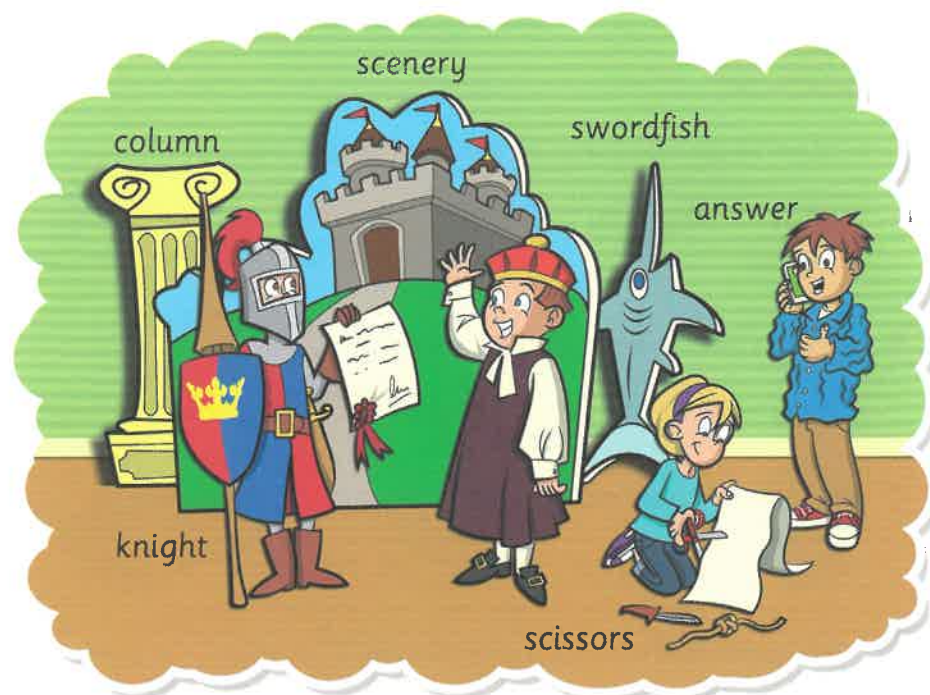


silent letters



Key Words

thumb
subtle
debt

solemn
autumn
column

castle
listen
mortgage

knight
kneel
knuckle

wreckage
wrinkle
swordfish
answer

scenery
scissors

resign
designer

Focus

There are silent letters in some English words because over hundreds of years the way we pronounce these words has changed, though the spellings haven't! The spellings give us a clue as to how the word was probably spoken in medieval times.

knight hour

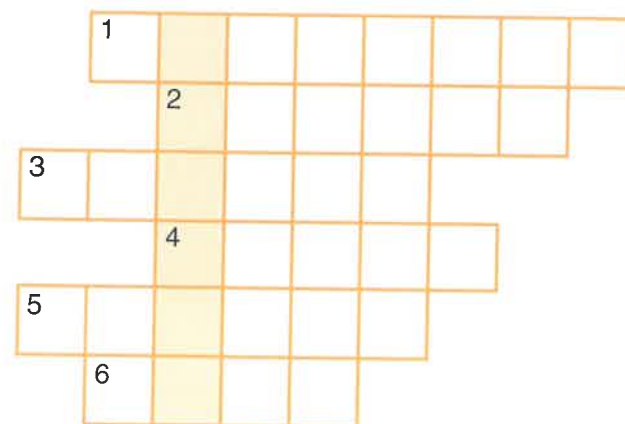
- A** Look at the key words. Which letter most often comes immediately before or after each of these letters when they are 'silent'?

1 w 2 g 3 w 4 c 5 k 6 t

- B** Copy three words that follow the pattern you have noticed for each answer in **A**.

Extra

- A** What's the hidden word?
Copy this grid carefully into your book.
Fill in the words by answering the clues.
Each answer is a key word.



Use a ruler when copying the grid.

- 1 its plural is the same as its singular 2 the season after summer
3 to leave a job or team 4 one on each hand
5 a block of stone or marble 6 to owe money

What is the hidden word?

- B** Construct a similar puzzle yourself using words with silent letters.

Extension

One way to help remember when silent letters are needed is to practise saying the words quietly to yourself, splitting them into syllables and sounding the silent letter, like this:

Wed / nes / day and sub / tle

- A** Choose ten words with silent letters that you might find tricky and list them in your book. Next to each, write the word again, but split into its syllables. Then underline the silent letters.
- B** Write a funny sentence that includes at least four words with silent letters.