

Chapter 6

Applying and using knowledge

Introduction

This chapter explores different techniques to break up words. Visual patterns (digraphs, letter strings or word families) are highlighted and made memorable by using mnemonics, word pyramids and sorting techniques, which give children strong visual and oral memories of a base word from which they can spell huge families of words.

However, the visual unity is often foiled by the tricky fact that these 'families' do not have a uniform pronunciation! So the second level of all these activities is to highlight and provide ways to define and explain (or at least explore) these differences.

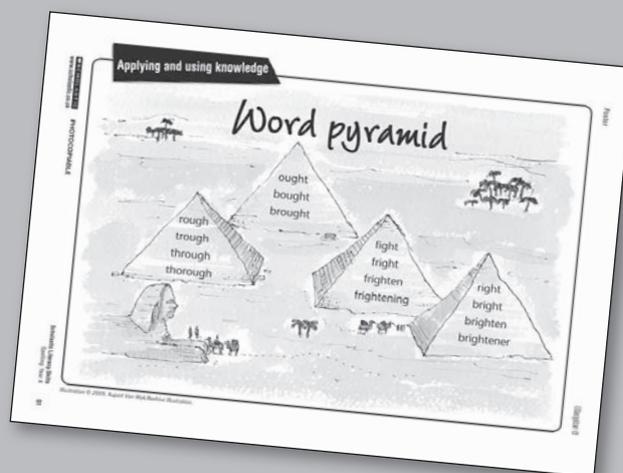
Poster notes

Word pyramid (page 91)

Use this poster to show children how powerful the patterns of words can be in terms of creating an image for your brain to remember. Each pyramid has the same pattern and shows how adding a letter or suffix makes a new word. But when you say these words in the first pyramid, it is clear that the pronunciation does not follow the pattern. Encourage the children to create their own pyramids where they expand upon a letter string, creating words that have a common pattern.

In this chapter

Word families page 92	To spell words with common letter strings but different pronunciations.
Vowel digraphs page 96	To spell words with common vowel digraphs but different pronunciations.
Exploring /k/ page 100	To explore the hard /k/ sound at the ends of words. To explore where and how the letter 'k' appears in words.
Assessment page 104	Activities and ideas to assess knowledge of spelling families.



