

WRTR Mini-Lessons

For moms too tired to think up their own word examples.

Welcome!

The following pages are meant to help you “teach” the preliminary skills and the spelling rules when your child needs more than the examples on the rule page, or those words are just too darn hard.

Preliminary Skills

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Segmenting and Counting Sounds

“Segmentation is the ability to break words down into individual sounds.” Sit beside the child. Starting with the right hand thumb, student and teach count sounds on their fingers.

Verbal pattern: “Zag”, z-a-g (touch fingers), 3 sounds.

Practice segmenting and counting some of the following words with your child:

zag	rich	hog	then	mop	me	the	pill
sun	milk	stop	flee	legs	wish	flip	mush
yak	brisk	lunch	twist	crisp	blush	smell	chimp
grasp	still	yelp	spit	slush	trip	scruff	dress

Blending

Given a series of segmented sounds, the child should be able to put it back together. Try a few of these. For a younger child, holding up fingers as you say the sounds helps.

Verbal pattern: z-a-g, what is that? “Zag.” m-u-sh, what’s that? “mush.”

Orally give the child sound segments to blend:

me	do	and	can	brim	nip	snuff	frog
stop	stand	must	brand	clasp	lisp	shift	smith
he	they	she	drop	bless	nut	cry	crutch
hand	we	no	spot	bush	flint	boat	splash

Blending “for Spelling”

Spalding almost exclusively relies on the “say it funny” device for proper spelling, like how most of us remember FebRUary or WeDNESday. Break single syllable words into sounds, then blend them back “for spelling,” NOT for normal speech.

NOTE: Say the stupid short i. There are NINE ways to misspell /E/ but only a couple of ways to misspell /i/. Forcing an /i/ makes the word memorable and drastically reduces the incorrect spelling possibilities. It comes in really handy, especially when the words get longer. “I and Y say EE as well, but that won’t help us spell.”

was: /w/ /ah/ /z/, /wahz/” (not /wuz/)

do: /d/ /oo/, /doo/”

cat: /ck /a/ /t/, /kat/

may: /m/ /A/, /mA/

ring*: /r/ /i/ /ŋ/, /riŋ/ (not /rEŋ/)

*In case you, like me, have never noticed, ŋ doesn’t have a /g/. It sticks to the roof of your mouth. Try saying ding, dong and really pronouncing the g’s. Doesn’t work. Had no idea. You?

Vowels

"Vowels are speech sounds made with an open vocal track." They are LOUD! Try screaming "fish" without the "i". Can't do it. The child should be able to list the vowels easily. A, E, I, O, U. If not, make a card and put it in your daily memory work.

Write a few of these on the board and have the child ID the vowel(s):

cat	grip	clod	cut
cap	crest	fig	gum
silk	pulp	hop	cast
nut	sprint	stump	sift

Vowel phonograms contain a vowel sound. Once the above exercise is easy, have him underline the single and multi-letter vowel PHONOGRAM(S) in the following words:

bar	her	saw	pea
light	corn	day	eat
seem	play	fort	point
rain	count	vein	boat

Consonants

Consonants are speech sounds made by blocking sound or air with our lips, tongue, and teeth. They can be voiced or unvoiced. Have the child feel his throat and yell MMMMM. This is a voiced consonant, it uses your voice-box. Now yell SSSSSS. There are no vibrations to feel. Whether a consonant is voiced or unvoiced, it's hard to scream one without adding a vowel.

Write some of these words on the board and have your child spot the consonants:

bug	tramp	crisp	slim
bust	big	wept	jump
bland	soft	grasp	plan

Multi-letter consonant phonograms have NO VOWEL PARTS. Find them in the words below:

bath	ship	batch	gnat
chin	such	parch	shift
knit	sign	wring	birth

Syllables

"A syllable is a unit of speech with one and only one vowel sound." Feel your chin as you slowly say the words below. Your jaw drops with each vowel sound. Count them in the following words:

hobnob	me	talcum	butterfly
moon	pancake	goat	skillet
understand	Chicago	coffee	fan

Sounding Out and Blending Syllables “for Spelling”

In Spalding, sounding out and blending is only for spelling; reading is always whole-word. “Sounding it out” is considered a *bad* reading habit!

