

**Phonics**  
**LESSON 51**

## Wh Digraph

- The *wh* digraph category of phonetic elements includes words with the consonants *w* and *h* that together stand for the /wh/ sound, as in *wheat*.

This lesson is divided into two sections. Section 1 is the core lesson, which can be used with most students in a whole-class or small-group setting. The core lesson is designed to introduce, model, and practice the phonetic element taught. Section 2 consists of optional activities designed to reinforce the element taught in the core lesson. These optional activities work well for small-group and individual instruction.

MATERIALS		DECODABLE BOOK
Wh digraph picture cards	Bingo cards and place markers	<i>Whisker Bill</i>
Word cards	Paper	
Wh digraph card	Practice sheet	
Word-family cards	Workmats	
Letter cards		
Index cards		

### SECTION 1

#### Student Objectives

- Introduce *wh* digraph
- Blend *wh* digraph words
- Blend onset and rime
- Sort words
- Practice decoding
- Introduce new high-frequency word: *walk*
- Read the decodable book

#### Introduce Wh Digraph

##### Materials: Wh digraph picture cards

- Show students the *wh* digraph picture card for *wheat*. Ask them to name the picture and tell you the sound they hear at the beginning of the word. Point to the letters *wh* on the card and tell students that the letters *w* and *h* together stand for the /wh/ sound they hear at the beginning of the word *wheat*.
- Explain that *wheat* starts with *wh*, which is an example of a consonant digraph. Remind students that a consonant digraph is two consonants that together stand for one sound. Say the words *wheat* and *heat* aloud. Ask students which word contains the *wh* digraph. Make sure students can differentiate between the two initial sounds.
- Show students the *wh* digraph picture cards one by one. Have them name each picture, point to the digraph, and say the digraph sound.

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### Blend Wh Digraph Words

Materials: Workmats, *wh* digraph card, letter cards

**NOTE:** If students have mastered individual sound/symbol relationships, you may want to skip this section and go directly to Blend Onset and Rime.

- Write the word *whale* on the board. Point out the *wh* digraph at the beginning of the word and ask students to put the *w* and *h* together to make the /wh/ sound. Next, run your finger under the letters as you blend the three sounds in *whale*. Remind students that an *e* at the end of the word makes the word have a long vowel sound. Point out that even though there are five letters, there are three sounds blended together to form the word. Then have students blend the word aloud with you as you run your finger under the letters.
- Repeat the blending activity with the words *while* and *whiz*. When students have blended the words, ask volunteers to come up and circle the *wh* digraph in each word. Have a student point to each *wh* digraph as the rest of the group says the sound.
- If students need more work with blending words, give them the letter/digraph workmat, the *wh* digraph card, and letter cards to blend the words above. Have them line up the card for each sound in each word under the boxes on their workmat. Model how to push up the *wh* digraph card into the box on the workmat and indicate the sound the digraph makes. Have students push up and sound out the remaining letters of the word in order on their workmat.

### Blend Onset and Rime

Materials: *Wh* digraph card, letter cards, word-family cards

- Tell students they are going to practice reading words with the *wh* digraph. Model using the *wh* digraph card, letter cards, and word-family cards.
  - 1 Place the *im* card in a pocket chart or along the ledge of a chalkboard. Remind students that this is the *im* word family. Place the *wh* digraph card in front of *im*. Have students listen while you model sounding out the word by blending the sound in the onset with the sounds in the rime: wh/im. Have students repeat.
  - 2 Cover the *w* in the word. Have students listen while you model sounding out the word: h/im. Have students repeat. Make sure they can differentiate between the word with and without the *wh* digraph sound.
  - 3 Replace the *im* card with the *ack* card. Repeat the process with the new word.
  - 4 Cover the *w* in the word. Have students listen while you model sounding out the word: h/ack. Have students repeat. Make sure they can differentiate between the word with and without the *wh* digraph sound.
  - 5 Replace the *ack* card with the *am* card. Repeat the process with the new word.

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- 6 Cover the *w* in the word. Have students listen while you model sounding out the word: h/am. Have students repeat. Make sure they can differentiate between the word with and without the *wh* digraph sound.
- 7 Replace the *am* card with the *en* card. Repeat the process with the new word.
- 8 Cover the *w* in the word. Have students listen while you model sounding out the word: h/en. Have students repeat. Make sure they can differentiate between the word with and without the *wh* digraph sound.
- 9 Replace the *en* card with the *ip* card. Repeat the process with the new word.
- 10 Cover the *w* in the word. Have students listen while you model sounding out the word: h/ip. Have students repeat. Make sure they can differentiate between the word with and without the *wh* digraph sound.
- 11 Replace the *ip* card with the *ig* card. Repeat the process with the new word.
- 12 Cover the *w* in the word. Have students listen while you model sounding out the word: h/ig. Point out that *hig* is a nonsense word and that not all words with *wh* at the beginning make a word when the initial *w* is covered.

