

Section 4

The Silent- e Rule

Teaching the Silent-e Rule

Tutors: The silent-e rule is the most useful and general idea indicating which vowels are long and which are short. Our research has shown, however, that a significant number of children are not familiar with the silent-e rule.

Children can understand and appreciate the transformation from a short vowel to a long vowel sound, but they often get confused as to which vowels make which sounds. For this reason, it is important to teach each vowel sound independently.

The manual contains a silent-e rule lesson for each vowel letter “a”, “i”, “o,” and “u.” It does not include a lesson on the relation between short and long “e”, however, as silent-e words with “e” are not common.

[Note to Tutors: When you teach the vowel sounds to your students, remember that a vowel’s name makes the same sound as the long vowel sound.]

The Silent- e Rule: Vowels and Rules You Need to Know

Kids: Here are the vowels and the sounds that they make:

A, E, I, O, and U

The Vowel A :

The vowel **A** can make 2 sounds: **a** and **ā**, as in **pān** and **pane**.

The Vowel E :

The vowel **E** can make 2 sounds: **e** and **ē**, as in **pet** and **Pete**.

The Vowel I :

The vowel **I** can make 2 sounds: **i** and **ī**, as in **bit** and **bite**.

The Vowel O :

The vowel **O** can make 2 sounds: **o** and **ō**, as in **hop** and **hope**.

The Vowel U:

The vowel **U** can make 2 sounds: **u** and **ū**, as in **hug** and **huge**.

Kids: Think of a word for each vowel that has the sound of the vowel's own name. Then think of another word for each vowel that has the short vowel sound:

A

E

I

O

U

Tutors: Have your students write these words in their journals.

Tutors and Kids: If you add a silent-e to the end of a word with just one consonant as the last letter, the vowel in the middle of the word changes its sound. This is only true if the word ends with just one consonant. If a word ends with more than one consonant, then the vowel in the middle does **not** change its sound.

For Example:

The word “**can**” ends with just one consonant, so when you add a silent-e to the end of “**can**”, it changes the sound of the vowel **a** and the word becomes “**cane**”. If the silent-e isn’t there, or if it has more than one consonant after the vowel, the vowel is short.

The vowel is always short in words like:

bit **sit** **rid** **rat** **not**

It is also short in words like:

back **stick** **fill** **pass**

The silent-e is never added after two consonants, but always after one:

back **bake** **bill** **file** **mill** **mile** **pass** **pace**

[Exception: Whenever the vowel “a” comes before “st”, the silent-e rule works, as in **taste**, **waste**, and **haste**.]

Kids: Let’s go on and change some vowel sounds using the silent-e rule. Let’s start with the vowel letter “a.”

The Silent-e Rule: The Long A Vowel

Tutors and kids: The vowel “a” can make two sounds: **a** and **a**. If you add a silent-e to the end of a word, you change the **a** to **a**.

For example:

$$\text{pan} + \text{e} = \text{pane!} \quad \text{rat} + \text{e} = \text{rate!}$$

Kids, read this:

1. Make the **cap** a **cape**.



2. Make **Nat** **Nate**



NATE

3. Make Jan Jane.



Practice these words:

can	cane
back	bake
hat	hate
mad	made
man	mane
pal	pale

Then read these words:

bake make safe take lake save sale page

Read :

Jan and Jane put my cap and cape in the lake. They made me so mad. I was so mad I got in a big rage. I know this was so bad. But I was so mad I didn't care.



Introduction to My Friend, Silent E

Tutors: This story is designed to reinforce the silent-e rule by applying it repeatedly to the words in the story. It contains a few words which your students may find difficult. Review the following words with your students before you read My Friend, Silent E:

friend

named

when

play

good

fast

talk

funny

short

much

long

down

song

If your students have difficulty with the story, read it with them again. Note whether they can read these words on their own the second time around.

My Friend, Silent E

by Sharese Bullock

I have a friend named Silent E,
He is not like the “e” in she, me or bee.
He does not walk. He does not talk.
He takes a bit and a bite.
He uses a kit to make a kite
when we sit down at a site.