Sound and blend the words below “for spelling”. Accent every syllable. Preserve short vowels (*especially* the stupid i) and the double letters between syllables. If you clap quickly as you blend, it helps.

imitate: /im/ /i/ /tAt/, /im-i-tAt/ (not /im'-uh-tAt/)

valley: /val/ /li/, /val-li/ (not /ee/)

doctor: /doc/ /tor/, /doc-tor/ (not /er/)

civil: /si/ /vil/, /si vil/ (not si-vul)

Syllable Types

Your younger child DOES NOT NEED to know this, but I use some of the terminology in my notes so it will help MOM or Dialectical-stage children to get the big picture.

There are six syllable types: Closed, Open, Vowel Teams, R-controlled, E Job-1 (called VCE elsewhere), and E Job-4 (called CLE elsewhere).

- Closed: single vowel, door shut with one or more syllables. Short sound. (cat, hobnob)
Because of the Sister Rabbit Pattern (p.
- Open: single vowel, long sound yelled out the open door. (me, do, **be**-long)
- Vowel Teams: multi-letter phonograms say what they want, wherever. (see, feed, loud)
- R-controlled: say what they like, but act like closed syllables for suffixes. (bar, barring)
- E Job-1: a consonant closed the door, but “e” helps the vowel yell a long sound anyway
- E Job-4: these are all the consonant-L-E syllables that make no sense.

THE RULES

Rule 1 (Q is a chicken): U always follows q and is not a vowel.

quit	quest	queen	quip
quench	squeal	quaint	squib
quiz	quid		

Write some of these on the board. Underline multi-letter phonograms. Ask for each word, "Why did I underline qu?" "Because Q is a chicken. U is not a vowel here. It's following Q." Read through for spelling and again in normal speech.

Rule 2: C says /s/ before e, i, and y.

cent	pen cil	cinch
ul cer	cen ter	cin der
cit rus	ran cid	ceil ing

Write some of these on the board. Underline multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 2 after each. Ask for each, "Why is c saying /s/ here?" "Because it's followed by e." Read for spelling and again in normal speech..

Rule 3: G may say /j/ before e, i, and y.

gem	mag ic	gin ger
mar gin	germ	gen der
gym	con gest	gen er ous

Write some of these on the board. Underline multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 3 after each. Ask for each, "Why is g saying /g/?" "Because it is followed by i." Read for spelling and again in normal speech..

Rule 4 (Open Door): At the end of a syllable, a, e, o, and u are long.

bo nus	de mon	cro cus
stu pid	lo tus	ho tel
po tent	be gan	be long

Write some of these on the board. Underline multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 4 after each. Ask for each, "Why is u long?" "The vowel can yell a long sound out the open door because no consonant has closed it." Read for spelling and again in normal speech.

Rule 5: I and y usually say /i/, but may say /I/.

si lent	ty rant	cy ber
qui et	i dol	I rish
i ris	by way	gi ant

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms and long vowels. Write r. 5 after each. "Why is i saying /eye/ here?" "Because he's taking his option to yell a long sound out the open door." Read the list for spelling.

Rule 6: English words don't end in i, please use y.

my	fly	dry
dan dy	bel fry	shy
plen ty	flim sy	gyp sy

Write some of these on the board. Underline multi-letter phonograms and long vowels. Notice that you're looking at a bunch of open syllables where y isn't taking his long sound option. Write r. 5, 6 after each word with a final /eye/. Write r. 6 after the rest. Read list for spelling. Keep those multi-syllable final y's as short i's. Every time, I say "I and Y say EE as well, but that won't help us spell." Then read the list in normal speech.

Rule 7: There are five kinds of silent e.

