



# Reading Ready

**Activities to support  
the storage of words  
in memory**



**Katie Pace Miles, Ph.D.**

## About the Author

**Katie Pace Miles, Ph.D.** is a professor of early literacy development and instruction at Brooklyn College, City University of New York. Dr. Miles's research interests include orthographic facilitation and mapping, high frequency word learning, literacy assessment of students with special needs, and literacy instruction for young children that is both developmentally appropriate and grounded in the science of reading. She works closely with New York City's Department of Education to support literacy initiatives that impact the city's most underserved students. Dr. Miles proudly serves as the Academic Advisor for Reading Rescue, a professional development program and an evidence-based literacy intervention provided to first grade students across New York City. In addition, she supports the alignment of other early literacy programs with the field of reading science in an effort to close the divide between research and practice.

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# Introduction



## Introduction

This document is broken into two sections:

**1) Resources to support learning**

**2) Word analysis activities to use with high frequency words or any words.**

Forming good word reading habits is essential to read all words. As the Reading Ready Educator Guide explains, these habits need to focus on breaking words into their letter-sound components and blending those sounds together to read the word. This same approach should be used with high frequency words, which are simply words that are used a lot in print. Many high frequency words have reliable letter-sound relationships that help to securely store it in memory. Students should be encouraged to use all the reliable letter-sounds available, and the teacher should point out any sounds in the word that are irregularly spelled.

A word's spelling, length, and meaning (concreteness/word type) interact with a student's phonics skills and with a teacher's linguistic knowledge. This interaction should be considered when determining the activity best suited to store the word in memory. You can think of this as:

**Word x Student Skills x Teacher Knowledge = Activity**

# Resources for Learning

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# High-Frequency Word Organizer

Align your high frequency word list to your phonics scope and sequence.

## ■ Regularly Spelled

Find all the words on the list that only contain letter-sound relationships **that you have taught** and put them in the first column (regularly spelled).

## ■ Temporarily Irregularly Spelled

Find all the high frequency words that contain letter-sound relationships **that will eventually be taught** by you or in your grade's or school's phonics scope and sequence. Put these words in the second column (temporarily irregularly spelled).

## ■ Permanently Irregularly Spelled

Find all the high frequency words that contain letter-sound relationships **that are not covered** by your school's phonics scope and sequence. Put these in the third column (permanently irregularly spelled).

## Decoding

Teach students to decode the words using the reliable letter-sound relationships, and then point out the temporarily irregular or permanently irregular part of the word.

### Examples for Temporarily Irregular Words

For the word **reach**: "You will soon learn that ea says /ē/."

For the word **float**: "You will soon learn that oa says /ō/."

For the word **high**: "You will soon learn that igh says /ī/."

### Examples for Permanently Irregular Words

For the word **said**: "In this word, ai says /ě/."

For the word **again**: "In this word, ai says /ě/."

For the word **of**: "In this word f says /v/."



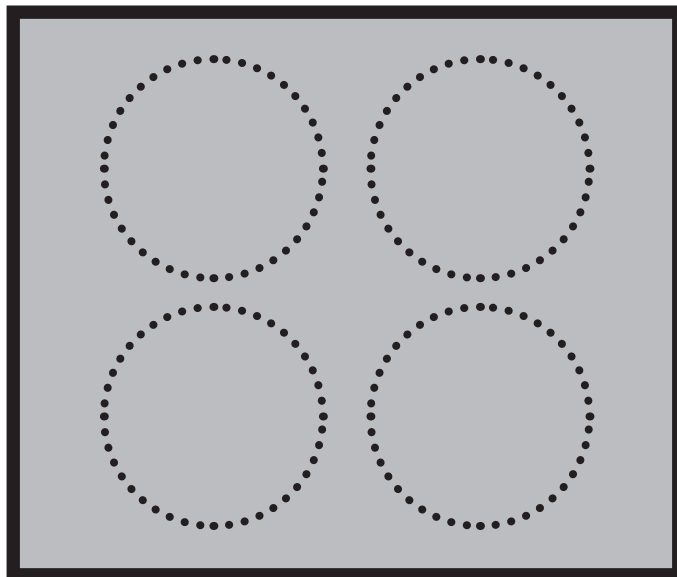
# High Frequency Word Organizer

Regularly Spelled	Temporarily Irregularly Spelled	Permanently Irregularly Spelled



# Sound-Letter Boxes Activity Sheet

Laminate or place in sheet protector






# Movement Dice Template

For use with the Word Game

**Select kinesthetic movements for each face of the dice.** Examples include: Tap Fingers, The Staircase, Bingo Stamper, Slide Counters, or Stomp It Out. Substitute your own!

