

# ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Layers of Language:  
The Anglo-Saxon Layer of Language, Letter-sound Correspondences

Marcia K. Henry, Ph. D.  
Professor Emerita,  
San Jose State University

## ~ Module 13, Session 4 ~ Handout 2

### 1. Silent *-e*

Silent *-e* on the end of a word marks a long vowel sound when a single vowel and consonant immediately precede the final *-e* (e.g., *bake*, *vote*, *state*, *vice*, *mute*, *revoke*, *demote*, etc.)

NOTE: Final *-ve* may or may not mark a long vowel sound.

*Live*, *gave*, *drove*, *save*, and *revive* have long vowel sounds.

*Have*, *give*, *love*, and *prove* are listed among the non-phonetic words.

### 2. *-ff*, *-ll*, *-ss*, (*-zz*)

One syllable words ending in *f*, *l*, *s*, and sometimes *z*, immediately following a short vowel, must double the final consonant as in *staff*, *still*, *dress*, and *jazz*.

Common exceptions include *if*, *clef*, *gas*, *this*, *us*, *bus*, *thus*, *yes*, and *quiz*.

Note also that final *-s* as /z/ does not double as in *as*, *is*, *was*, *has*, *his*, etc.

### 3. *-ck*, *-tch*, and *-dge*

Spell the /k/ sound with *-ck* immediately following one short vowel at the end of a one syllable word as in *stack*, *peck*, *stick*, *dock*, and *cluck*.

Spell the /ch/ sound with *-tch* immediately following one short vowel at the end of a one syllable word as in *patch*, *stretch*, *stitch*, *notch*, and *clutch*.

Spell the /j/ sound with *-dge* immediately following one short vowel at the end of a one syllable word as in *badge*, *pledge*, *bridge*, *dodge*, and *nudge*.

### 4. Soft *c* and *g*

*C* and *g* have a “soft” sound when they come before *e*, *i*, and *y* as in *cent*, *city*, and *cycle*; and *stage*, *gin*, and *gypsy*.

Common exceptions include *get* and *give*.

## 5. Plurals

Nouns usually add *-s* to make the plural form as in *cats*, *legs*, *boys*, *girls*, and *horses*.

Nouns ending in *-s*, *-x*, *-z*, *-ch*, and *-sh* add *-es* for plurals as in *dresses*, *boxes*, *topazes*, *lunches*, and *dishes*.

### Plurals, Continued

Nouns ending in *-y* require suffix addition rules when adding suffixes (See Session 6 Handout).

In nouns ending in *f*, the *f* often changes to *v* and *-es* is added as in *wife* – *wives*, *leaf* – *leaves*, and *shelf* – *shelves*.

Nouns ending in *o* sometimes add *s* as in *altos* and *sopranos*, and sometimes add *es* as in *veto*es and *potato*es. Check your dictionary to confirm if needed.

Some plurals are completely irregular. Sound clues will help in pluralizing words such as *foot* (*feet*), *mouse* (*mice*), *man* (*men*), and *goose* (*geese*).

NOTE: Teachers are also responsible for knowing if their students understand **contractions** and **possessives**.