

IT'S A WONDERFUL WORD

TEACHING NOTES

LESSON 1: HEAR A HOMOPHONE

Resources: Photocopy lesson plan, dictionary for reference

Lesson: Introduce homophones to your class by explaining that homophones are words that are pronounced exactly the same as another word, but differ in meaning, for example *flower* and *flour*. There are even some homophones with three meanings, for example *they're*, *there* and *their*. There are no spelling 'rules' to learn that will help students remember them; they just need to be learnt and recognised.

Ask your students to think of some homophones and write them on the board for discussion.

Hand out the lesson plan to the class. Read out a list of homophones and ask students to write down the correct spelling in the space provided.

Review their spellings and point out how each homophone was subject to more than one interpretation. This demonstrates how important it is to always request the definition of a word if you are asked to spell it. Explain that during a Spelling Bee the only way to discover which spelling is correct is by asking for a definition from the Spellmaster.

Next, ask your students to define each of the words they have spelt and to write a sentence using that word in the correct context.

EXTENSION TASK: Ask your students to pair off and to see if they can come up with other examples of homophones with written definitions for each one. See if they can find any particularly unusual ones.

SPELLING TIP: Give your students a word of the day, every day that they must learn to spell and watch their talent grow.

HOMOPHONES: hire/higher, new/knew, pour/poor/paw, through/threw, see/sea, whether/weather, check/cheque, allowed/aloud, break/brake, hour/our, stationery/stationary, would/wood, stairs/stares, shore/sure, to/too/two, plain/plane, where/wear, whole/hole, saw/sore, find/finned, bear/bare, practise/practice, pear/pair, chews/choose, be/bee, cereal/serial, waive/wave.

LESSON 2: ARTICULATE CLEARLY

Resources: Photocopy lesson plan, dictionary, pens

Lesson: Describe the format of The Times Spelling Bee to the class, and how it focuses on team effort. Explain to your pupils that one of the rounds, The Quick-Fire Challenge, relies on clear articulation of spellings, as contestants have to spell as many words as possible in two minutes. The temptation is to spell as fast as possible but it is just as important for the judges to be able to hear each letter clearly. If the judge mishears what is spelt students may be asked to repeat the word.

Begin by reading out a selection of words, one by one, to your class and invite children to stand up and 'say the word, spell the word and say it again'. This exercise can then be repeated until all pupils have had a go. Students are only required to 'say it, spell it, say it' in the Play-off Challenge.

Students then pair up. Using the two lists of words provided on the lesson plan, the first student should cover Column B and the second person should cover Column A. The first student reads out each of the words in Column A one by one, and the second student should try to spell the word aloud as quickly and clearly as possible, while their partner writes down exactly what they hear. Students then swap so that the second person is reading the words in Column B to their partner. Students should then compare their findings and see if any of the letters or words were misheard or misspelt.

Remind students that they are not allowed to correct themselves if they realise they have made an error.

Extension task: Students should discuss 'danger letters'. These are letters that can be misheard easily, such as D and T, and practise articulating these correctly - at speed. Are there any other 'traps' that they should be aware of? Vowels can be quite tricky for judges to hear. The new Quick-Fire Challenge rules can be explained now to the class.

The Times Spelling Bee has a dedicated spelling website www.timesspellingbee.co.uk to help your spellers to prepare for the Championship. There are loads of interactive games and quizzes ready to use, so log on and start practising today.

CURRICULUM MAPPING

England & Wales: English

- Being clear, coherent and accurate in spoken and written communication
- Demonstrating a secure understanding of the conventions of written language, including grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Understanding how English varies locally and globally, and how these variations relate to identity and cultural diversity
- Use a range of ways to structure and organise their speech to support their purposes and guide the listener
- Vary vocabulary, structures and grammar to convey meaning, including speaking standard English fluently
- Listen and respond constructively to others, taking different views into account and modifying their own views in the light of what others say
- Understand explicit and implicit meanings
- Make different kinds of relevant contributions in groups, responding appropriately to others, proposing ideas and asking questions
- Take different roles in organising, planning and sustaining talk in groups
- Sift, summarise and use the most important points
- Explore the ways that words, actions, sound and staging combine to create dramatic moments
- Use the conventions of standard English effectively

