

Birthday Skates

by Debbie Gonzales

Early Level 9

Teacher guide by Joy Allcock

Phonemic Awareness

1. Manipulating sounds to make new words

What word would we make if we dropped the first sound in each of these words?

Kate without the 'k' – *ate*

pink without the 'p' – *ink*

box without the 'b' – *ox*

skates without the 's' – *Kate's*

Amy without the long 'a' – *me*

laces without the 'l' – *aces*

feet without the 'f' – *eat*

Students could think of other words that rhyme, and make up a rap or poem using the words.

What word would we make if we dropped the last sound in each of these words?

Amy without the long 'e' – *aim*

ice without the long 'i' – *I (eye)*

white without the long 'i' – *why*

lace without the 's' – *lay*

rink without the 'k' – *ring*

slide without the 'd' – *sly*

thump without the 'p' – *thumb*

Extension

What word would we make if we swapped the vowel sound in the middle of each of these words?

The short 'e' in *get* for a short 'o' – *got*

The short 'o' in *stops* for a short 'e' – *steps*

The 'ur' in *hurt* for an 'ar' – *heart*

The long 'oo' in *boots* for a long 'i' – *bites*

The long 'e' in *steel* for a long 'a' – *stale*

The long 'e' in *feet* for a short 'a' – *fat*

The long 'a' in *Kate* for a long 'i' – *kite*

The long 'a' in *skate* for a long 'oo' – *scoot*

Phonics

NOTE

The Long 'a' sound

This sound is written in a number of common ways:

- As a syllable by itself at the start of a word (**a**)
a/pron, a/pex, a/phid, a/gent
- At the start of or inside a syllable – two vowels together (**ai, ei, ea**) or a split digraph (**a_e**)
aim, aid, ate, train, vein, mistake, great, break
- At the end of a syllable inside a word (**a**)
pa/per, ma/tron, la/dy, sha/dy
- At the end of a word (**ay, ey**)
tray, day, portray, they, survey
- Vowels plus **gh** patterns at the end of a syllable or word or before a **t** (**aigh, eigh**)
straight, eight, neigh/bour, sleigh

Students can begin to notice these spelling patterns and their attention can be drawn to the position of the long 'a' sound in the word. Words with the **eigh/aigh** patterns can be grouped and students supported to find the situations and words when they might use these patterns.

1. Introducing the long 'a' sound

Remind students that the long 'a' sounds like the name of the letter **a** – aaaaapron, caaaaake, daaaaaaay. Practise making the long 'a' sound, being aware of the shape of your mouth as you say it.

2. Brainstorming words that contain the long 'a' sound

Brainstorm words that begin with a long 'a' sound.

aim, aid, age, angel, agent, apron, acorn

Brainstorm words that end with a long 'a' sound.

day, stray, play, tray, they, obey, sleigh

Brainstorm words that have a long 'a' sound inside the word

cake, tame, late, game, great, train, paint, stale, freight, eight, straight

3. Looking for the spelling patterns for the long 'a' sound

Say the word *aim* and count the sounds. Draw two sound boxes on the board.

--	--

Write the word *aim* on the board and ask students to help you fill in the sound boxes. Circle the spelling pattern for the long 'a' sound.

ai	m
----	---

Say the word *agent* and count the sounds. Draw five sound boxes on the board.

--	--	--	--	--

Write the word *agent* on the board and ask students to help you fill in the sound boxes. Circle the spelling pattern for the long 'a' sound.

a	g	e	n	t
---	---	---	---	---

Say the word *play* and count the sounds. Draw three sound boxes on the board.

--	--	--

Write the word *play* on the board and ask students to help you fill in the sound boxes. Circle the spelling pattern for the long 'a' sound.

p	l	ay
---	---	----

Say the word *obey* and count the sounds. Draw three sound boxes on the board.

--	--	--

Write the word *obey* on the board and ask students to help you fill in the sound boxes. Circle the spelling pattern for the long 'a' sound.

o	b	ey
---	---	----

Repeat this process with words such as great, train, gate

t	r	ai	n
---	---	----	---

g	a	te
---	---	----

Write the patterns you have found on the board

a ai a_e ay ey

Write some of the words students brainstorm under these spelling patterns.

Explain to students that these are the most common spelling patterns for the long 'a' sound, but they might find more!

