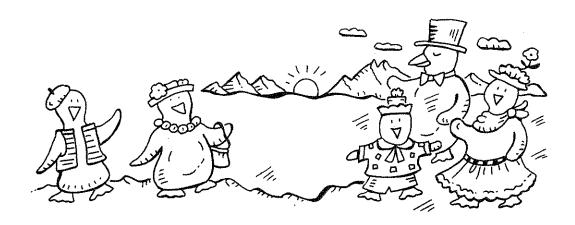
# 

Grades 4-6

by Timothy Rasinski Kent State University

### To my own children—Mike, Emily, Mary, and Jenny—Word Wizards in their own right.

A father couldn't ask for better kids.



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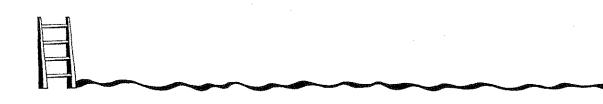
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#### **Welcome to Word Ladders!**

In this book you'll find 100 mini-wordstudy lessons that are also kid-pleasing games! To complete each Word Ladder takes just ten minutes but actively involves each learner in analyzing the structure and meaning of words. To play, students begin with one word and then make a series of other words by changing or rearranging the letters in the word before. With regular use, Word Ladders can go a long way toward developing your students' decoding and vocabulary skills.

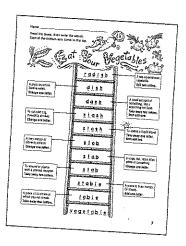
#### How do Word Ladders work?

Let's say our first Word Ladder begins with the word walk. The directions will tell students to change one letter in walk to make a word that means "to speak." The word students will make, of course, is talk. The next word will then ask students to make a change in talk to form another word—perhaps chalk, or tall. At the top of the ladder, students will have a final word that is in some way related to the first word—for example, run. If students get stuck on a rung along the way, they can come back to it, because the words before and after will give them the clues they need to go on.

#### How do Word Ladders benefit students?

Word Ladders are great for building students' decoding, phonics, spelling, and vocabulary skills. When students add or rearrange letters to make a new word from one they have just made, they must examine sound-symbol relationships closely. This is just the kind of analysis

that all children need to perform in order to learn how to decode and spell accurately. And when the puzzle adds a bit of meaning in the form of a definition (for example, "make a word that means to say something"), it helps extend students' understanding of words and concepts. All of these skills are key to students' success in learning to read and write. So even though Word Ladders will feel like a game, your students will be practicing essential literacy skills at the same time!



#### How do I teach a Word Ladder lesson?

Word Ladders are incredibly easy and quick to implement. Here are four simple steps:

- 1. Choose one of the 100 Word Ladders to try. (The last three pages are the hardest ladders in the book, so avoid starting with those.)
- **2.** Make a copy of the Word Ladder for each student.
- **3.** Choose whether you want to do your Word Ladders with the class as a whole, or by having students work alone, in



- pairs, or in groups. (You might do the first few together, until students are ready to work more independently.)
- 4. At each new word, students will see two clues: the kinds of changes they need to make to the previous word ("rearrange the letters" or "add two letters"), and a definition of or clue to the meaning of the word. Sometimes this clue will be a sentence in which the word is used in context but is left out for children to fill in. Move from word to word this way, up the whole Word Ladder.

Look for the **Bonus Boxes** with stars. These are particularly difficult words you may want to preteach. Or you can do these ladders as a group so that children will not get stuck on this rung.

That's the lesson in a nutshell! It should take no longer than ten minutes to do. Once you're done, you may wish to extend the lesson by having students sort the words into various categories. This can help them deepen their understanding of word relationships. For instance, they could sort them into:

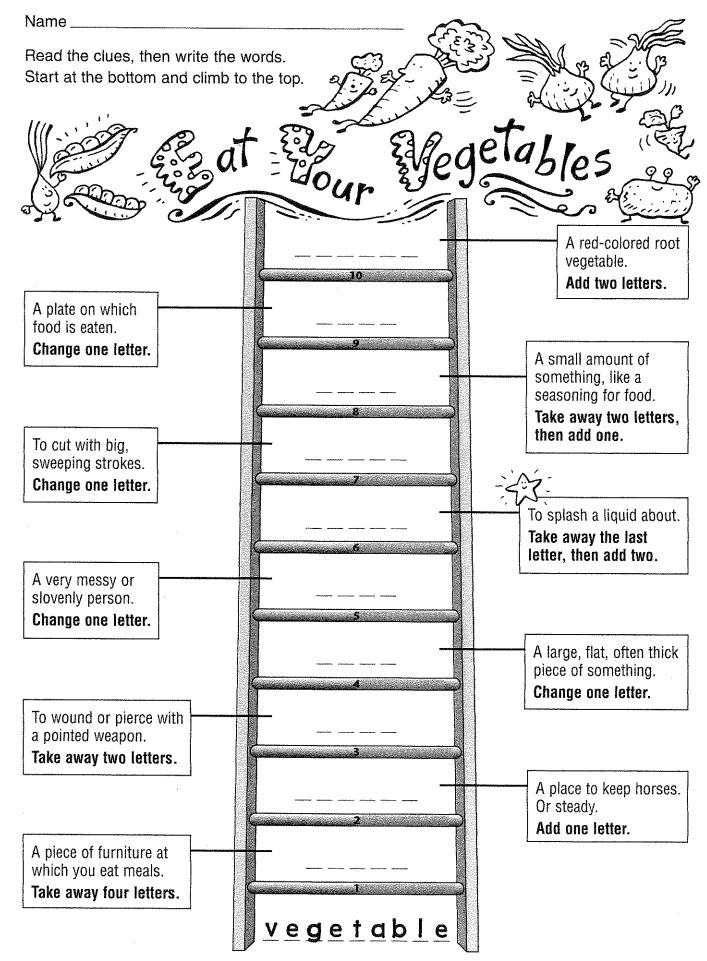
- Grammatical categories. (Which words are nouns? Verbs?)
- Word structure. (Which words have a long vowel and which don't? Which contain a consonant blend?)
- Word meaning. (Which words express what a person can do or feel? Which do not?)

## Tips for Working With Word Ladders

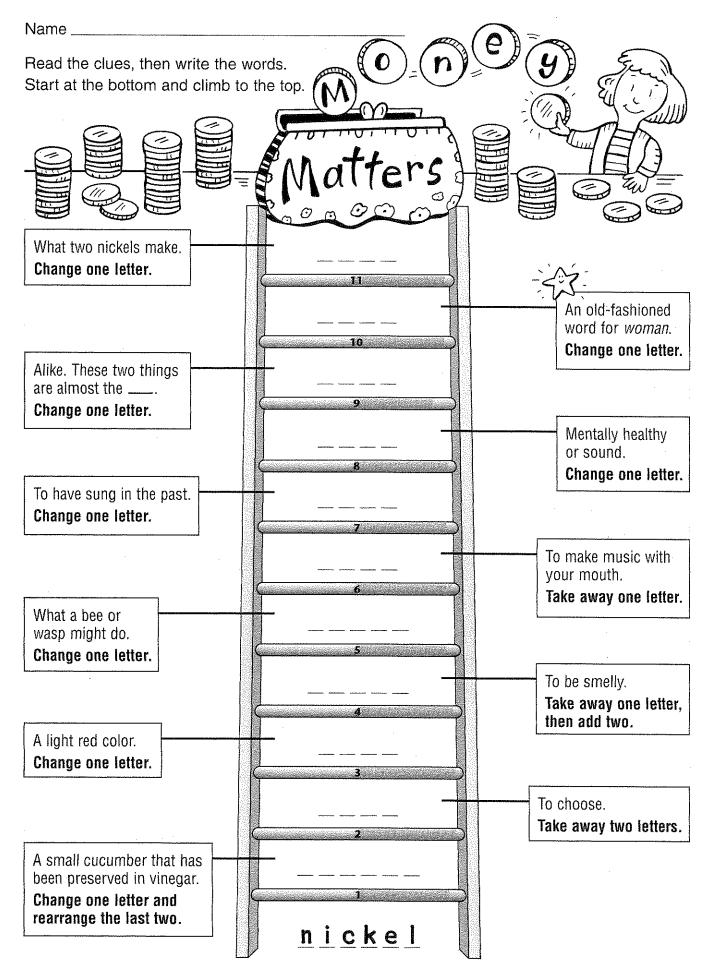
To give students extra help, mix up and write all the "answers" for the ladder (that is, the words for each rung) on the board for them to choose from as they go through the puzzle. In addition:

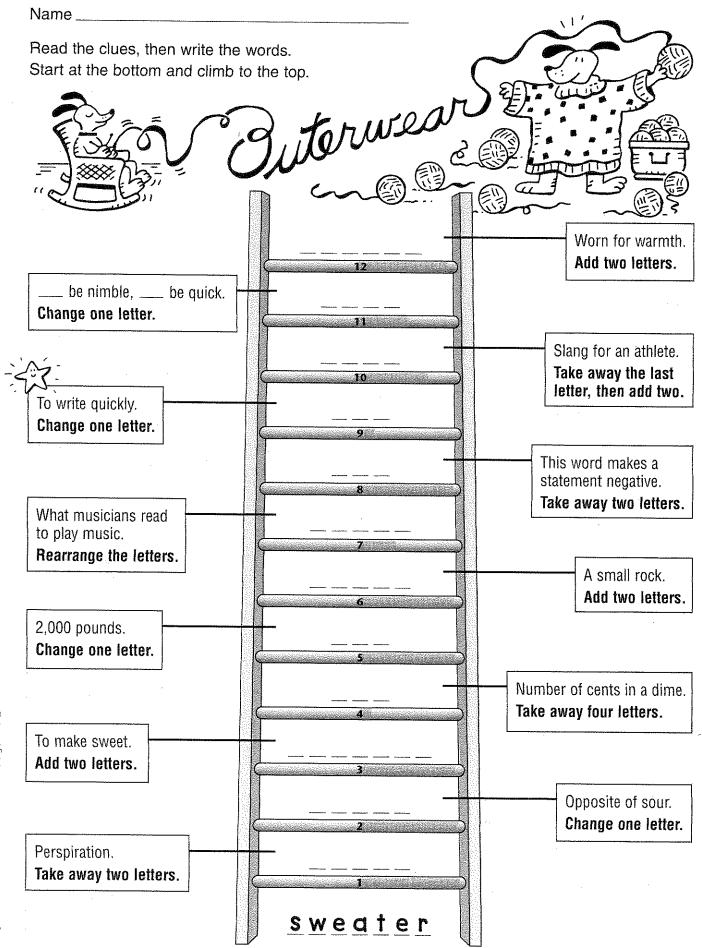
- Add your own clues to give students extra help as they work through each rung of a ladder. A recent event in your classroom or community could even inspire clues for words.
- If students are having difficulty with a particular word, you might simply say the word aloud and see if students can spell it correctly by making appropriate changes in the previous word. Elaborate on the meanings of the words as students move their way up the ladder.
- If students are stuck on a particular rung of the Word Ladder, tell them to skip it and come back to it later.
- Challenge students to come up with alternative definitions for the same words. Many words, like *lock*, *fall*, and *stock*, have multiple meanings.

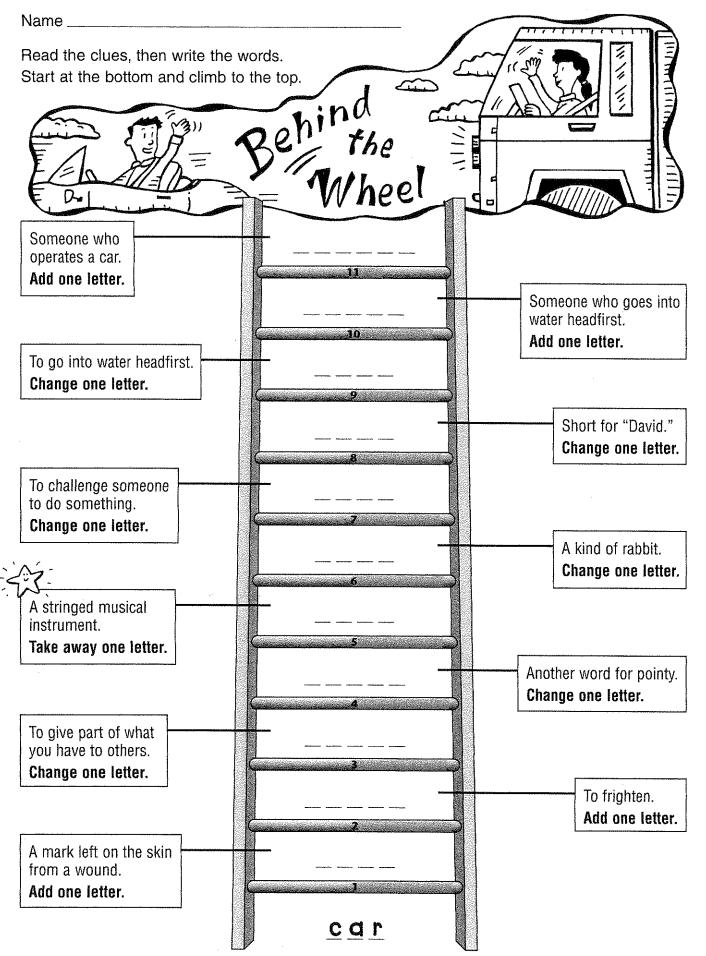
Timothy Rasinski is a professor of literacy education at Kent State University, with a special focus on young and struggling readers. Dr. Rasinski has served on the board of directors at the International Reading Association and as president of the College Reading Association. He is the author of numerous books and professional articles on effective reading instruction.

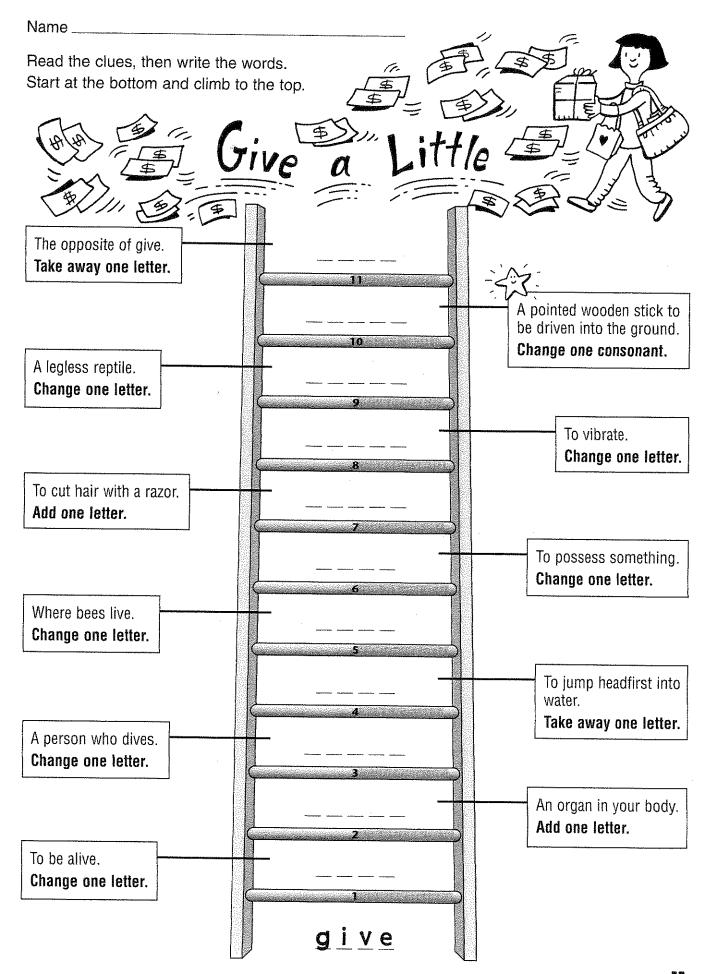


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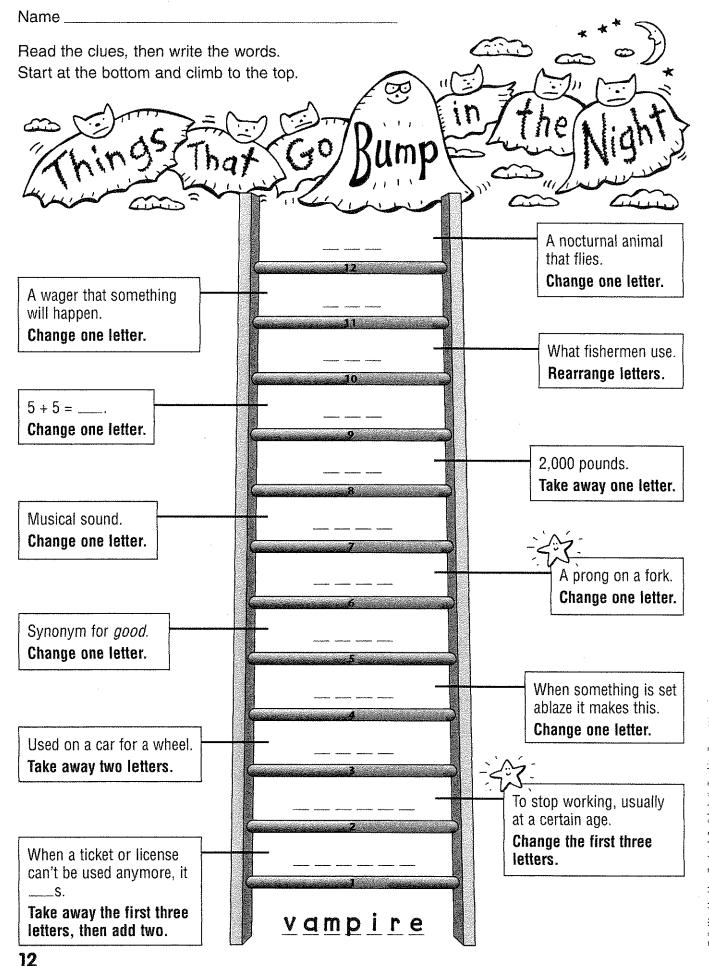


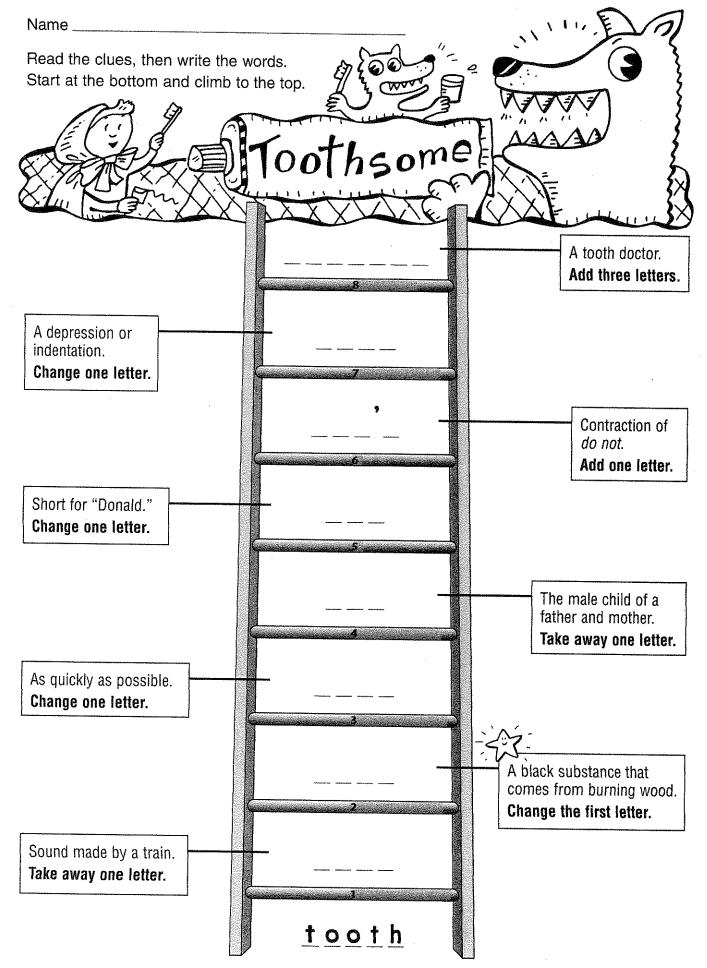


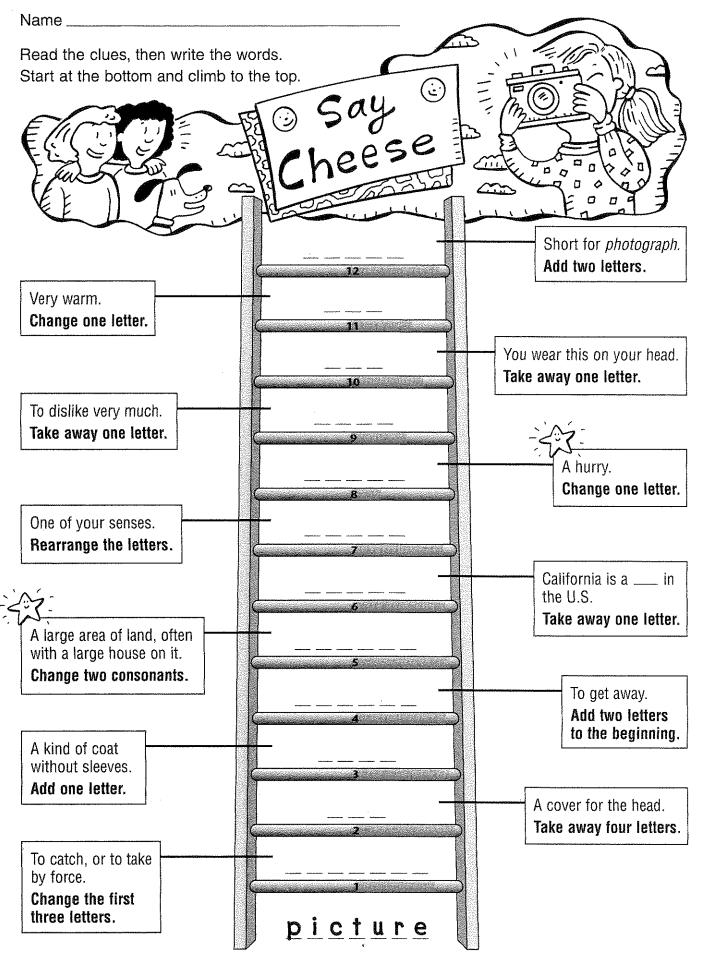


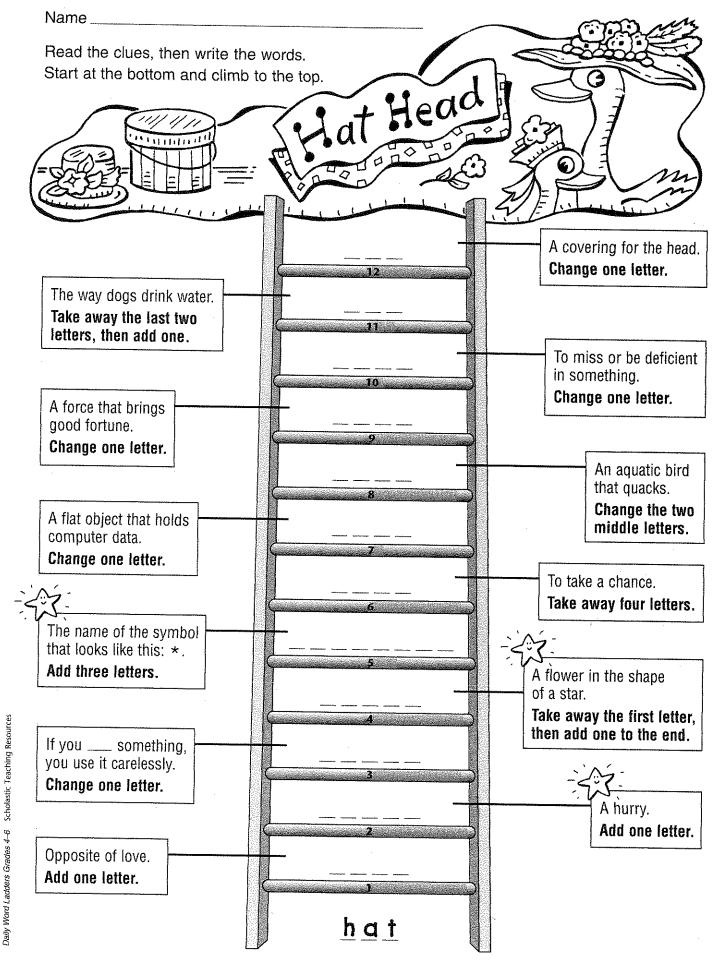


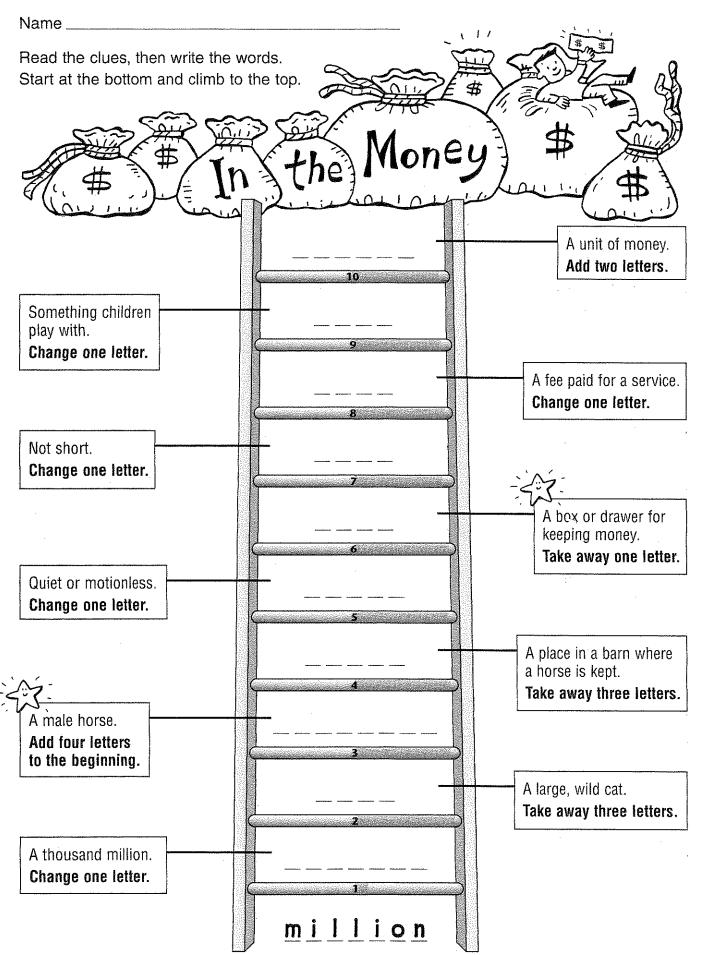
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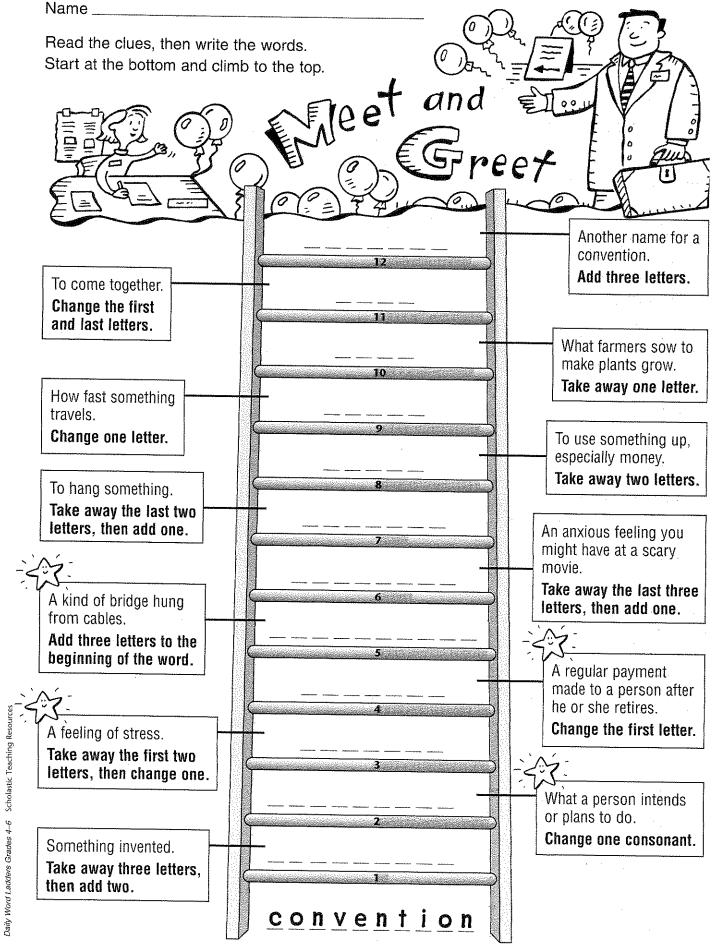


