue/blew, night/knight</i>
3/4	• Homophones	<i>berry/bury, brake/break, fair/fare, grate/great, groan/grown, here/hear, heel/heal/he'll, knot/not, mail/male, main/mane, meat/meet, missed/mist, peace/piece, plain/plane, rain/rein/reign, weather/whether, whose/who's</i>

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Y3/4 homophone pairs

accept	except	affect	effect
berry	bury	brake	break
grate	great	groan	grown
heel	heal	he'll	knot
rain	rein	mail	male
meat	meet	medal	meddle
peace	piece	plain	plane
weather	whether	whose	who's
ball	bawl	fair	fare
here	hear	main	mane
not	reign	missed	mist
scene	seen		

Y2 homophone pairs

their	there	they're	here
hear	quiet	quite	see
sea	bear	bare	one
won	sun	son	two
too	to	be	bee
blue	blew	night	knight

ESSENTIALspelling Glossary

Affix:

an addition to the base form or root of a word in order to modify its meaning or create a new word (i.e. a prefix or a suffix).

Antonym:

a word opposite in meaning to another (e.g. bad and good).

Common Exception Words (CEWs):

Many **high frequency words** are decodable using **phonics**, but some will initially present difficulties as they contains rarer GPCs that the children will not learn straight away. Once children have progressed through the school's phonics scheme, the **high frequency words** that do not fit any of the **GPCs** studied so far -or have very rare GPCs- are called **Common Exception Words**. Some words may or may not become CEWs depending on regional accent. For example, in the south of England, the words bath, path and grass all sound as if they have an 'ar' sound but in northern accents, the spelling of these words is predictable.

Consonant: a basic speech sound in which the breath is at least partly obstructed, and which can be combined with a vowel to form a syllable. In the alphabet, 21 letters are consonants: *b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z* but *y* also acts as a vowel when found in the middle or end of a word. However, in total, there are 24 consonant sounds in the English language as we also have the digraphs *ch*, *sh* and *th* that each represent single sounds.

Etymology:

the (study of the) origin of a word and the historical development of its meaning.

Digraph:

see **grapheme**

Grapheme:

the smallest unit of writing in a language i.e. the letter or letters representing a single **phoneme** (sound) e.g. m, p, a, ai or ch. Where two letters represent one phoneme, they are known as a digraph (ai or ch). Three letters making one phoneme are known as a trigraph (igh or tch). Similarly, a quadgraph is the term for four letters making one sound (ough or eigh). A **vowel** digraph is made up of two letters making one vowel sound (ay/ou) and a consonant digraph consists of two **consonant** letters making one sound (sh or ng). Consonant digraphs should not be confused with consonant clusters or letter strings that make two or more separate sounds (e.g. spl, tr or cl). A split vowel digraph consists of two vowel letters making one phoneme but straddled around a consonant (*came* or *like*). The second vowel in the digraph is always an e but it is silent. It acts to turn a **short vowel** sound into a **long vowel** sound and makes the first vowel letter say its name (e.g. ah to ay).

Grapheme- phoneme correspondence (GPC):

the letters that represent sounds in a word. If a word has 3 (phonemes) sounds, it will have the corresponding number of graphemes i.e. 3. This does not necessarily mean 3 letters. For example, the word cup has 3 phonemes and 3 graphemes (c-u-p), but so does the word rain (r-ai-n). The word church also has 3 phonemes and graphemes (ch-ur-ch). Each grapheme corresponds to the phoneme. If the letters representing a sound are rare or unusual, the words can be tricky to spell. The word fruit has 4 phonemes and graphemes (f-r-ui-t) and it has an unusual GPC in the middle- ui making an 'oo' sound. This word is said to contain a 'rare GPC'.

High frequency words (HFW):

Words that occur most often in the written language. These are often identified as the first 100 most common words and the next 200 medium frequency words. Many are decodable using phonics, but some will present difficulties as they contain rarer **GPCs** that the children will not learn straight away. Once children have progressed through their phonics scheme, the high frequency words that do not fit any of the GPCs studied so far are called **Common Exception Words** (see linked glossary entry).

Long vowel:

see **vowel**

Morpheme:

the smallest meaningful unit in a language (e.g. wait = one morpheme, waiting = 2: wait + ing). It is not the same as a word, or a syllable. For example, grandmother is one word with 2 morphemes (grand + mother) and 3 syllables (grand + moth + er). Morphemes can be '**bound**' (only found attached to a root word and cannot operate independently e.g. un- or -ed), '**unbound**' or '**free**' (able to stand alone e.g. happy).