**Sort Words**

**Materials:** Index cards, word cards

- Write the words *wh digraph* and *non-wh digraph* on index cards and place them on the top row of a pocket chart or along the ledge of a chalkboard. Ask students to come up one at a time, select a word card, say the word, and place it under the correct category. Continue until all the word cards are placed correctly. Once all the words have been sorted, have students read aloud the words under each category.

**Practice Decoding**

**Materials:** Decodable book *Whisker Bill*, practice sheet

- For students who seem to have a grasp of decoding *wh* digraph words and previously taught decodable and high-frequency words, provide extra practice with the text by allowing them to independently read:  
     the practice sheet  
     the decodable book *Whisker Bill*
- Some students may benefit from having the decodable book introduced and pre-taught before they read the book. Strategies might include introducing and practicing high-frequency words used in the book, teaching special word structures, and doing a book walk.

**Introduce New High-Frequency Word: *walk***

- Tell students they are going to learn a new word that they need to be able to recognize and read quickly. Write the word *walk* on the board, and read it. Then have students read the word with you. Have students write the word *walk* in the air with their finger as you spell it out loud with them, pointing to each letter on the board as you say the letter name.
- Use the high-frequency word in a sentence. Have students make up their own sentences using the high-frequency word.

**Read the Decodable Book**

**Materials:** Decodable book *Whisker Bill*

**NOTE:** See the “Elements Used in This Book” section, found at the start of the decodable book, for a list of words and skills covered in the book. Pre-teach these elements as necessary.

- Show students the cover of the book. Have them read the title with you as you run your finger under each word. Ask students what they see in the picture and what they think the story might be about. Ask a student to point to the *wh* digraph in the word *Whisker*.
- Give students a copy of the book. Have them preview the pictures and predict the story. When they get to page 7, ask where they think Whisker Bill wants to go in his boat.
- Have students read the book. You may want them to whisper read so you can monitor their progress. When they have finished reading, take time to discuss the book and check for understanding. Ask students how Whisker Bill felt about where he was at the end of the story. Have students point to clues in the story that helped them draw their conclusion.



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**SECTION 2** Optional Lesson Activities (for students who need additional practice)

**Student Objectives**

- Blend *wh* digraph words
- Blend onset and rime
- Spell and write *wh* digraph words
- Complete learning center activities

**Blend Wh Digraph Words**

**Materials:** Workmats, *wh* digraph card, letter cards

- Give students the letter/digraph workmat, the *wh* digraph card, and the letter cards. Say the word *white* and have students listen for the sounds in the word. Have students select the *wh* digraph card and the letter cards they need to spell *white*. Provide help as needed. Have students line up the card for each sound under the boxes on their workmat. Ask them to blend the sounds as they push up the letters into the boxes. Then have them say the word *white* aloud.
- Repeat the process with the words *which* and *whisk*.

**Blend Onset and Rime**

**Materials:** Workmats, *wh* digraph cards, letter cards, word-family cards

- Give students the onset/rime workmat, the *wh* digraph cards, and the word-family cards. Say the word *when*. Ask students what onset they hear at the beginning of the word. Have them place the *wh* digraph card in the box on the left of their workmat. Have them identify the rime they need to put at the end of *wh* to make the word *when*. Have them place the *en* card in the box on the right. Write the word on the board. Have students check their spelling of the word on their workmat with the word on the board. Then have them blend the sound in the onset with the sounds in the rime.
- Say the words *whim*, *whack*, *wham*, and *whip* one at a time and have students use the *wh* digraph and word-family cards to spell the words on their workmat. Have them blend the onset and rime as they make each word. Write each word on the board as students finish making the word on their workmat. Have students check their spelling of each word on their workmat with the word on the board.

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- Dictate several *wh* digraph words and have students write or spell them (*whale, which, whisk, white*).
- Dictate simple sentences for students to write.  
*Which way did he go?*  
*Her pants are white.*  
*Mom whisks the eggs in the pan.*  
*That whale is huge!*

**Learning Center Activities**

**Materials:** Word cards, Bingo cards, place markers, paper, index cards

- Give each student a blank Bingo card. Have them write *wh* digraph words from the word cards on their Bingo card. Place the word cards upside down. Have students take turns drawing a word and saying it aloud. Have them put a place marker on their card if they find a word that matches the one read. Continue playing until a student has marked three words in a row on his/her card.
- Have students choose four to six *wh* digraph words and use them to create a story that explains where Whisker Bill is and what he is doing there.
- Have students choose four to six *wh* digraph words other than those on the *wh* digraph picture cards. Have them create a flashcard for each of the words chosen. Have them write the word at the bottom of an index card, underlining the *wh* digraph. Then have them draw a picture of the word above it.