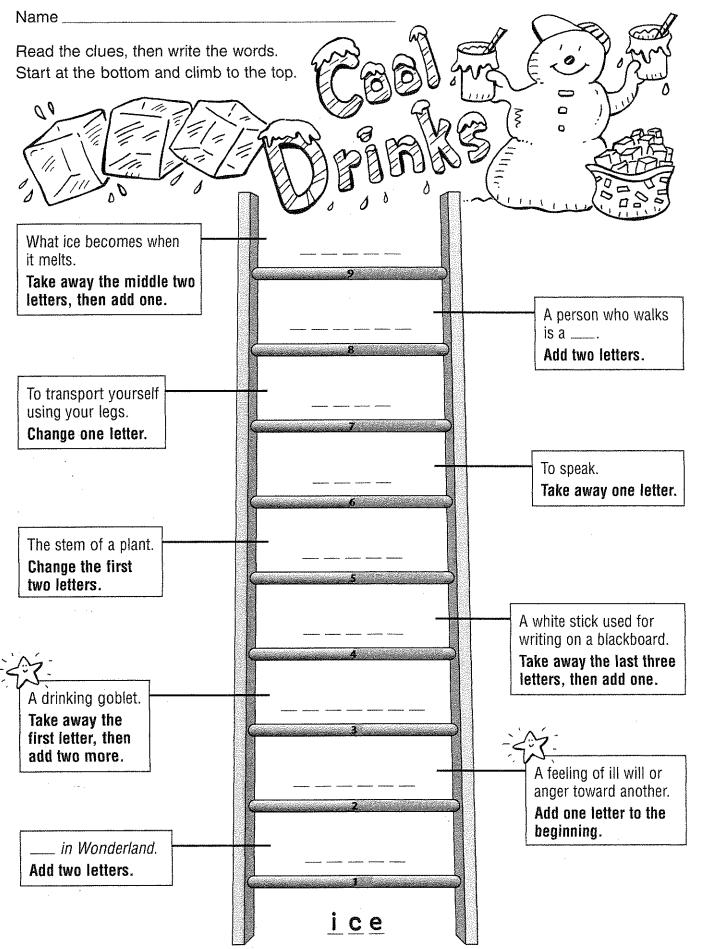


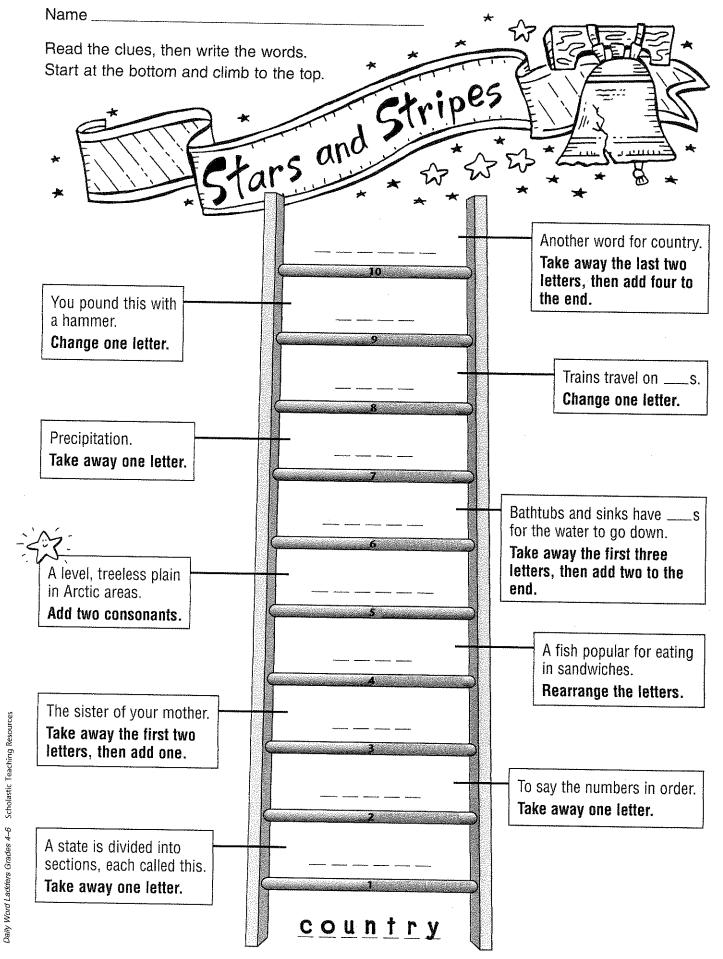


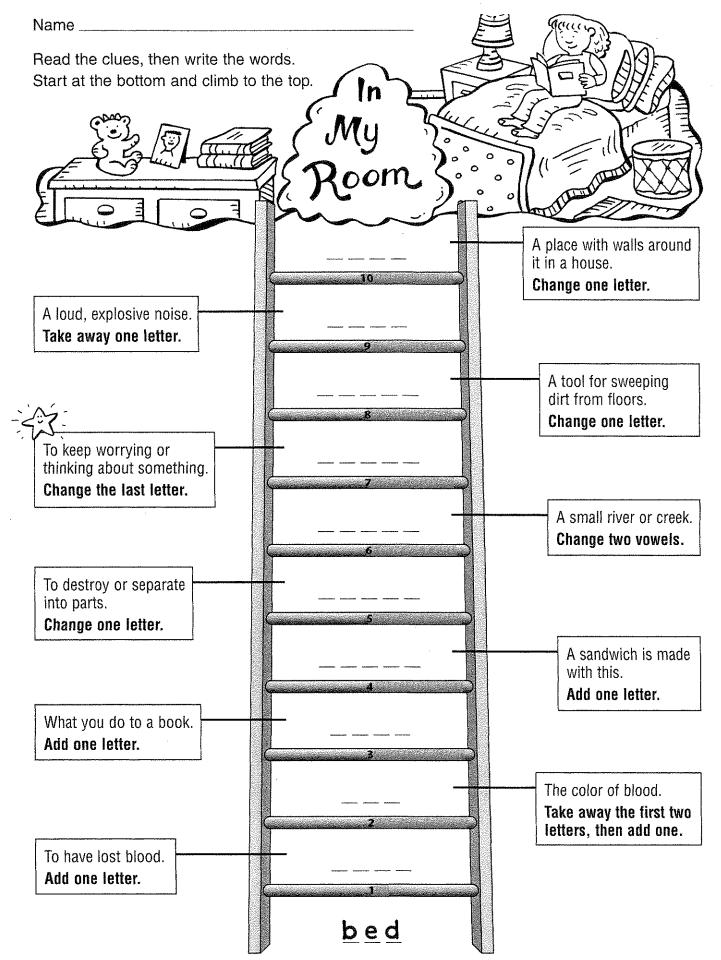


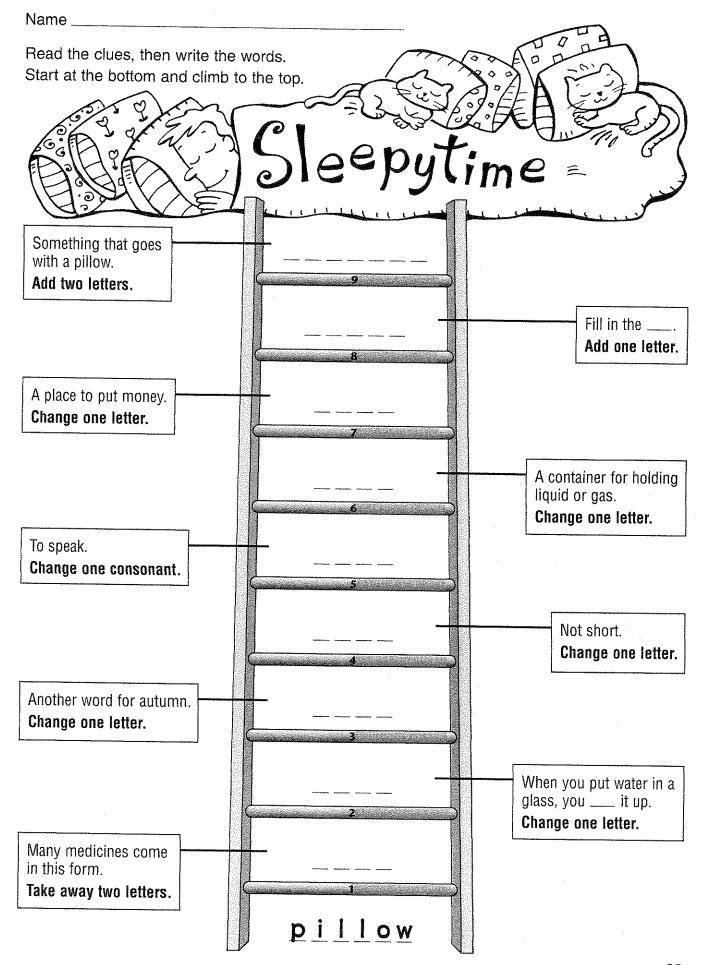


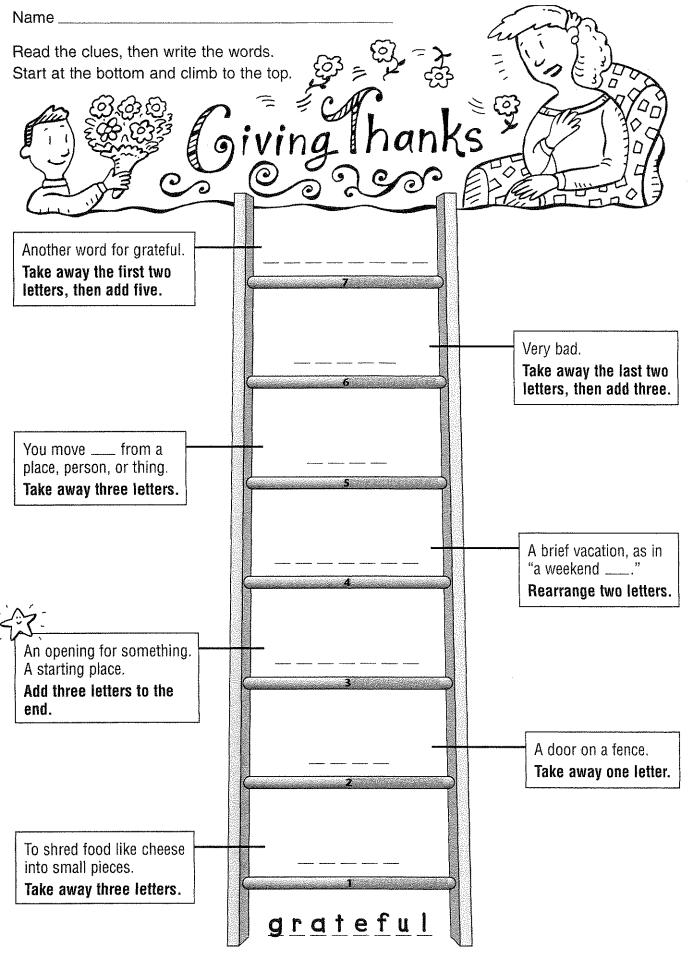


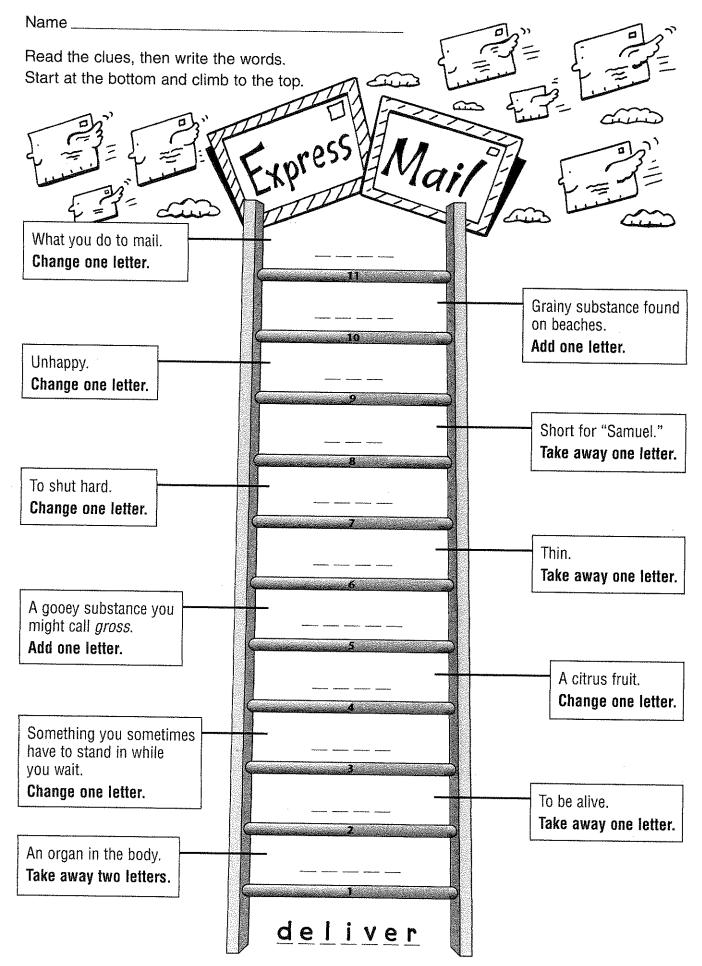


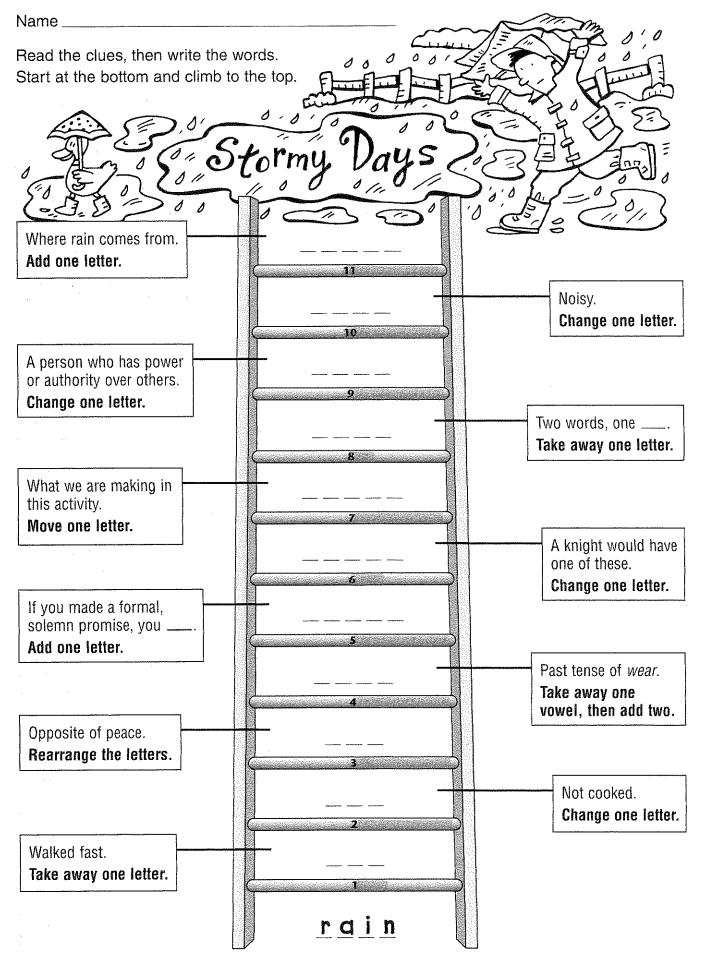




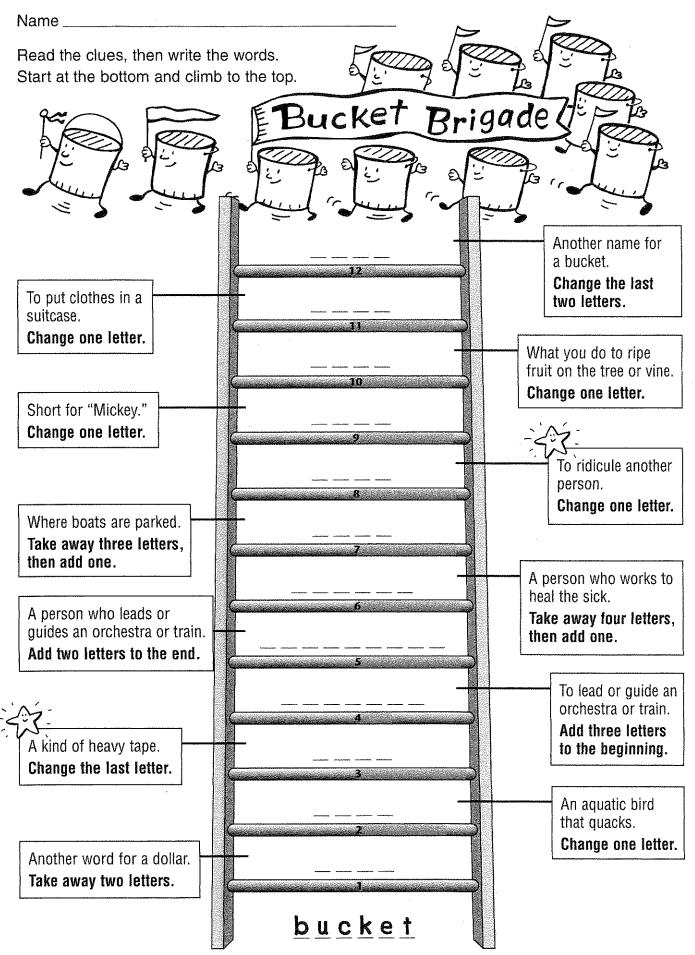


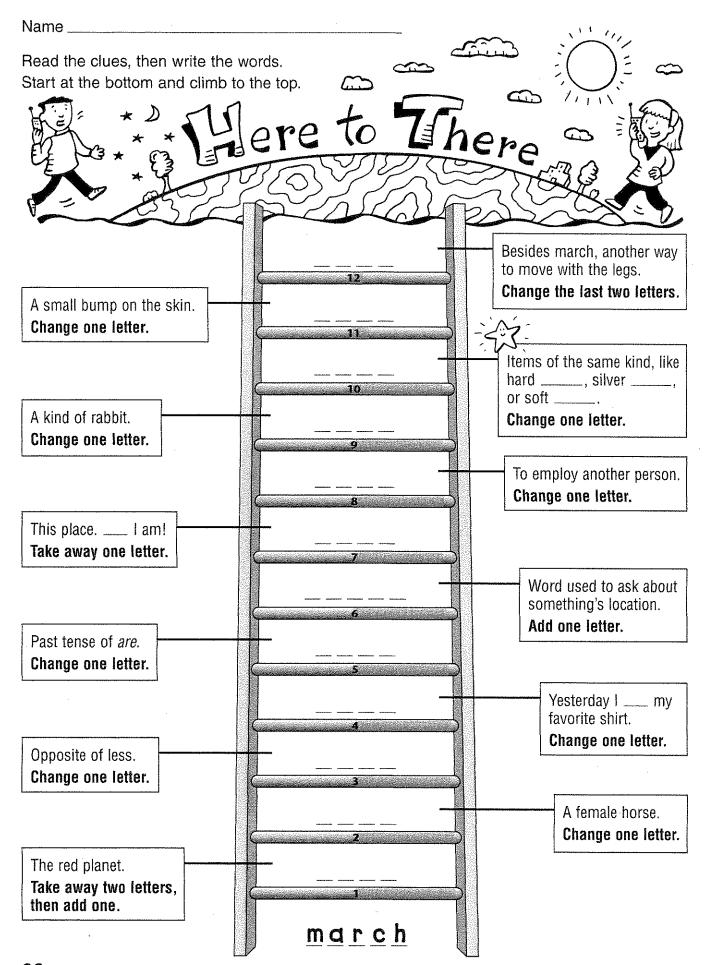


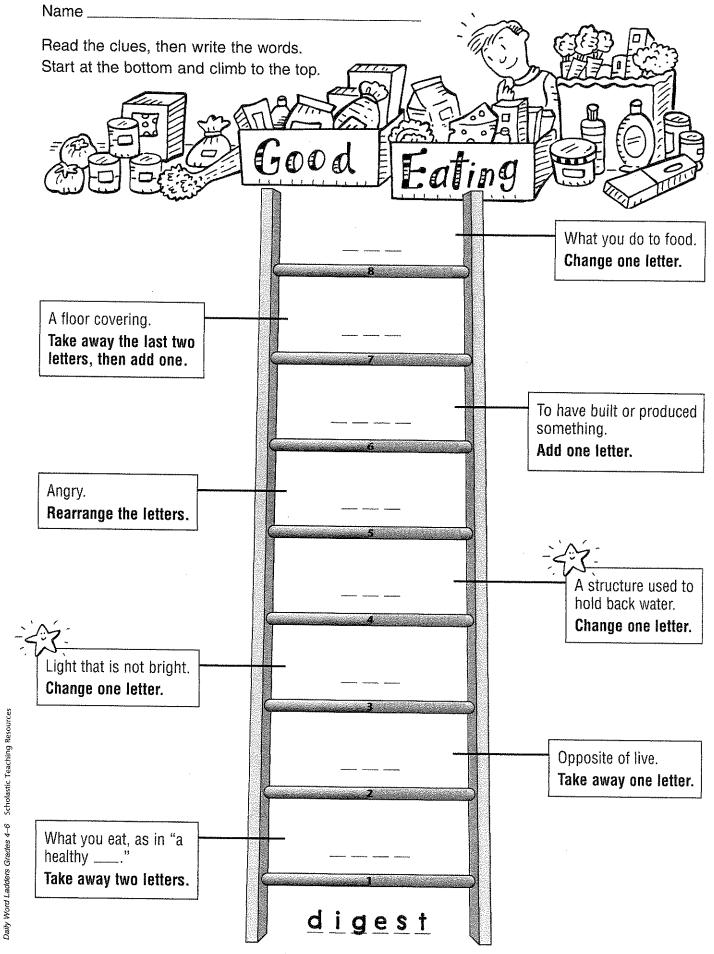


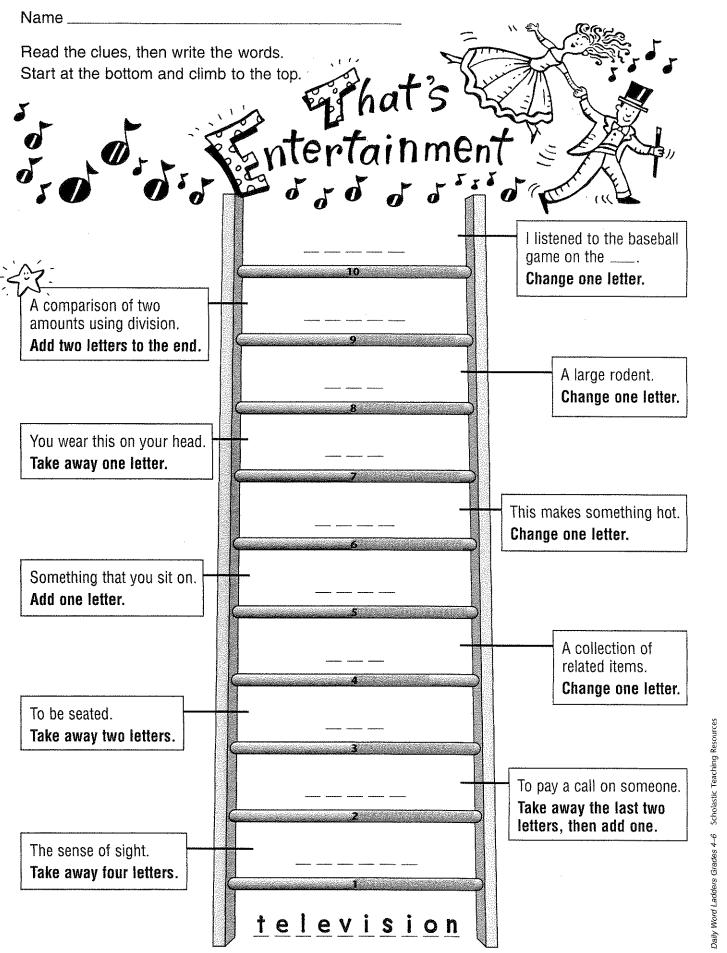


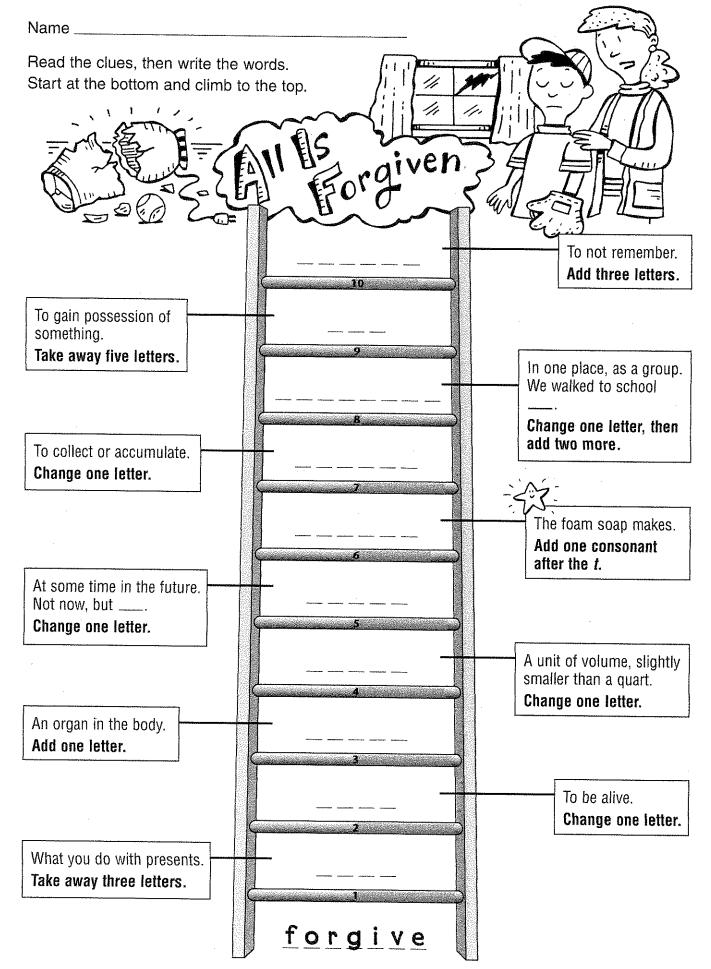


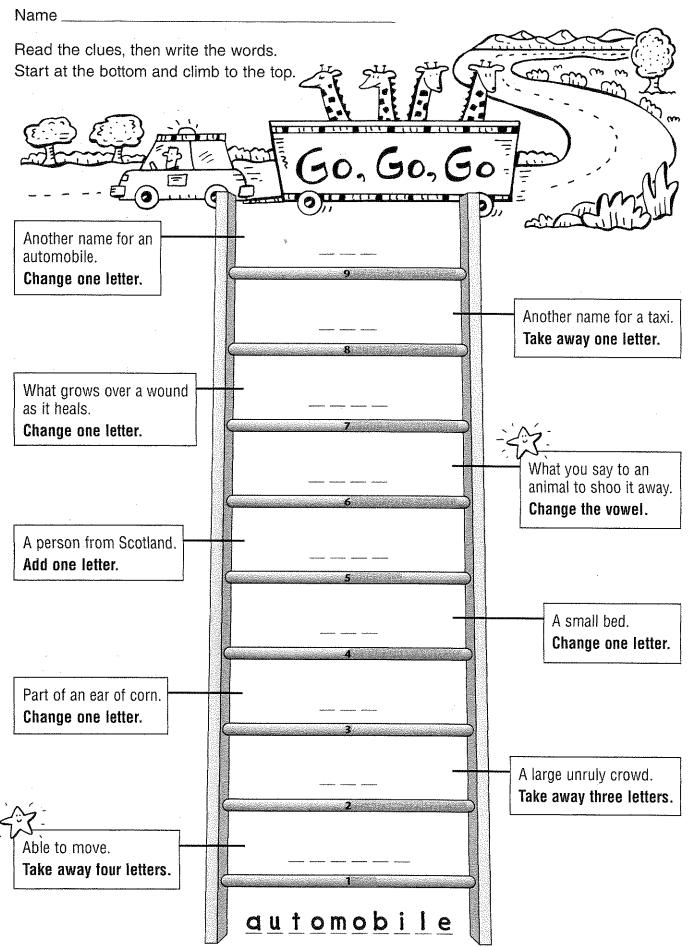