Applying and using knowledge

Word pyramid

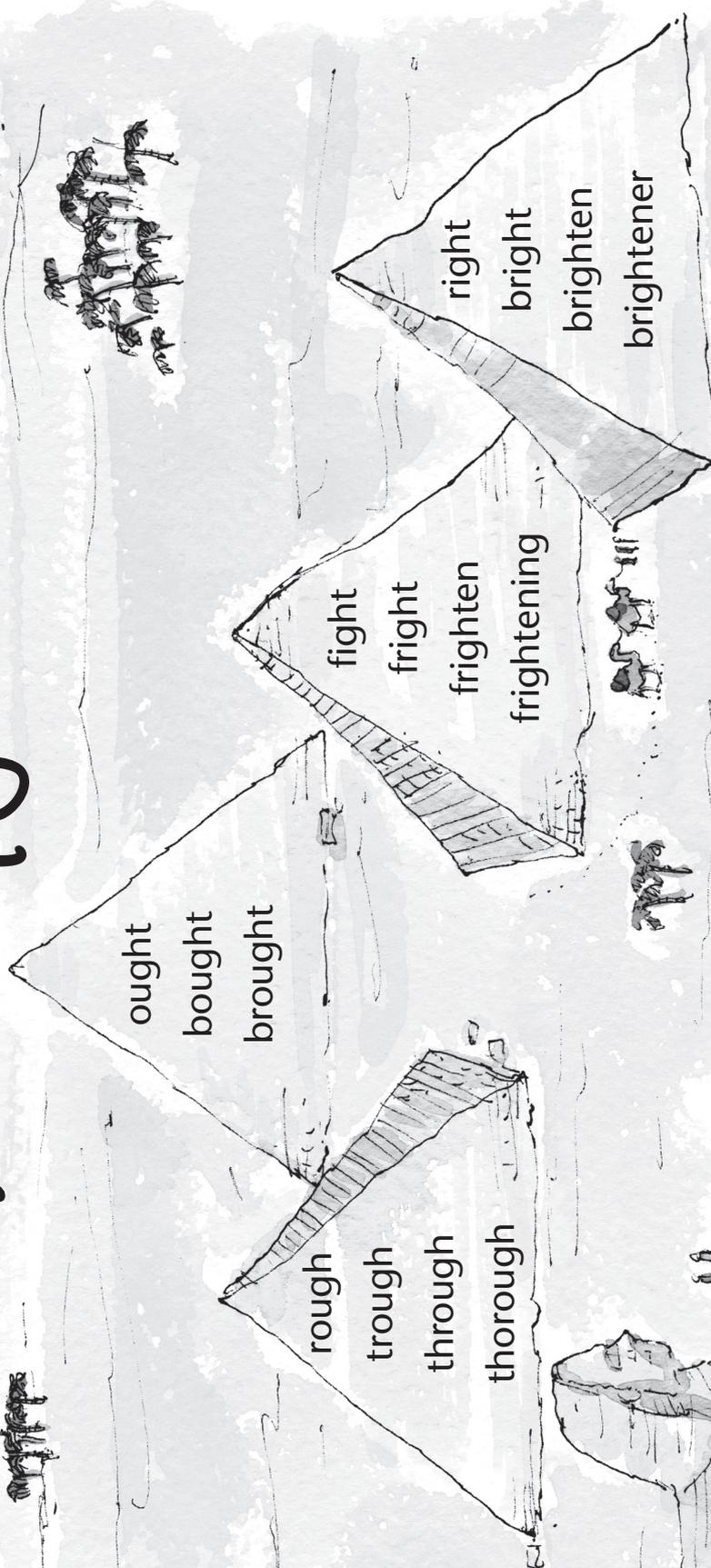


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Word families

Objective

To spell words with common letter strings but different pronunciations.

Background knowledge

Mnemonics are useful strategies for creating a visual and oral basis to remember tricky spellings. They are very powerful when they are used for a group of words in that they can represent the tricky bit of a word family.

In these activities, mnemonics are used to represent the 'ight' and 'ough' families. This strategy is used to introduce the visual pattern but as each of these letter strings or word families have a range of pronunciations, sorting games will help the children to make distinctions of sound within the family.

Activities

● Photocopiable page 93 'Fun with mnemonics'

Read the mnemonic and the words to be sorted. Pick some words from the list and encourage the children to extend the mnemonic. For example: *rough – Ron Oh U Gorgeous Hunk!* Return to the words and say the words in the list together. Ask the children to say what they notice about the pronunciation of the words. They should sort and write the words next to the appropriate 'hunks', according to how the word is said.

● Photocopiable page 94 'Mighty mnemonics'

Read the mnemonic and the words to be sorted. Encourage the children to extend the mnemonic. For example: *might – Mum I've Got Homework Tonight.* Read the words a second time and place them in the correct column according to how they are said. Challenge the children to think of a way of differentiating between the homophones *knight* and *night*.

● Photocopiable page 95 'Ear rap!'

The letter string 'ear' has three pronunciations or 'rap styles': /air/ as in *bear*; /ur/ as in *earth* and /ear/ as in *gear*. Work together to sort the words into groups, writing them in lists on the whiteboard (or on individual whiteboards). Now challenge the children to sort the words according to the rap type and then slot them where they think appropriate in the poem. Have fun saying the crazy poem together as part of a plenary session. Challenge the children to make up a rap of their own using a word family of their choice.

Further ideas

● **More mnemonics:** Extend the work on these families or invite the children to create their own mnemonics for the word families or other common tricky letter strings. Other letter strings to investigate include '-ice', '-ous' and '-age'.

What's on the CD-ROM

On the CD-ROM you will find:

- Printable versions of all three photocopiable pages.
- Answers to all three photocopiable pages.
- Interactive versions of 'Mighty mnemonics' and 'Ear rap!'.