When we sit at the site,
on a mat with my mate,
I start to think if Sam is the same.
Sam and Pam are funny names.
We say them fast and make a fun game.
Name Game, Name Game, the Name of the Game is
Name Game.



Jan and Jane are not the same,
Jane has my friend, E, at the end of her name.
My good old friend, Silent E,
He is so fast; we can not see.
He does not talk in Jane's name,
and that is how we play the Name Game!!!

Jan

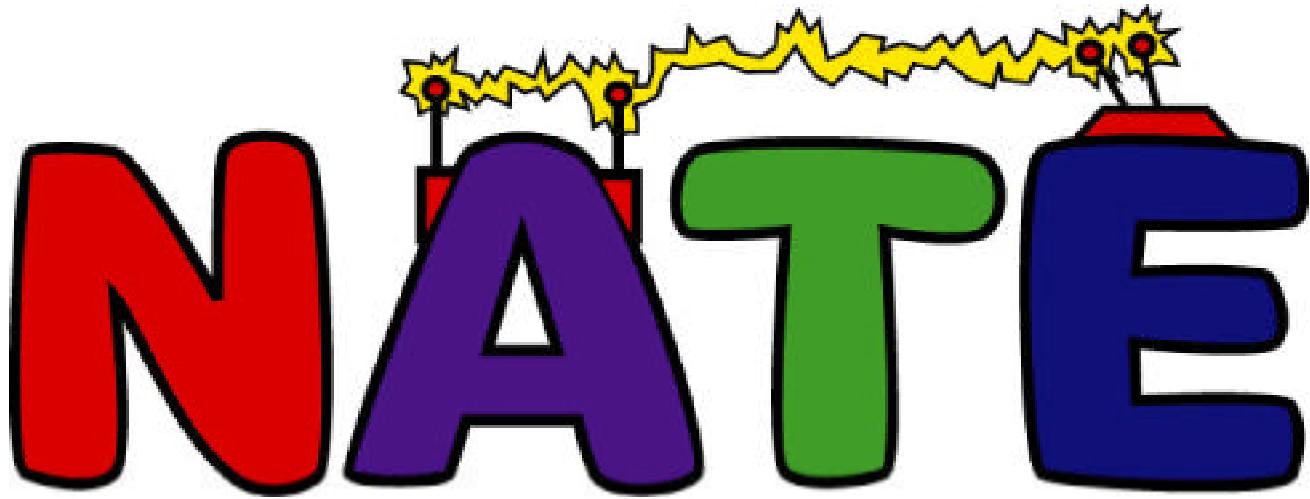


Jane



Kat and Kate are not the same,
Kate has my friend, E, at the end of her name.
My good old friend, Silent E,
He is so fast; we could not see.
He does not talk in Kate's name,
and that is how we play the Name Game!!!

Nat and Nate are not the same.
Nate has my friend, E, at the end of his name.
My good old friend, Silent E,
He is so fast; we can not see.
He does not talk in Nate's name,
and that is how we play the Name Game!!!



Jack and Jake are not the same,
Jake has my friend, E, at the end of his name.
My good old friend, Silent E,
He is so fast; we can not see.
He does not talk in Jake's name,
and that is how we play the Name Game!!!

So you see, how much fun it can be
when we play the Name Game with Silent 'E'.
If you are short, he will make you long,
when we sit at a site and sing the Name Game Song!!!

Comprehension Questions for My Friend, Silent E

Tutors: Be sure to use a separate copy for each student. Have the student write her/his answers below. Turn in this sheet when complete.

1. Can you remember some of the names from the story that got changed when a silent e was added to them? What happens to Nat? What happens to Jack?
 2. The story talks about the name game. How do you play it?
 3. What kind of sound does the silent e make at the end of a word?