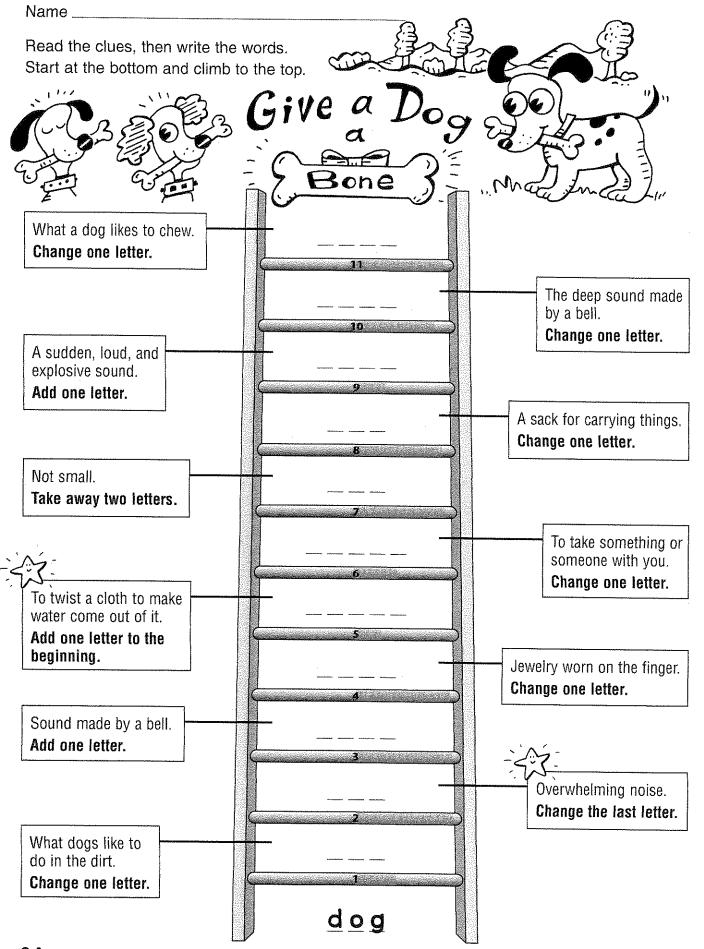


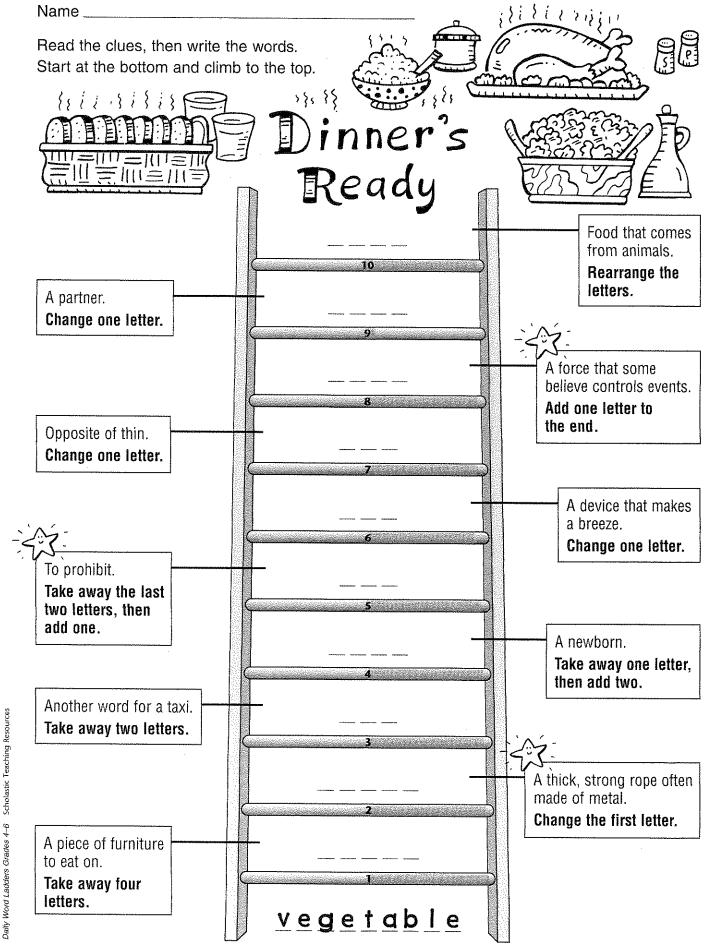


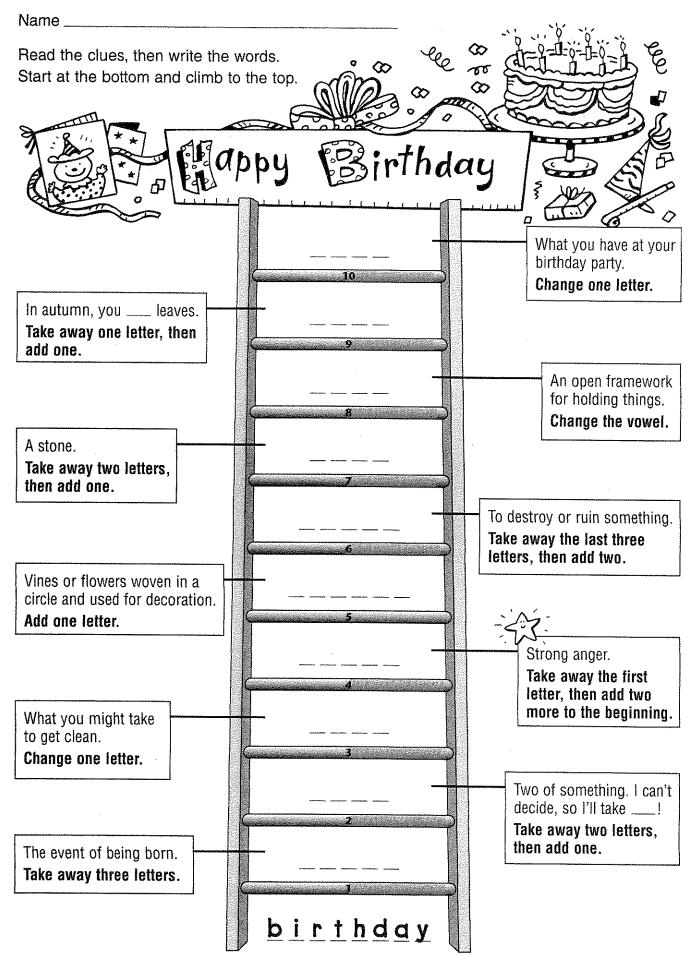


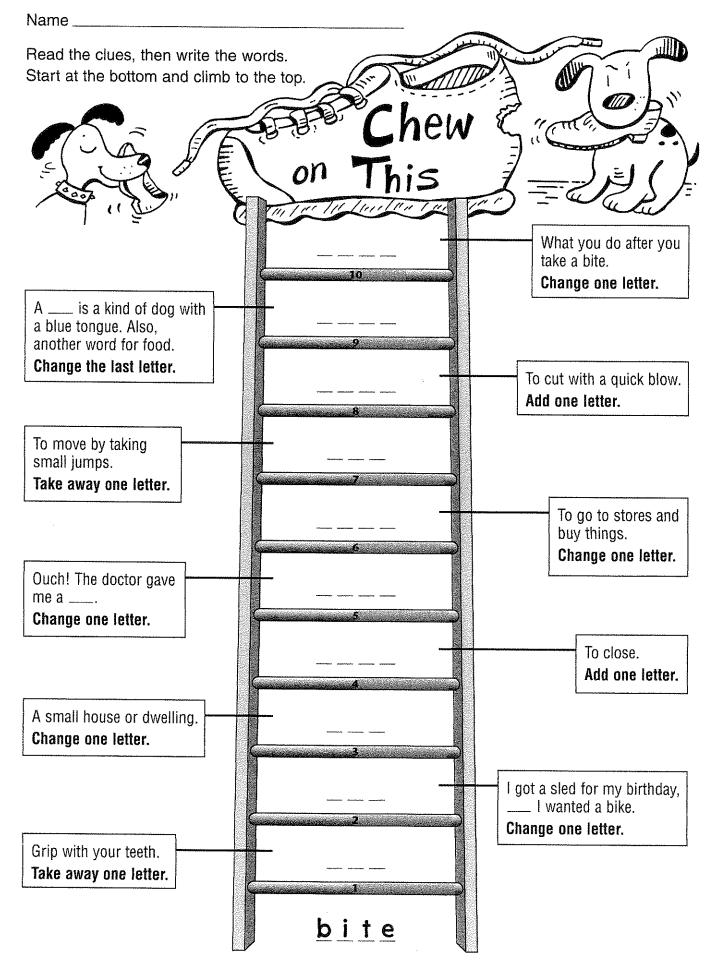


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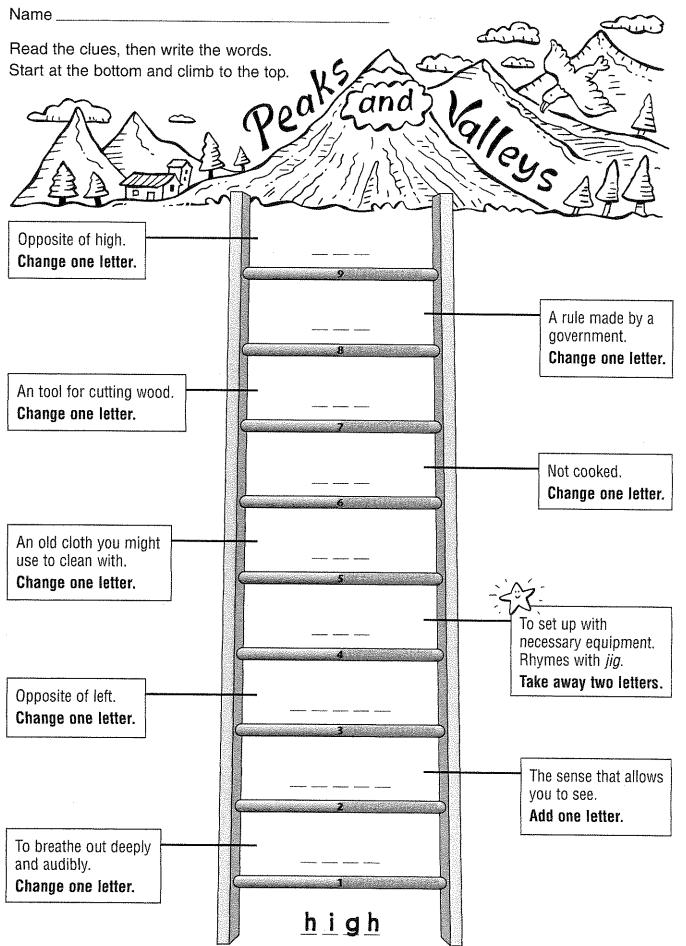


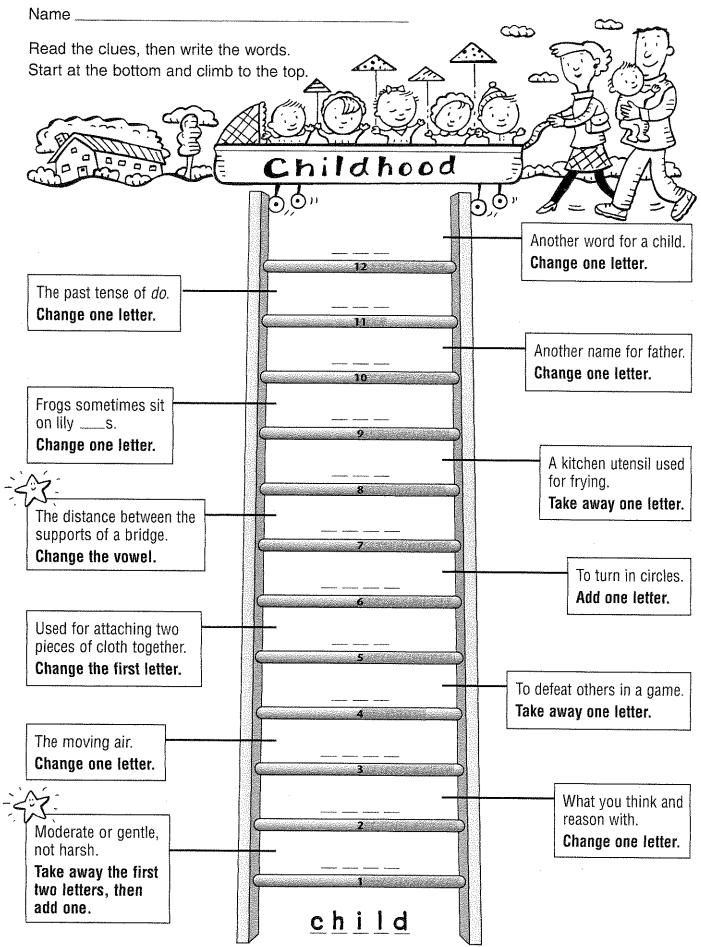


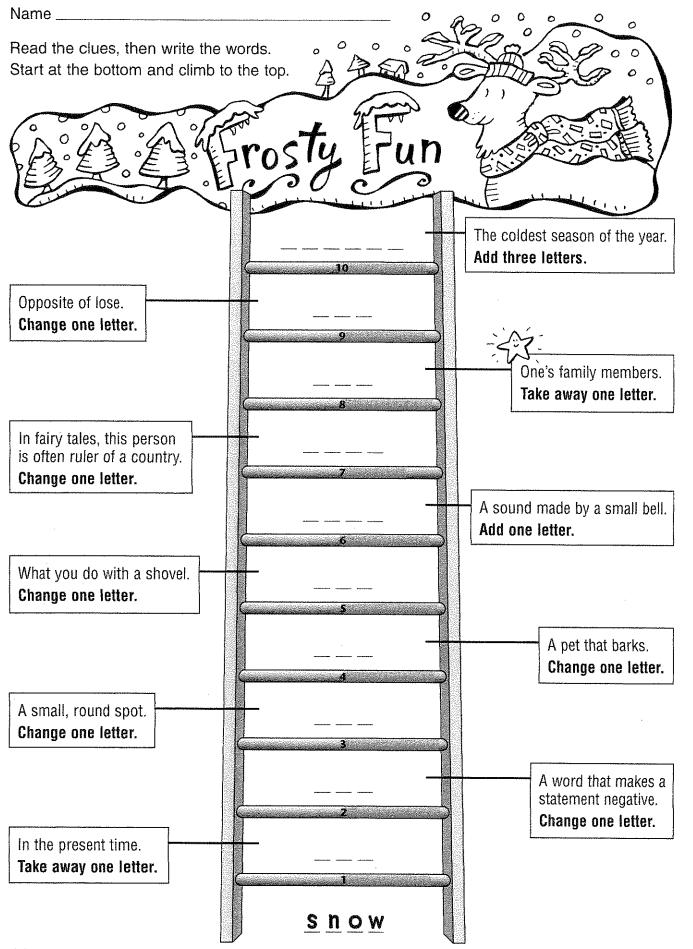


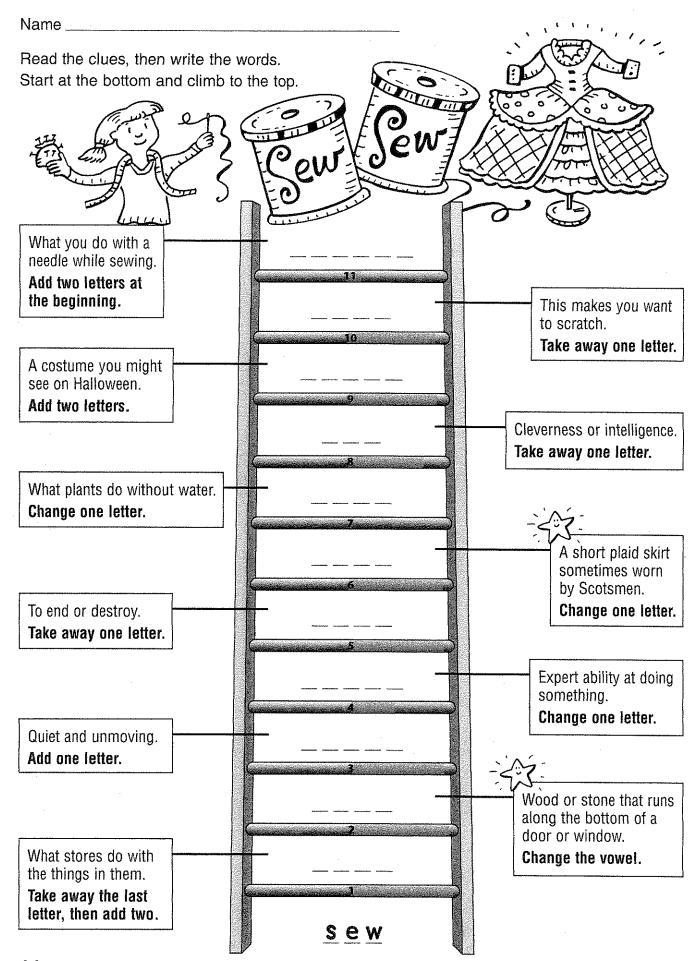


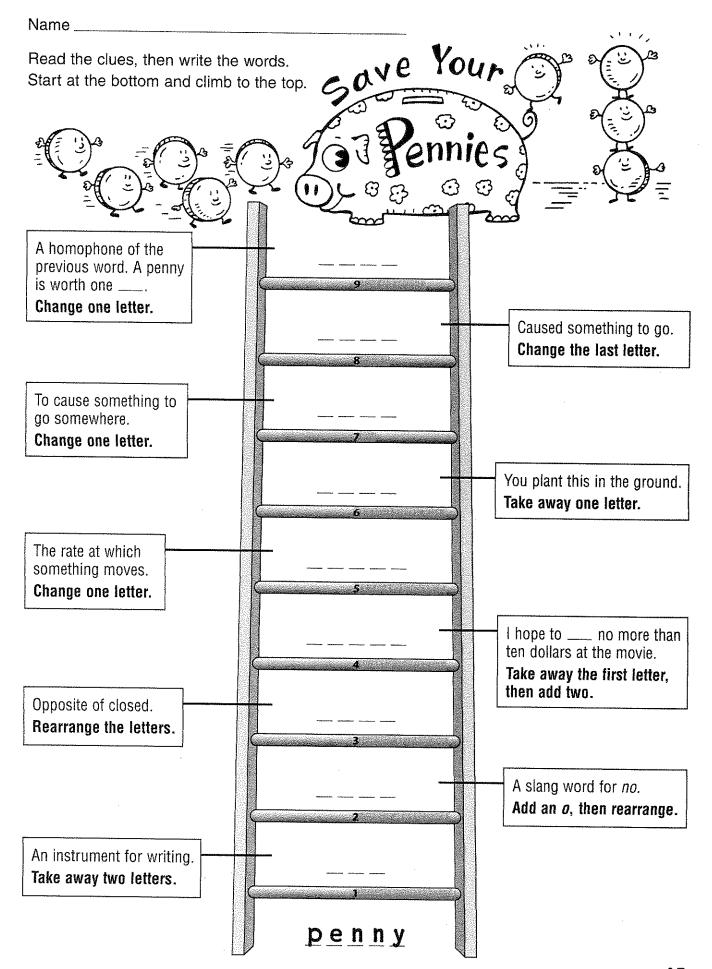
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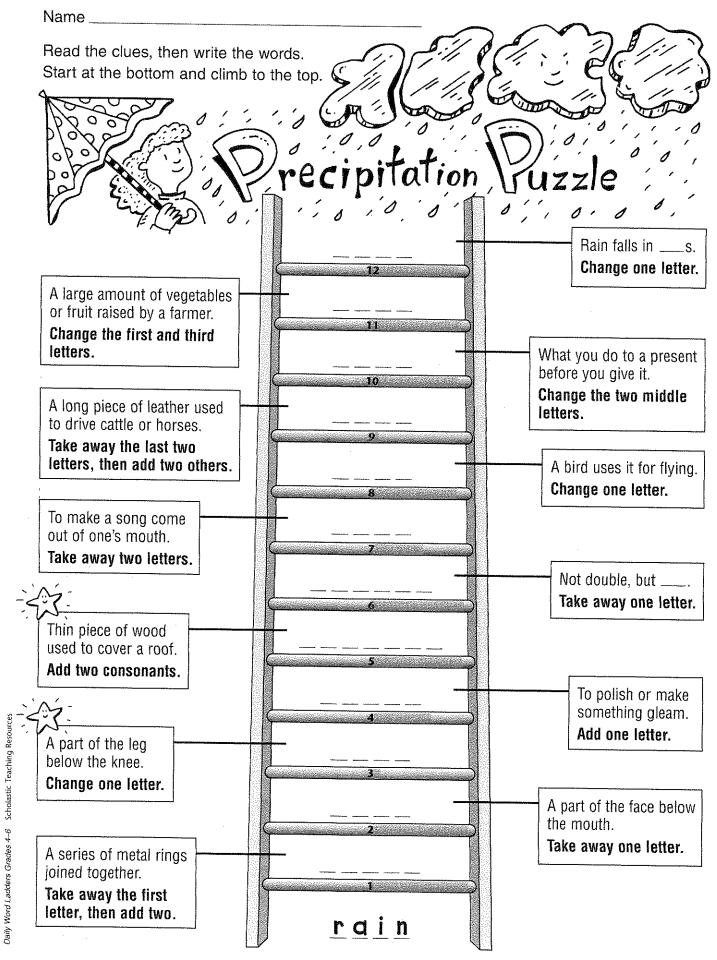


