



Printable Cards for Irregular “Heart” Words

An irregular word is one that cannot be readily decoded because either

- it includes grapheme-phoneme correspondences that are unique to that word or a few words (permanently irregular words), or
- the student has not yet learned all the grapheme-phoneme correspondences in the word (temporarily irregular words).

Contrary to popular belief, students should *not* be taught to memorize irregular words by sight. In *most* irregular words, only one or two letters do not conform to their usual sound correspondence. This means that **most** irregular words are at least partially decodable. Rather than relying on visual memorization, instruction in irregular words should promote students’ orthographic mapping. This means that the focus should be on connecting the letters in the word to the sounds they represent, even if the correspondence is an unusual one.

To teach new irregular words, you should guide your students in identifying the irregular part of the word—the letter or letters that don’t follow regular phonetic rules. These are the parts of irregular words that must be learned “by heart.”

On the cards in this set, the irregular parts are designated with a heart shape. Point out the irregular part(s) and discuss the unexpected grapheme-phoneme correspondences with your students. The purpose of this process is to support the student’s orthographic mapping of the word.

Present each word initially with the symbols (i.e., hearts and boxes) covered up. Begin by showing the students the word and saying the word aloud. The students repeat the word, and then you and the students find the irregular part together by matching the phonemes in the word with the graphemes and identifying any irregular grapheme-phoneme correspondence(s). Also, point out any chunks of words that may be helpful in identifying other words (e.g., the -ould in could, would, and should). Once the irregular part(s) of the word and any useful chunks have been identified, the students should practice reading and spelling the word using the following steps:



1. Students say the sounds in the word together with you, including the sound that is represented by an irregular grapheme, and then blend the sounds together to form the word.
2. Students say the sounds in the word on their own, including the sound that is represented by an irregular grapheme, and then blend the sounds together to form the word.
3. Students write the word while saying each sound. Repeat writing the word while saying the sounds 2-4 more times. Using varied practice (e.g., write it big, small, fast, slow) can make this activity more engaging.

If you are using these cards to accompany UFLI Foundations lessons, please note that only permanently irregular words are included, and the symbols on each card align with permanent irregularities in the word. For example, in Lesson 1, “the” is taught as an irregular word, and because students have not yet learned the graphemes, both “th” and “e” are marked with a heart in the lesson slides. In later lessons, the “th” grapheme is taught, so that part of the word becomes regular at that point. Therefore, on the card in this set, only the “e” in “the” is marked with a heart because it is the only part of the word that is *permanently* irregular.



Printable Cards for Irregular "Heart" Words

said

A rectangular card with a white background. The word 'said' is written in a large, black, sans-serif font. A red heart is positioned directly under the 'ai' in 'said', and a horizontal line is drawn above the heart. Below the 's' and 'd' are two blue squares, one on each side.

the

A rectangular card with a white background. The word 'the' is written in a large, black, sans-serif font. A red heart is positioned directly under the 'e' in 'the', and a horizontal line is drawn above the heart. Below the 't' is a blue square.

said

A rectangular card with a white background. The word 'said' is written in a large, black, sans-serif font. A red heart is positioned directly under the 'ai' in 'said', and a horizontal line is drawn above the heart. Below the 's' and 'd' are two blue squares, one on each side.

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mother



brother




today




very



above



among



again



against



always



almost



floor



poor



door



won



son



month



hour



minute



Monday



Wednesday



February



eye



heart



about



answer



honest



honor



truth



truly



busy



build



built



sure



laugh



whom



whose



toward





through



learn





earth





early




buy




guy




guess




guest



guide



young



touch



enough



tough



rough