Word families

Fun with mnemonics

- A great way of remembering the spelling of **ough** words is to use the mnemonic 'Oh U Gorgeous Hunk'!
- But these tricky hunks say the **ough** differently. Look at the words at the foot of the page and sort them above the names of the hunks!



Tough Ted



Peter Plough



Dan Dough



Olly Ought



Troy Trough

thought	trough	rough	slough	though
plough	fought	cough	bought	nought
enough	tough	bough	although	sought

Word families

Mighty mnemonics

- A useful mnemonic for **-ight** words is *I Got Homework Tonight*.

ight is usually pronounced /**igh**/ + /**t**/ (sounds like **ite**), unless it has a preceding **e**, when it is usually pronounced /**ai**/ + /**t**/ (sounds like **ate**). Can you spot the exception from the list of words below?

light	frighten
weight	might
sight	eight
slight	freight
height	tighten
brightly	right
night	knight

- Say the words and sort them into **ite** and **ate** words.

Sounds like ite	Sounds like ate

Word families

Ear rap!

■ The word family **ear** has three different rap styles. Choose the words to fit the sound made by the different rap titles.

near	disappear	hear	search	tear
pear	fear	swear	wear	underwear

Bear rap (sounds like air)

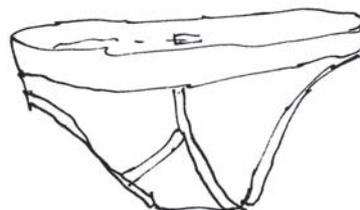
I'm a bear

I'm not going to _____ trainers!

I live on _____s 'cos they taste nice,

I don't _____ because I play nice,

I like it neat so don't _____ up your _____!



Gear rap (sounds like ear)

I got my gear

I got it _____

I have no _____

Because I'm famous

I can listen with my _____s

But I don't always _____

So shout it, don't _____!



Earth rap (sounds like er)

This is the Earth rap

This is the time to _____ rap

This Earth is a _____

We must look after it well

Let's _____ for a way

This is the Earth rap!



Vowel digraphs

Objective

To spell words with common vowel digraphs but different pronunciations.

Background knowledge

The vowel digraphs (two letters making one sound) 'ow', 'ou' and 'au' all have more than one pronunciation.

- 'ow' = /oʊ/ as in *snow* and /ow/ as in *now*
- 'ou' = /or/ as in *pour*, /ow/ as in *house*, /u/ as in *young* and /oo/ (short /oo/) as in *would*, *could* and *should*
- 'au' = is generally pronounced /or/ as in *autumn* but also has alternative pronunciations such as *sausage*, *aunt* and *because*.

As in previous activities, we will be linking visual strategies that reinforce the spelling pattern with oral techniques such as rhyme and word sorting to differentiate between the spellings and the different pronunciations. Careful listening is very important in these activities and this would be a good time to assess any speaking and listening issues that children in your class may have.

Activities

● Photocopiable page 97 'oh ow!'

Read the words carefully and sort them according to their pronunciation: /oʊ/ as in *snow* or /ow/ as in *cow*. Encourage the children to write more 'ow' words sorted by their pronunciation. On a separate piece of paper, suggest that they create their own mind map of 'ow' words of their own choice. Extend the activity by challenging the children to find multi-syllable words.

● Photocopiable page 98 'ou sort'

Explain to the children that they should cut out the words and sort them in any way they wish – but making sure that they have some criteria that they can explain; sorting the words into families can be interpreted in a number of ways and provides children with the opportunity to sort the words in a way that is meaningful and memorable to them. Once the children have tried out some different ways to sort the words, ask them to make a mind map of the words, grouping them in whichever way helps them to remember them best. The children could do this by sticking the words on to a page; however, writing in a cursive style helps to embed the spelling of the words at a kinaesthetic level. Suggest that the children work with a partner to play snap with the cards. The 'snap' comes when the words have the same sound for the 'ou' letters.