## 1. Draw your activities

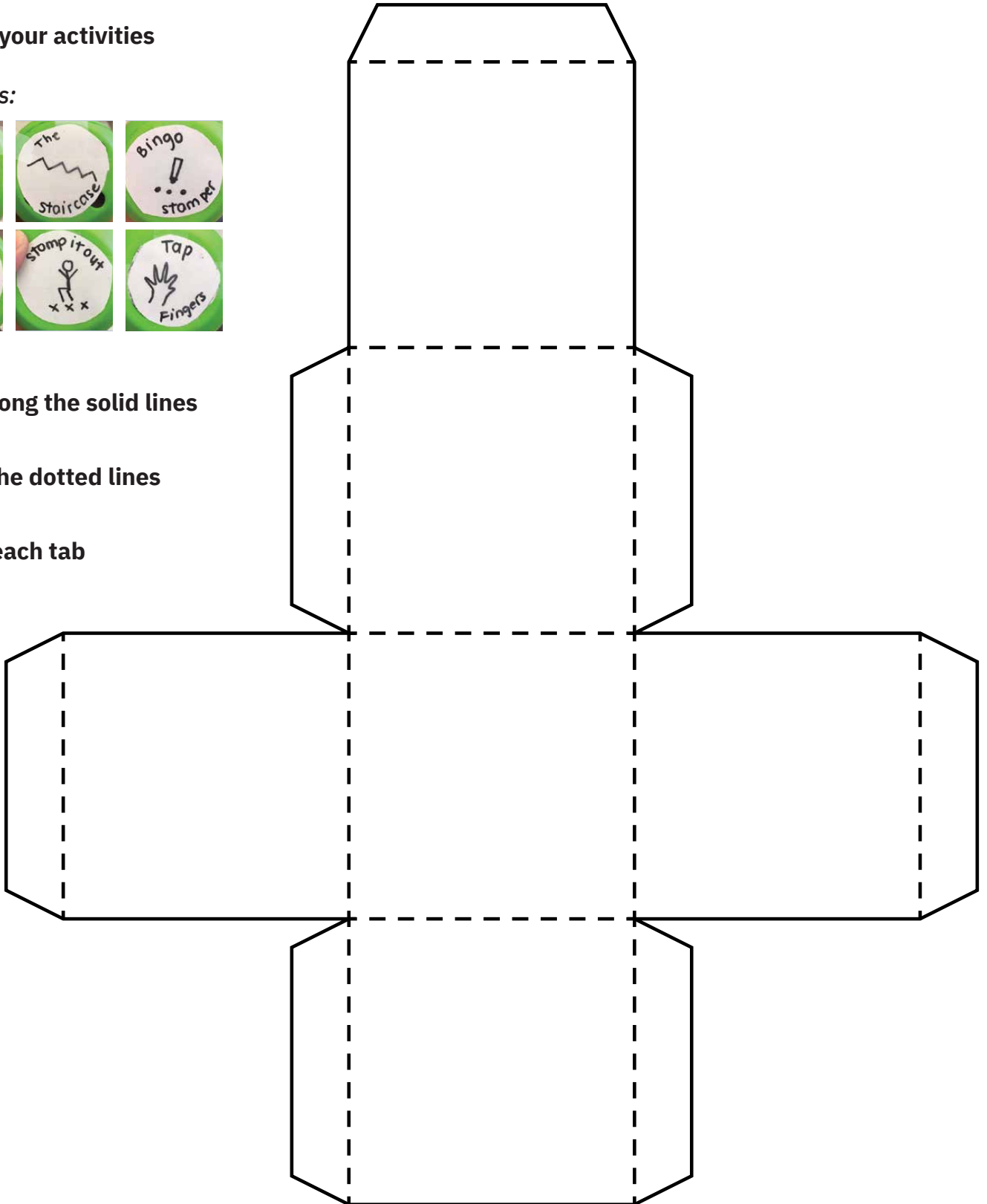
Examples:



## 2. Cut along the solid lines

## 3. Fold the dotted lines

## 4. Glue each tab



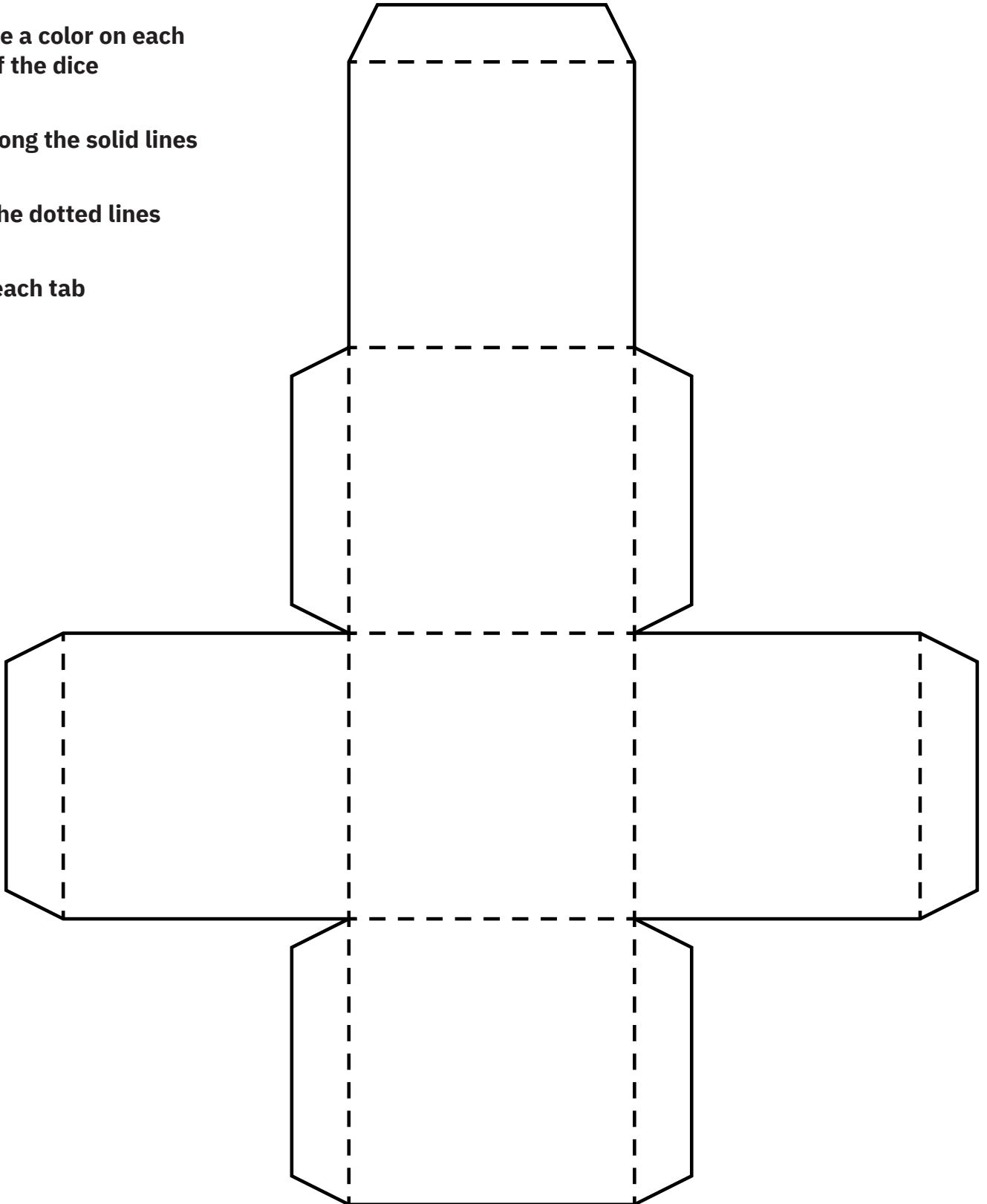


# Color Dice Template

For use with the Word Game

Place a green, yellow, or red dot on each face of the dice (two sides per color). The colors represent the deck of cards from which the teacher should pull the word card.