- Spell correctly, increasing their knowledge of regular patterns of spelling, word families, roots of words and derivations, including prefixes, suffixes and inflections
- Experiment with a range of approaches, produce different outcomes and play with language
- Engage in specific activities that develop speaking and listening skills
- Evaluate and respond constructively to their own and others' performances

Scotland: English

Reading: Level C, D
Writing: Functional writing: Level C
Talking: Level C, D
Listening: Level C, D

Northern Ireland: English

- Developing pupil's knowledge, understanding and skills: express meaning, feelings and viewpoints
 - Talking in group discussions
 - Listening actively and reporting back
- Developing pupils as individuals
- Learning outcomes:
- Work effectively with others
 - Demonstrate self-management
 - Communicate effectively in written and spoken formats

THE TIMES SPELLING BEE CHAMPIONSHIP 2010

KEY DATES

DECEMBER 4, 2009

Final date for team entry

JANUARY 11, 2010

Deadline for withdrawal of a team

FEBRUARY 12, 2010

Deadline for submitting names
of team members

MARCH – APRIL 2010

During this period, schools will take part
in local, inter-school, knockout heats

MAY, 2010

Schools successful in local knockout heats
will proceed to the Semi-Finals

JUNE, 2010

Grand Final in London

IT'S A WONDERFUL WORD

It's a Wonderful Word consists of two lessons for English teaching that help pupils with spelling. The first has a focus on homophones and the importance of understanding the definitions of words and the second provides fun ways to practise spelling aloud. Supporting notes are on the back page with curriculum mapping.

TALKING POINT

The English language is our heritage. As well as having a lot of fun with spelling, taking part in The Times Spelling Bee will encourage your pupils to see spelling in a different light – as a subject that is vibrant, challenging and contemporary and which bears witness to our unique social history. Join us in this celebration of the English language. Register your school now at www.timesspellingbee.co.uk.



HEAR A HOMOPHONE

Homophones are words that sound the same as another word but actually have a different meaning. For example, *flower* and *flour*. The first means a bloom on a plant and the second means a finely ground grain.

When you hear words that are homophones the only way of discerning their meaning is by looking at the context in which they are used and by asking for a definition.

Your teacher will read out a list of homophones, write them down and then write a definition for each with a sentence using the word you've written.

Homophones _____ Definition _____

Sentence _____

Homophones _____ Definition _____

Sentence _____

Homophones _____ Definition _____

Sentence _____

Homophones _____ Definition _____

Sentence _____

Homophones _____ Definition _____

Sentence _____

Homophones _____ Definition _____

Sentence _____

Now write homophones you've thought of _____



ARTICULATE CLEARLY

Here are two columns of words for you to try to spell with a partner. Try not to read them before the exercise starts.

Cover Column B and read out the words in Column A and ask your partner to spell them as quickly as possible. Write down exactly what you hear your partner say. Without looking at Column B swap over. Your partner will ask you to spell the words in Column B and will write down what you give as your spelling.

Column A	Column B
Words with silent letters	Words that are nouns
Knight _____	Seventeen _____
Knead _____	Parrot _____
Queue _____	Entertainer _____
Course _____	Finalist _____
	Ankle _____
Words with 'i' before 'e' except after c	Centre _____
Believe _____	Vehicle _____
Receive _____	Batman _____
Retrieve _____	Benefit _____
Perceive _____	Decoration _____
Grieve _____	
Words that are adjectives	Words that are verbs from Old English
Timeless _____	Sharpen _____
Wireless _____	Ought _____
Jolly _____	Behold _____
Global _____	Choose _____
Friend _____	Rotate _____
Extinct _____	Crinkle _____
Visible _____	Quicken _____
Uncomfortable _____	Rebuild _____
Solvent _____	Gnaw _____
Ordinary _____	Fiddle _____