Job 1, jump 1	rode	joke	tune	safe
V u, job 2	hue	give	groove	sue
C g, job 3	quince	prince	grunge	hinge
Job 4, more	bun dle	can dle	sim ple	hum ble
Handyman E	house	horse	freeze	cheese

Write some of these on the board. Underline multi-letter phonograms. See the book for proper silent e markings. Ask for each, "What is e's job here?"

Job 1, Let's the little vowel yell his long sound over the head of the consonant that tried to close the door.

For Job 5, I point out that he's not *entirely* shiftless. He's often keeping us from thinking words are plural. Without him, horse would be hors, a plural of the nonsense word "hor." Cheese would be chees, a plural of the nonsense word "chee."

For a child that has difficulty remembering the silent e, we pop our hands over our mouths at the end of a word. /r/-/O/-/d/-(*). It's really memorable, especially if you read a whole list of them.

Rule 8: There are 5 kinds of /er/. W makes “or” say /er/.

fern	jerk	perk	verb
bird	skir mish	swirl	squirm
burn	slur	church	burst
worm	world	worst	word
earn	earl	learn	earth

Write some of these on the board. Mark the multi-letter phonograms. Put r. 8 after only the “wor” words, because “W screws everything up!” Read for spelling and again in normal speech.

Rule 9 (Doubling Rule): To add a vowel-beginning suffix to a 1-syllable word with 1-vowel and 1 final consonant, double the consonant.

run ning	pop ped	big gest	mad der
stun ning	dip ped	fat test	pop per
fib bing	trim ped	thin nest	hug ger

Do yourself a favor and go teach the Sister Rabbit Pattern (p. 17) first, it makes this rule easy. I’m not going to even explain it the other way.

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 9 after each. For each word ask, “Why did we double the n here?” “Because the suffix ___ starts with a vowel. To keep the closed syllable up front, we need two consonants between.”

*Note: R-controlled syllables (p. 4) follow this rule too.

Rule 10 (Harder Doubling Rule): To add a vowel-beginning suffix to a 2-syllable word with 1-vowel and 1 final consonant, (and the accent is on the 2nd syllable) double the consonant.

ex cel ling	un zipped	ab hor ring
oc cur red	in terred	ex tol ling
un wrap ped	re cut ting	un fit ting
re but table	trans mit table	met al lic

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 10 after each. Some also have other rules. It couldn’t be avoided on this one. Pop in your r. 4, 20, 28, and 29’s, if you like. But, more importantly, ask for each, “Why is the ‘l’ doubled?” “Because ‘ing’ begins with a vowel would snatch the consonant from that accented closed syllable.”

Rule 11 (Dropping Rule): To add a vowel-beginning suffix to a silent e word, drop the e.

blam ing	clos ing	lik ing	cut est
driv er	fin er	bak er	whit ish
loved	ad mired	us ed	fat ed

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 11 after each. Ask, "What is the base word?" Also ask, "Where did the 'e' in 'blame' go?" "It was dropped because the suffix starts with 'i'." "If the 'E' is gone, how is that 'a' still long?" "Because magic 'e' works even when he's invisible."

Rule 12: I before e, except after c, or sounded like /ay/.

wield	priest	pier
pix ie	brie	zom bie
shield	die sel	chief
de ceive	re ceipt	ceil ing
con ceit	per ceive	con ceive
vein	rein	skein
reign	heir	beige
veil	feign	sur veil

Write some of these on the board. Put r. 12 after each. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Ask for each, "Why do we use 'ei'?" "Because it followed 'c'." For the third set ask, "Why do we use 'ei'?" "Because it's saying /ay/." (Notice this isn't the usual rhyme. "Neighbor" and "weigh" use "eigh" which is its own separate thing.)

Rule 13 (Shiny Fish Friendship): In a base word, "sh" at the beginning or the end of a syllable, or the suffix "ship." Sh doesn't start other syllables.

fish	shrimp	bash	shoe
shelf	blush	fresh	shin
lord ship	queen ship	lea der ship	ow ner ship

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. You may write r. 13 after these, but it's used inconsistently in the spelling lists. I haven't figured it out. Ask for each, "Why is /sh/ 'sh' here?" "Because it ends the base word 'fish'." Or, "It's the suffix 'ship'." And so on...

