

Segmenting to spell words

In Phase Five, children continue to practise segmenting words into phonemes and then writing the graphemes needed to represent those phonemes (sounds). However, spelling now becomes more complex as the children learn that there is more than one grapheme to represent many of these sounds, so they must select the correct grapheme for the word they want to write.

Demonstrating spelling

In Reception, children used phoneme frames to help them segment and spell words. In Year 1 (Phase Five), children are encouraged to start segmenting and spelling words without this aid, although you may still find it useful at the start of Year 1. When demonstrating spelling, you could start to draw lines rather than using a phoneme frame.

- 1 Say a word then orally segment it, counting the number of sounds on your fingers.
- 2 Draw a line for each of the sounds you have counted. You could draw a longer line when a digraph is needed (for example, if spelling the word 'day' draw _ _ _).
- 3 Say the sounds again and write the correct graphemes on each of the lines you have drawn. Sometimes this might involve making a choice about which grapheme is needed for a particular word. Model making these choices, referring to the patterns noted when reading words (for example: *d-ay, I know it is 'ay' because we don't find 'ai' at the end of words; wh-en, I know 'when' starts with the 'wh' grapheme, I remember that from reading the word*).
- 4 Demonstrate how to check the word by sound-talking and blending it.

Refer to visual reminders in the classroom, such as the **Phase Five Frieze of graphemes** or the **Phase Five Sound mat** and any completed **Phonic family tree templates** when choosing the correct grapheme for a word. Start to build up children's knowledge of spelling patterns by discussing the lists of words they read or words recorded on phonic family trees. (A guide to **Spelling choices and guidelines** is included on pp.243–248. It outlines some of the patterns you might point out for graphemes introduced in Term 1.)

Segmenting practice activities

The following activities can be used to practise segmenting to spell words with newly learnt graphemes. Towards the end of Term 1 the activities could also involve making simple choices between two graphemes that represent the same sound. The activities can be used in the daily phonics session and for additional spelling practice.

- ▶ **Build a word:** This activity is best done with a small group of children. It is a good activity for children who need further practise at segmenting. Give each pair of children a set of **Grapheme cards**. Say a word for the children to sound-talk with their partner, counting the phonemes. Then ask them to find the graphemes to make the word. Write on the whiteboard so the children can check the words are correct. Repeat with six to eight more words.
- ▶ **Whiteboard words:** Give each pair of children a whiteboard. Say a word and ask the children to sound-talk/orally segment the word with their partner, counting the phonemes on their fingers. Ask the pairs to then write the word on their whiteboards. Say *Ready, steady, show* and the children hold up their whiteboards. Then say the sounds and write the word on the whiteboard so the children can check each grapheme in the word.
- ▶ **Helping Tog:** You could introduce this activity using Tog the sound-talk robot or a similar puppet. Explain that Tog is having difficulty spelling some words and needs the children's help. Say a word and ask the children to orally segment it to help Tog. Start to write the word on the whiteboard, but pause at a phoneme and explain that Tog can't remember how to write it. Ask the children to write the grapheme needed, and/or the rest of the word.
- ▶ **My turn/your turn:** Say a word and then segment it, counting the phonemes on your fingers. Say the sounds as you write the word on the whiteboard. Ask the children to sound-talk and read it. Then hide the word and ask the children to segment it and write it on their whiteboards or on paper. Show the word so the children can check each grapheme in the word.