

“Heart” Word Routine (For irregularly spelled words)

- 1. Introduce the word**, showing a card or writing it on the board.
 - **Say:** “This word is _____. What’s the word?” (Students respond).
 - Embed the word in a sentence.
- 2. Spell the word.**
 - **Say:** “_____ is spelled _ _ _ .” Let’s spell the word _____ together.” (point to letters as you spell the word together).
- 3. Underline the “unfair” part of the word** (if applicable), the part that is not decodable.
 - **Say:** “_____ has (#) sounds” (segment the phonemes in the word)
 - **Say:** “Some parts of this word I can sound out, but other parts I can’t. This is the unfair part!”
 - Draw a heart over the unfair part of the word.
 - **Say:** “Because this part is unfair, it is important that I learn this word by heart.”
- 4. Practice the word.**
 - Say: Let’s air write this word together. (Students write the letters of the words in the air as you spell the word together, then blend it back together, drawing an imaginary line under the word: “s-a-i d...said!”)
 - Carpet write, back write, arm write, etc. two to three more times.

Additional options for practice:

- After airwriting, carpet write the word, then trace the word on a personal whiteboard or paper with the cap on a marker or eraser end of a pencil.
- Flip the word over or erase from the board, then have students say the names of the letters in the word aloud as they write the word on their whiteboard or paper. Support students to check their spelling.

Note: This routine can also be used to teach students high-frequency words for which the phonics pattern has not yet been taught. In this case, point out the spelling pattern and identify its sound, but do not label it “unfair.”