1. Denote a color on each face of the dice
2. Cut along the solid lines
3. Fold the dotted lines
4. Glue each tab







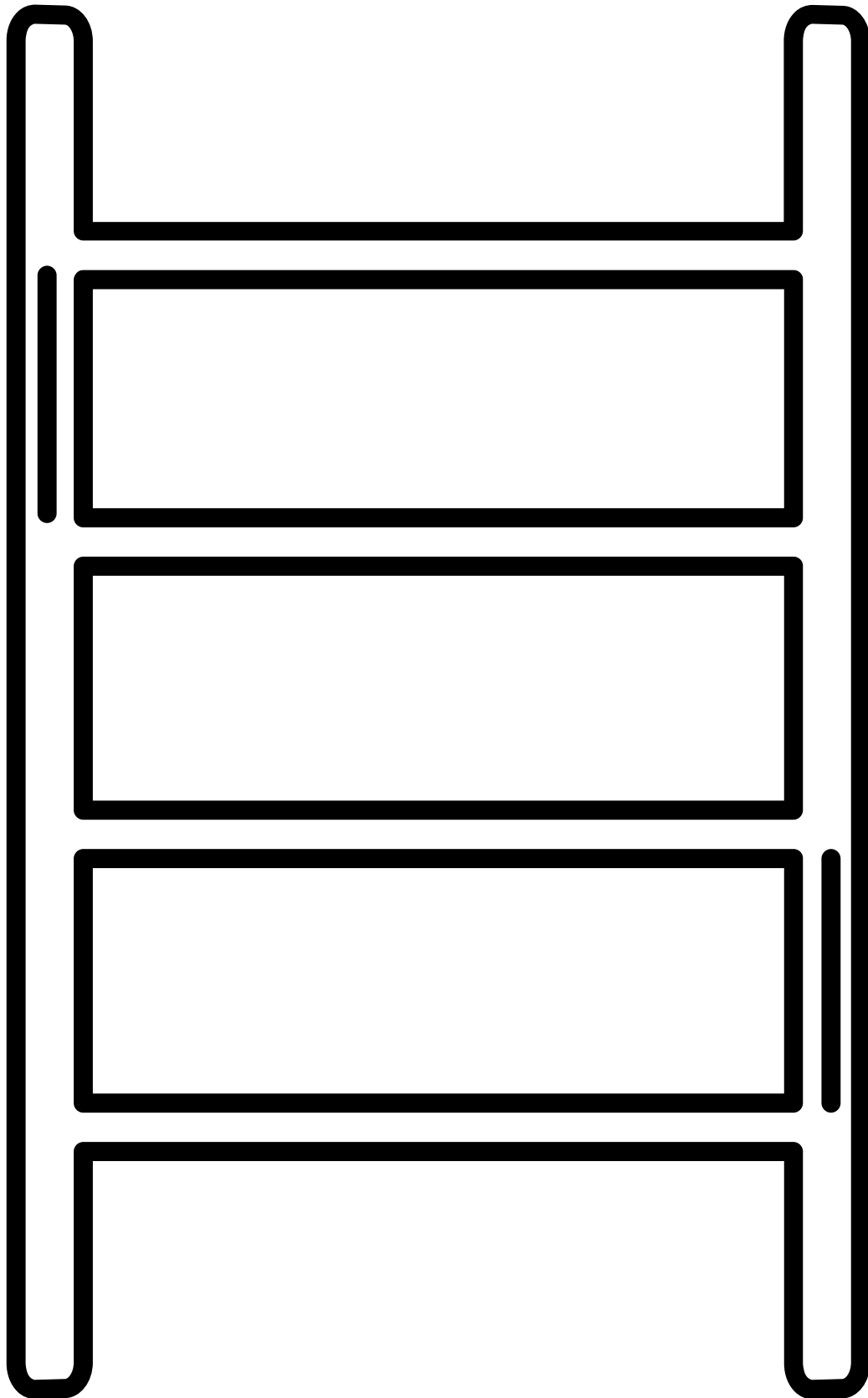
# Look-Alike Word Activity Sheet

Laminate or place in sheet protector




# Word Ladder Activity Sheet

Laminate or place in sheet protector





# Word Analysis Activities

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## Magnetic Letters Scramble



**Materials:** magnetic letters in the practice word *plus two additional letters* that may cause confusion

For the word **said**, use: s, e, a, d, i, y

**Works great with:** one-syllable regular words, one-syllable irregular words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **said**.”

Student repeats **said**.

“Count the sounds in the word. /s/ /ě/ /d/. How many sounds?”

Student counts: “Three.”

“There are three sounds, but four letters in the word. Now, make the word and then read the word.”

Student makes the word and then reads the word.

**If correct:**

“Yes, it is spelled **s-a-i-d**.”

