

Word Chains

Word chains are good practice to acquire automaticity with speech sounds. Word chains can provide practice for targeted speech sounds. Soon, under Teacher Tools on our website, we will have word chains to practice different sounds. Our first word chain will have words with the short /a/ vowel sound. Teacher's can use these chains by dictating the words to students and then having the students make one sound change. When making a word chain, each new word is different by only one sound. It is best to do this with small white boards so students can erase the letter (usually one letter) to make the new word.

Below is the dialog to use with a word chain.

Teacher: Write the word *cat*. (Students write the word.) What's this word? Students say *cat*. How do you spell it? Students spell the word c-a-t. Teacher then writes *cat* on the large board so all can see it.

Teacher: If this word says *cat*, make one change so it says *can*. (Students change the *t* to an *n*.) What's this word? Students say *can*. How do you spell it? Students spell the word c-a-n. Teacher erases the *t* in *cat* and replaces it with an *n*.

Continue the chain with the above dialog. With this approach, students are seeing the word, hearing the word and writing the word. They are using three of their five senses: sight, hearing and kinesthetic (by writing the word). Each time after the students have made the change on their white boards, the teacher changes her word as the students spell the new word.

Here are the words for a chain using words with the short /a/ vowel sound.

cat

can

ran

rap

sap

lap
map
man
fan
fat
rat
mat

This word chain with short /a/ words would be good to use when students are doing Lessons 1 and 2 in *English Reading and Spelling for the Spanish Speaker Book 1*.