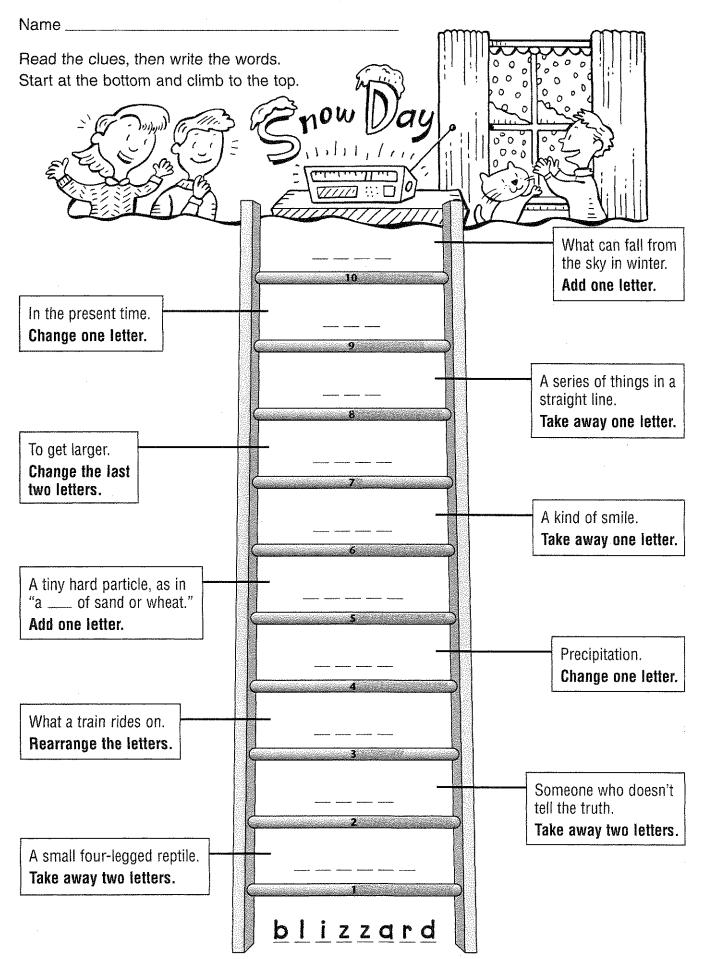


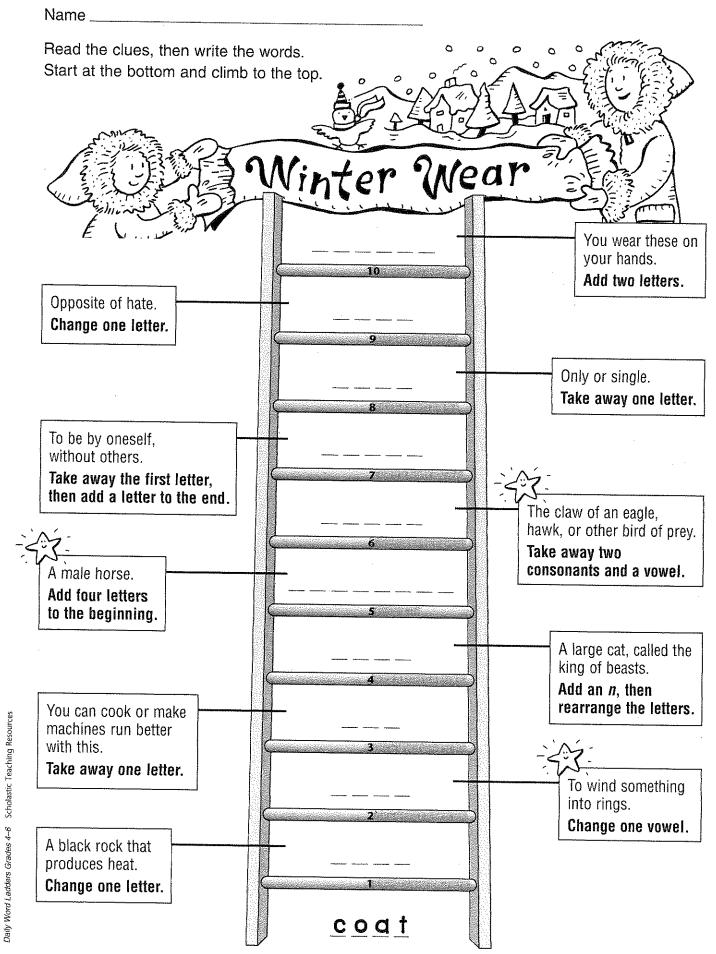


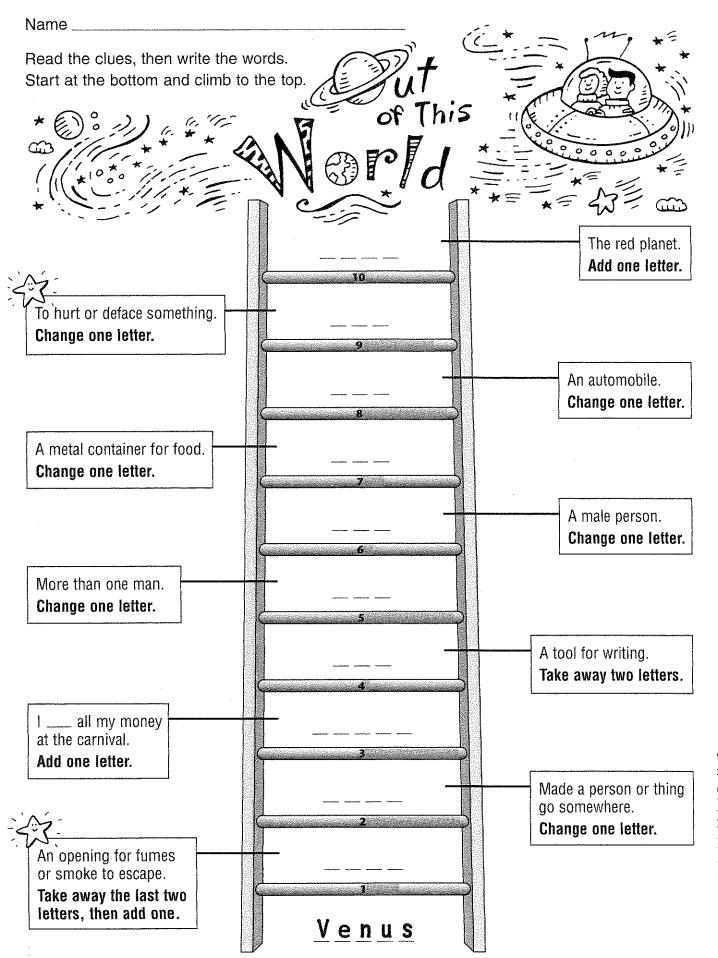


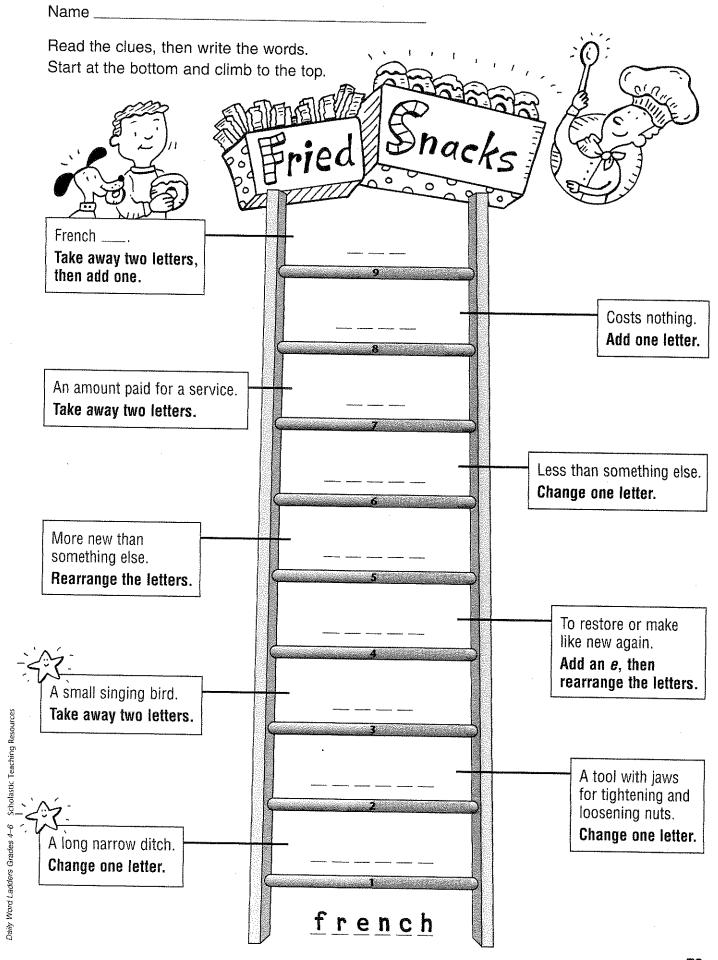
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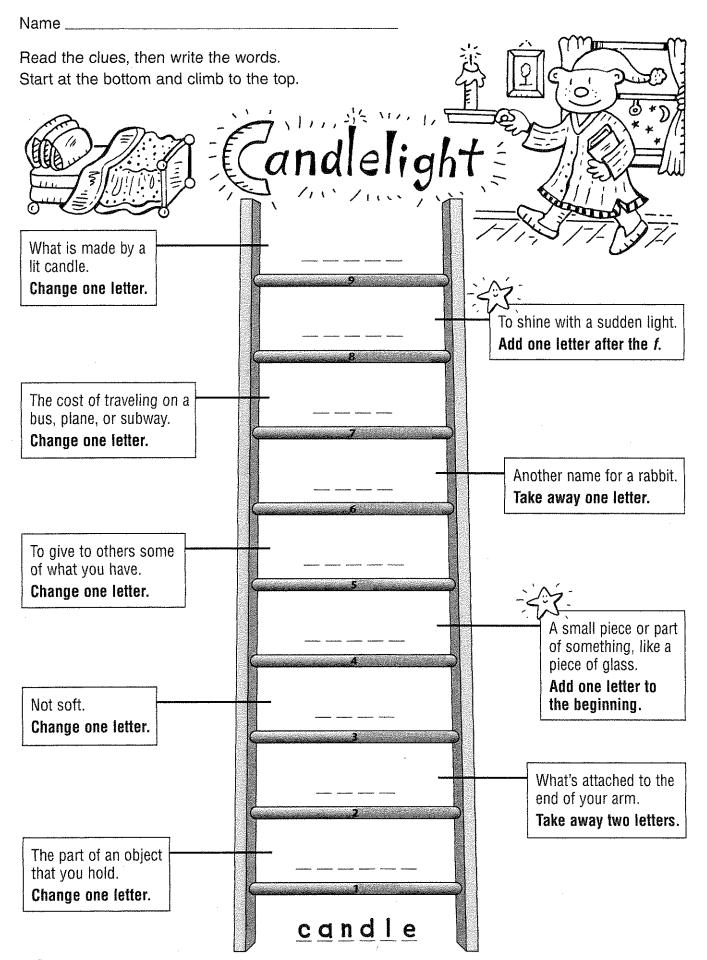