**If incorrect:**

“Said is spelled **s-a-i-d**. Let’s try again.”

Scramble the letters up and ask the student to make the word three more times.

Student repeats the steps 3x.

## Say, Segment, Blend



**Materials:** a sheet with all the practice words written with enough room to underline the letter-sound parts and then the entire word.

Consider using bingo stampers, finger paint, etc. as dots that you then visually blend together while blending the sounds together.

**Works great with:** one-syllable regular words, one-syllable irregular words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **said**.”

Student repeats **said**.

“Hold up a finger for each sound you hear in **said**.”

“/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

Write the word **said** on a whiteboard or piece of paper. Draw a line under each letter-sound unit. For the word **said**, draw a line under the s, a line under the ai, and a line under the d.

“Say the sounds with me.”

“/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

Draw a long line under the word as you blend the sounds together to read the whole word:

“Read the word.”

“**Said**.”

## Word Mapping



**Materials:** Sound-Letter Boxes Activity Sheet, bingo stamper, dry-erase markers

**Works great with:** single-syllable irregularly-spelled words, multisyllabic words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **said**.”

Student repeats **said**.

“Let’s count the sounds in **said** on our fingers: /s/ /ě/ /d/.”

Student counts on their fingers.

**First time:** “Watch as I mark one dot in the box for each sound in the word **said**.”

Make a mark in a box for each of the three sounds in the word, starting with the left-most box.

**Subsequent times:** “Now you mark a dot in the box for each sound in the word **said**.”

Student marks dots on their own sheets

“**Said** has three sounds: /s/ /ě/ /d/.”

“Watch as I spell each sound. The letter S says /s/, the letters A and I spell the sound /ě/, and the letter D spells the sound /d/. Say the sounds as you write the letter that represents each sound.”

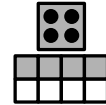
Student writes the letters that represent each sound.

“Read the word.”

Student reads the word.

Call attention to the irregular spelling by underlining, highlighting or circling. Have the student repeat as much or as little of this process as is appropriate for their skill level.

## Word Mapping + Spelling



**Materials:** 3 blocks, 4 counters, whiteboard, dry erase marker, Sound-Letter Boxes Activity Sheet

**Works great with:** temporarily and permanently irregularly spelled words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

Place one block on the table for each sound in the word.

“Say the word **said**.” Student repeats **said**.

“Now watch me count the sounds in **said**. /s/ /ě/ /d/.” As you say the sounds, touch one block to represent each sound in the word. Student repeats.

Write the word on the whiteboard.

“Here are the letters and sounds in **said**.”

Say the sounds in the word again, pointing to each letter(s) that make each sound. “/s/ /ě/ /d/, **said**.”

Student repeats

Cover the word on the whiteboard.

“Now, move a chip on the activity sheet into the gray boxes for each sound you hear in ‘said.’”

Student moves chips while saying the sounds.

“Now spell **said** by writing the letters that make the sounds in each white box. Read the word.”

Student reads the word.

Uncover the word and have the student compare their word to the word written on the whiteboard.

“Let’s check your spelling!”

If student has spelled the word **correctly**, say:

“You spelled the word **said**, and even got the tricky part!”

If student has spelled the word **incorrectly**, say:

“This word is tricky, because the letters a and i are working together to make a different sound than they usually do: /e/. Please write the word **said** paying extra attention to the tricky part.”

## Count and Clap



**Materials:** whiteboard, dry erase marker

**Works great with:** multisyllabic words, both regular and irregular.

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **many**.”

Student repeats: **many**.

Write the word **many** on a whiteboard.

“This is the word **many**. Your turn.”

Student says **many**.

“Hold up a finger for each sound in the word **many**.  
/m/ /ě/ /n/ /ē/.”

Student holds up fingers for each sound.

“Now let’s clap the syllables in the word **many**.”  
Clap for each syllable.

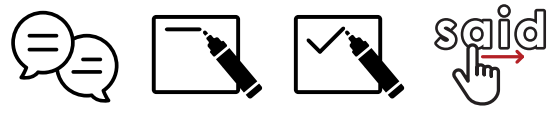
Hold up the whiteboard and write the word **many**,  
calling attention to the irregular spelling.

“Let’s read it again. **Many**.”

Student reads word.

Call attention to the irregular spelling by  
underlining, highlighting or circling. Have the  
student repeat as much or as little of this process  
as is appropriate for their skill level.

