

## Spelling - Digraphs (gh, ph and f)

### Reading/discussion

Sometimes English spelling can be very strange! Take the letter 'f' for example. We all know what 'f' sounds like. It works very well in words like fish, food, fat and fast. Yet we use two other ways to spell the same sound. These are the **consonant digraphs**: 'gh' and 'ph'. A digraph is two letters which are used together to make one sound.

'gh' is quite an easy digraph to remember because we only use it as an 'f' after short **vowel digraphs** ending in 'u', such as cough, tough and laugh. (Of course, not all words which end in 'gh' sound like 'f' at the end. Think of plough, dough, or though. I told you that English spelling was strange, didn't I?)

The digraph 'ph', however, is borrowed from Greek, and it seems to turn up everywhere!

You'll find it

- at the beginning of a word: phone;
- in the middle of a word: alphabet;
- and at the end of a word: telegraph.

It also likes joining up with an 's': sphere, sphinx.

In fact the only place you don't often find the 'ph' digraph is after a vowel digraph ending in 'u', where the 'gh' digraph likes to hang out.

Like all spelling, unfortunately, the only way to be sure to use these 'f' sounds correctly is to memorize them, so let's see how many we can learn.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Spelling - Diagraphs (gh, ph and f) Questions

### A. Sorting and Spelling.

Here is a list of words containing an 'f' sound. Sort them all into the correct boxes. Can you think of any others? Now pair up with a friend and test each other to see how many you can spell without looking.

phone, food, photo, rough, feet, alphabet, gopher, fast, enough, nephew, afraid, orphan, trophy, half, laugh, dolphin, cough, fish, elephant, fond, tough, fat, trough.

F	PH	GH

### B. Correct the spelling.

Someone can't spell very well! Can you read the following paragraph and correct the spelling by underlining the incorrect word and writing the correct one in the box next to it?

My neghew and I went phishing yesterday.  
The sea was very rouf and we didn't catch many phish but I was lucky enouf to hook a lovely phat trout. We are both very phond of trout so we decided to divide it and take halgh each. On the way back to the car my neghew put his phoot into a puddle of water. He just lauphed and said it didn't matter, but he had quite a nasty couf and I was aphraid that it might get worse, so we drove back home as phast as we could.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Spelling - Digraphs (gh, ph and f) Answers

### Activity A

F	PH	GH
food feet fast afraid half fish fond fat	phone photo alphabet gopher nephew orphan dolphin elephant	rough enough laugh cough tough trough

### Activity B

nephew	fishing
rough	
fish	enough
fat	
fond	
half	
nephew	foot
laughed	
cough	
afraid	
fast	