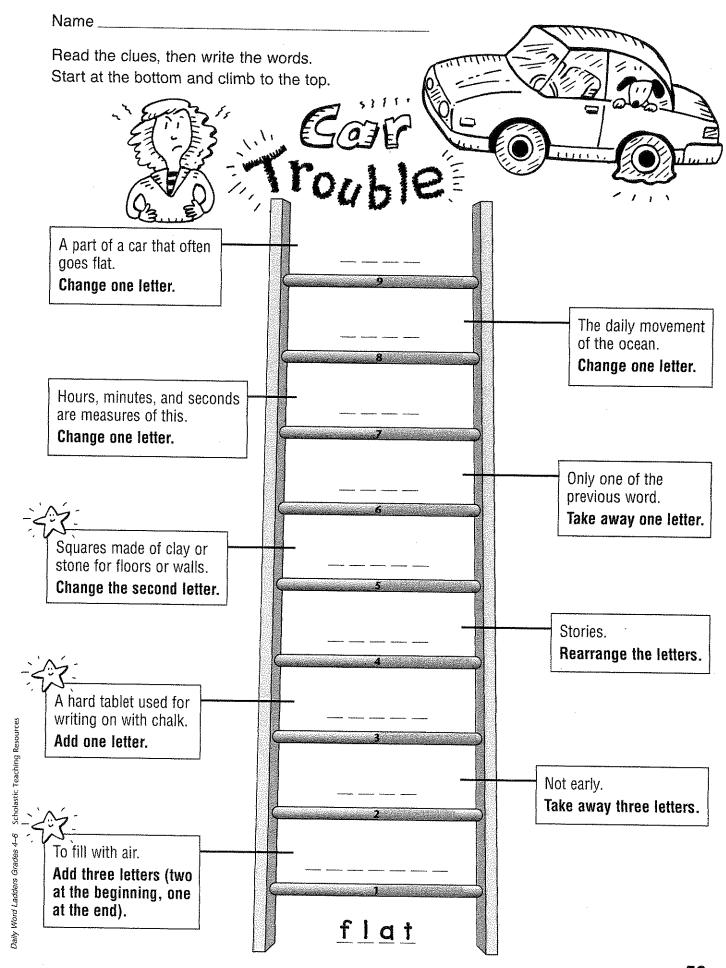


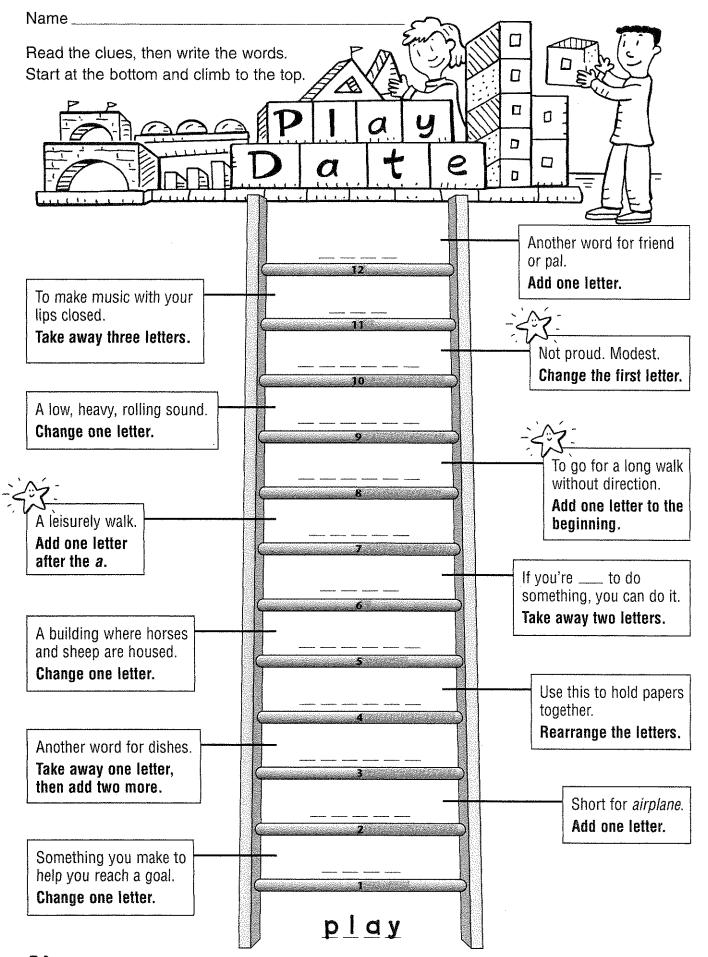


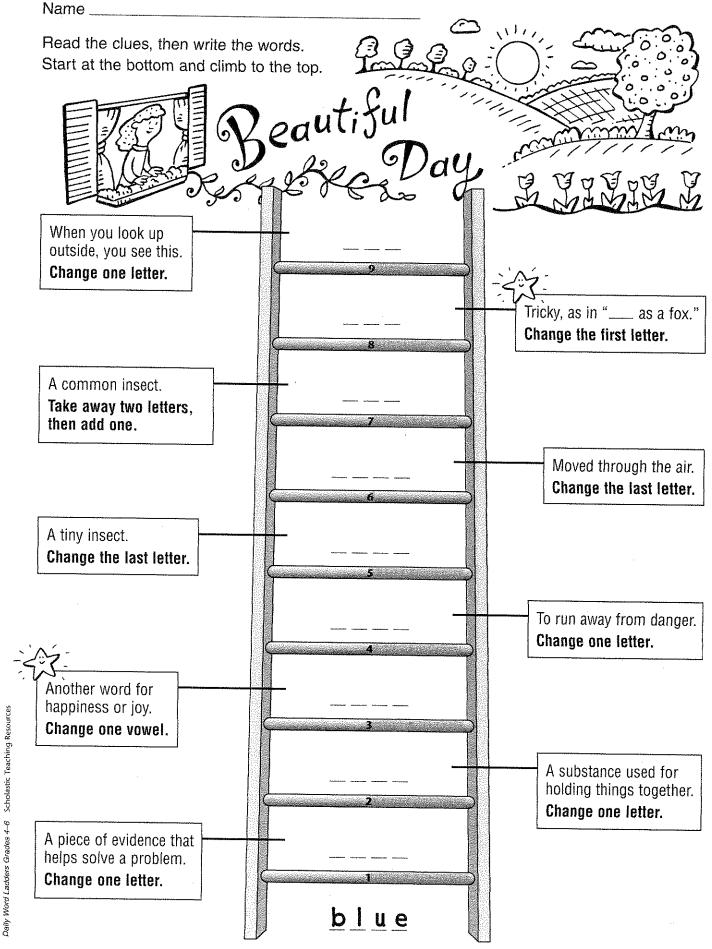


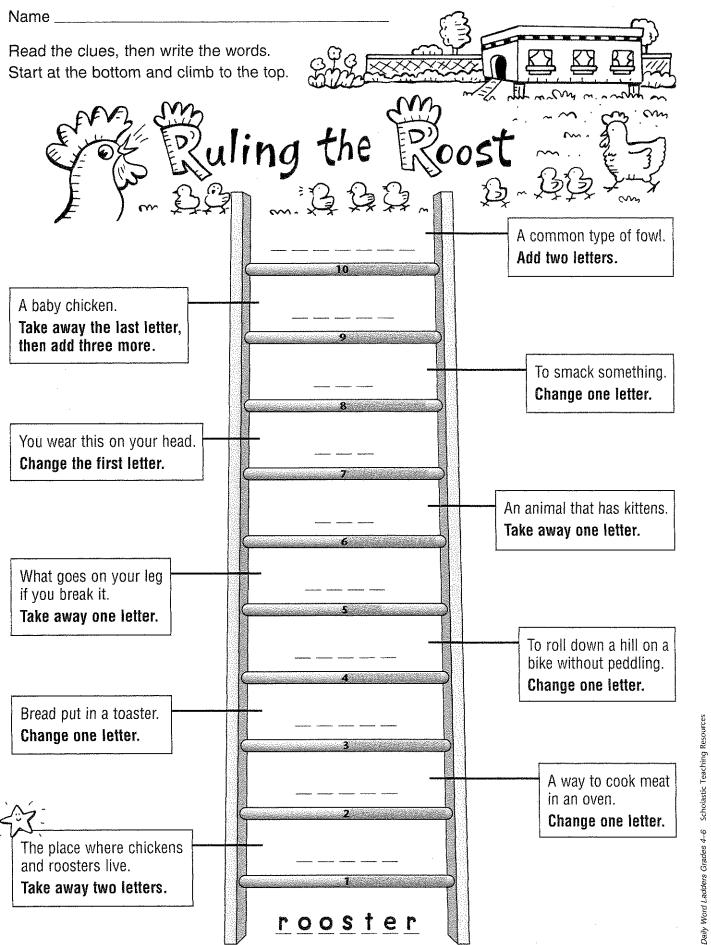


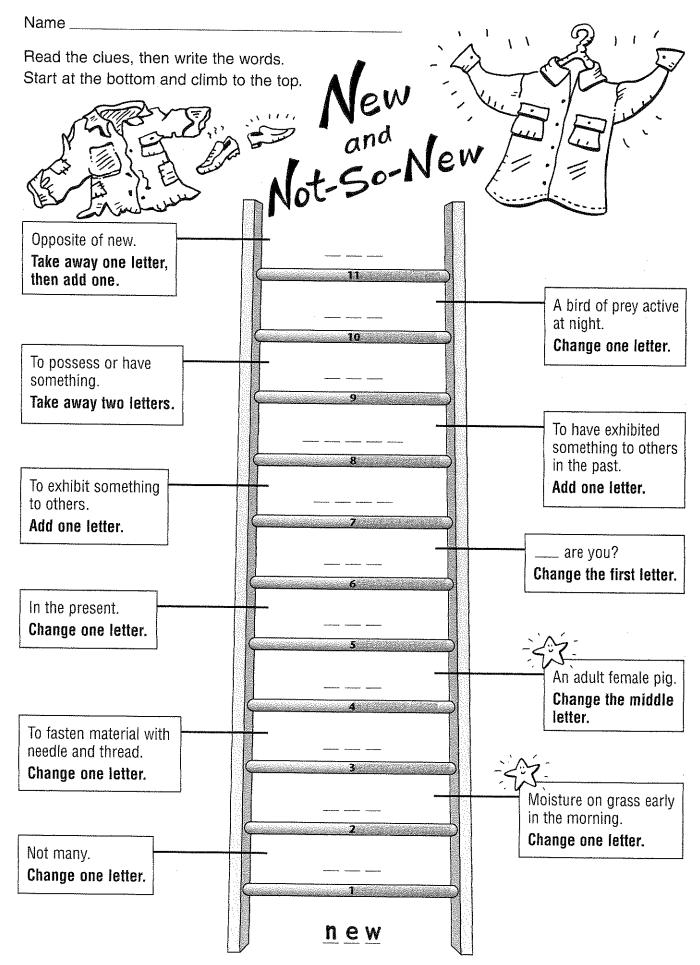


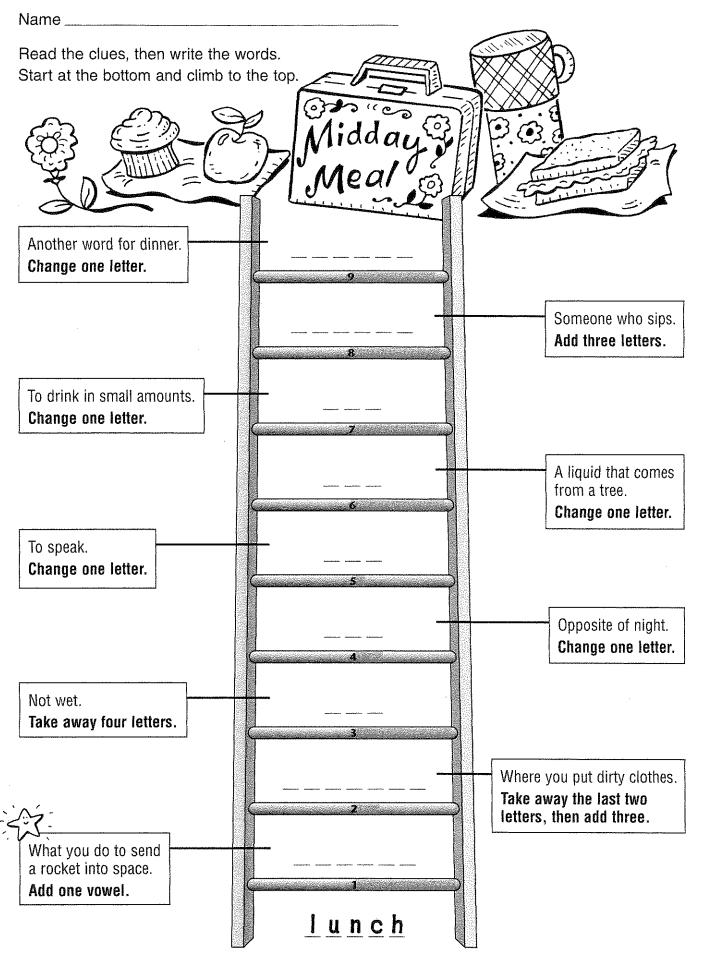


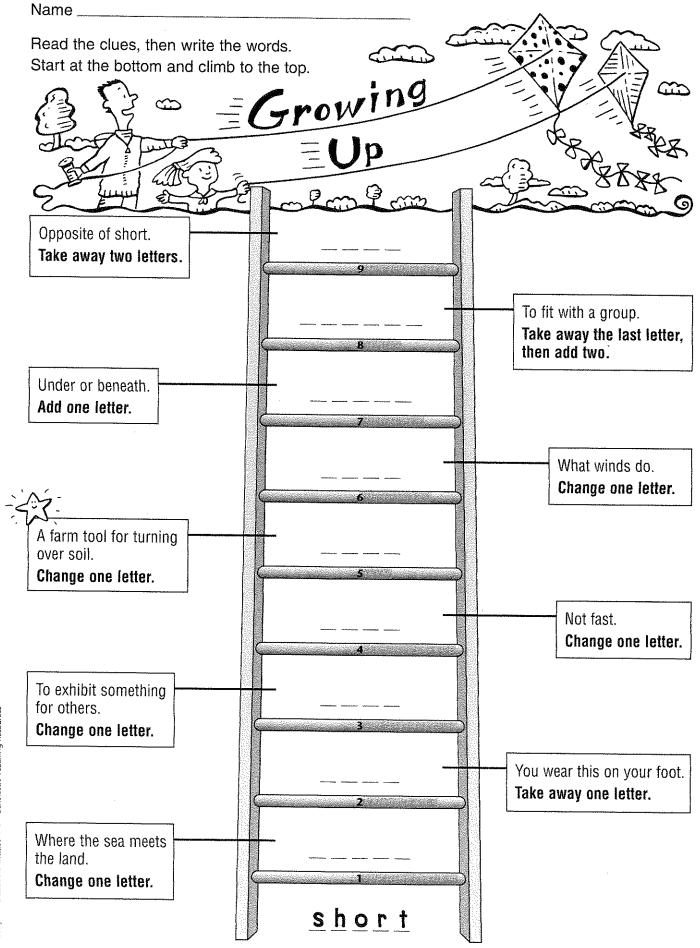


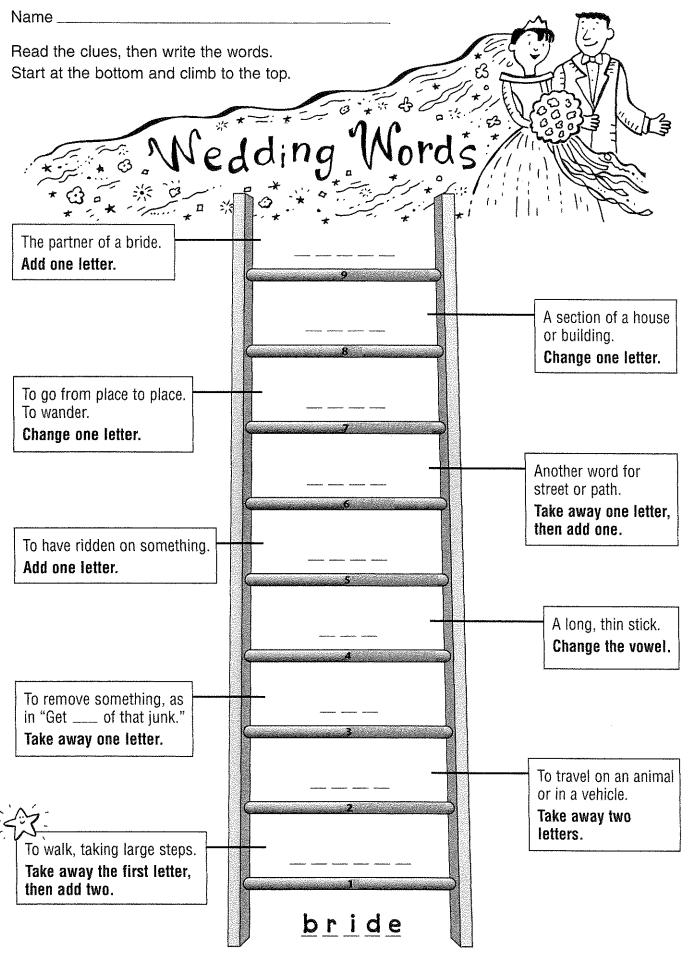


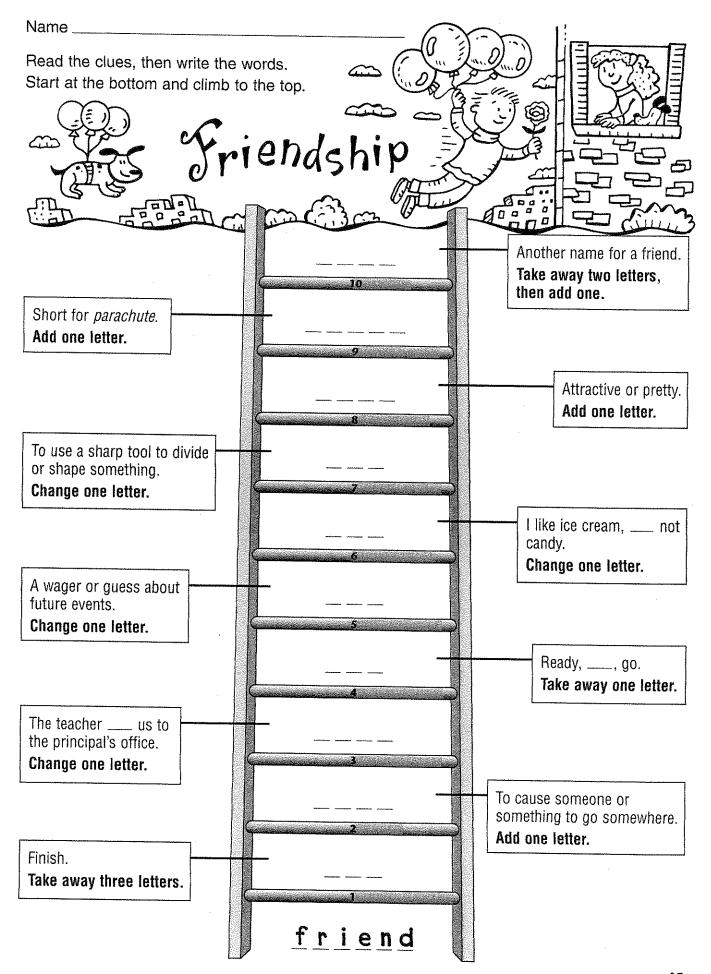


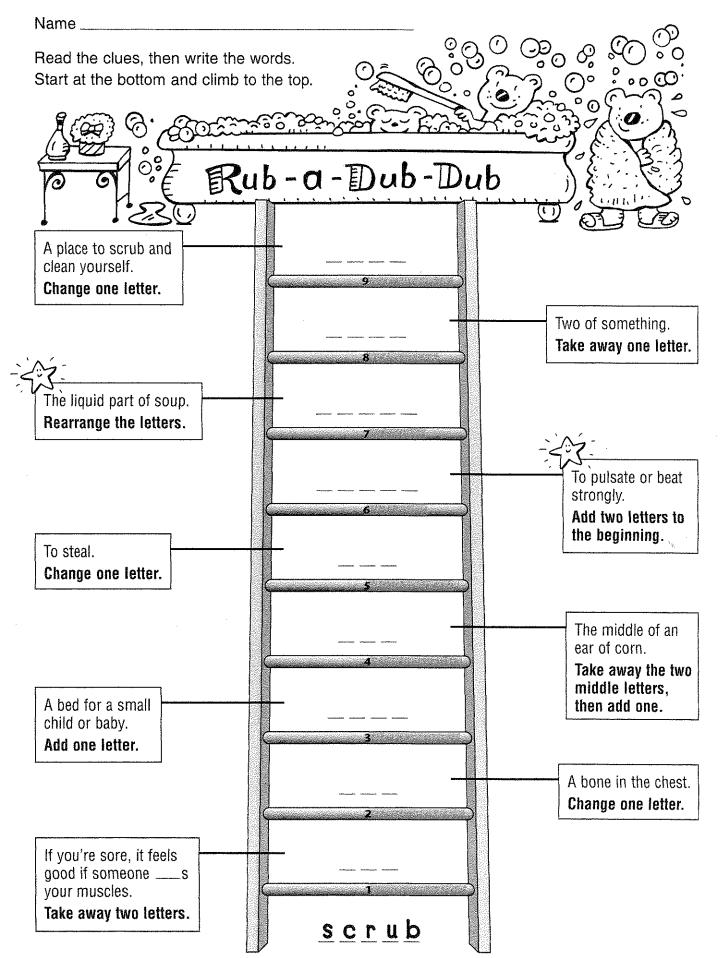


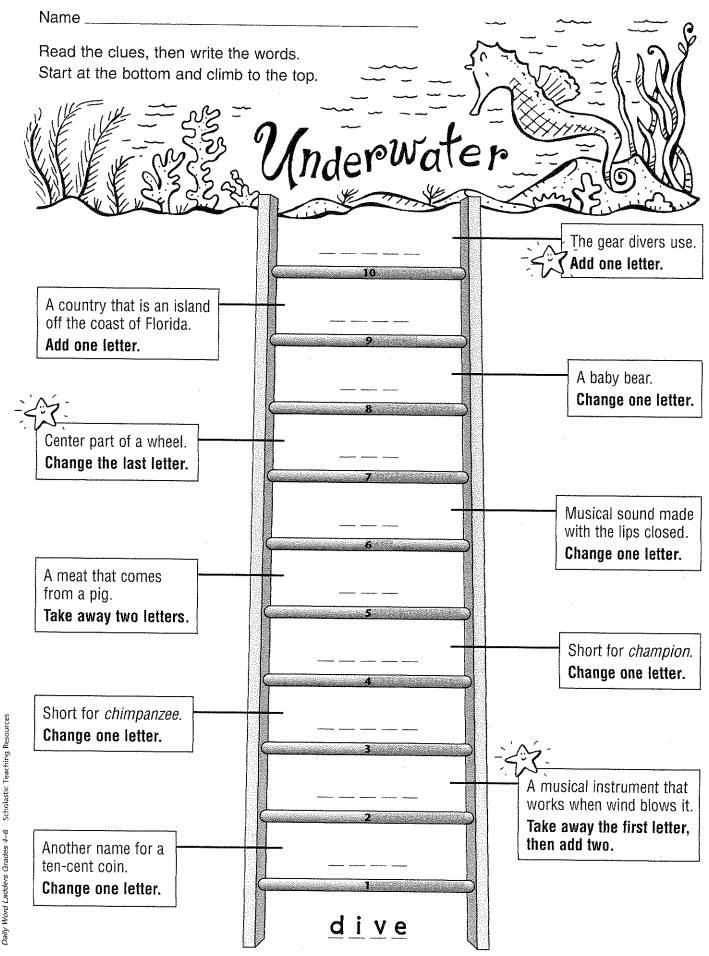


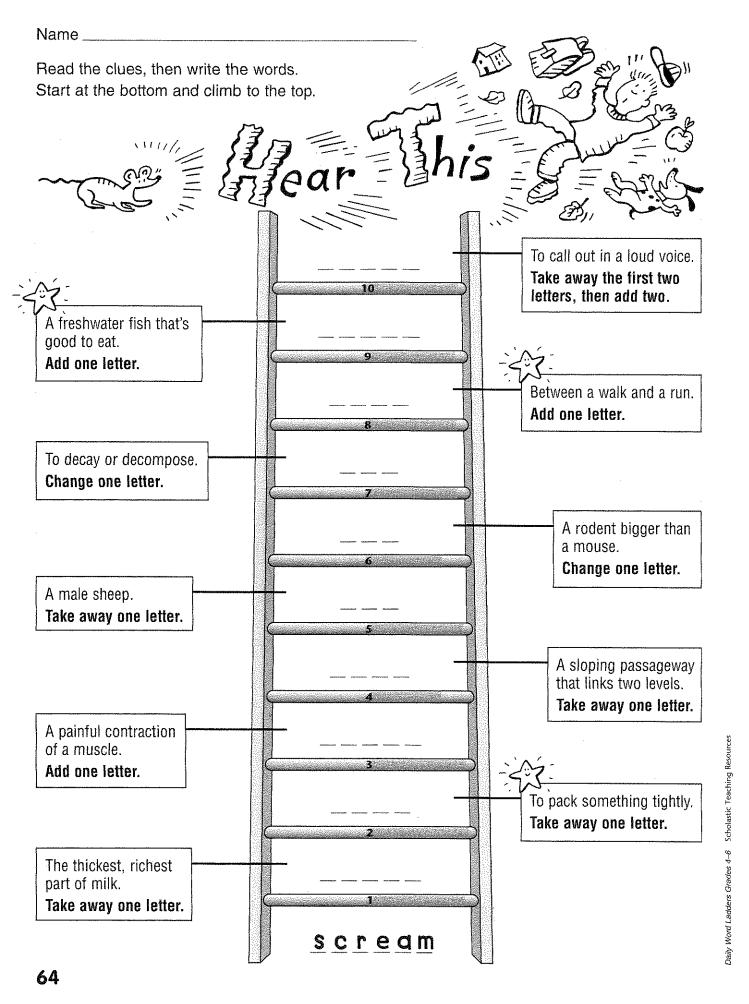


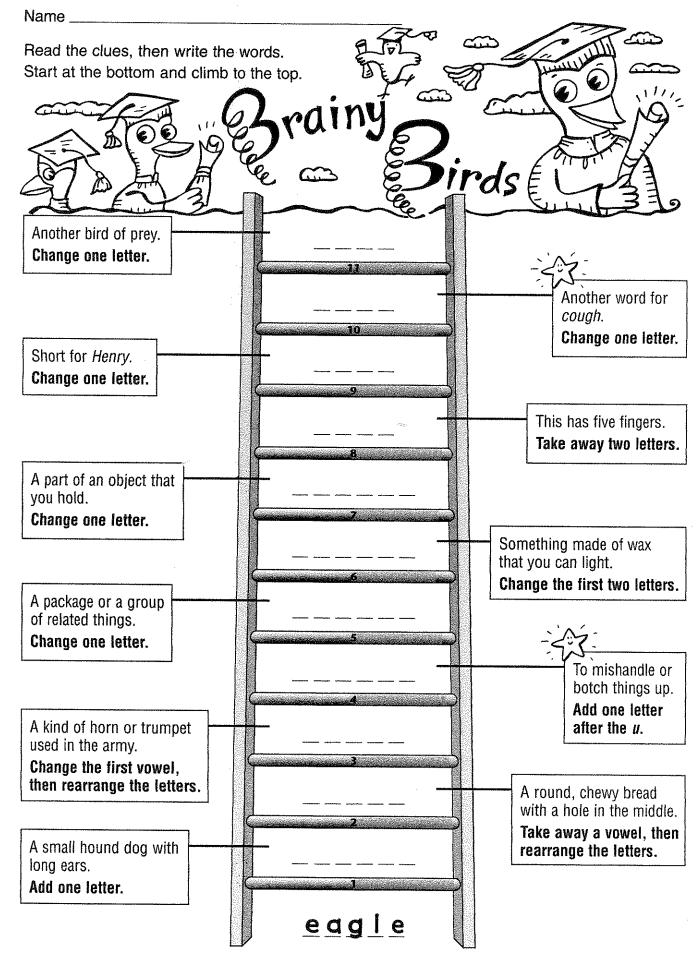


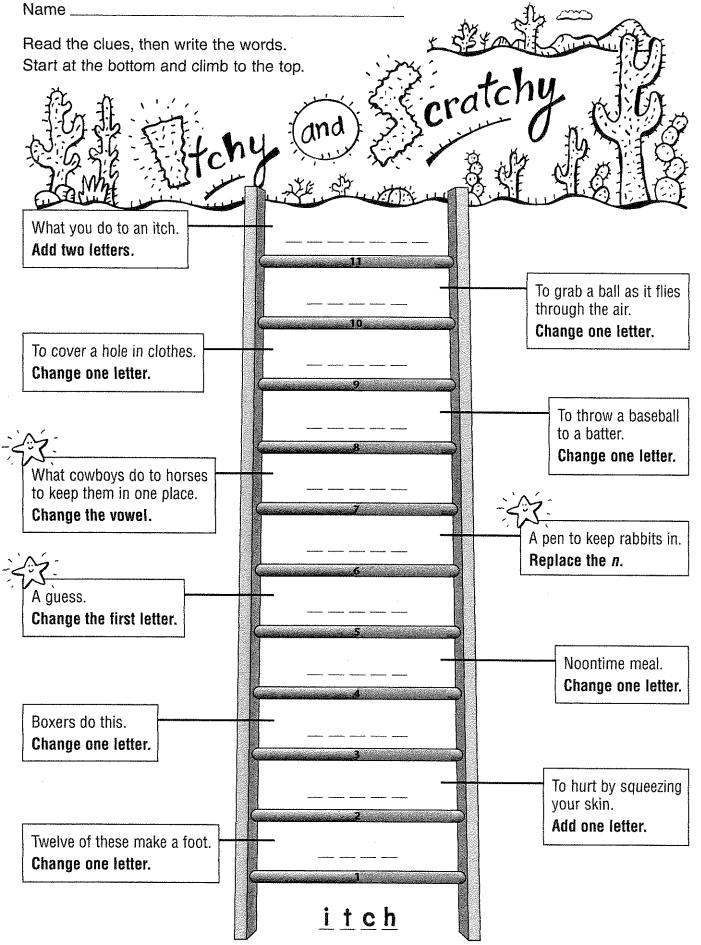


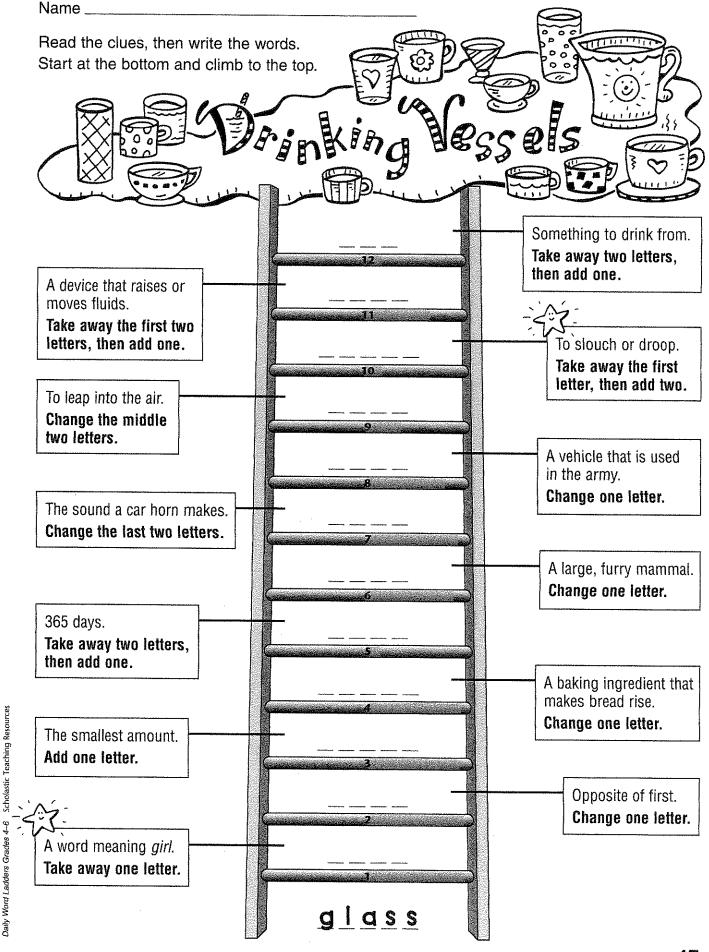


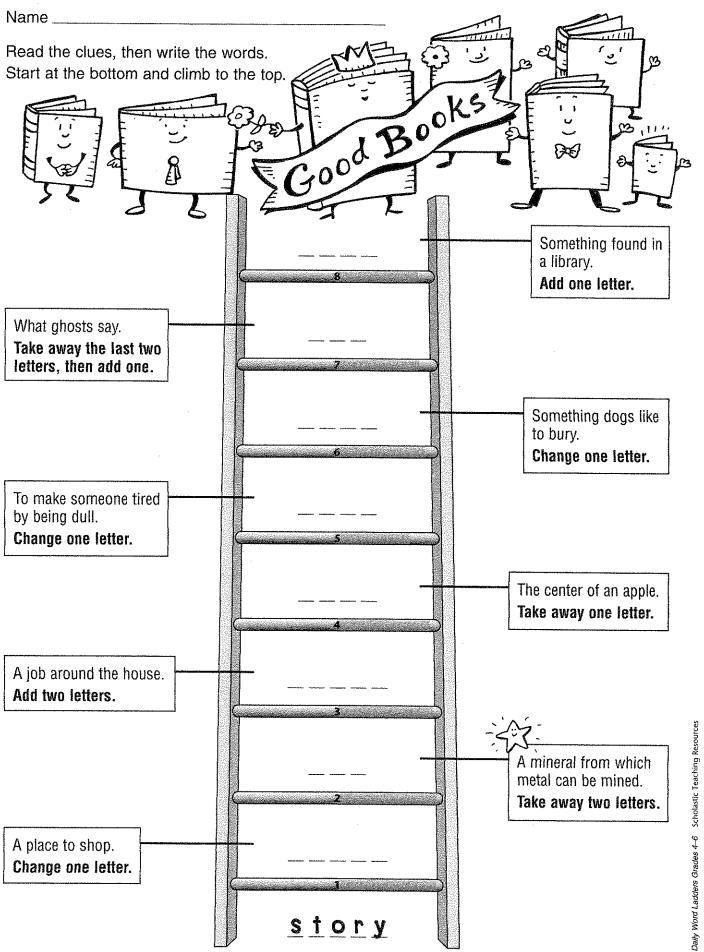


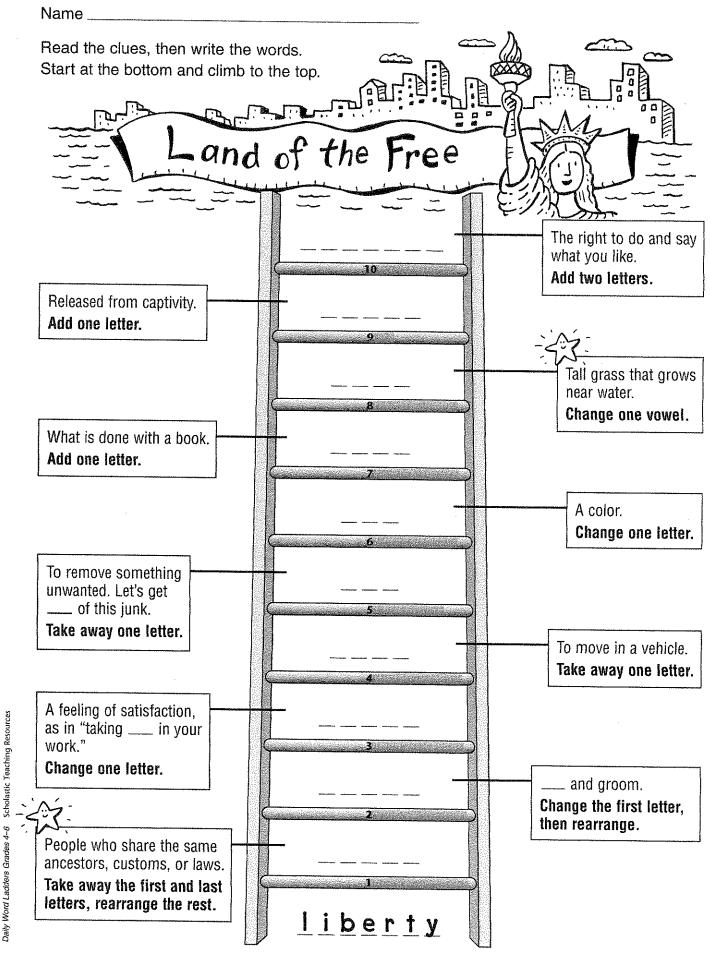


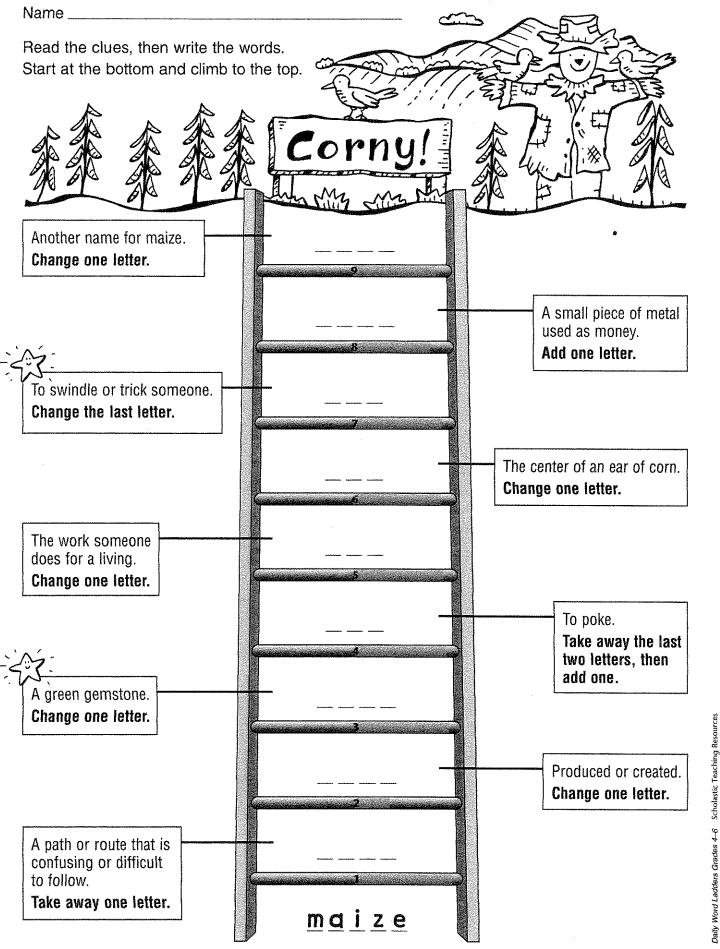


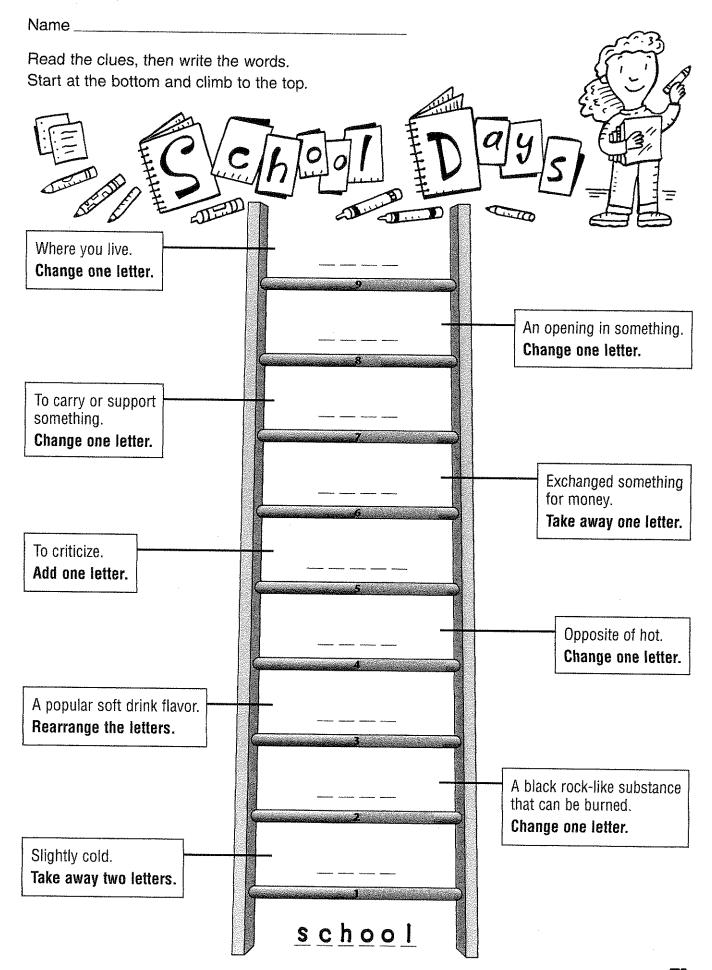


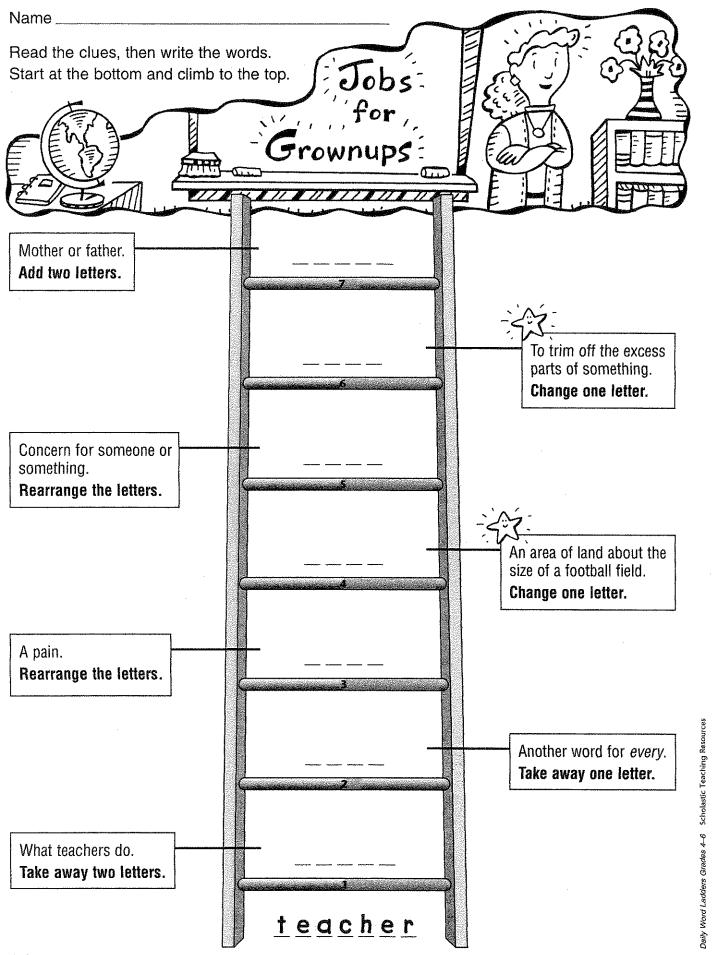


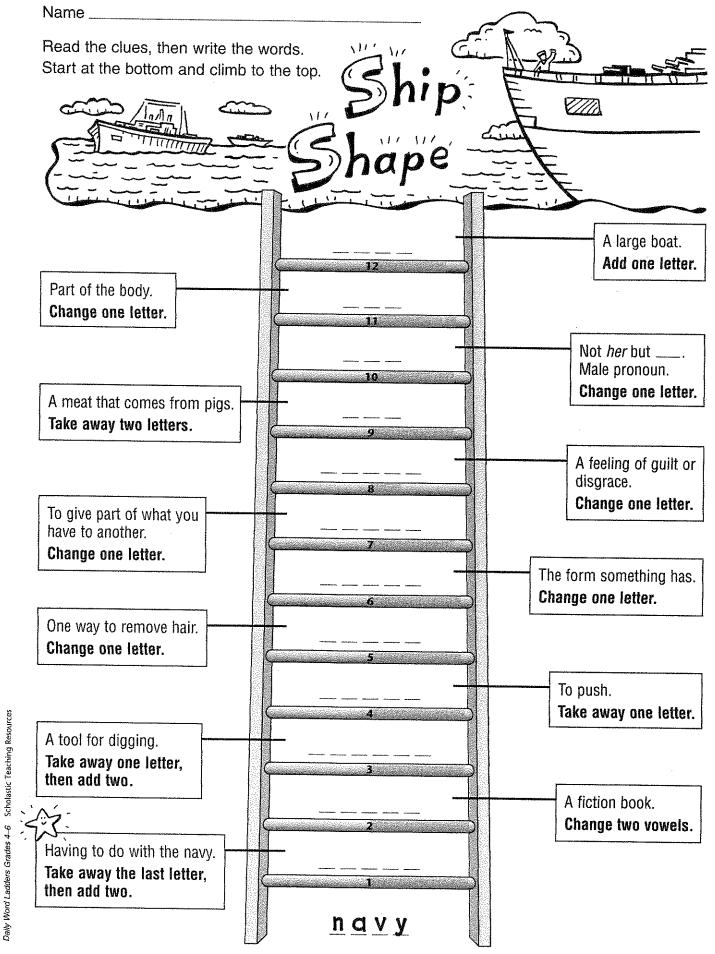


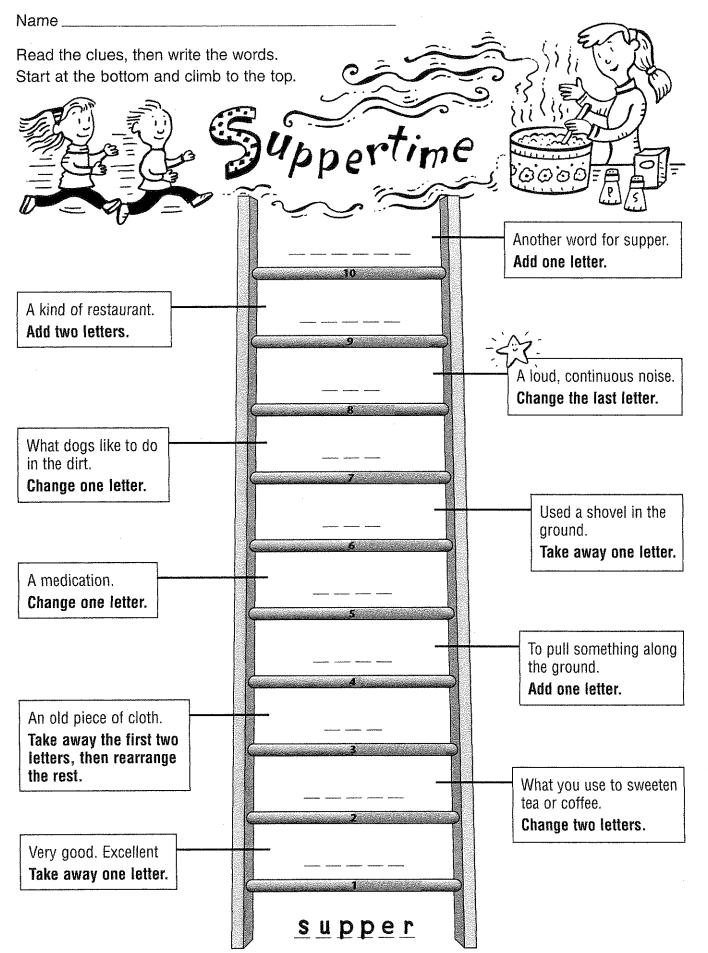


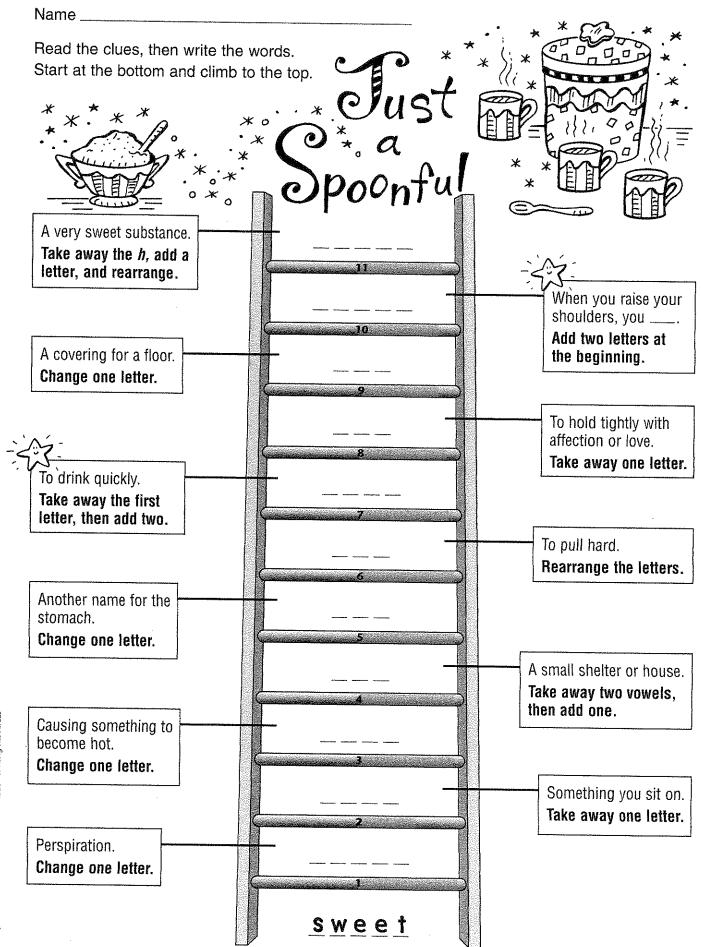


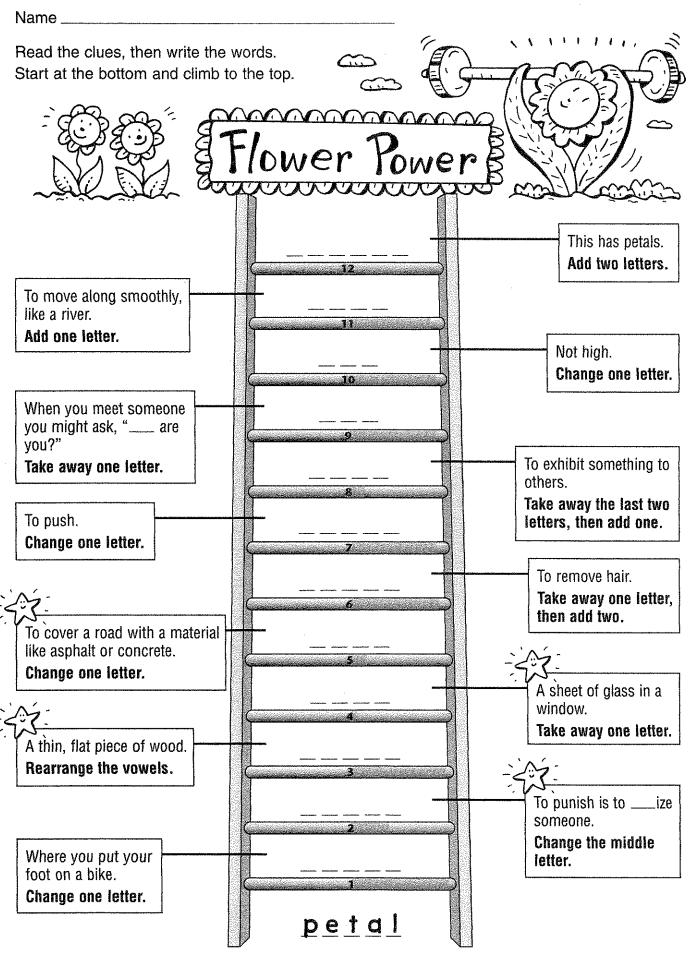


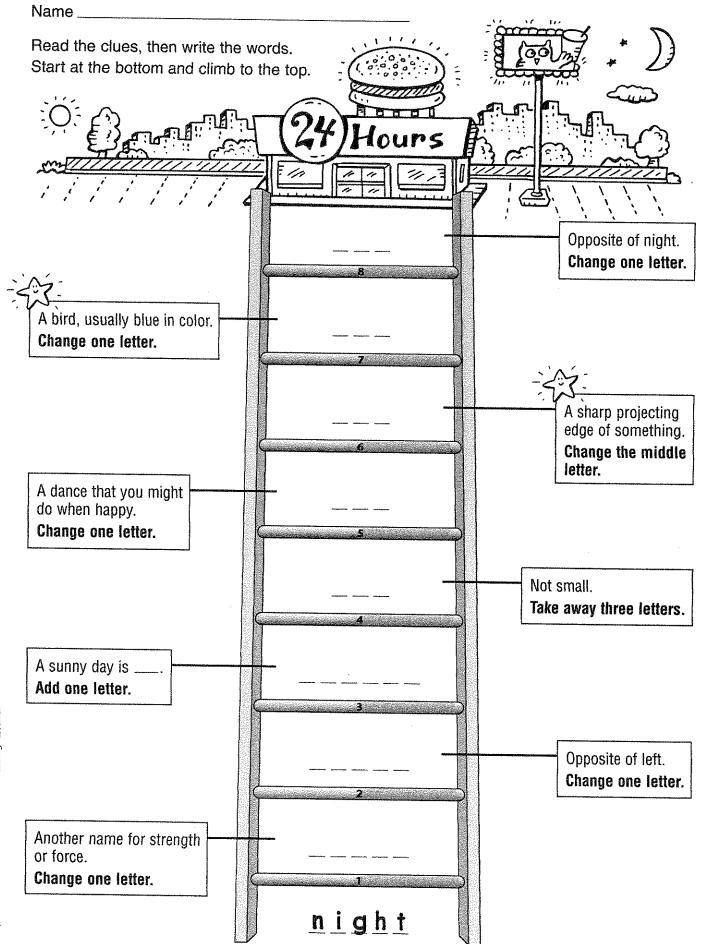


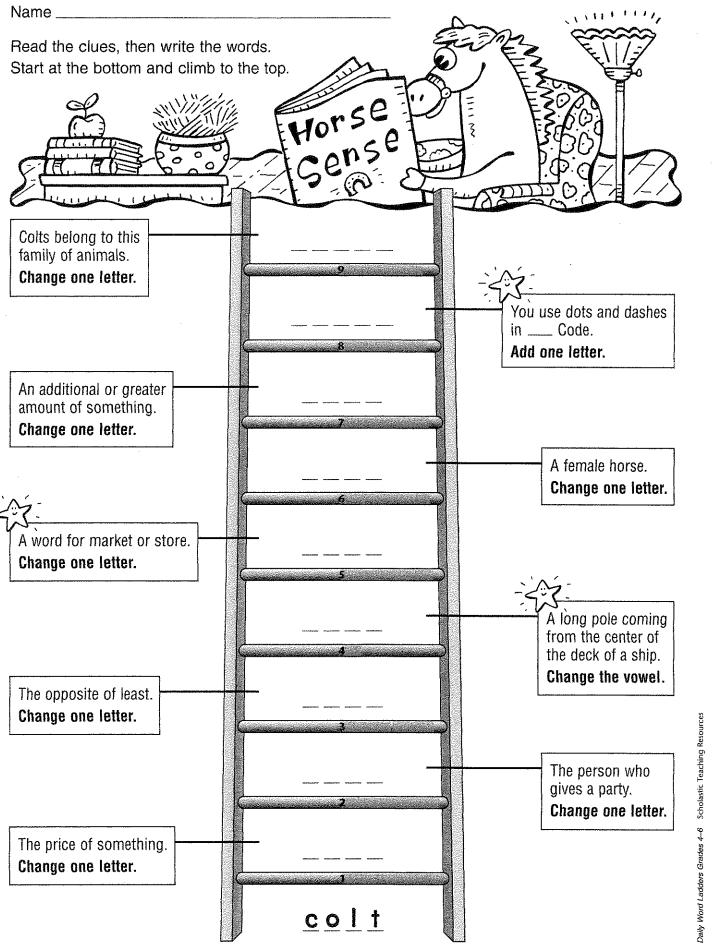


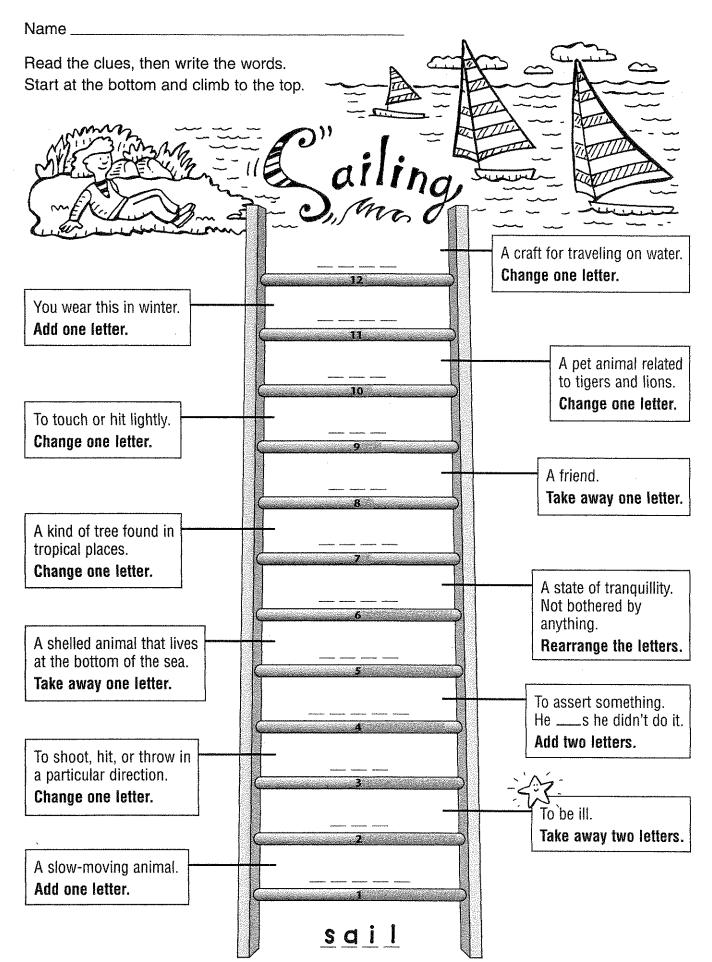


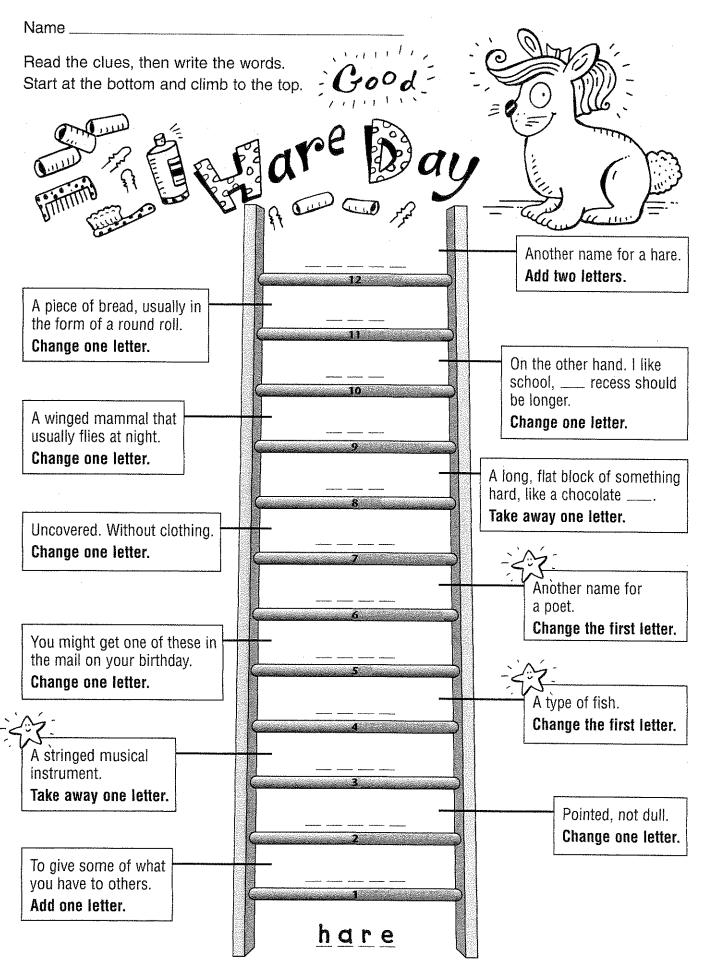


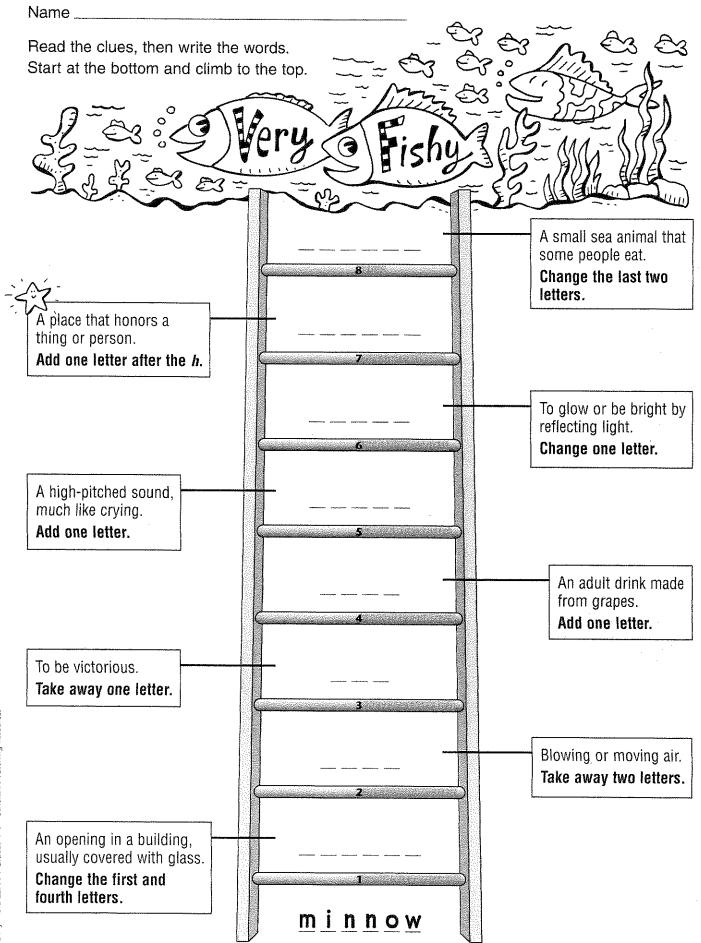


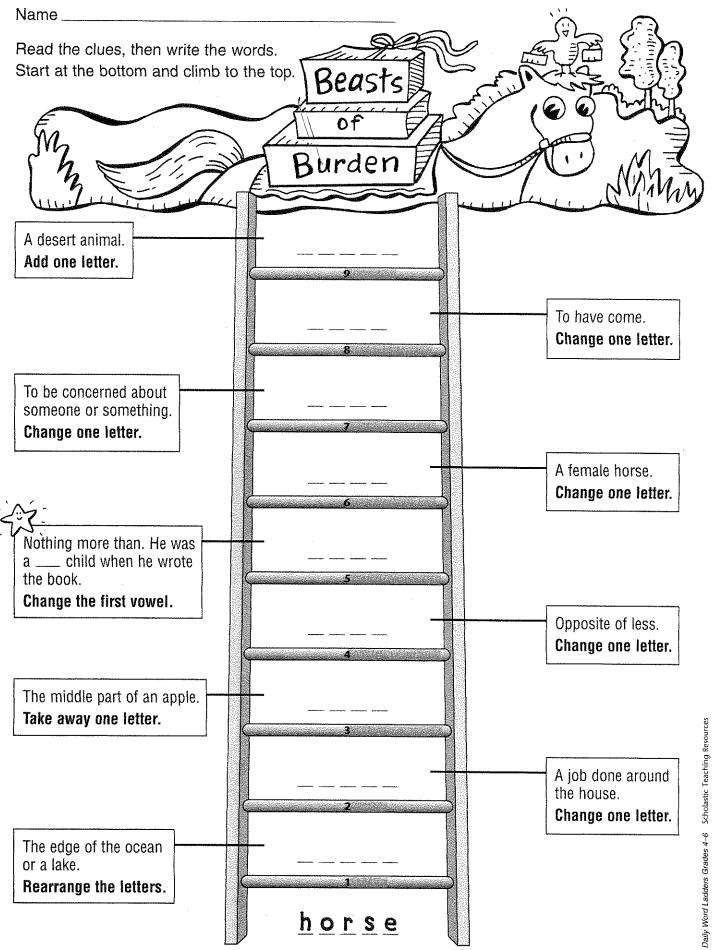


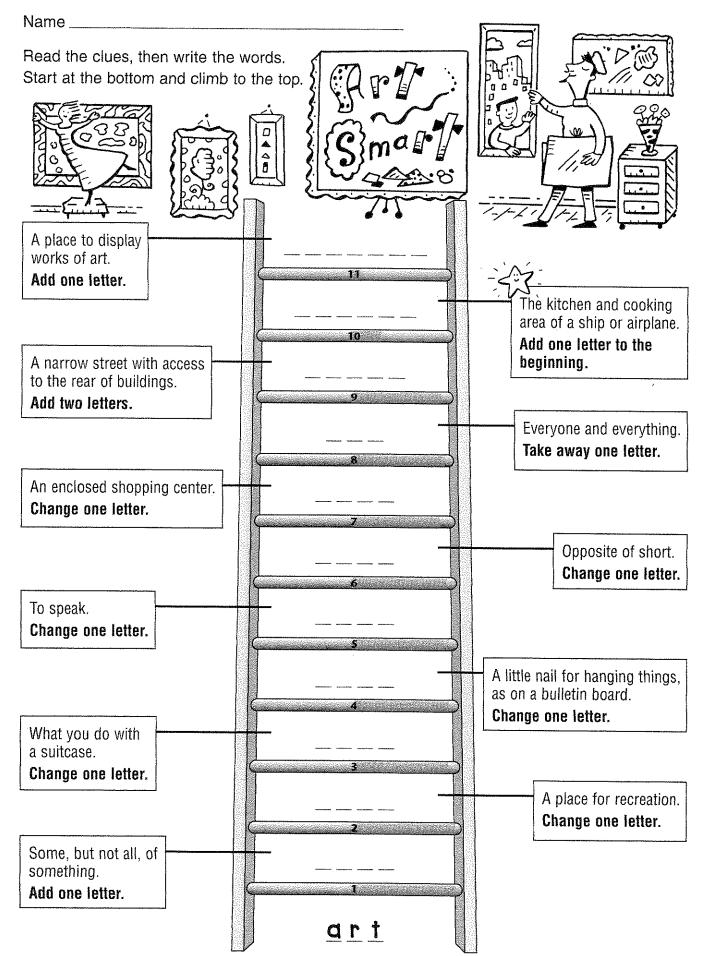


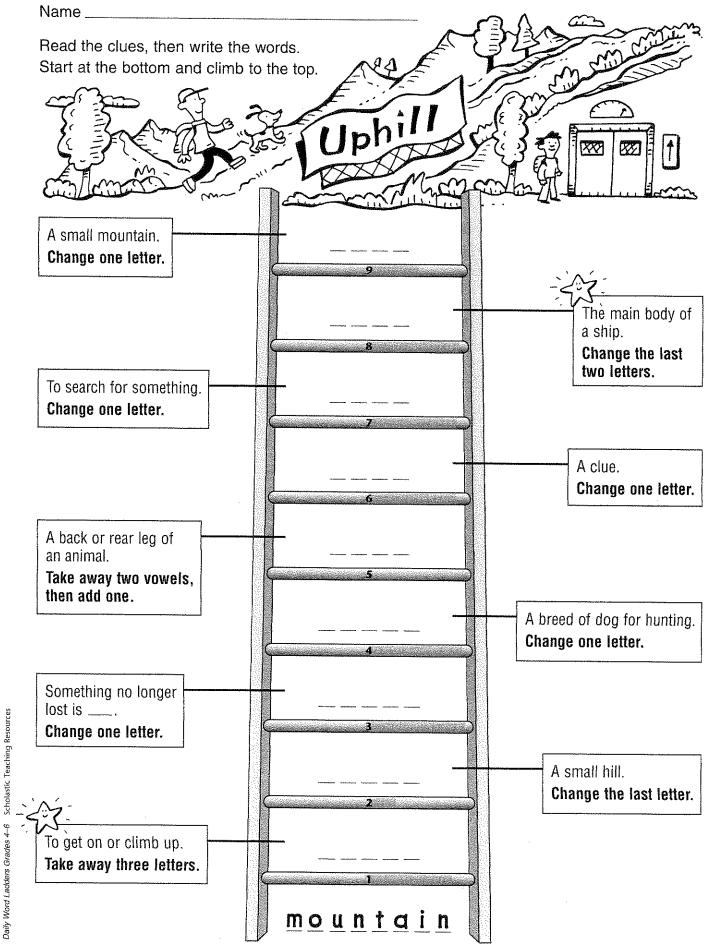


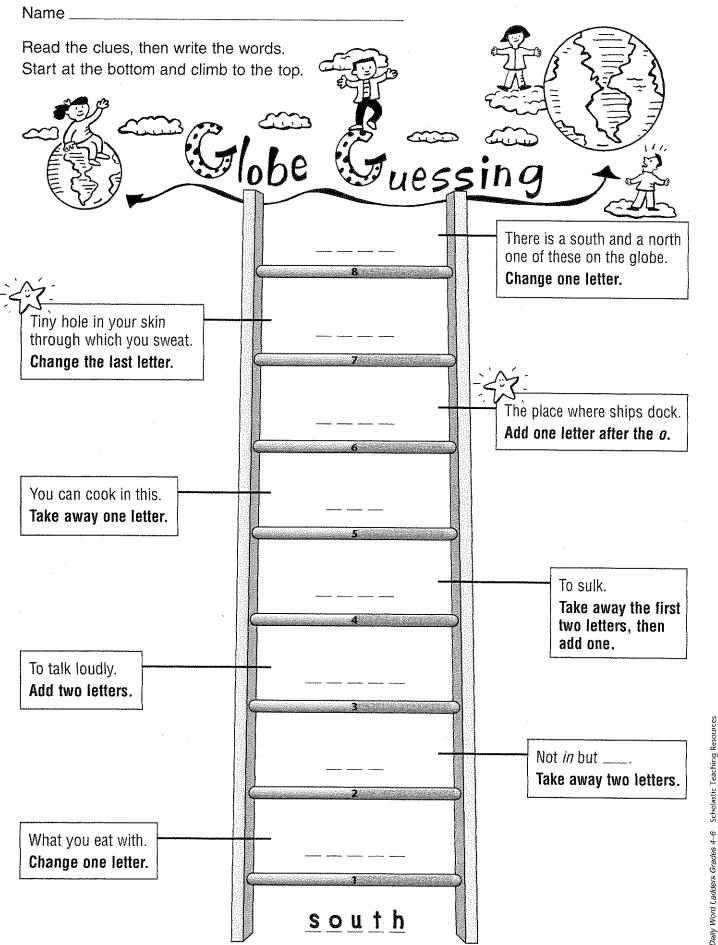


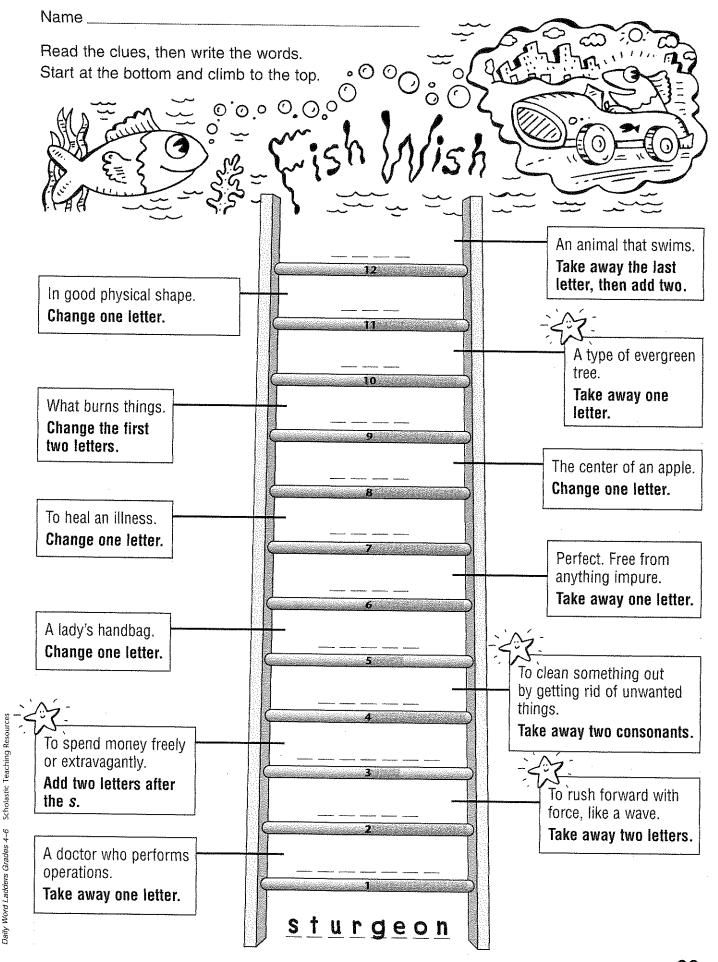


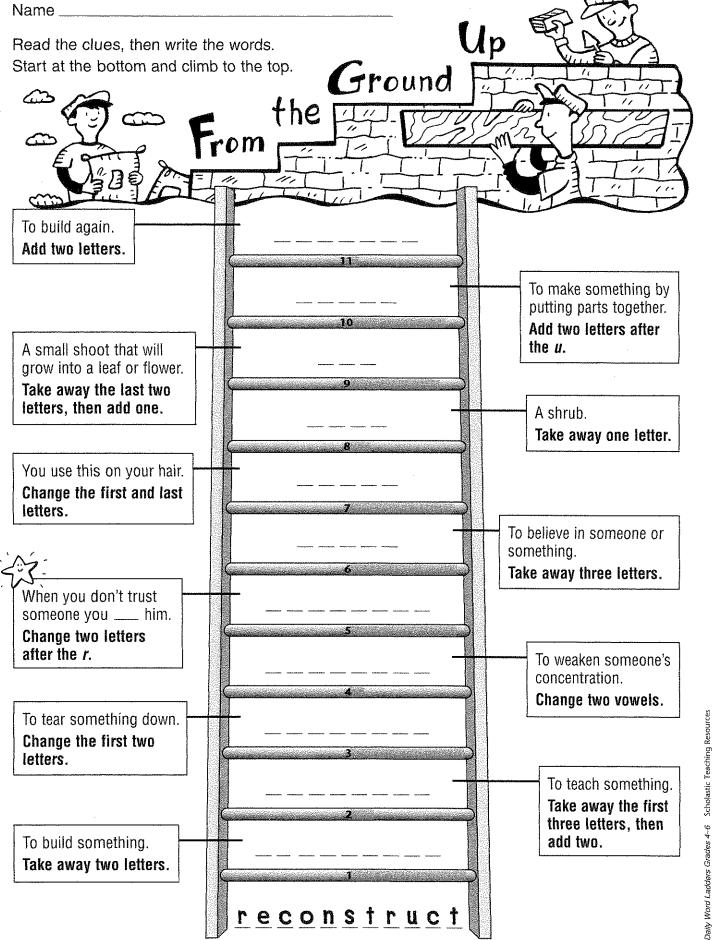


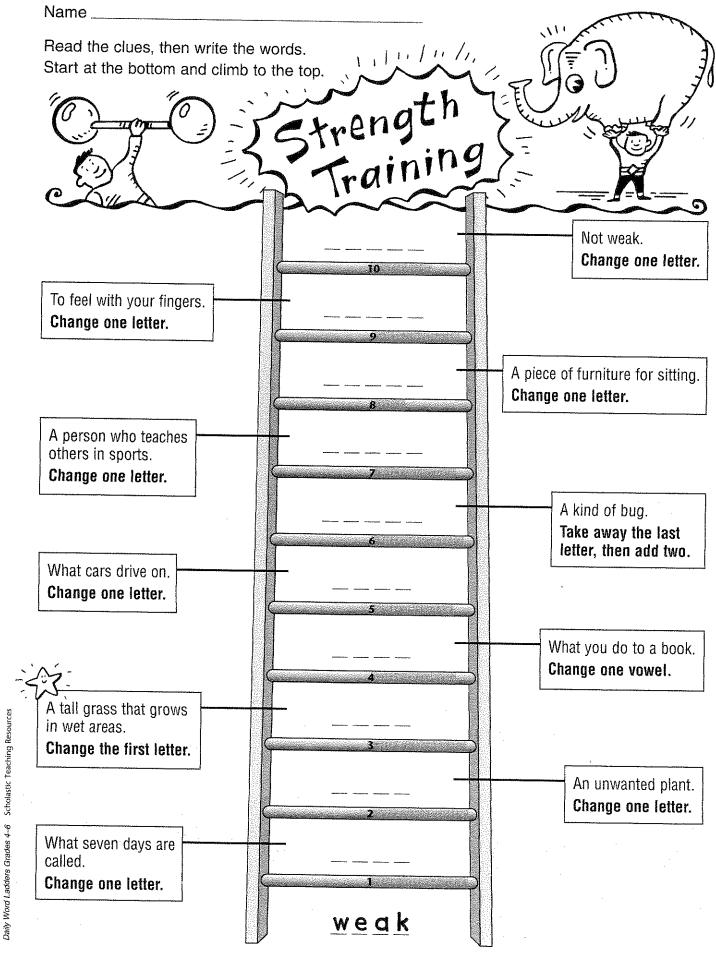


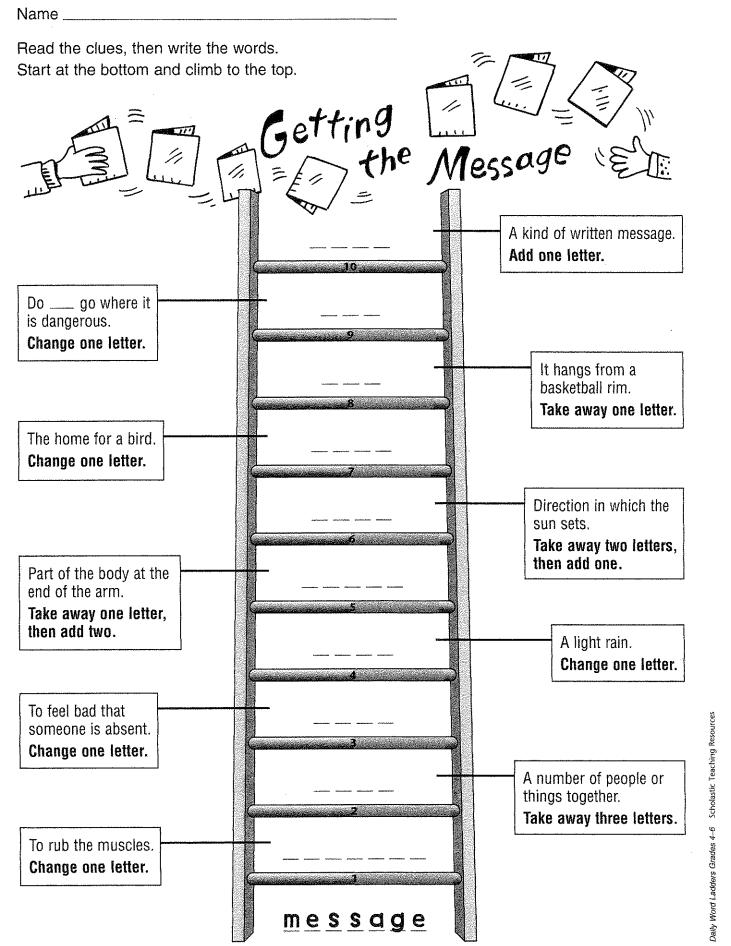


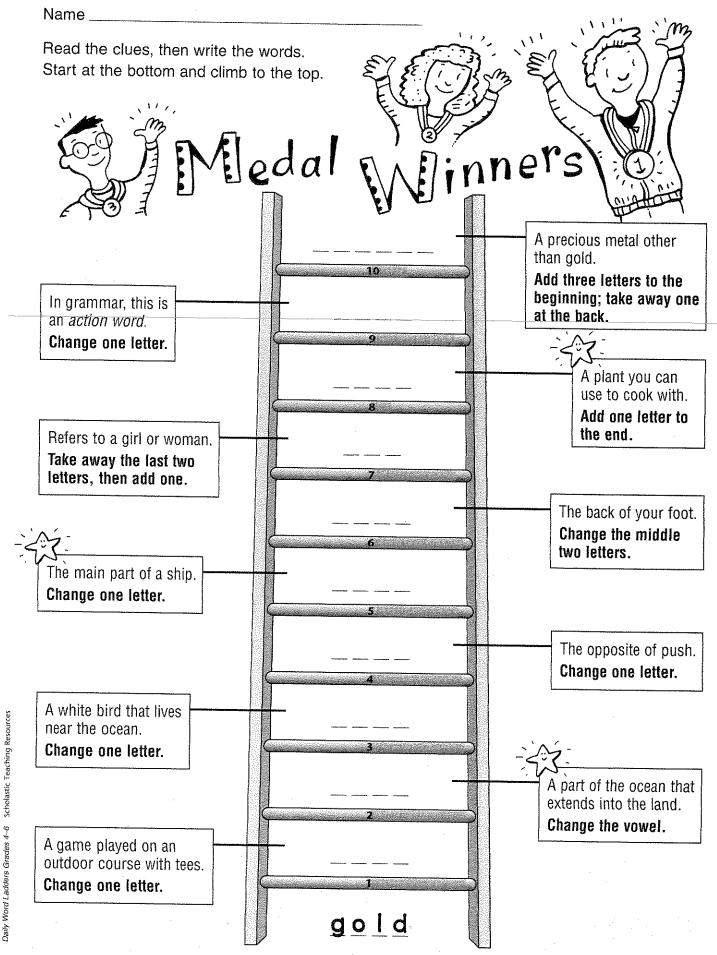


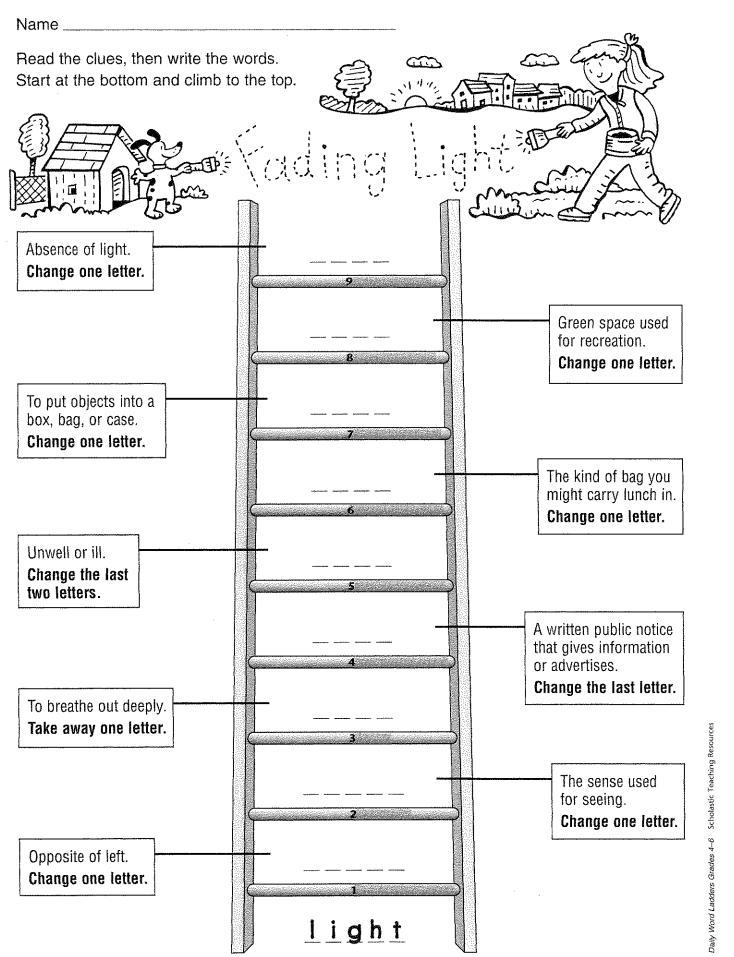


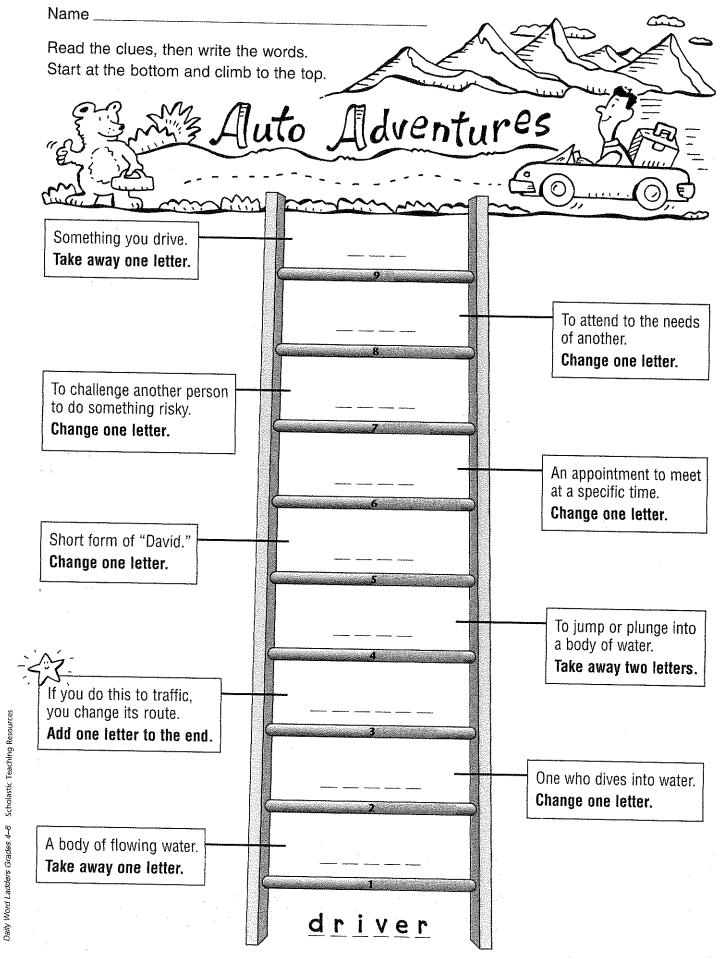


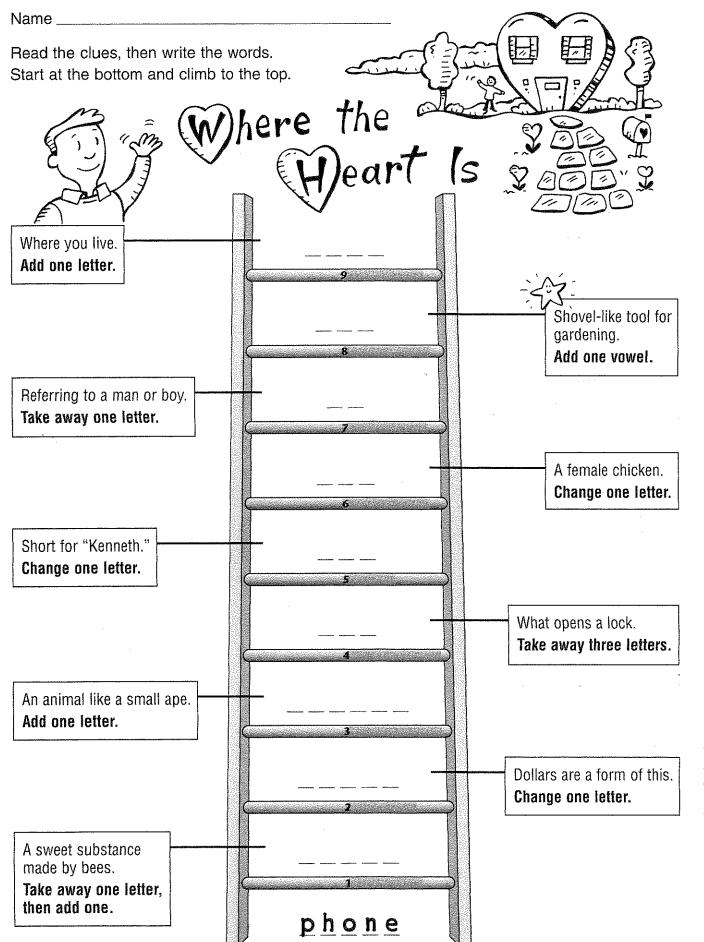


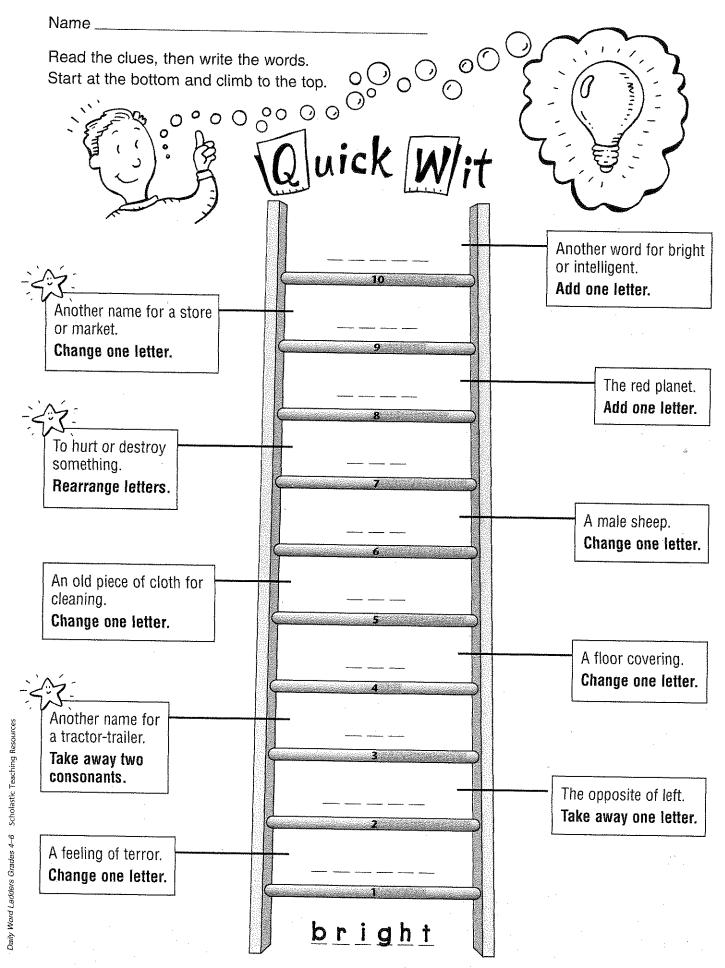


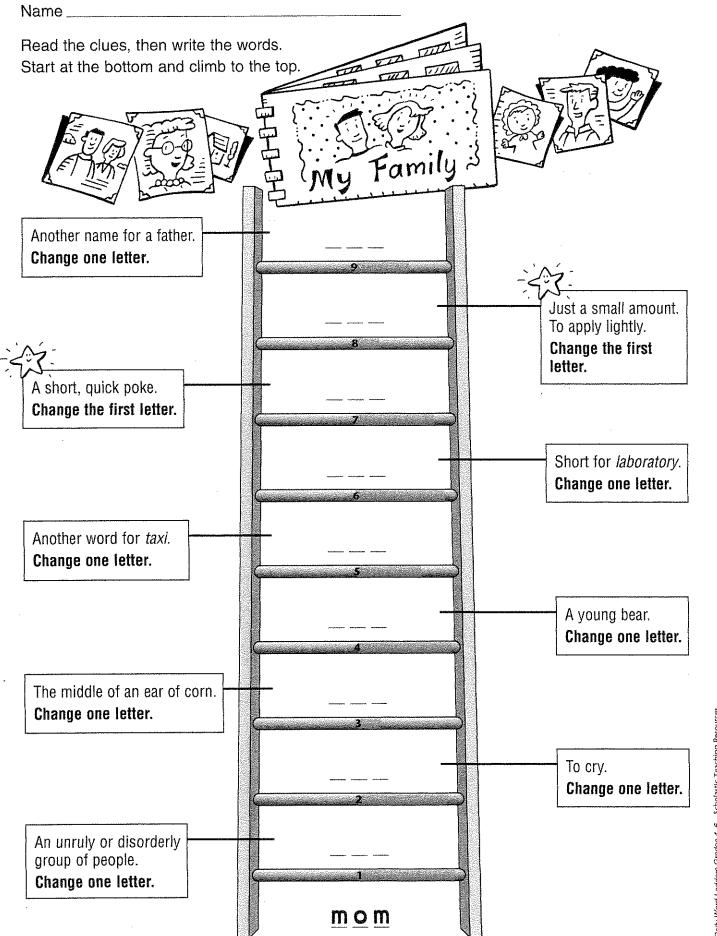


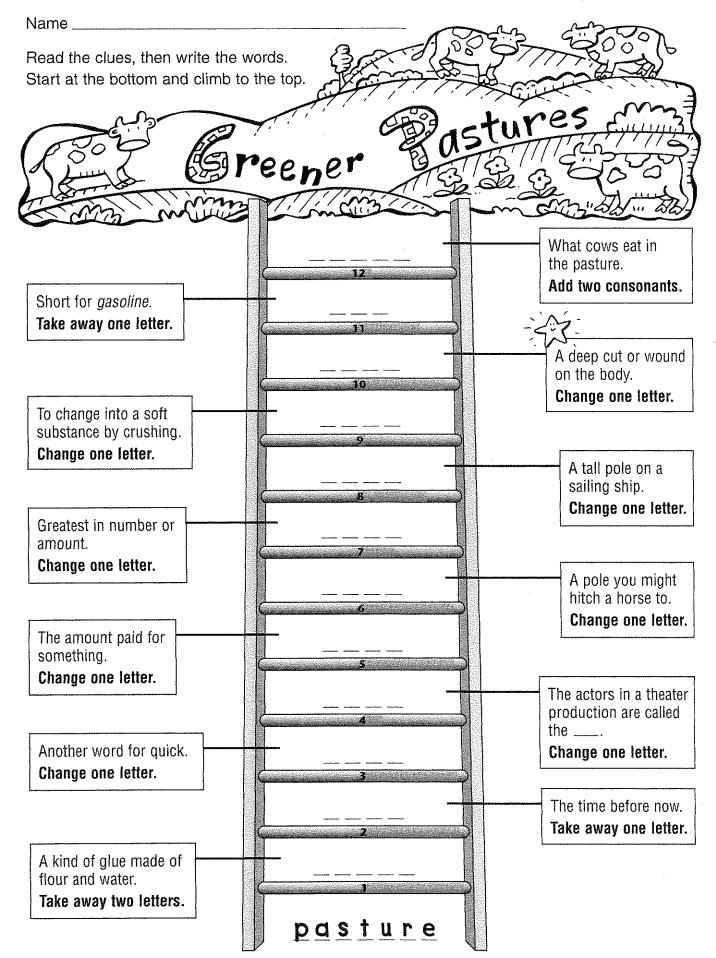




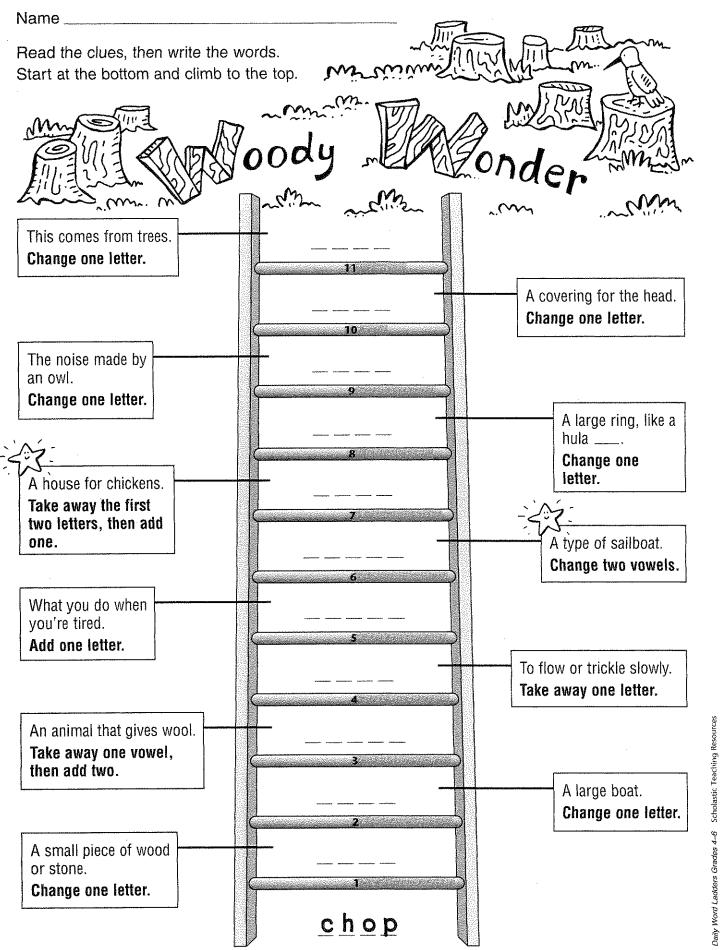


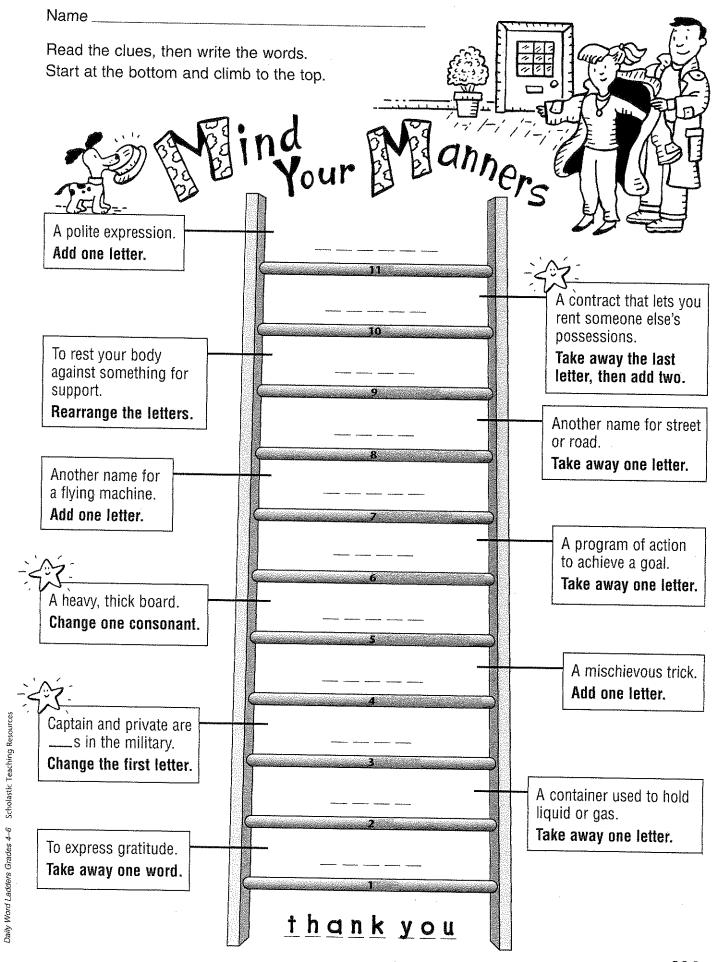


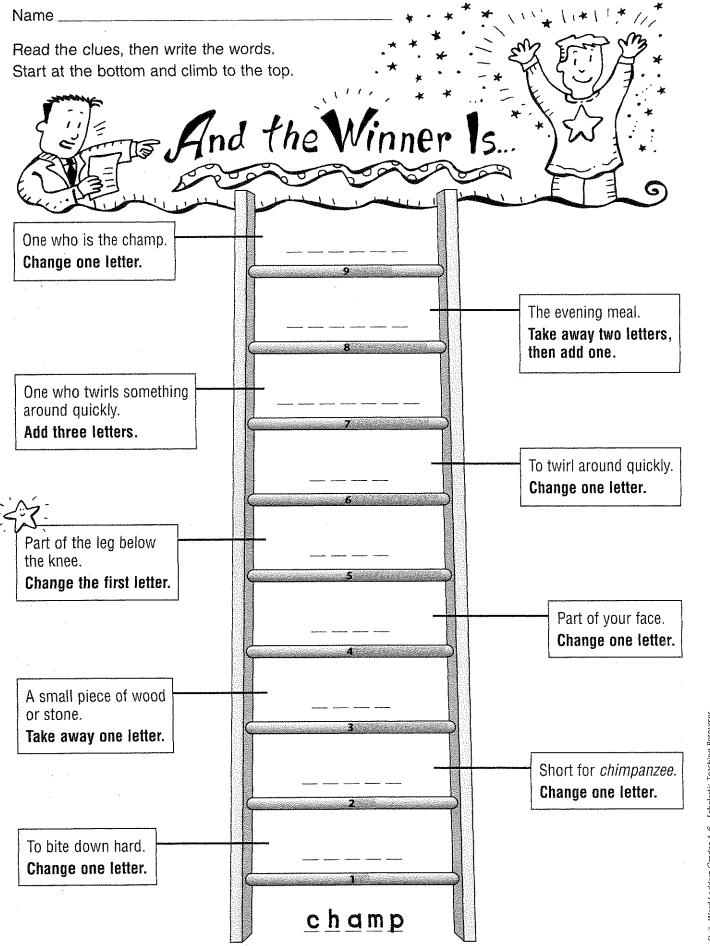


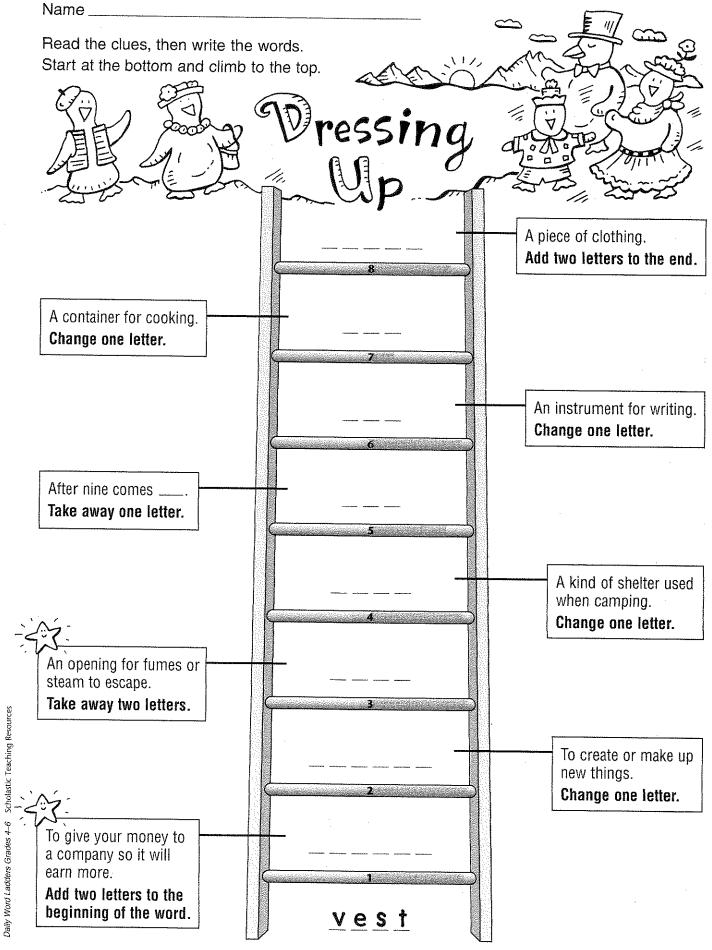


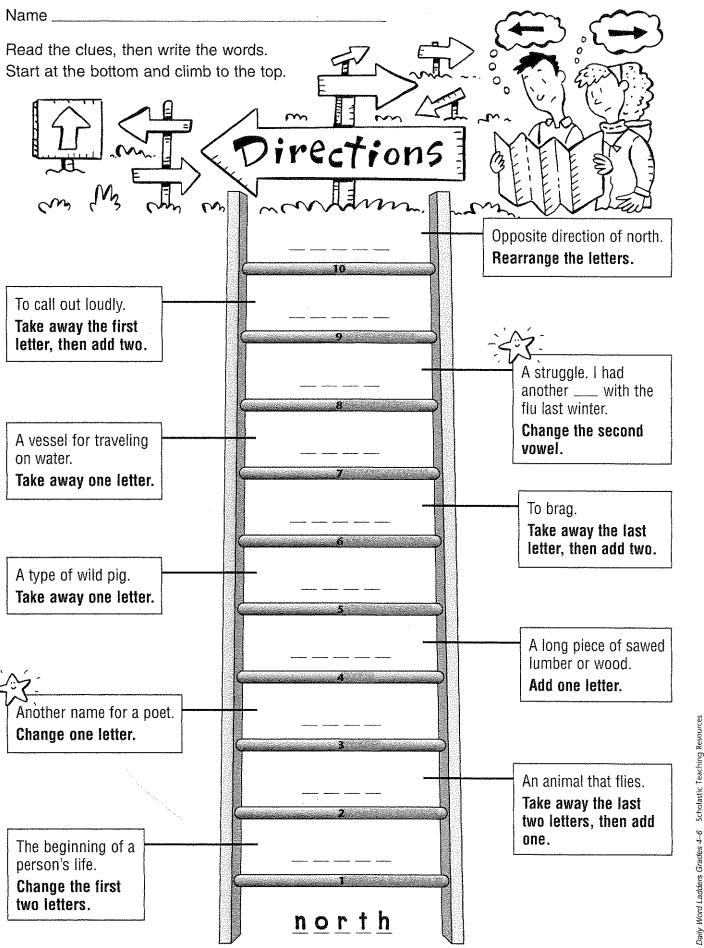
Daily Word Ladders Grades 4-6 Scholastic Teaching Resources

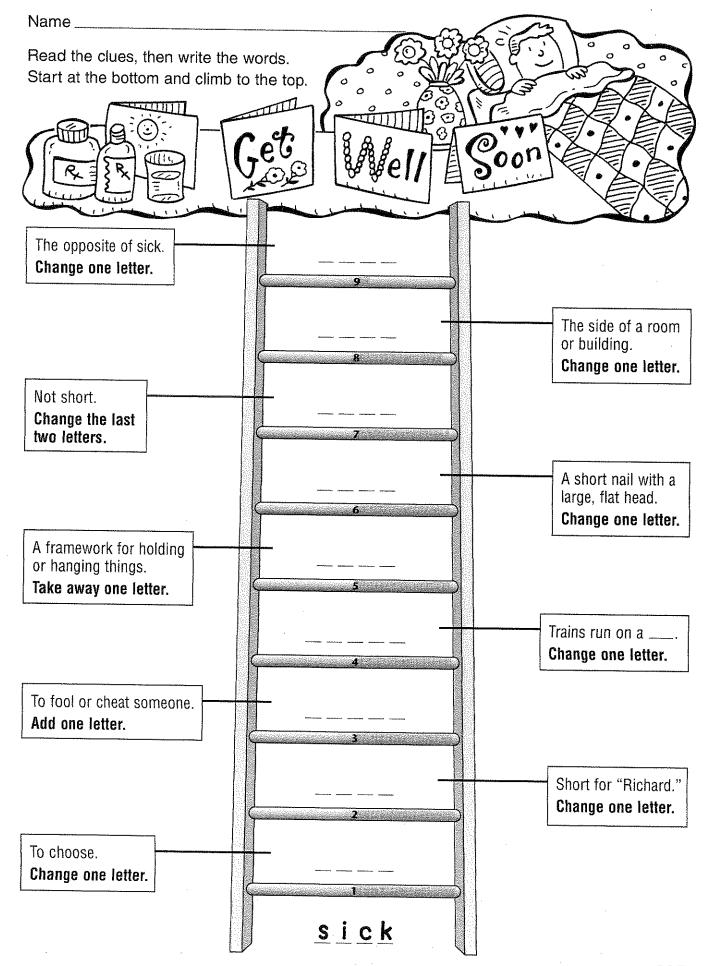














# **Answer Key**



#### Eat Your Vegetables, page 7

vegetable, table, stable, stab, slab, slob, slosh, slash, dash, dish, radish

#### Money Matters, page 8

nickel, pickle, pick, pink, stink, sting, sing, sang, sane, same, dame, dime

#### Outerwear, page 9

sweater, sweat, sweet, sweeten, ten, ton, stone, notes, not, jot, jock, Jack, jacket

#### Behind the Wheel, page 10

car, scar, scare, share, sharp, harp, hare, dare, Dave, dive, diver, driver

#### Give a Little, page 11

give, live, liver, diver, dive, hive, have, shave, shake, snake, stake, take

# Things That Go Bump in the Night, page 12

vampire, expire, retire, tire, fire, fine, tine, tone, ton, ten, net, bet, bat

## Toothsome, page 13

tooth, toot, soot, soon, son, Don, don't, dent, dentist

## Say Cheese, page 14

picture, capture, cap, cape, escape, estate, state, taste, haste, hat, hot, photo

