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SPELLING

Silent letters

Objectives

- To spell the /n/ sound spelled 'kn' and 'gn' or the /r/ sound spelled 'wr' at the beginning of words.
- To spell the /m/ sound spelled 'mb' at the end of a word.
- To spell words where the letter 'l' is silent.

What the children need to know

- Some words have silent letters, which are letters that are not pronounced.
- A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound.
- A grapheme is a letter or letters that correspond to a single phoneme in a word.
- The graphemes 'kn' and 'gn' at the beginning of a word are usually pronounced /n/.
- The grapheme 'wr' at the beginning of a word is usually pronounced /r/.
- The grapheme 'mb' at the end of a word is usually pronounced /m/.

TEST LINKS:

Section 1,
Spelling 2: Q9

Section 2,
Spelling: Q3

Section 3,
Spelling 3: Q5, 6;
Spelling 4: Q10

WORKBOOK LINKS:

Pages 6–7



Challenge and mastery ideas

- Present the children with a selection of words containing silent letters such as *know*, *gnat*, *write*, *lamb*, *could*, *listen*. Ask them to say each word in turn and ensure that they know its meaning. Look at each word and identify whether there is a phoneme that is not pronounced. *Which phoneme is it? What grapheme does this correspond to?*
- Provide word grids that are missing the words' silent letters. Ask the children to work together to insert the correct silent letters. For example,

		R	O	T	E
		R		H	
	N	O	W	U	
N		N		M	
I		G			
T					

- Ask each child to write a list of three words with silent letters, using a dictionary or word list to help them. They can then challenge their partner to devise a silly sentence using all three words. For example, *The gnat climbed to the top of the castle.*
- Deepen the children's knowledge of spelling patterns by exploring some of them.
 - They can help to distinguish between homophones (*know/no*; *wrap/rap*).
 - They can show us where the word came from. For example, *words with a silent g or a silent k are often Viking words (gnaw, knee)*. Explain that hundreds of years ago these silent letters would have been sounded.
- As a group, or independently, ask the children to complete the *Workbook* questions on pages 6–7.



Review

- Call out some words containing silent letters. Ask the children to discuss the spelling with a partner and to write the silent letter on a whiteboard.
- If the children have composed sentences containing words with silent letters, ask them to read them out and challenge the rest of the class to identify and spell the silent-letter words.
- Ensure that words with silent letters are included in regular spelling tests.



Watch and listen

- Watch for children who identify other silent letters in words or silent letters they have come across already, but in a different position. For example: *scissors*, *doubt*, *chorus*, *reign*.
- Look for children who are able to apply the rules learned about spelling patterns when they come across new words such as *sword* or *jostle*.
- Note which children identify and spell words with silent letters correctly.