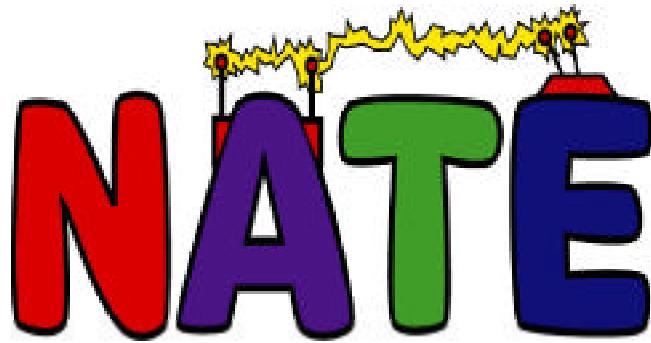
Student _____
Tutor _____

Date _____
Grade _____

How did you like
My Friend, Silent E?
Circle the right answer

5

“Da Bomb”



4

“Hype”

3

“Decent”



2

“Aiight”

1

“Wack”
4-14

The Silent-e Rule: The Long I Vowel

Tutors and kids: The vowel “i” can make two sounds: **i** and **ī**. If you add a silent-e to the end of a word, you change the **i** to **ī**.

For example: hid + e = hide! rid + e = ride!

Kids, read this:

Make the pin



a pine



Now, read these words:

dive dice wire bike life
line side size vibe wipe

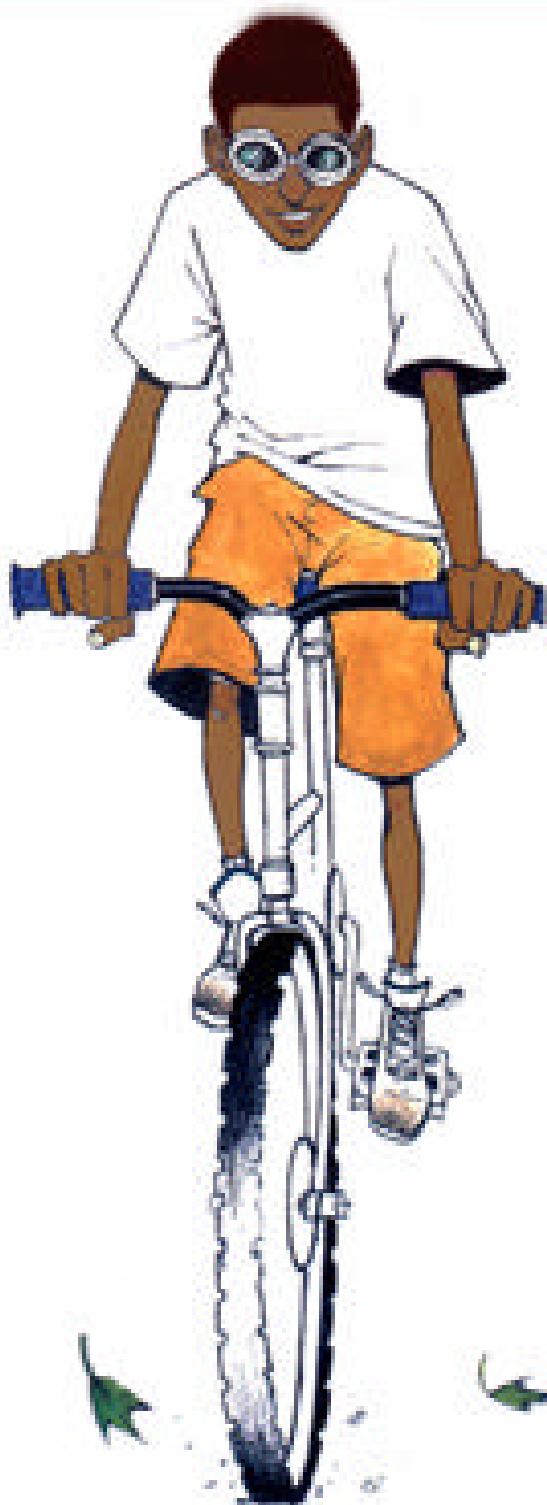
Kids: Here's something special about long **ī**.

It also pops up in words that end with -ld and -nd:

wild mild find mind kind

Read the following sentences:

Jim **rides** his **bike** all of the **time** by the **side** of the school.
He **likes** to **ride** his **bike** a lot.



Introduction to My Hot Dog

Tutors: My Hot Dog is an enjoyable and easy story for your students to read, once they have mastered the silent-e rule. Review the following words before you read My Hot Dog:

bit
bite
ate
dime

If your students have difficulty with the story, read it with them again.