## Hat Head, page 15

hat, hate, haste, waste, aster, asterisk, risk, disk, duck, luck, lack, lap, cap

## In the Money, page 16

million, billion, lion, stallion, stall, still, till, tall, toll, doll, dollar

## Meet and Greet, page 17

convention, invention, intention, tension, pension, suspension, suspense, suspend, spend, speed, seed, meet, meeting

#### Cool Drinks, page 18

ice, Alice, malice, chalice, chalk, stalk, talk, walk, walker, water

#### Stars and Stripes, page 19

country, county, count, aunt, tuna, tundra, drain, rain, rail, nail, nation

#### In My Room, page 20

bed, bled, red, read, bread, break, brook, brood, broom, boom, room

#### Sleepytime, page 21

pillow, pill, fill, fall, talk, tank, bank, blank, blanket

#### Giving Thanks, page 22

grateful, grate, gate, gateway, getaway, away, awful, thankful

#### Express Mail, page 23

deliver, liver, live, line, lime, slime, slim, slam, Sam, sad, sand, send

## Stormy Days, page 24

rain, ran, raw, war, wore, swore, sword, words, word, lord, loud, cloud

## Official Officers, page 25

private, pirate, irate, rate, grate, generate, generation, generally, general

## Bucket Brigade, page 26

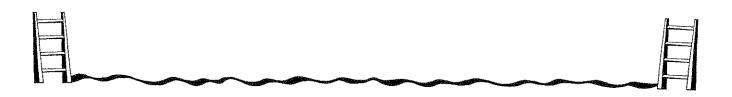
bucket, buck, duck, duct, conduct, conductor, doctor, dock, mock, Mick, pick, pack, pail

## Sweet Things, page 27

caramel, camel, came, cane, sane, same, seam, seat, sweat, sweet

## Here to There, page 28

march, Mars, mare, more, wore, were, where, here, hire, hare, ware, wart, walk



## Good Eating, page 29

digest, diet, die, dim, dam, mad, made, mat, eat

## That's Entertainment, page 30

television, vision, visit, sit, set, seat, heat, hat, rat, ratio, radio

## All Is Forgiven, page 31

forgive, give, live, liver, liter, later, lather, gather, together, get, forget

## Go, Go, Go, page 32

automobile, mobile, mob, cob, cot, Scot, scat, scab, cab, car

#### All in the Family, page 33

uncle, unclear, nuclear, clear, learn, earn, earnest, ear, are, art, ant, aunt

#### Give a Dog a Bone, page 34

dog, dig, din, ding, ring, wring, bring, big, bag, bang, bong, bone

## Dinner's Ready, page 35

vegetable, table, cable, cab, baby, ban, fan, fat, fate, mate, meat

## Happy Birthday, page 36

birthday, birth, both, bath, wrath, wreath, wreck, rock, rack, rake, cake

## Chew on This, page 37

bite, bit, but, hut, shut, shot, shop, hop, chop, chow, chew

# Peaks and Valleys, page 38

high, sigh, sight, right, rig, rag, raw, saw, law, low

## A Rose Is a Rose, page 39

flower, lower, low, slow, slot, lot, not, knot, note, nose, rose

#### Childhood, page 40

child, mild, mind, wind, win, pin, spin, span, pan, pad, dad, did, kid

## Cheese Eaters, page 41

mouse, house, hose, chose, chase, base, bash, bath, bat, rat

#### Frosty Fun, page 42

snow, now, not, dot, dog, dig, ding, king, kin, win, winter

#### Seaworthy, page 43

ocean, bean, bead, beard, heard, heart, heat, seat, seal, sea

#### Sew Sew, page 44

sew, sell, sill, still, skill, kill, wilt, wit, witch, itch, stitch

