

STUDENT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

CLASS: _____

SCORE: _____

LESSON 95 • VOWEL DIGRAPH EA = SHORT Ě 16 SHORT Ě WORDS

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Irregular Orthoepey • Digraph ea Sounding as Short Ě (/ɛ/)
“In many common English words, the vowel team **ea** does not take the long ē sound (as in meat), but sounds as short **&ebreve;** (as in **b&ebreve;d**).”
Wheeler's 16 Core Words:
head • dead • lead (metal) • read (past) • tread • bread • dread • thread • breath • death • realm • deaf • health • wealth • stealth • meadow

CONCEPT

1
16-Word Short Ě Digraph Matrix
Copy the words neatly in 4 balanced columns, placing a breve (̆) over the **&ebreve;a** team:

head • dead • lead • read

tread • bread • dread • thread

breath • death • realm • deaf

health • wealth • stealth • meadow

2
Heteronym & Tense Discrimination
Explain the difference in sound and meaning between the present and past tense forms below:
1. I like to **read** (/rēad/) good books today. • Yesterday I **read** (/r&ebreve;ad/) three chapters.

2. The guide will **lead** (/lēad/) the way. • The heavy sinker was molded of solid **lead** (/l&ebreve;ad/).

3
Phonogram Family Classification
Group the target words into their precise rhyming families on the lines below:

-ead family (4 words):
bread, dead, head, thread...

-ealth family (3 words):
health, wealth, stealth...

-eath family (2 words):
breath, death...

WHEELER'S ORTHOGRAPHY RULES • DIGRAPH EA = SHORT Ě

1. 1. Historical Shortening: In Old and Middle English, long vowel digraphs shortened before heavy consonant clusters; *bread, death, health*.

2. 2. Heteronym Alert: *Read* (present /ri:d/) vs. *read* (past /rēd/); *lead* (verb /li:d/) vs. *lead* (metal /lēd/). Check sentence context for correct pronunciation.

3. 3. Silent L & A Nuances: *Realm* has short ě with voiced *l*; *deaf* has short ě with voiceless *f*; *meadow* is a disyllable with unaccented *-ow* (/ou/).

LESSON 95 TEACHER GUIDE & ANSWER KEY

LESSON 95 • TEACHER MASTER KEY

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TARGET WORD	DIACRITIC & SOUND	PHONOGRAM / ROOT	ORTHOEPIC TEACHING POINT
bread	br&ebreve;ad • /brɛd/	-ead family • Old English brēad	Digraph shortened to short ĕ; never confuse with *bred*
thread	thr&ebreve;ad • /θrɛd/	-ead family • Digraph th- + r- blend	Consonant blend thr- + short ĕ digraph
breath	br&ebreve;ath • /brɛθ/	-eath family • Voiceless noun	Contrast voiced verb: breathe with long ē
health	h&ebreve;alth • /hɛlθ/	-ealth family • Root heal + -th	Suffix -th caused historical vowel shortening
wealth	w&ebreve;alth • /wɛlθ/	-ealth family • Root weal + -th	Cognate with well-being; short ĕ
meadow	m&ebreve;ad-ōw • /mɛd-ou/	Old English mædwe • Disyllable	First syllable short ĕ; second syllable long ō

COMPLETE ANSWER KEY & SOLUTIONS

WHEELER'S EXERCISES

Exercise 1 (Matrix Copywork): All 16 words transcribed with breve diacritic (&ebreve;a) marking short e quality.

Exercise 2 (Heteronyms):

1. read: present tense has long ē (/ri:d/); past tense has short ĕ (/rɛd/).

2. lead: verb to guide has long ē (/li:d/); noun naming dense metal has short ĕ (/lɛd/).

Exercise 3 (Families):

- ead: bread, dead, head, read, tread, dread, thread.
- ealth: health, wealth, stealth.
- eath: breath, death.

Teaching Tip: Notice how adding -th to heal created health with short ĕ!

SOCRATIC GUIDING PROMPTS & PEDAGOGICAL INSIGHTS

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- When you read 'bread' and 'meat', what happens to the sound of 'ea'?
- Look at the word 'breath'. How do you change it into the action word 'breathe'?
- How does the word 'heal' relate to the spelling and meaning of 'health'?

DICTATION & ORAL APPLICATION SENTENCES (READ SLOWLY AT NORMAL SPEAKING PACE):

1. Good health is of far greater worth to a man than silver or earthly wealth.

2. Mother baked a fresh loaf of warm brown bread for our evening meal.

3. Take a deep breath of the fresh morning air across the flowery green meadow.

4. He wound the fine white linen thread carefully upon the wooden spool.