My Hot Dog

When my mom went with me to the ball
game, I got a hot dog. I took one bite, and
let me tell you, it was good!

Then this big kid JoJo came up to me,
and he says , “Give me some.”



But he did not take a little bit. He took a big bite!

And then he took two even bigger bites.

There was only a little bit left of my hot dog
that he did not eat.



I said, "I told you that you could have a little bit,
but you ate up all my hot dog."

So he says, "Well, I only ate a little bit."

I said, “Now you got to buy ME a hot dog.”

Then he says, “Here’s a dime and that’s all I got.”



I said, “How can I get a hot dog with a dime?!!

You are no good at all.”

Next time he comes up to me I am going to say, “No!”

Comprehension Questions for My Hot Dog

Tutors: Be sure to use a separate copy for each student. Have the student write her/his answers below. Turn in this sheet when complete.

1. Why did the kid in the story let JoJo take a bite out of his hot dog?
 2. Do you think that giving JoJo his hot dog was the right thing for the boy to do? Why or why not?
 3. What would YOU do if JoJo asked for a bite of your hot dog?
 4. What other kinds of things could you buy at a ball game?

Student _____
Tutor _____

Date _____
Grade _____

How did you like
My Hot Dog?
Circle the right answer

5

“Da Bomb”

4

“Hype”

3

“Decent”

2

“Aiight”

1

“Wack”

4-22



The Silent-e Rule: The Long O Vowel

Tutors and kids: The vowel “o” can make two sounds: **o** and **o**. If you add a silent-e to the end of a word, you change the **o** to **o**.

For example: hop + e = hope! rod + e = rode!

Kids, practice these words:

rob	robe
jock	joke
mop	mope

Then read these words:

cone robe hole pole lone mole hope pose vote

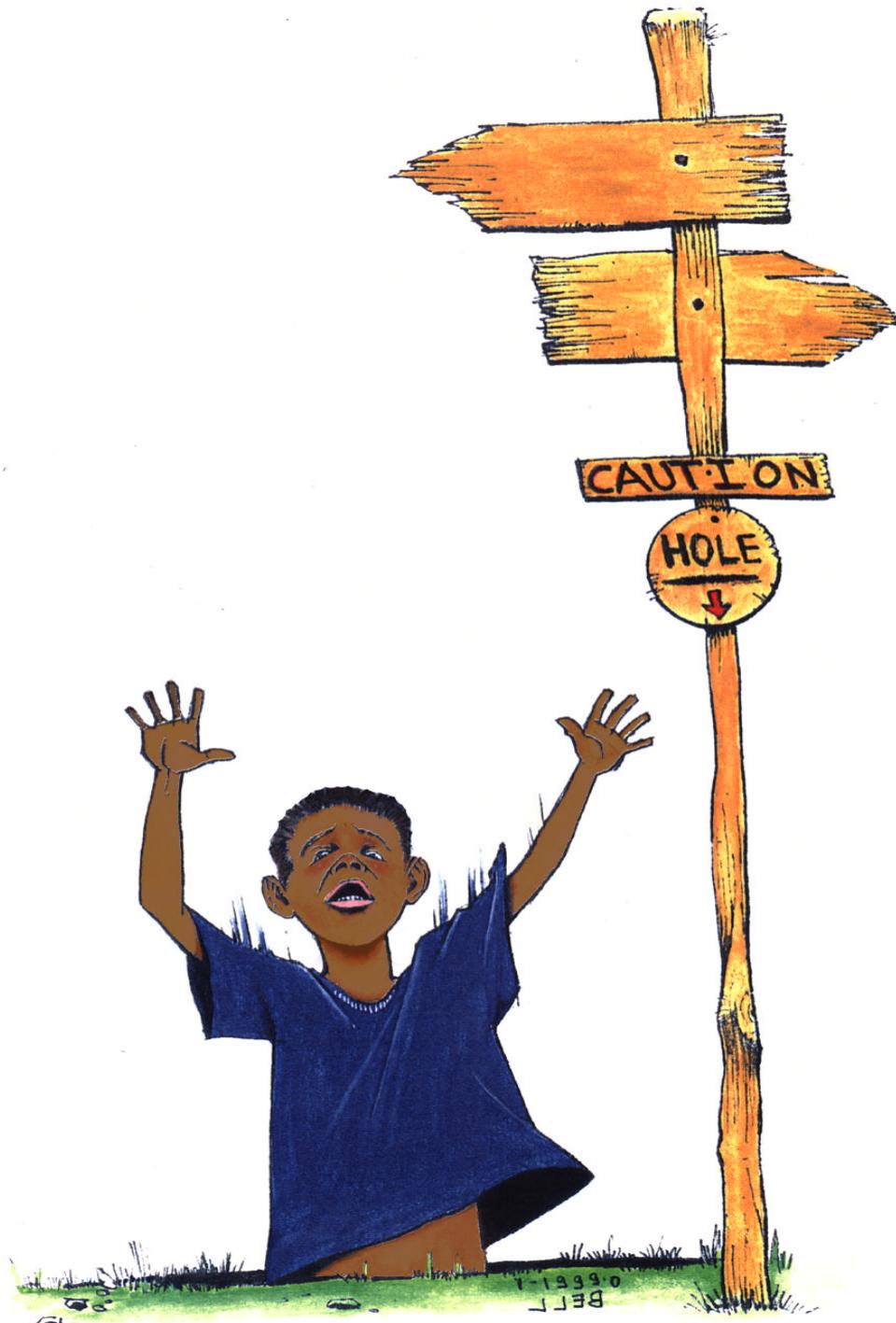
Kids: Here's something special about long **o**.

