

Silent Letters- Pelmanism And Snap

Instructions for teachers

Choose the most useful words below for your students, preferably making sure that there are at least four examples of each silent letter, e.g. four with silent T. This will usually mean cards from more than one level below, e.g. all the Elementary ones and most of the Pre-Intermediate ones. Cut up one pack of cards per group of two or three students.

There are two games that can be played with the same pack of cards. In pelmanism (also called “pairs” and “the memory game”), they spread all the cards face down on the table and try to find two which have the same silent letter, also pronouncing them correctly in order to keep those two cards and score two points. Snap is a much faster game in which they deal all the cards out but don’t look at their own pack, take turns turning over the top card from their packs, then race to shout “Snap!” if the last two cards to be turned over (their last card and their partner’s last card) have the same silent letter. If they are right and the two words do both have the same silent letter, they can take all the cards which have been turned over so far. If they are wrong, they have to give a card to each other player as punishment. The game then continues. The winner is the person with the most cards when the game is stopped.

Before, after or between those games, students can work together to find similar words with the same silent letter, including for the same reason and/ or in the same position.

Elementary

answer	island	ballet	buffet
biscuit	build	Christmas	listen
could	should	know	knife
science	scissors	sandwich	Wednesday
raspberry	receipt	what	when
where	which	white	why
wrap	wrestling	write	wrong

Pre-Intermediate

autumn	column	bomb	lamb
climb	comb	champagne	foreign
ghost	yoghurt	guarantee	guard
handkerchief	handsome	honest	hour
knee	knitting	plumber	thumb
rhyme	rhythm	whale	while

Intermediate

artistically	physically	business	parliament
cabaret	sachet	castle	fasten
debt	doubt	exhausted	exhibition
fascinated	scenery	knapsack	knight
knock	knot	psychiatrist	psychology
wheel	whistle	who	whole
wreath	wrist		

Upper Intermediate

acquaintance	acquire	aisle	isle
beret	gourmet	bidet	chalet
breadcrumb	tomb	campaign	cologne
condemn	solemn	critically	magically
cupboard	coup	damn	hymn
descend	scene	exhilarating	vehicle

heir	honour	kneel	knob
miscellaneous	scent	muscle	obscene
pseudonym	psychic	rhetoric	rhino
whoever	wholly	wrestle	wrinkle

Advanced/ Proficiency

aplomb	catacomb	apostle	epistle
apropos	bourgeois	arraign	reign
bristle	bustle	cachet	crochet
debris	rendezvous	debtor	subtle
diaphragm	feign	ghastly	ghoul
glisten	hasten	gnarly	gnash
gnat	gnaw	gristle	hustle
jamb	limb	jostle	nestle
knack	knoll	knackered	knuckle

numb	plumb	pestle	trestle
playwright	sword	pneumonia	pneumatic
psalm	pseudo	rapport	ricochet
rhapsodic	rhinestone	rhododendron	rhomboid
rustle	thistle	scintillating	scion
silhouette	vehement	soubriquet	valet
succumb	womb	whet	whey
wrangle	wrath	wreak	wreck
wrest	wretched	wriggle	wring
writ	writh	wrung	wry