

STUDENT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

GRADE / CLASS: _____

SCORE: _____

LESSON 53 • VOWEL DIGRAPH AI

Original Page 32 • Phonogram ai

ai

= Long ā sound (/eɪ/) as in *gain, rain, nail*

VOWEL DIGRAPH • AI

1 Read and write each word carefully.

gain /geɪn/ _____	fail /feɪl/ _____	laid /leɪd/ _____	aid /eɪd/ _____
rain /reɪn/ _____	nail /neɪl/ _____	paid /peɪd/ _____	aim /eɪm/ _____
grain /greɪn/ _____	wail /weɪl/ _____	wait /weɪt/ _____	paint /peɪnt/ _____

2 Sort words by their rhyming pattern.

-AIN WORDS _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	-AIL WORDS _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	-AID WORDS _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	OTHER AI WORDS _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
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3 Write three original sentences using words from above.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4 Orthographic Discovery: Answer each question.

a. What vowel sound does the digraph ai make? _____

b. Where does ai usually appear in base words? _____

RULES TO REMEMBER • LESSON 53

Rule 1 • Digraph AI
Two vowels standing together: the *a* is long and the *i* is silent (āi).

Rule 2 • Position in Base Words
ai is used at the beginning (*aid, aim*) or in the middle (*rain, wait*), never at the end of a word.

Rule 3 • Irregular Spelling
pay becomes *paid*, and *lay* becomes *laid* (irregular past tense spelling with *-id*).

TEACHER: Master Key / Orthographic Guide

LEVEL: Grade 2 / Primary Phonics

FOCUS: Vowel Digraph Ai (āi = /eɪ/)

STANDARD: Wheeler Page 32

LESSON 53 • TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL KEY & PEDAGOGICAL MATRIX

Vowel Digraph /eɪ/ Mastery

Pedagogical Purpose: Systematic mastery of the vowel digraph **ai**. Students explore rhyming rime patterns (-ain, -ail, -aid) and internalize the orthographic rule governing *ai* vs. *ay*.

DIGRAPH MATRIX			
RIME / PATTERN	TARGET WORDS	PHONETIC & STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS	ORTHOGRAPHIC NOTES & DISTINCTIONS
-ain Family	gainraingrain	Onset + rime /eɪn/. <i>grain</i> features an initial consonant blend /gr/.	Homophone alert: <i>rain</i> vs. <i>rein</i> (harness) vs. <i>reign</i> (rule).
-ail Family	failnailwail	Onset + rime /eɪl/. <i>wail</i> starts with semivowel /w/.	Homophone alert: <i>fail</i> (pass), <i>wail</i> vs. <i>whale</i> (sea mammal).
-aid Family	aidlaidpaid	Onset + rime /eɪd/. <i>aid</i> begins directly with the vowel digraph.	Morphological note: <i>laid</i> and <i>paid</i> are irregular past tense forms of <i>lay</i> and <i>pay</i> .
Other Ai Rimes	aimwaitpaint	Rimes /eɪm/, /eɪt/, /eɪnt/. <i>paint</i> contains a final consonant blend /-nt/.	Homophone alert: <i>wait</i> vs. <i>weight</i> (mass/heaviness).

EXERCISES 2, 3, & 4: ANSWER KEYS & SAMPLE RESPONSES

Exercise 2 Sort Key: -ain Words: gain, rain, grain • -ail Words: fail, nail, wail • -aid Words: aid, laid, paid • Other ai Words: aim, wait, paint.

Exercise 3 Model Sentences: 1. *The heavy rain helped the green grain grow tall.*
2. *He paid for the new hammer and a silver nail.*
3. *We must wait until the fresh paint is completely dry.*

Exercise 4 Discovery Key: a. Sound: The long ā sound (/eɪ/). • b. Position: At the beginning (*aid*, *aim*) or in the middle (*rain*, *wait*); never at the end of base words.

GUIDED ORAL PRACTICE • Socratic Teacher Script

Socratic Prompt 1 (ai vs. ay Rule)
"Notice where *ai* sits in *rain*, *nail*, and *wait*. English words almost never end in *ai*—at the end of a word, we use *ay* like in *day*, *play*!"

Dictation Sentence 1 (rain, wait, paint)
"We must wait for the spring rain before we paint the fence."

Socratic Prompt 2 (Two Vowels Walking)
"When two vowels go walking, the first does the talking! In *ai*, the *a* says its long name /eɪ/ and the *i* remains silent."

Dictation Sentence 2 (paid, nail, laid)
"Father paid for each nail and laid the wood on the grass."