It also pops up in words that end with -ld:

old bold sold told cold

Read the following sentences:

Let me tell you a **joke**. I **hope** you like it. **Rob** the **jock** **rode** a bike around a **pole** and fell in a **hole**.



Introduction to The Hater

Tutors: This is a creative story playing on the appearance and disappearance of an imaginary figure who represents the child's effort to wrestle with her anti-social feelings. In current African American culture, "Hater" has become an important word (a Playa Hater is someone who is hostile to hip-hop artists). The story has been designed to give the kids practice with silent-e words. Review the following words with your students before you read The Hater:

Hater

take

cake

dance

ride

alike

bike

ice

face

place

care

lie

If your students have difficulty with the story, read it with them again. Note whether your students can read these words on their own the second time around.

The Hater

By Erika Coleman

I got a problem that I must tell.

It seems that things ain't going so well.

It's all been bad since I was four.

That's when my little blue friend came to my door.

He said to have fun, all it would take,

was to put both my hands in the birthday cake.

Me and the Hater have so much fun.

We jump and play and dance and run.

Hater is little, way shorter
than me,

but he does things that I
never did see.



Me and the Hater are just alike.

I even let him ride my brand new bike.

I bet y'all can guess what the Hater did.

He popped a wheelie and made me bump my head.

No one can see my new best friend

when he gets me into trouble again and again.

He knows that mama will yell and yell.

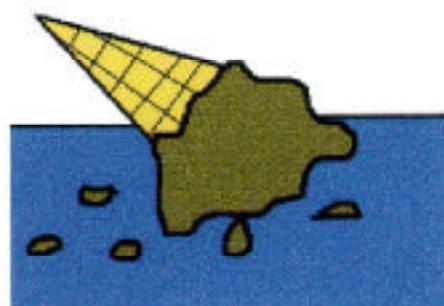
That's kinda why things ain't going so well.

When Hater comes, he leaves a big mess.

And we play so much, I do bad on my tests.

HE made me eat a bug,

And HE was the one who put
ice cream on the rug.



I did not push mud into little Dave's face,

and Hater left my toys all over the place.

I tried to tell mama, but she did not care.

When the teacher called, she sent ME upstairs.

No toys, no games, the end of my T.V. show.

Now that I think about it, where did that Hater go?

See, when all the trouble went down,

that little Hater was nowhere to be found.

Hater would tell me that he could fly,

but now I see that it was just another old Hater lie.

I have not seen him all afternoon.

I don't think I'll see him anytime soon.

The fun ran out when Hater went away.

All I had wanted to do was play.

I mean, he was cute, but I
wanted all to see,

Hater made all the mess
and it got blamed on me.



