

Rhyming Stories

language workbook



for the sounds and spelling of English

Susan Boyer

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From left to right: marble carver by Susan Boyer; woman blowing bubbles from Microsoft; man in kayak by Susan Boyer; student with blue background purchased from Fotolia; man in bookstore purchased from photos.com; waitress in coffee shop purchased from photo.com; woman with golden roses by Susan Boyer; chef purchased from Fotolia; painter at easel purchased from photos.com; man looking at painting by Susan Boyer

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

'Rhyming Stories - language workbook' has been developed to provide complementary learning activities for *'Rhyming Stories - practice with the sounds and spelling of English'* (A5 storybook). An audio recording of *Rhyming Stories* is also part of this learning resource.

The activities have been designed so that students can work through them in class with other students, or alone, without the help of a teacher. The language exercises were developed to provide reinforcement of English spelling patterns introduced through each of the stories in *'Rhyming Stories - practice with the sounds and spelling of English'*.

Each story (in the storybook) focuses on a particular sound of English as well as telling a narrative on a different topic. Therefore, each corresponding section of this language workbook focuses on the same sound and its spelling variations. It also includes additional activities to extend the topic while providing repetition through listening, speaking, reading and writing on the theme of the story.

For example, the language activities for **'Jen the apprentice chef'**, focus on and provide reinforcement of spelling variations for the sound /e/, but also provide explanation and practice on 'how to use a dictionary' and speaking activities on the topic of food and cooking.

Each unit of this 'language workbook' is divided into different sections, which explain and provide practice with various aspects of English spelling and pronunciation in a systematic and enjoyable way:

- Each unit begins with a **vocabulary or word matching activity** which focuses on the meaning of words found in each specific story. The activity aims to familiarise learners with the meaning of words they will use in later exercises. It also emphasises the link between English sounds and spelling, as the words in the matching activity have the focus sound of that corresponding story.
- After the matching activity, learners are required to write the answers into a crossword which consolidates spelling patterns.
- The subsequent activity comprises simple comprehension questions about the story to ensure readers engage with the topic while practising language features.
- Next, learners are required to **listen and read the story and write the missing words** (all of which contain the focus sound of that story) into the text. This process draws attention to the spelling variations of the focus sound of that particular story.
- A short activity follows in which learners identify one word with a different sound to other words on the same line. Answers to these exercises are provided at the back of this book.
- Various additional activities follow which include researching or speaking on a topic through surveys and/or discussion. Other activities include analysing language features of English, such as 'silent letters', homophones and particular letter combinations common in English.
- Each unit also contains an activity where learners write words into lists (according to their sound - spelling correlation). The completed lists can be checked against the 'Spelling Reference Lists' at the back of *'Rhyming Stories - practice with the sounds and spelling of English'* (A5 storybook).

Dear ‘Rhyming Stories’ user,

This book has been designed to help you to understand the link between English sounds and spelling, and to provide fun activities that will help you to improve your spelling. This book will provide the most benefit when used with the accompanying storybook, ***‘Rhyming stories – practice with the sounds and spelling of English’*** and the audio recording.

Some central points to know about English spelling and pronunciation:

- Twenty-six letters are used to write English.
- Forty sounds are used in spoken English.
- Since there are **more sounds** in spoken English than **letters** in written English, some **letters represent more than one sound**.

The rhyming stories in this book range from 150 to 250 words and each contains a simple story that focuses on a specific **sound** of English. Every story is illustrated with visual cues and colours which also help to demonstrate the link between the sounds and spelling of English words.

When learning any new skill it is important to realise that there is more than one method that can be helpful. This book contains a variety of learning activities aimed at improving spelling. For example, this book encourages the use of all the following skills and senses:

- visual – **seeing** and identifying the spelling patterns and their relationship to pronunciation by reading the ‘Rhyming Stories’
- auditory – **hearing** and recognising words with the same sound in each ‘Rhyming Story’ on the audio recording
- physical – **writing** words with the focus sound with its spelling combinations helps us remember patterns; for example, completing the spelling lists in this book for each ‘Rhyming Story’. (Also see information about ‘English Vowel Sound Spelling Charts’ below.)
- verbal - **saying** words aloud as we consciously focus on the spelling also helps to implant the pattern in our mind.
- logical – **understanding** the limited spelling patterns of English, such as which letter combinations are possible and which combinations never occur in English.

The approach used in this book also recognises that **repetition** is central to learning, particularly with improving spelling. Most importantly, the approach takes into account that successful learning happens best when we **enjoy what we are doing**. Therefore, my aim with this book is to provide stories that are varied, interesting and fun.

PDF versions of ***‘English Vowel Sound Spelling Charts’*** (colour and/or illustrated) can be purchased, downloaded and printed to any size appropriate for your classroom or learning space.

See: www.englishbooks.com

The charts can be laminated and re-used multiple times for students to write words according to their spelling variations on the matching coloured chart as a lasting visual ‘ready-reckoner’.

A4 size laminated ***‘English Vowel Sound Spelling Charts’*** can be bought at:

www.boyereducation.com.au

Suggestions for students working through this course independently:

- Improving your spelling is all about repetition, so the more you do, the easier it will become.
- Reading and listening to stories at the same time is a very effective way to become familiar with the spelling patterns of English.
- After listening to a story, try reading it aloud. This will help you focus on the spelling as well as the sounds contained in the words.
- Write new or difficult words onto small 'word cards' that you can carry in your pocket or wallet. Use time waiting in queues or for appointments to memorise the spelling of new words, then check the cards to see if you got the spelling right.
- You may need to check the meaning of some new words in a dictionary, so have a good dictionary nearby while you are studying. Because English words are not always pronounced as they are spelt, you may also need to use a dictionary to learn the correct pronunciation.
- It helps to be familiar with words and expressions used to talk about spelling and pronunciation and to understand what dictionary symbols mean. A list of words relating to spelling and language learning is given on page 6 of *'Rhyming Stories – practice with the sounds and spelling of English'*. Also, an explanation and practice in using a dictionary is given on page 11 of this workbook.
- If you are also focusing on the pronunciation of English words, mark the stress patterns of words on the same cards so that you can say the words correctly. See pages 5, 9 and 11 of this book for an explanation and practice with understanding 'word stress'.
- When using this book with the audio recording, practise saying the new words aloud. Record your voice so that you can check your pronunciation.
- Practise writing in English every day. Try to use the new words you have learnt in your writing.
- Remember, improving your spelling is like success in any new skill: the more you do it, the easier it will become!