Rule 14 (Special Mission Motion): Ti, si, ci, are used to say /sh/ to begin syllables after the first one.

ques tion	men tion	ac tion
ses sion	func tion	sec tion
fa cial	spe cial	con di tion
mi li tia	an cient	na tion

Ti is the most common, especially when we're talking "shun's" (tion). Mark multi-letter phonograms, write r. 14 after all, and ask for each, "Why did we use 'ti' here?" "Because it's starting the second syllable."

Note: We aren't yet contrasting WHICH one, just that it's not "sh".

Rule 15 (Tense Discussion): "Si" says /sh/ when the syllable before it ends in s.

com mis sion	di gres sion	dis cus sion
pas sion	mis sion	Prus sian
sup pres sion	ag gres sion	ces sion

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 14, 15 after each. Ask for each, "Why is 'si' saying /sh/ here?" "Because the syllable before starts with an 's'." Go through each and read for spelling. Lots of repeating the double consonants and weird stuff: "com-miss-shun."

Note: When you hear a short vowel followed by "shun," it's often "ssion." When it's the "root" that ended in "S" (tense), you might not get the double. (tension)

Rule 16 (Persian Fusion): Si may say /zh/ as in vision

Hoo sier	Per sia	ver sion
vi sion	am ne sia	col li sion
cor ro sion	de ci sion	di vi sion
ero sion	ex plo sion	in clu sion

If the base or root does not end in "s", "si" usually says /zh/. If you hear /zhun/ in a word, it's almost always "sion." /Zhah/ at the end is almost always "sia."

Mark multi-letter phonograms; write r. 16 after each. A couple also need r. 4. Read each for spelling.

Rule 17 (FLoSsy): We often double final l, s, and f after a single, short vowel.

off	buff	whiff	fluff
moss	bass	kiss	mass
bill	hill	tell	quill

Write some of these on the board. Underline the multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 17 after each. "Why are there 2 f's here?" "Because it's following a single short vowel." Read for spelling and again in normal speech.

Rule 18: Use ay for /A/ at the end of a word.

may	pray	gray	pay
stray	sway	hay	bray
ray	bay	say	clay

Write some of these on the board. Mark the multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 18 after each. Ask for each, "Why do we use ay here?" "Because we hear a final /A/." Read for spelling and again in normal speech.

Rule 19 (Old Wild Words): i and o may say /I/ and /O/ before 2 consonants.

child	mild	wild
old	bold	gold
bind	wind	kind
bolt	jolt	colt
most	post	host

Write some on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. (We don't underline the long i's and o's.) Write r. 19 after each. Ask, "Why does o say /O/ here?" "Because o took his option to yell a long sound over their heads even though the door is closed."

Rule 20: Letter s never follows x. X already has one, /ks/.

exceed	extra	exist
excise	excite	exit
excess	complex	exact

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 20 after each. (This rule is only marked on multi-syllable words. I don't know why.) Also, there's only one word I could find in English that breaks this rule: exsanguination.

Rule 21 (Prefixes aren't FLoSsy): All has 2- l's but as a prefix only one l is written

al ready al right al though
al so al most

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms and r. 4. Write r. 21 after all. Read for spelling, preserving those short vowels.

Rule 22 (Suffixes aren't FLoSsy) till and full have 2-l's but when written with another syllable only one l is written

health ful un til ful fill
art ful len til pis til

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms and r. 4 and r. 19 instances. Write r. 22 after all. Read for spelling, preserving those short vowels.

Rule 23 (Fudge Rule) "dge" is only used after a single vowel that says it's short sound.

ledge edge fudge trudge
smudge lodge badge wedge
dredge hedge judge dodge
bridge pledge ridge nudge

English words don't end in j. Your choices are ge or dge. If it's a single short vowel, it's dge.

Write some of these on the board. Mark the multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 23 after each. For each ask, "Why did we use dge?" "Because it follows /e/."