## Spell and Check



**Materials:** paper and pencil or whiteboard and marker

**Works great with:** irregular words, one-syllable words (regular, temporarily irregular, permanently irregular)

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **said**.”

Student repeats **said**.

“Hold up a finger for each sound in the word **said**.”

Student holds up fingers for each sound.

“Write the letters that represent each sound:  
/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

Student spells the word.

Hold up the correct spelling of the word. “Correct  
your spelling.”

Student corrects any spelling errors.

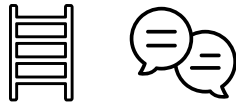
“Now underline the word as you read it.”

Student reads word.

Repeat these steps with the target word two or  
three times.



## Word Ladders



**Materials:** Word Ladder Activity Sheet, dry erase markers, magnetic letters (to be used on the ladder)

**Works great with:** regularly and temporarily irregularly spelled words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

Spell the target word on the first (lowest) rung of the word ladder.

“Watch as I read the word at the bottom of the ladder. **Fast.** As we climb up the ladder, the letters will change and make new words.”

On the next rung up, change one part of the word so that the entire word is different, for example:

“What letter do I need to change to make the word that means something you get when you break a bone?”

Students explains that the letter **f** needs to change to a **c**.

Read the word.

Student reads the word.

“In this word (point to fast), the word spells, **fast, /f/ /ă/ /s/ /t/.**”

“But in this word (point to cast), the word spells **cast, /c/ /ă/ /s/ /t/.**”

Continue making words that adjust the spelling by one or two letters at a time.

## Word Chains



**Materials:** magnetic letter set (optional), whiteboard, dry erase marker, eraser

**Works great with:** regularly spelled words, temporarily irregularly spelled words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

Pull out the letters for your chosen target word.

Build each word by using magnetic letters or writing on a whiteboard.

“Make the word **got.**”

Student makes the word.

“Now read the word.”

Student reads the word.

“Now, make the word **dot.** Only take away, add, or change the letters that need to be changed.”

Student makes the word.

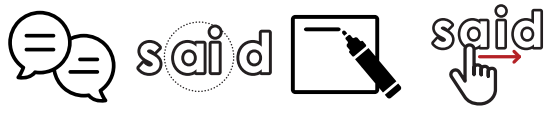
If the student selects or takes away the wrong letter, ask the student, “What sound does that letter make? What sound does this new word need?”

Prompt the student to read each word when it is built. “Read the word.”

Student reads the word.

Repeat cycle by forming a new word.

## Circle and Spell



**Materials:** a sheet with the target word written large enough for the students to circle the letter-sound relationships and space for two spellings underneath. Like so:



**Works great with:** irregular words, one-syllable words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **said**.”

Student repeats **said**.

“Watch as I write the word **said**.”

Write the word said, and then circle the letters by phoneme as you say each sound in the word.

“Now circle the letters as you say each sound in the word. Then, read the word.”

Student circles the letters that make each sound and then reads the word.

“Now spell the word and read it.”

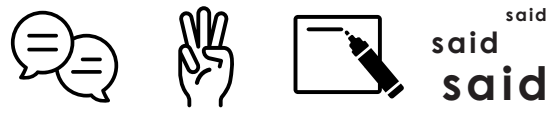
Student spells and reads the word on the first line.

“One more time.”

Student spells the word again on the second line and reads it.

Repeat the steps using the same written-out word with already-circled sounds.

## Three Silly Spellings



**Materials:** whiteboard, dry erase marker, eraser, paper, 3 differently colored pencils

**Works great for:** multisyllabic temporarily and permanently irregularly spelled words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **said**.”

Student repeats **said**.

“Let’s count the sounds in the word **said**.”

Hold up a finger for each sound in the word **said**, “/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

Student says “/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

Write the word **said** on a whiteboard and point to the word **said** on the whiteboard

“In this word, ai says /ě/.”

Point to each part of the word and say the sounds, “/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

Slide your finger under the word. “**Said**.”

“Say the sounds as I point.”

Student repeats each phoneme, “/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

“Read the word”

Student reads **said**.

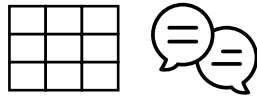
“Let’s spell the word three times, in three silly ways.”

Student chooses three silly ways to spell the word.