● Photocopiable page 99 'au words'

Read the words together. Check that the children understand what the words mean, using a dictionary if necessary. Ask the children to exaggerate the /or/ sound as they pronounce the words, then draw their attention to the exceptions in the 'odd one out' activity at the foot of the photocopiable sheet. To reinforce the spelling pattern, suggest that the children make the rhyming words into cards and play snap with the rhymes.

Further ideas

- **Digraph investigations:** Explore other vowel digraphs such as 'ai', 'ea' and 'oi'. Give the children lists of words focusing on one digraph and help them to explore the effect of where it is placed in the word, which letters change its sound and ways of discerning the different sounds that the digraph makes.



What's on the CD-ROM

On the CD-ROM you will find:

- Printable versions of all three photocopiable pages.
- Answers to 'oh ow!' and 'au words'.
- Interactive versions of 'oh ow!' and 'au words'.

Vowel digraphs

oh ow!

■ Sort the words by how **ow** is pronounced – sometimes it sounds like **oh** (as in **snow**) and sometimes it sounds like **ow** (as in **now**). How many other **ow** words can you add?

know shadow power
 coward arrow brown crowd
 allow thrown owner
 flow fowl
 now below

Sounds like oh	Sounds like ow

Vowel digraphs**ou sort**

- Sort these words in any way you wish. Ideas include sorting them by the letter after **ou**, or sorting the words into families.



pour	mourn
shout	mouth
would	house
could	mouse
should	out
bound	doubt

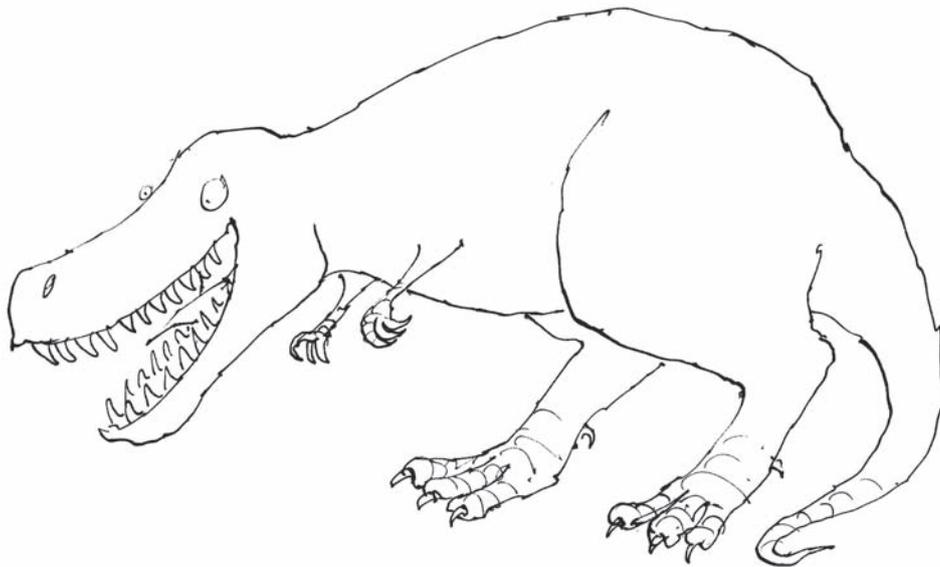
Vowel digraphs

au words

- Draw arrows to join the rhyming pairs.

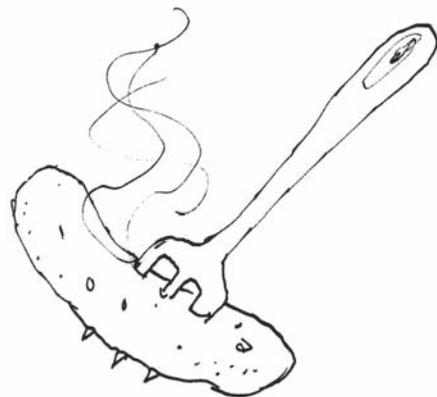
Laura
pause
daughter
caught
assault
dinosaur
astronaut

aquonaut
aura
vault
tyrannosaur
slaughter
taught
cause



- Look at each line of words below. Which word does not have the same sound for **au**? Draw a circle around the odd one out.