Rule 24 (Changing Rule) When adding an ending to a word that ends with a consonant + y, use i instead of y unless the ending is ing.

cried	de nied	var ied	tries
cop ies	en vy ing	stud y ing	lob by ist
vy ing	bur ies	fly ing	re plied

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Add r. 4 and r. 5 where needed. Add r. 24 to all. Ask for each, "What is the base word?" Then ask for each, "Why did we use an 'i' here?" "Because with suffix 'ed', y changes to i." Or "Why did we use 'y' here?" "Because the suffix 'ist' begins with an 'i'."

Read for spelling. Don't let your i's and y's go /ee/. Keep them short. It really does help avoid spelling errors. Then go back through and read it for normal speech.

Rule 25 (Snack Truck): Use ck for /k/ after a short, single, accented vowel.

sick	block	back	pick
black	track	pock et	tick et
check	chick en	knock	struck

Write some on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 25 after each. Ask for each, "Why is /k/ ck?" "Because it's following /i/." Read for spelling and then again in normal speech..

Rule 26: Capitalize proper nouns.

Kan sas	Ne bras ka	Ben
New York	Pat rick	Eas ter
Ger man	Mem phis	Zach

I have yet to need to really teach this rule, but there you go.

Rule 27: /z/ is only Z at the start of a word.

zip	zest	zoom
zag	zoo	zeal

Write some on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 27 after each. Ask "Why is /z/ a z?" "Because it's up front." Read for spelling and then again in normal speech..

Rule 28 (Ed-D-T): Ed says /t/ after unvoiced sounds, /d/ after voiced sounds, and /ed/ after /d/ and /t/.

Voiced:	cleaned	maimed	bowled	peeled
Unvoiced:	rushed	stumped	pinched	asked
/d/ /t/:	land ed	hunt ed	sift ed	crust ed

Voiced sounds use our voice boxes. They hum. Feel your throat and say “mmmm, nnnnn, /d/, /g/.” Now try “shhhh, /ch/, /p/.” There’s no hum. Ed changes to match. /rusht/ /cleend/

For adding ed to final /d/ or /t/ sounds, we need a spacer. Can’t say /bud-d/ for budded or /bat-t/ for batted. And since the spacer is a vowel, which is voiced, the d says /d/.

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 28 after each. Ask, “Why does ed say /d/?” “Because it follows /n/.” Read for spelling and then again in normal speech.

Rule 29 (Sister Stutters): For spelling, say both consonants in a middle double.

pos sum	mut ton	let ter
muf fin	lad der	ban ner
bet ter	rub ber	ten nis
shud der	fos sil	sup per

Write some of these on the board. Mark multi-letter phonograms. Write r. 29 after each. Read for spelling, keeping the double letters between consonants and avoiding schwa. Ask for each, “Why did I say /poS/ /Sum/?” “Because for spelling, we say both consonants between syllables.”

Syllable Division

The child doesn’t need this, but it will help MOM to know what’s going on so she doesn’t throw WRTR out the nearest window. Dictionary syllable division isn’t like spoken. Not all of the wacky pronunciation is Spalding’s fault; some is Webster’s.

Pattern 1: If it’s there, “Count back three and chop consonant-L-E”

stum ble	bat tle	bub ble
sim ple	snif file	han dle

Pattern 2: If there is only a single consonant phonogram between two vowel phonograms, “give it to the second guy.”

o pen	ra ven	ze ro	lo cust
hu man	stu dent	o men	la bel

Pattern 3: Divide between compound words.

pig pen	dish pan	whip lash
sun fish	foot ball	rail road

Pattern 4: Multi-letter phonograms stay together, even when it negates other patterns.*

or chard	pan ther	dol phin
au thor	leath er*	buck le*

Multi-letter phonograms never divide. They are still just ONE phonogram. Also, notice that the consonant, multi-letter phonogram usually doesn't go to "the second guy" unless there's a vowel team in the first syllable (or, ar, au, etc.) though leather and feather *still* keep it to themselves.