Comprehension Questions for The Hater

Tutors: Be sure to use a separate copy for each student. Have the student write her/his answers below. Turn in this sheet when complete.

1. Why did the girl eat a bug?
 2. How high could the Hater fly?
 3. How come the Hater disappeared when trouble went down?
 4. Why can't anybody else see the Hater?

Student _____
Tutor _____

Date _____
Grade _____

How did you like
The Hater?

Circle the right answer

5

“Da Bomb”



4

“Hype”

3

“Decent”



2

“Aiight”

1

“Wack”
4-30

The Silent-e Rule: The Long U Vowel

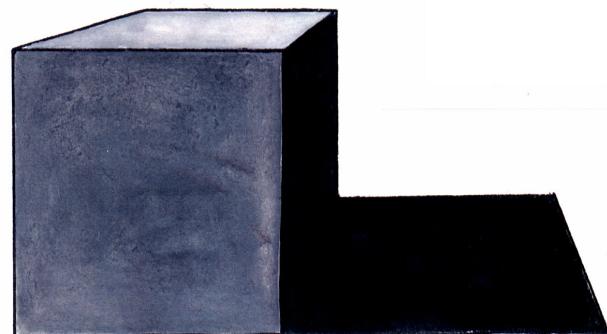
Tutors and Kids: The vowel “u” can make two sounds: **u** and **u**. If you add a silent-e to the end of a word, you change the **u** to **u**.

For example:

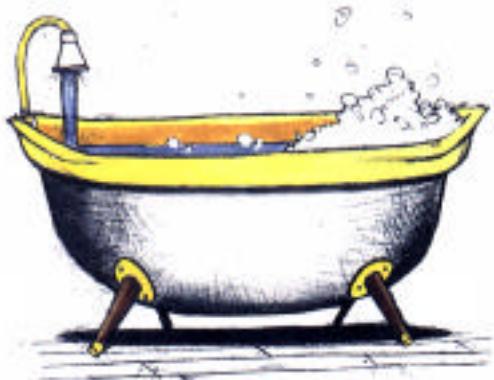
dud + e = dude! **hug + e = huge!**

Kids, read this:

1. **Make the cub** a **cube**



2. **Make the tub** a **tube**



Practice these words:

June

Luke

pure

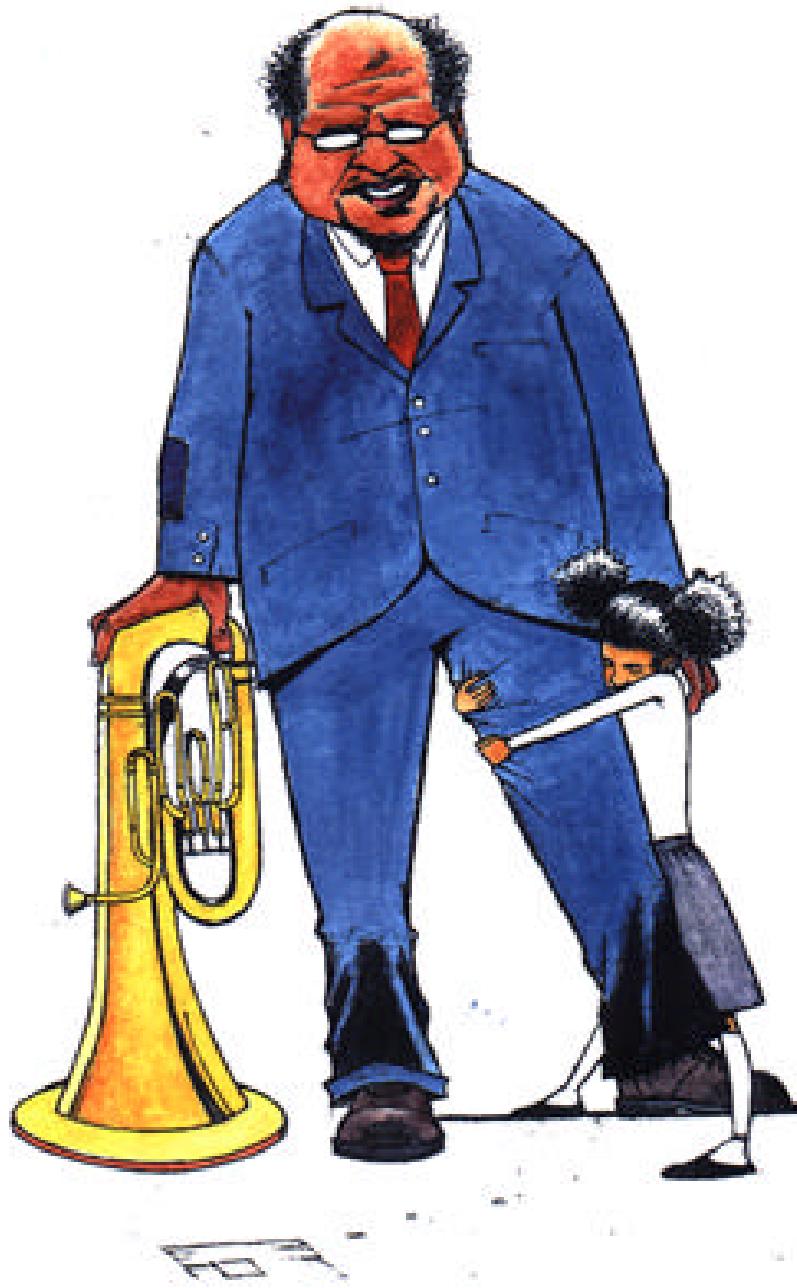
rule

rude

tune

Now, read these sentences:

This **huge** man named **Luke** made a cool **tune** on his **tuba**. June didn't think it was loud or **rude**. She gave **Luke** a **huge** **hug**.



Introduction to Dealing With Zeke

Tutors: This is another story that contains words with the silent-e rule. It also has words like “shove,” a word that is an exception to the silent-e rule, and that will need to be taught to your students.

Review the following words with your students before you read Dealing With Zeke.

dealing	chance
sure	don't
obeying	play
stool	fool
walked	good
standing	week
bumping	because
acting	school
very	forgot
next	proud
allowed	after

If your students have difficulty with the story, read it with them again. Note whether your students can read these words on their own the second time around.

Dealing with Zeke

By Michael LeeYow and Bill Labov



My mom used to say “Boy, don’t play the fool.
You know I work all day so you need to be in school.”
So I went to school to have a good week.
It would have been fine if not for that Zeke.
That same day I got sent home from school, because
I forgot
to take the advice that my mom taught.



She would get on my case and say,
“Jamaal, use your head.”
Then I got sent home for using
my hands instead.
This was my last chance before
it was mom’s turn
to play teacher and make sure
that I learn.

“Don’t get sent home from school for not obeying the
rules!”

were my mother’s last words as I sat on that stool.

So this time, my mom made me vow.

I gave her my word that I would make her proud.

It was back to school as I saw the sun rise —

time to see if I was more wise.

As I walked across the street,

there was Zeke,

standing in the
school yard,

acting all hard.

I tried to walk by, but
Zeke was an ace



at bumping into kids and then he'd make a mean face.

I thought, "Never walk around him and never look
scared."

Zeke likes to shove those that dared.

So when I came by, I hoped that the bump and
mean face were it.

Oh, but not this kid Zeke, he does not like to quit.

When we got to the steps to go to our class,

Zeke gave me a shove and wouldn't let me pass.

He shoved me one more time and made me drop my book.

So I went up to Zeke and gave him a hard look.

Zeke did not like me looking at him like I was the man.

I made him so mad that he said, “Time to put up your hands.”

I said, “This is not the time and this is not the place!

I will see you some time after school face to face.”

When I got home I said, “Mom, you were right.

School is not the place for a kid to have a fight”

The very next day, I saw Zeke in line,

Not bumping any kids and acting all fine.

