

Silent Letters Loud and Clear

By Robin Pulver (robinpulver.com)

Illustrated by Lynn Rowe Reed

Teacher Guide

About the book:

Wretched...dumb...a pain! Mr. Wright's class is through with silent letters. The students can't hear silent letters. They make spelling too tricky. Should silent letters be banned forever? From the creators of *Punctuation Takes a Vacation* and *Nouns and Verbs Have a Field Day* comes another dynamic grammar book with which both new and experienced spellers will identify.

About the author:

Robin Pulver is the author of the Mrs. Toggle books and the Axle Annie books, among other popular picture books for children. She lives in upstate New York.

About the illustrator:

Lynn Rowe Reed is the creator of many humorous picture books for children, including *Julius Anteater*, *Misunderstood* and *Please Don't Upset P.U. Zorilla*, both of which she wrote and illustrated. She lives in Indiana.

Pre-reading:

What is a silent letter? Are they important or could we just get rid of them?

Questions to consider:

1. Where can silent letters be in a word?
2. What does it mean that they "follow no rules?"
3. Do you agree that good spellers are made, not born?
4. What doesn't mean you're a bad speller?
5. Why don't the kids cheer for the silent letters?
6. The kids think silent letters should be banned. What does it mean to ban something?
7. Where did the silent letters decide to go? Can you blame them?
8. What do they decide to do instead of scream or fight?
9. What's wrong with their letter to the editor? Does it mean something different than they meant?
10. Why is it embarrassing? What do they decide to do? In the end, what happens?

A song:

To the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot!"

I'm a silent letter
quiet and shy
you can learn to spell me
if you try.

Don't forget about me
any day
or your words won't mean
what you say!

Activity One:

Use simple clip art from the book to create a board game that is in black and white (or use characters from the book which could be colored in like a coloring book to minimize color printing or using too much ink for the teachers). It should have blocks which curve around, a free space or two, a lose your turn space, a beginning and you win block. Put the words listed below inside blocks that should have a dotted edge to cut out.

<http://www.abcteach.com/free/g/gamebacktoschool2.pdf> example of simple board game

Copy the simple board game below and glue inside a manila folder. Students advance by spelling one of the following words correctly: knee, knot, wrong, wrist, wrap, thumb, pterodactyl, orange, wished, face, home, saved, alone, picture, hide, practice, are, made, take, called, when, when, know, when, daughter, climb, knight, wriggle, fine, like, one, wristwatch, two, spelled, came, silence, dumb, use, should, could, would, what, write, who, hopefully, right, quite, why, wrote, know, stomach, numb, sighed, sight, flashlight, quite, castle, what, might, fight, bright, sign, gave, when, somebody, thumb, knock, bright, bravely.

Activity Two:

Using the same word cards, print a page for each child and cut out. Next, children should sort the cards in the following categories: silent letters at the beginning of the word, silent letters in the middle, silent letter to end a word. In pairs, check your answers.

Activity Three:

Use a variety of fun fonts and sizes to create a page of words that feature a silent letter (see list above).

Directions for students: Find and circle all the silent letters on this page! Check your answers with a friend.

This guide was created by [Tracie Vaughn Zimmer](#), a reading specialist and award-winning children's author. Visit her website to find hundreds of guides to children's literature.