# Save Your Pennies, page 45

penny, pen, nope, open, spend, speed, seed, send, sent, cent

## Right or Wrong, page 46

true, blue, clue, club, cub, hub, hum, ham, hall, fall, false

# Precipitation Puzzle, page 47

rain, chain, chin, shin, shine, shingle, single, sing, wing, whip, wrap, crop, drop

## Snow Day, page 48

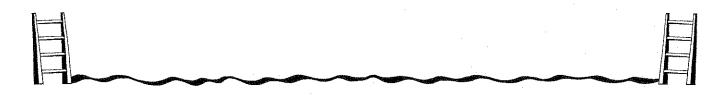
blizzard, lizard, liar, rail, rain, grain, grin, grow, row, now, snow

# Winter Wear, page 49

coat, coal, coil, oil, lion, stallion, talon, alone, lone, love, gloves

# Out of This World, page 50

Venus, vent, sent, spent, pen, men, man, can, car, mar, Mars



#### Fried Snacks, page 51

french, trench, wrench, wren, renew, newer, fewer, fee, free, fry

#### Candlelight, page 52

candle, handle, hand, hard, shard, share, hare, fare, flare, flame

#### Car Trouble, page 53

flat, inflate, late, slate, tales, tiles, tile, time, tide, tire

#### Play Date, page 54

play, plan, plane, plates, staple, stable, able, amble, ramble, rumble, humble, hum, chum

#### Beautiful Day, page 55

blue, clue, glue, glee, flee, flea, flew, fly, sly, sky

#### Ruling the Roost, page 56

rooster, roost, roast, toast, coast, cast, cat, hat, hit, chick, chicken

## New and Not-So-New, page 57

new, few, dew, sew, sow, now, how, show, shown, own, owl, old

## Midday Meal, page 58

lunch, launch, laundry, dry, day, say, sap, sip, sipper, supper

## Growing Up, page 59

short, shore, shoe, show, slow, plow, blow, below, belong, long

## Wedding Words, page 60

bride, stride, ride, rid, rod, rode, road, roam, room, groom

## Friendship, page 61

friend, end, send, sent, set, bet, but, cut, cute, chute, chum

#### Rub-a-Dub-Dub, page 62

scrub, rub, rib, crib, cob, rob, throb, broth, both, bath

#### Underwater, page 63

dive, dime, chime, chimp, champ, ham, hum, hub, cub, Cuba, scuba

## Hear This, page 64

scream, cream, cram, cramp, ramp, ram, rat, rot, trot, trout, shout

#### Brainy Bird, page 65

eagle, beagle, bagel, bugle, bungle, bundle, candle, handle, hand, Hank, hack, hawk

## Itchy and Scratchy, page 66

itch, inch, pinch, punch, lunch, hunch, hutch, hitch, pitch, patch, catch, scratch

#### Drinking Vessels, page 67

glass, lass, last, least, yeast, year, bear, beep, jeep, jump, slump, pump, cup

## Good Books, page 68

story, store, ore, chore, core, bore, bone, boo, book

## Land of the Free, page 69

liberty, tribe, bride, pride, ride, rid, red, read, reed, freed, freedom

## Corny!, page 70

maize, maze, made, jade, jab, job, cob, con, coin, corn

## School Days, page 71

school, cool, coal, cola, cold, scold, sold, hold, hole, home

## Jobs for Grownups, page 72

teacher, teach, each, ache, acre, care, pare, parent



## Ship Shape, page 73

navy, naval, novel, shovel, shove, shave, shape, share, shame, ham, him, hip, ship

#### Suppertime, page 74

supper, super, sugar, rag, drag, drug, dug, dig, din, diner, dinner

#### Just a Spoonful, page 75

sweet, sweat, seat, heat, hut, gut, tug, chug, hug, rug, shrug, sugar

