

SOUND SPELLING...

*Thinking about spelling from
a sound perspective.*

SPELLING S BLENDS

Below are examples from a young speller that are not uncommon with some learners of literac



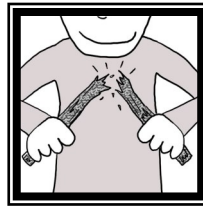
sgab



sbin



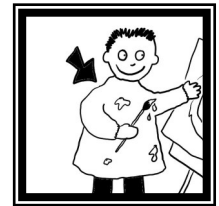
sdeps



snap



slip



smok

These are all good attempts at spelling. The child is attending to each sound in all six words including the blends* at the start of each word. **Why then, are they incorrectly spelling the blends in the first three words, while getting the blends in the second three correct? Can you guess how this child might spell the following words?**

Spit _____ Skid _____ Swag _____

The answers are at the bottom of this page.

* A BLEND occurs when there are TWO CONSONANTS together in a word that make TWO SOUNDS. Examples of initial blends are ST, SL, SM, GR, GL, PR, PL, TR, TW and final blends are FT LK NK PT ST

All the words in the pictures above begin with "S BLENDS".

Note: The letters SH, PH, TH and CH are NOT BLENDS. They are DIGRAPHS.

Although there are two consonants, the combination makes ONE SOUND.

What's going on here? One test used when assessing phonological awareness is to ask a child to remove a sound and to state what is remaining. For example: "Take the /s/ sound off "slip" and what are you left with?" The answer is "lip". Now do the same with "scab". As an adult, we know how the word is spelt so this may affect how we respond. We might say "cab". IF WE REALLY THINK about the sounds, we should say "gab".

This is the source of the spelling error above. The child who is spelling words as written above, should be told that they are hearing the sounds well, but spelling can be **crazy** and they must learn a rule...

WE NEVER WRITE sb **Instead we write:** sp **WE NEVER WRITE** sd **Instead we write:** st

WE NEVER WRITE sg **Instead we write:** sc or sk Give lots of examples to show how this is done.

(ANSWER: sbit, sgid, swag)