1. autumn aunt slaughter
2. haunt pause sausage
3. because sauce taught
4. author draught vault
5. beauty caught trauma



Exploring /k/

Objectives

To explore the hard /k/ sound at the ends of words.
To explore where and how the letter 'k' appears in words.

Background knowledge

These activities look at the patterning of words and give children strategies to explore likely patterns for different phonemes and likely partners for different letters.

The /k/ phoneme (hard 'c') makes the sound at the beginning of *car* and not the /s/ at the beginning of *circus*. There are several ways of making the /k/ phoneme at the end of words and they generally follow certain conventions (see chart on page 101).

Before the children begin these activities it is important that they have a secure understanding of the following terms:

- **Vowel letters:** 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'.
- **Consonant:** all the other letters.
- **Long vowels:** among these are the sounds of the vowel's letter name (/ai/, /ee/, /ai/, /oa/, /yoo/).
- **Short vowels:** these are /a/ as in *apple*, /e/ as in *egg*, /i/ as in *fig*, /o/ as in *orange* and /u/ as in *jug*.
- **Syllable:** how a word is broken up by sound. For example, *toucan* has two syllables (you can feel when you say a syllable because your jaw drops).

Activities

● Photocopiable page 101 'Which ending?'

Make sure that the children understand the terms *consonant*, *vowel* (long and short) and *syllable*. Read through the chart on the photocopiable sheet together and use the example words to encourage the children to generate other words that belong to each group. Read each clue and fill in the words using the chart to help where necessary.

● Photocopiable page 102 'Goes with k'

Cut out the words. Sort them according to the criteria by where the 'k' is in the word and then by the consonants that precede and follow 'k'. Encourage the children to use dictionaries to investigate which letters are commonly found with 'k'. Investigate whether there are any combinations that only occur at the beginning or ends of words. Challenge the children to make a mind map of other words with the same 'k' beginnings and ends. They may use dictionaries to help them.

● Photocopiable page 103 'k in the middle'

Cut out the words. Ask the children to work out the different endings of the words and sort them accordingly. Draw their attention to the different patterns in the words '-ckle' and so on. Provide pieces of card and ask the children to make one more card for each family. Suggest that they then play 'Happy Families' with a partner.

Further ideas

- **Spelling investigations:** Suggest that the children complete further investigations about which letters create combinations with the letter 'k' and produce a tally chart of letters that precede and follow it.
- **Word cards:** Use the word cards in other ways, such as suggesting that the children say the word aloud to their partner, who predicts the partner letter for 'k' in that word.

What's on the CD-ROM

On the CD-ROM you will find:

- Printable versions of all three photocopiable pages.
- Answers to 'Which ending?'.
- Interactive version of 'Which ending?'.

Exploring /k/

Which ending?

- Use the chart below to help you spell the words that go in the gaps.

ck	k	k	ic
ck is used at the end of a word with a short vowel sound and no other consonants following the vowel.	k is used at the end of words with a short vowel sound and a consonant following the vowel.	k is also used at the end of words with long vowel sounds when the long vowel sound is made by two vowels.	Some words with two syllables end in ic.
ck words include muck and black .	k words include pink and tank .	k words include peek and freak .	ic words include electric and comic .

- The opposite of front is _____.
- There are icebergs in this cold place. _____
- A young bird is called a _____.
- Jack climbed up the bean _____.
- The wonderful wizard was _____.
- Acorns grow into _____ trees.
- If you make something smaller you make it _____.
- Seven days make a _____.