#### Flower Power, page 76

petal, pedal, penal, panel, pane, pave, shave, shove, show, how, low, flow, flower

#### 24 Hours, page 77

night, might, right, bright, big, jig, jag, jay, day

## Horse Sense, page 78

colt, cost, host, most, mast, mart, mare, more, Morse, horse

## Voting Booth, page 79

ballot, ball, ballet, let, lot, tot, tote, note, vote

## Sailing, page 80

sail, snail, ail, aim, claim, clam, calm, palm, pal, pat, cat, coat, boat

## Bunny Tales, page 81

rabbit, bit, bat, fat, far, car, scar, scare, care, hare

# Good Hare Day, page 82

hare, share, sharp, harp, carp, card, bard, bare, bar, bat, but, bun, bunny

## Very Fishy, page 83

minnow, window, wind, win, wine, whine, shine, shrine, shrimp

# Beasts of Burden, page 84

horse, shore, chore, core, more, mere, mare, care, came, camel

#### Apple for Teacher, page 85

faculty, faulty, fault, felt, fell, tell, tall, tam, team, teach

## Art Smart, page 86

art, part, park, pack, tack, talk, tall, mall, all, alley, galley, gallery

#### Uphill, page 87

mountain, mount, mound, found, hound, hind, hint, hunt, hull, hill

# Globe Guessing, page 88

south, mouth, out, shout, pout, pot, port, pore, pole

#### Fish Wish, page 89

sturgeon, surgeon, surge, splurge, purge, purse, pure, cure, core, fire, fir, fit, fish

# From the Ground Up, page 90

reconstruct, construct, instruct, destruct, distract, distrust, trust, brush, bush, bud, build, rebuild

## Strength Training, page 91

weak, week, weed, read, road, roach, coach, couch, touch, tough

# Getting the Message, page 92

message, massage, mass, miss, mist, wrist, west, nest, net, not, note

## Medal Winners, page 93

gold, golf, gulf, gull, pull, hull, heel, her, herb, verb, silver

## Fading Light, page 94

light, right, sight, sigh, sign, sick, sack, pack, park, dark



#### Auto Adventures, page 95

driver, river, diver, divert, dive, Dave, date, dare, care, car

#### Where the Heart Is, page 96

phone, honey, money, monkey, key, Ken, hen, he, hoe, home

### Quick Wit, page 97

bright, fright, right, rig, rug, rag, ram, mar, Mars, mart, smart

#### My Family, page 98

mom, mob, sob, cob, cub, cab, lab, jab, dab, dad

#### Family Ties, page 99

mother, other, bother, brother, broth, both, moth, math, bath, bather, father

#### Greener Pastures, page 100

pasture, paste, past, fast, cast, cost, post, most, mast, mash, gash, gas, grass

## Fur Facts, page 101

bald, ball, fall, full, bull, bell, sell, shell, shall, hall, hair

#### Woody Wonder, page 102

chop, chip, ship, sheep, seep, sleep, sloop, coop, hoop, hoot, hood, wood

#### Mind Your Manners, page 103

thank you, thank, tank, rank, prank, plank, plan, plane, lane, lean, lease, please

### And the Winner Is . . . , page 104

champ, chomp, chimp, chip, chin, shin, spin, spinner, dinner, winner

#### Dressing Up, page 105

vest, invest, invent, vent, tent, ten, pen, pan, pants

#### Directions, page 106

north, birth, bird, bard, board, boar, boast, boat, bout, shout, south

#### Get Well Soon, page 107

sick, pick, Rick, trick, track, rack, tack, tall, wall, well