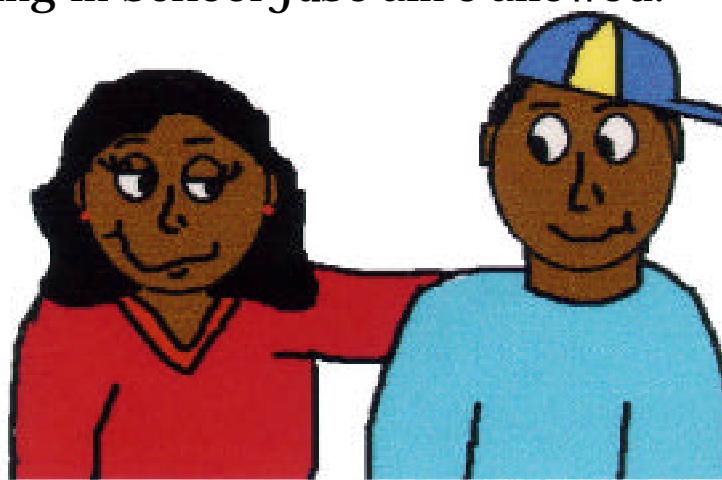
The kids came up to me to ask why Zeke was all new

I said, “I met him after school.”

They asked, “But what did you do?”

“I did what I had to do to make my mom proud,

‘cause fighting in school just ain’t allowed.”



Comprehension Questions for Dealing With Zeke

1. How would you handle the problem if Zeke came up to you and got in your face?
 2. How did Jamaal's mother want him to deal with Zeke?
 3. Why do you think that Zeke changed his mind and started acting "all new" by the end of the story?

Student _____
Tutor _____

Date _____
Grade _____

How did you like
Dealing With Zeké?
Circle the right number

5

“Da Bomb”



4

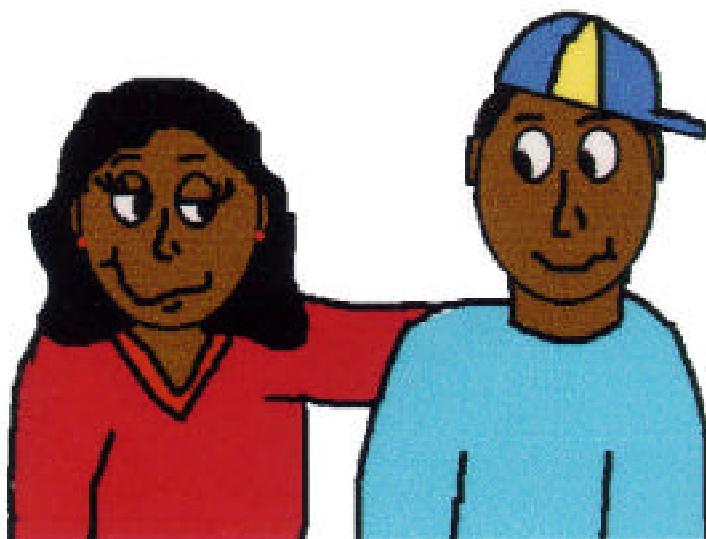
“Hype”

3

“Decent”

2

“Aiight”



1

“Wack”

Section 4: The Silent-e Rule

Progress Assessment

Student's Name _____
Grade _____

School _____
Teacher _____

Tutors: MAKE SURE you xerox this form for each student you work with. Mark the number of silent e words read correctly in each section below. The first section asks the kids to read silent e words they were exposed to in the lessons. The second section asks the kids to generalize the silent e rule by reading words they weren't exposed to in the lessons. They need to get 18 out of 20 words read right in each section before moving on to a new lesson!

Section 1: Kids: Read the words below out loud.

- | | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. can | 6. pale | 11. bake | 16. made |
| 2. Pete | 7. joke | 12. Kit | 17. pose |
| 3. hid | 8. Time | 13. Pet | 18. rag |
| 4. cube | 9. hop | 14. dive | 19. bike |
| 5. ride | 10. rude | 15. tub | 20. vote |

Number of words read correctly: _____ out of 20, _____%

Section 2: Kids: Read the words below out loud.

- | | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. care | 6. rare | 11. Pat | 16. mare |
| 2. sin | 7. sore | 12. ice | 17. tot |
| 3. bore | 8. fire | 13. dope | 18. lone |
| 4. mule | 9. pit | 14. let | 19. get |
| 5. five | 10. more | 15. tone | 20. rose |

Number of words read correctly: _____ out of 20, _____% 4-40