Pattern 5: If there are 2+ consonant phonograms (or none) between two vowel phonograms, share and share alike, keeping "blends with their friends," if you can.

but ton	les son	com plex
cap let	bob bin	rab bit

Pattern 6: The affix stands alone. (Remember the "cheese stands alone" from the song?)

Base- the smallest unit of meaning that is still an English word.

Affix- a word part that we add to a base word to change its meaning.

Suffix- an affix that attaches to the end of a base word

Prefix- an affix that attaches to the beginning of a base word

same ness	hope less	safe ly
bait ed	use ful	al read y

Syllable Division Summary

1. Count back three, chop "Consonant-L-E."
2. If there's only one consonant phonogram between, "give it to the second guy."
3. Divide between compound words.
4. Multi-letter consonant phonograms stay together, even when it negates other rules.
5. More than one between? Share and share alike, keeping "blends with their friends."
6. The affix stands alone.

Memory Hooks and Fuller Explanations

We find the following memory cues very handy; they often “complete” the concept for a particular Spalding rule. You will often see them pop up in my notes. I don't make the kids mark them anymore (used to in my old keys), but I do mention the memory hook each time.

For /k/ followed by any other letter, K takes e, i, y and c takes the rest! Because of Rule 2, if /k/ is in front (not just of a word, even in front of other letters, K takes e, i, y, and c takes the rest.

- Kennel, kind, like, etc.
- Crash, cat, coin, bacon, etc.

K really LOVES to end words, but he's afraid of short single vowels sneaking up on him. Vowel teams and other consonants are okay, too. (In Rule 25 we see “c” come to his rescue.) But, he can only stand it *at all* in the first syllable. For the end of a multi-syllable word, he runs away entirely and c goes it alone. We sometimes call it **Magic Milk Truck** or just “K loves..”

- Dark, bank, squeak, milk
- r. 25 snack, truck
- Magic, tarmac, concentric

Sister Rabbit Pattern: “A closed syllable up front needs two consonants between.” Why? A single consonant always goes *to the second guy*.

1. With 2 between: sis-ter, rab-bit, pat-tern
2. With only 1 between: fi-nal, le-gal, la-bel

Happy Jumbo Kittens have closed syllables up front and don't follow the Sister Rabbit pattern, but they aren't BREAKING it. Some letters CAN'T double. They'd follow the pattern if they could. It's just not an option. Cov-er isn't breaking the pattern on purpose, there's just no such thing as “covver” in English.

“**Happy Jumbo KittenS Wearing Giant Yogurt Vests.**” The letters H, J, K, W, S saying /z/, G saying /j/, Y, and V can't double.

Camel words, alternatively, break the Sister Rabbit Pattern for NO REASON. “Camel” could really be “cammel” right? “Camel” should be read /kA-mel/. Denim could really be “dennim.” “Denim” should be read /dE-nim/. Camel words really could follow the pattern, they're just being obnoxious.

Rule 30: Broken Bells (Bing-Bang-Bonk!) Multi-letter phonograms never divide, but they often drop a letter when a similar sound follows. (“ng” is the most common)

Only “ng” says /ng/, but when followed by /k/ or /g/ the “g” melts into glue.

- “Bank” isn’t /b/-/a/-/n/-/k/, it’s /b/-/a/-/ng/-/k/
- “Ban-gle” isn’t /ban/-/gle/, it’s /bang/-/gle/. The “ng” didn’t divide. There’s a genuine “g” sound following it, so the first “g” melted into glue.
- “Van-quish” isn’t /van/-/kwish/, it’s /vang/-/kwish/ “Qu” has s /k/ sound in there so the “g” melted again.

This comes up rarely with other phonograms, but can still be helpful.

“Budg-et” in syllables is budge + et, but the first “e” melted.

Rule 31: Extra Tall Squash “A” may say it’s third sound if preceded by /w/ or followed by // (accented syllables), or if it’s hanging on the end all alone.

