



ADULT GUIDE · SPELLING PATTERNS

Choose spellings from word context

What this pack helps with

Choose reviewed alternative spellings in named words and sentences, then record one precise next step.

Before you begin

An adult reads the instructions, models natural pronunciation where stated and keeps the first attempt visible.

Pencil. Optional counters or letter tiles for oral segmenting and rebuilding.

How to use evidence

Ask the learner to say the whole word, notice its sound sequence or known spelling, complete the task and explain the choice. Record exact evidence and one fresh recheck.

Print A4 at actual size. Child pages are 2–5; pages 6–7 contain models, rubrics and next steps. Colour is optional.

Limits and source

English alternative spellings are partly position sensitive and partly lexical. The printed word and sentence fix each answer; the examples are not universal spelling rules. DfE national curriculum in England: English programmes of study and English Appendix 1 (OGL v3.0). Original TheLearnDen prompts, word sets and sentences. This is not an official assessment.



SAY · NOTICE · PRACTISE · CHECK

Choose spellings from word context

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Choose ai or ay

Use the sentence and the alternatives. Write the complete word.

The sn____l slid on the path. ☐ ai ☐ ay _____We pl____ in the park. ☐ ai ☐ ay _____The tr____n is late. ☐ ai ☐ ay _____It is a sunny d____. ☐ ai ☐ ay _____

This pattern helps with these exact words; it is not a rule for every /eɪ/ word.

2. Choose ee or ea

Use the sentence and the alternatives. Write the complete word.

I can see a tr____. ☐ ee ☐ ea _____We ____t lunch. ☐ ee ☐ ea _____My f____t are wet. ☐ ee ☐ ea _____I r____d this book each day. ☐ ee ☐ ea _____

The /i:/ sound has several spellings; these word choices must be learned and revisited.



SAY · NOTICE · PRACTISE · CHECK

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3. Choose oi or oy

Use the sentence and the alternatives. Write the complete word.

The c____n is round.

☐ oi ☐ oy

The b____ smiled.

☐ oi ☐ oy

Do not sp____l the surprise.

☐ oi ☐ oy

We enj____ the game.

☐ oi ☐ oy

This position pattern supports these examples but does not predict every English word.

4. Choose ur, ir or er

Use the sentence and the alternatives. Write the complete word.

The b____d sang.

☐ ur ☐ ir ☐ er

T____n left at the gate.

☐ ur ☐ ir ☐ er

Give h____ the book.

☐ ur ☐ ir ☐ er

My sh____t is red.

☐ ur ☐ ir ☐ er

ur, ir and er can represent a similar sound in these words; the sentence fixes which word is intended.



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5. Choose aw, au or ore

Use the sentence and the alternatives. Write the complete word.

I s___ a bird. ☐ aw ☐ au ☐ ore _____

The dog put a p___ on me. ☐ aw ☐ au ☐ ore _____

A p___se means stop briefly. ☐ aw ☐ au ☐ ore _____

We need m___ water. ☐ aw ☐ au ☐ ore _____

These spellings belong to the printed words; pronunciation can vary by accent.

6. Choose from two spelling families

Use the sentence and the alternatives. Write the complete word.

A br___n dog ran. ☐ ow ☐ ou _____

The cl___d is grey. ☐ ow ☐ ou _____

The bl___ balloon rose. ☐ ue ☐ ew ☐ oo _____

A f___ birds flew past. ☐ ue ☐ ew ☐ oo _____

The m___n is bright. ☐ ue ☐ ew ☐ oo _____

The same or similar sound can have different spellings; these are exact word examples, not universal rules.



SAY · NOTICE · PRACTISE · CHECK

Choose spellings from word context

7. Choose the complete ending

Use the sentence and the alternatives. Write the complete word.

I lo__ my dog.

☐ v ☐ ve

A pu__ of wind blew.

☐ f ☐ ff

The bee made a bu__.

☐ z ☐ zz

The child will ca__ the ball.

☐ ch ☐ tch

The pi__ shell is small.

☐ nk ☐ ng

We sang a so__.

☐ nk ☐ ng

These endings are checked in named words. Do not turn the examples into a rule that predicts every spelling.

8. Choose the next spelling step

Use the evidence from this pack.

word spelled accurately

word choice to revisit

pattern pair to compare

fresh sentence to try

A short word set cannot establish independent spelling of every alternative grapheme.



ADULT ANSWERS AND FEEDBACK · 1 OF 2

Use the model, record the evidence

Keep the unaided first attempt. Use each boundary and choose one fresh recheck. Do not total a score.

1 snail; play; train; day

snail; play; train; day Use the sentence and printed word frame; write the complete target word.

Look for: Uses ai inside the printed examples. Uses ay at the end of the printed examples. **Next:** Compare a new reviewed pair such as rain/stay.

2 tree; eat; feet; read

tree; eat; feet; read Use the sentence to choose the printed spelling and write the complete word.

Look for: Uses the whole word, not only its sound. Checks the vowel pair against the model. **Next:** Build a personal pair from words already taught.

3 coin; boy; spoil; enjoy

coin; boy; spoil; enjoy Use the sentence and word frame to write each complete word.

Look for: Uses oi within the printed examples. Uses oy at the end of the printed examples. **Next:** Contrast a fresh reviewed pair such as join/toy.

4 bird; turn; her; shirt

bird; turn; her; shirt Use the complete sentence to identify and write the known word.

Look for: Chooses a lexical spelling for the named word. Reads the completed sentence aloud. **Next:** Revisit one word from memory after a gap.



ADULT ANSWERS AND FEEDBACK · 2 OF 2

Use the model, record the evidence

Keep the unaided first attempt. Use each boundary and choose one fresh recheck. Do not total a score.

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- 5** **saw; paw; pause; more**
saw; paw; pause; more Use meaning and the printed alternatives to write each complete word.
Look for: Checks the whole spelling. Explains the completed sentence meaning. **Next:** Practise one selected word in a new sentence.
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- 6** **brown; cloud; blue; few; moon**
brown; cloud; blue; few; moon Use each sentence and printed alternatives to write the complete word.
Look for: Uses meaning to identify the word. Copies the selected spelling accurately. **Next:** Sort fresh taught words by their known spelling.
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- 7** **love; puff; buzz; catch; pink; song**
love; puff; buzz; catch; pink; song Use the sentence and printed alternatives; write each complete word.
Look for: Preserves the complete final spelling. Checks the word against its sentence meaning. **Next:** Revisit one contrast with a different taught word.
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- 8** **Adult-assessed evidence**
Example: wrote coin; revisit cloud; compare ai/ay; try The train came today. Record exact word evidence and choose one new sentence.
Look for: Names the word, not a vague sound score. Keeps lexical choices separate from reliable position patterns. **Next:** Repeat after a gap without showing the answer first.
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