Examples include:

- Tiny size, medium size, large size
- Wobbly writing, regular writing, slanted writing
- Spread apart letters, regular spacing, squished letters
- All lower case, all upper case, capitalized (first letter capitalized only)
- Different color pencils- purple writing, red writing, green writing

## Look-Alike Word Reading



**Materials:** Look-Alike Activity Sheet with rows filled

**Works great with:** regularly or temporarily irregularly spelled words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

Write a set of words into the boxes that look similar to your target word(s). Choose words that can be easily mixed-up, such as said, same, and laid.

“We are going to read words that look alike. Pay close attention to the letters in the words.”

Students take turns reading through the rows or sets of the words.

## Mispronunciation Fix



**Materials:** whiteboard, dry erase marker, magnetic letters (optional)

**Works great with:** permanently irregularly spelled words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

Write the word **said** on a whiteboard.

“Please read this word for me.”

Student attempts to read the word.

If student **says the target word**, say:

“Yes, this is the word **said!**”

If the student **cannot identify the target word** based on their mispronunciation:

Say the target word.

Say the mispronunciation.

Ask, “Do you hear how those words sound similar? The word is spelled like /s/ /ā/ /d/,” (use their mispronunciation), “but is pronounced /s/ /ě/ /d/.” (Use correct pronunciation).

“In this word, the letters A and I spell the sound /ě/.” (Explain the unique spelling).

Continue with your own examples

# Spelling Mnemonic



**Notes:** This may be better for students with more *established letter-sound correspondences* who are *struggling with spelling* irregular high frequency words. Only use this with permanently irregular words based on your school’s phonics scope and sequence.

**Materials:** piece of paper and pen/pencil

**Works great with:** Permanently irregular words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

“Say the word **said**.”

Student repeats the word **said**.

Write the word **said** on a piece of paper.

“This is the word **said**. It has letters that don’t say what they usually say. If I tried to sound the word out. I would say, /s/ /ā/ /d/.” (Deliberately mispronounce.) “But in this word the **ai** says /ě/.”

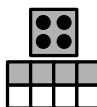
Point to the letters and say the sounds: “/s/ /ě/ /d/.”

“When I read this word I read **said**, but when I spell this word, my spelling brain says /s/ /ā/ /d/ and I know the long a sound can be written **ai** so I use it.”

## Additional Examples

HFW	Reading	Spelling	Mnemonic
<b>said</b>	/s//ě//d/	/s//ā//d/	said is spelled /s//ā//d/
<b>many</b>	/m//ě//n//ē/	/m//ă//n//ē/	many is spelled /m//ă//n//ē/
<b>who</b>	/h//oo/	/wh//ō/	who is spelled /wh/ /ō/
<b>again</b>	/ə//g//ě//n/	/ā//g//ā//n/	again is spelled /ā//g//ā//n/
<b>one</b>	/w//ü//n/	/ō//n/	one is spelled /ō//n/ with a silent e
<b>two</b>	/t//oo/	/t//w//ō/	two is spelled /t//w//ō/
<b>of</b>	/ŭ//v/	/ō//f/	of is spelled /ō//f/
<b>eye</b>	/ī/	/ē//y/	eye is spelled /ē//y/ with a silent e

# High Frequency Word Game



**Materials:** Movement Dice, Sound-Letter Boxes Activity Sheet, three decks of color-coded cards (or pieces of paper in a bowl, or a spinner):

- **Green** cards: “Rule Followers”, regularly spelled words
- **Yellow** cards: “Rules We Are Learning”, temporarily irregular words.
- **Red** cards: “Rule Breakers”, permanently irregular words.

**Works great with:** permanently/temporarily irregularly spelled and regularly spelled words

Teacher in blue. Student in red.

Give each student a sound-letter box.

“There are three piles of cards. Green, for rule follower words, red for rule breaker words, and yellow for words that follow rules we are still learning.”

Choose a student to come to the front and roll the color dice to determine which color card to pick.

Student picks a card and hands it to the teacher.

“This is a (color) word. We (know/don’t know) all the letter-sounds in the word. The word is \_\_\_\_\_. Say the word.”

Student says the word.

“Now roll the movement dice.”

Student rolls the movement dice.

Students orally segment word based on what the movement dice landed on.

Then have the entire class/group segment the sounds of the word, while performing the same movement.

Students go back to their sound-letter boxes and segment and spell the word on their own.

“Check your spelling by looking at my board. Correct any errors.”

All the students correct their spelling.

Underline while you read the word.

Students read and underline the word.