- Squash: /s/ /kw/ /ah/ /sh/.
- Call: /k/ /ah/ //
- Ex-tra: /eks/-/trah/

Suffixes like to match.

- If the preceding sound uses a voice box sound, suffix s does too. Birds, buttons, zoos.
- If the preceding sound is unvoiced, suffix s is too. Ships, rafts, books.
- If the preceding sound is TOO matchy-matchy (/s/, /sh/, /ch/), the suffix needs a spacer vowel E. And since vowels are always voiced, you get /ez/. Fishes, foxes, benches.

Huge Fudge Batch

This expands Rule 23. Like k, final ch and ge LOVE to end words, but they’re afraid of short single vowels. D often comes to help ge. T comes to help ch. We only mark r. 23 when Spalding says so, but I mention the Huge Fudge Batch when we see final ge, ch, dge, or tch.

Pumped Raft and Buttered Bread

This is a “test” for distinguishing between the “ed” suffix and base words ending in /d/ or /t/.

- If you hear a word like “prompt”, but you don’t see it spelled, is it a “t” or an “ed”? If it’s an “ed” then it’s a past tense suffix word. To find out we check the “pumped raft”. We rip off the /t/ sound and try to add “ing”. If it’s “prompted” then there should be such a thing as “prompting”.
- Alternatively, for a word like “pumped” you can rip off the /t/ and add ing. Pumping is a real thing.
- It works for the /d/ sound too. Rip the /d/ off “battered” and add “ing.” Battering is a real thing. But, try that with a word like “yard.” Yarring? Not a thing. So it’s just a base word ending in /d/.

Rare Stories

All of these phonograms/sound pairs appear in less than 10 English words. We use wacky stories to remember them. Most of the time *only I know them*, but the pictures are so vivid, the child easily remembers that there’s something crazy about that word.

AIGH: An Ideal Growth Habit = straight. It’s the only English word with this phonogram.

AUGH: Awful Ugly Goat Hater = The farmer caught his haughty, naughty daughter and taught her not to slaughter the animals. She was fraught and distraught.

- Even weirder: Slaughtering animals is no laughing matter.

EA #3: We took a break (with a bear) and had a great steak, yea!

EI #1,2:

- Weirdly, he put the receipt on the ceiling to deceive me about what he’d received. It was conceit to conceive a plan and think I would not perceive his deceit.
- Their reigning heir was under surveillance. She wore a beige veil and feigned an afternoon ride, but her horse tripped on a skein and his rein cut off his vein.

EIGH: Elves in Green Hats = My neighbor has a sleigh with eight neighing ponies that pull the weight of the freight.

- Even weirder: The ponies ran over an elf of sleight height.

EY #1: They obey and put the prey in the why.

GU: A roguish guy in disguise guarded the guild’s guillotine. Without guile, he guided each guilty guest away, guaranteeing a baguette and a Guinness if they guessed his guitar-playing guinea pig’s name.

IE #2: The pie vie was a tie, until one died from a lie.

OE: The foe of my toe is a doe with a hoe. Woe to me, I need aloe. Joe's foe is the schmoe with roe in his oboe.

OU(L) #2: Oh my soul! There's a cantaloupe boulder on my shoulder. Get a poultry poultice!

OU(R) #2: Four pompadoured gourds mourn. Tears course from their source and pour onto the tennis court.

OUGH: Over Under Grinding Heels.

To remember what stories are grouped here: Thor and America are getting their feet done.

- Saying AH/AW: "For the evil he has wrought, Loki ought to be sought, fought, and brought to justice," Captain America thought, as he bought the dreadnought.
- Saying OH:
Thorough Thor, oh!
 He watches o'er the borough
although he is on furlough.
 And doesn't make much dough, ho!
- Saying OO: Through
- Saying UFF: Pumice is rough and tough enough to slough a callus.
- Saying OFF: Feet gross me out, so I needed to cough in the trough.
- Saying OW: A drought broke the boughs.

UI: I am in pursuit of the recruit in a suit that bruised the fruit on the cruise and escaped out the sluice.