4. Finding the words that contain the long 'a' sound in the story

As students read *Birthday Skates* ask them to listen for words that contain the long 'a' sound. After reading the story through, go back and re-read it a page at a time. Ask students to identify the

long 'a' words on each page and then write them on the board under the correct spelling pattern. Ask students to colour-code the spelling patterns for the long 'a' sound in the words on the board.

5. Extension

Write the long 'a' words from the book and from students' suggestions onto cards. Students could sort the cards into spelling pattern groups. They could then look at where in the word the spelling patterns occur.

For example: The two-vowels-together patterns occur at the start of or inside a syllable. The **ay** and **ey** patterns only occur at the end of a word or root word.

Vocabulary Development

1. Word meanings

Use the lists of important vocabulary in the story (nouns, verbs and adjectives) on the inside back cover of the book to generate discussion based on students' own experiences. Choose some to discuss further.

For example:

Nouns

skates, boots, blades, steel, laces

skates What other kinds of skates do you know of? Describe how we move on ice skates, on roller skates, on a skate board.

boots Why do people wear boots? Describe some different kinds of boots. Do you own any boots? What do you use them for? Are ice-skating boots the same as roller skating boots? How are they the same? How are they different?

blades What is a blade? What other things do you know of that have blades? What would you use these things for? Why do ice skating boots have blades?

steel What is steel? What kind of things could be made of steel? Why do you think ice skating blades are made from steel?

laces What are laces used for? What sort of things have laces? Could we use a zip instead of laces – would a zip work the same way as laces? Would skating boots be safe if they had a zip instead of laces?

Adjectives

brand new, shiny, sharp

brand new What does brand new mean? Will Kate's skates be brand new when she goes home from the skating rink? Tell us about a time when you got something that was brand new.

shiny List all the things you can think of that are shiny. Describe what shiny means.

sharp What do we use sharp things for? List all the things you know that are sharp. What part of the skates are sharp?

2. Synonyms

Generate new words that could replace these ones that appear in the story:

hard (Page 4) The lacy ribbon is *hard* to untie. (difficult, not easy)

tangled (Page 8) At the skating rink Kate's crazy pink laces get *tangled*. (mixed-up, knotted, muddled)

falls (Page 10) Kate *falls* on the ice with a thump! (trips, drops, slips)

greatest (Page 15) They skate the *greatest* figure-eights ever! (best, most amazing, most special)

3. Antonyms

Think of words that mean the opposite to replace these in the sentences.

- hard* It is hard to skate on sharp steel blades. (easy)
brand new She wants some brand new ice skates... (old, used)
wobbles Kate wobbles her way onto the skating rink. (glides, slides, zooms)

Comprehension

Character Study

Kate and Amy are sisters. Fill in activity sheet 1 to describe what you have found out about these two characters.

Use Activity sheet 2 to describe how Kate and Amy feel as you read through the story.

Story structure

Birthday Skates has a beginning, a middle and an end. Use Activity Sheet 3 to describe the events that happen at each part of the story.

Fluency

Re-read the story and find the words that Amy repeated to her sister. What were they and when did she say them?

What was Kate's repeated reply? When did she change her reply? What did she say?

Phonics focus words

Make up the phonics focus words into cards – either colour-code the long ‘a’ spelling patterns or print them in colour. These cards can be used for quick word recognition or for word sorts to identify spelling patterns for the long ‘a’ sound.

today	way	sways
birthday	they	Amy
skating	skates	laces
eights	crazy	
blades	lacy	
waiting	shakes	
changes	Kate	
greatest	okay	

ay

a

ea

a_e

ey

ai

eigh

Activity Sheet 1: Description of Characters

	Kate	Amy
Appearance		
Choose qualities from the list below that you think belong to Kate or Amy. You can add your own ideas as well. excited happy kind determined independent helpful hurt friendly generous		

Activity Sheet 2: Characters' Feelings

Write down how you think each character is feeling and how you know this, when you look at these pages.

	Kate	Amy
Page 4	Kate is excited and happy because it is her birthday and she has a present to open. You can tell she is happy because she is smiling.	
Page 7		
Pages 8 and 9		
Page 11		
Page 12		
Page 15		

Activity Sheet 3: Story Structure

At the beginning of the story...



In the middle of the story...



At the end of the story...
