

Pip's Guide to Spelling Success

Learning objective: To identify and apply spelling strategies and understand the importance of etymology and rules.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions below using full sentences where appropriate.

Pip the bookworm caterpillar spends every afternoon in the Great Library, surrounded by towering shelves of stories. Pip knows that spelling is not just about memorising letters; it is like solving a secret code. Sometimes, words follow clear rules, such as adding a suffix like '-tion' to change a verb into a noun. Other times, the history of a word, known as its etymology, gives us a clue. For example, many words containing 'ph' come from ancient Greek, where 'ph' makes an 'f' sound. Pip often shares clever tricks with his friends to help them remember tricky spellings. He suggests using a mnemonic, which is a pattern of letters or a silly sentence to help recall the order of tricky words. If a word looks strange on the page, Pip recommends writing it down in three different ways to see which one looks correct. By observing patterns in books, Pip has turned spelling into a fun adventure. Whether it is a silent letter or a double consonant, Pip believes that with a little patience and a lot of reading, anyone can become a spelling champion.

Word bank: suffix · prefix · etymology · mnemonic · vowel · consonant · phonetic

1. According to the passage, what is a mnemonic? (2 marks)

2. What does Pip suggest you do if you are unsure how a word is spelled? (2 marks)

3. Why might knowing the etymology of a word help a student with their spelling? (2 marks)

4. Why does the author describe spelling as a 'secret code' in the first paragraph? (2 marks)

5. Do you agree with Pip that reading is the best way to improve spelling? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw Pip the caterpillar sitting on a giant stack of books, holding a magnifying glass and looking at a word written on a piece of paper.



Extension challenge: Choose three words you find difficult to spell. Create your own mnemonic for each one to help you remember the correct letter order.