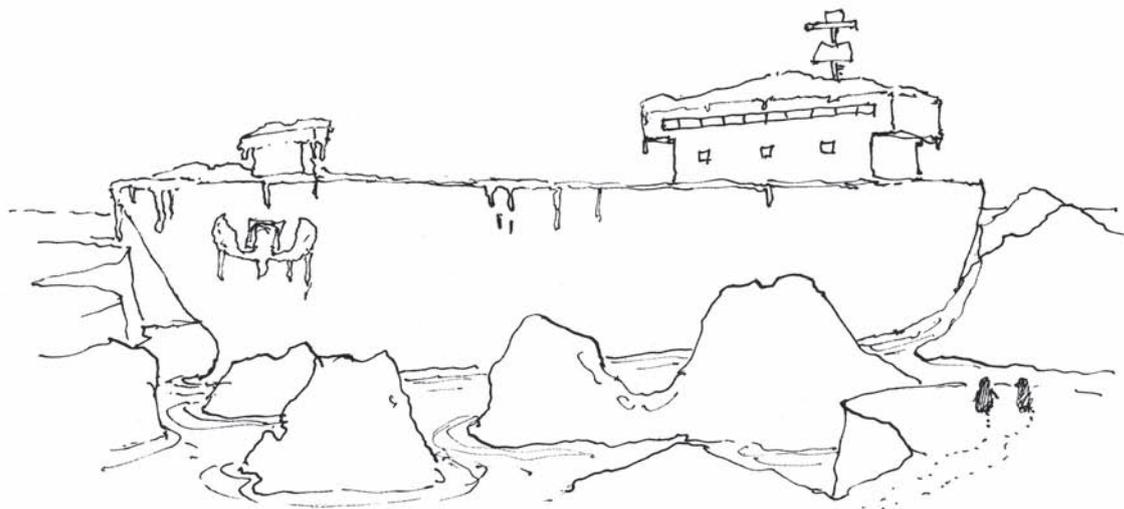


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Exploring /k/

Goes with k

- Take a look at these words containing k. Sort them in the following ways: k at the beginning; k at the end. Then sort the 'beginning' words according to the letter after k and the 'end' words according to the letter before k. Make a list of the consonants that are friends with k.



back	knee
pork	knife
tank	lurk
walk	chuck
risk	wink
know	milk

Exploring /k/

k in the middle

■ Sort the words into families, according to their endings. Are there any patterns you notice? Make one more card for each family and play Happy Families with a partner.



broken	crackle
ankle	stricken
shaken	token
croaking	choking
wrinkle	blanking
taken	flocking
tickle	tinkering
pickle	striker

Assessment

Assessment grid

The following grid shows the main objectives and activities covered in this chapter. You can use the grid to locate activities that cover a particular focus that you are keen to monitor.

Objective	Page	Activity title
To spell words with common letter strings but different pronunciations.	93	Fun with mnemonics
	94	Mighty mnemonics
	95	Ear rap!
To spell words with common vowel digraphs but different pronunciations.	97	oh ow!
	98	ou sort
	99	au words
To explore the hard /k/ sound at the ends of words.	101	Which ending?
To explore where and how the letter 'k' appears in words.	102	Goes with k
	103	k in the middle

Observation and record keeping

The activities in this chapter help the children to develop a variety of visual and oral strategies to apply to spelling families that have strong visual resemblances but have a range of pronunciations. As ever, the 'show me' technique for focusing on one word type using whiteboards gives a whole-class snapshot of understanding, while specific tailored dictation will provide a clear indication of the children's ability to use the words studied.

Assessment activity

● What you need

Photocopiable page 105 'Sort it', writing materials.

● What to do

Ask the children to remember the work they have done on word families and how words with similar spellings are not always pronounced the same. Check that the children understand what rhyme is and give examples if necessary. The children should complete the activity independently.

Differentiation

- For some children you will need to run this activity in two parts, concentrating on the two different word families separately. It may be easier for some children to do the activity kinaesthetically by having the rhyming words made into cards.

Further learning

- **Poetry:** Study some 'visual rhyme' poems that have spelling patterns that suggest they should rhyme but that don't actually rhyme.

Assessment

Sort it!

■ Sort the words in each set below into rhyming pairs.

Set 1
 enough
 though
 rough
 thought
 although
 bought

Set 2
 eight
 knight
 tight
 weight
 height
 bright

■ Can you use the same spelling pattern to make words that rhyme with **rough**?

rough

■ Can you use the same spelling pattern to make words that rhyme with **height**?

height