Morphology:

In linguistics, morphology analyses the structure of words and parts of words, such as **root words**, **prefixes**, and **suffixes**. It explores how words can change and looks at their relationship to each other.

Phoneme:

the smallest unit of sound in a language. Represented by a corresponding **grapheme**.

Phoneme frame:

A resource used in the teaching of **phonics** and spelling to help children segment words into constituent sounds. The frame is typically a long rectangle divided lengthways into boxes. When children hear a word, they are encouraged to represent each **phoneme** heard by placing a **grapheme** in each box, in sequence and in the order in which the sounds are heard. For example, the word farm would be represented as:

f	ar	m
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Phoneme spotter:

A resource designed to support the teaching of target **phonemes/graphemes** within a context. The aim is for the children to read and comprehend the text in the first instance. They can then identify the target words, which have been chosen to support revision, new learning and extension, where appropriate. Teachers may decide to use extracts from the spotter to support assessment through dictation.

Phonics:

is a method of teaching children to read by linking sounds (phonemes) and the symbols that represent them (graphemes, or letter groups).

Prefix:

A prefix is an **affix** that is placed before the root of a word. Adding it to the beginning of one word changes it into another word. For example, when the prefix un- is added to the word happy, it creates the word unhappy. Whilst a prefix carries meaning and will therefore change the meaning of a word, it is a '**bound morpheme**' in that it can only be found attached to a root word and cannot operate on its own.

Root word:

A word stem or base that has no prefix or suffix attached to it. The root is the smallest unit of meaning associated with the word. For example, in the word unhelpful, help is the root word. A root word carries meaning and is usually an '**unbound (or free) morpheme**' in that it can stand alone without the addition of other morphemes and still make sense.

Schwa sound:

see **unstressed vowel**

Silent letters:

In some words, there are letters whose presence cannot be heard in a word such as the g in gnome, the w in two or the b in thumb. The spellings of these words are often the legacy of historic pronunciations and its **etymology**.

Short vowel:

see **vowel**

Suffix:

A suffix is an **affix** that is placed after the root of a word. Adding it to the end of one word changes it into another word. For example, when the suffix -ful is added to the word joy, it creates the word joyful. A consonant suffix begins with a **consonant** letter (e.g. -ment) and a vowel suffix begins with a vowel letter (e.g. -ing). Whilst a suffix carries meaning and will therefore change the meaning of a word, it is a '**bound morpheme**' in that it can only be found attached to a root word and cannot operate on its own.

Syllable:

a unit of pronunciation having one **vowel** sound, with or without surrounding **consonants**, forming the whole or a part of a word; for example, there are two syllables in danger and three in elephant. Sometimes syllables are referred to as the 'beats' of a word.

Synonym:

a word or phrase that means exactly or nearly the same as another word or phrase in the same language, for example *jump* is a synonym of *leap*.

Unstressed vowel:

this is the 'uh' sound we hear in "weak" syllables in English words, like the er in sister or the i in family. It is found in many words and can be spelt using just about any vowel spelling, so can be difficult for children to distinguish and spell. It is also known as the schwa sound.

Vowel:

a vocal sound made with a relatively open mouth compared to a **consonant**. There are 5 vowel letters in the English language: a,e,i,o,u (with the letter y often acting as a vowel when at the end or beginning of words). There are 20 vowel sounds in the English language, many made by **vowel digraphs**. **Short vowels** are **vowel** sounds that are pronounced in a short form. In English the **short vowel sounds** are those in pat, pet, pit, pot, put, putt. They are often (but not always) represented by a single letter (consider words like bread and hook where the short e and u are represented by two vowel letters). Conversely, a long vowel is a vowel sound that is pronounced the same way as the name of the letter itself in words such as rain, week, light, boat, cube. Long vowels are vowel sounds often (but not always) represented by two or more letters (consider words like unicorn and table where the long vowel sound is represented by the single vowel letter u). **There are other vowel sound classifications such as 'r controlled vowels' (e.g. ar, or, ur, air, eer, ear) and 'vowel diphthongs' (e.g. ow, ou, oy, oi), but it is usually easier to talk about these with children in terms of them also being types of long vowel sounds.**

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