

# Mighty Mouth Movers

## Teaching Manual

Created and written by

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Mighty Mouth Movers is a set of two companion books –  
the **Student Book** and the packed-to-the-rafters-with-ideas **Teaching Manual**.

The Mighty Mouth mover rhymes were written to make the serious business of teaching literacy – and in particular how to speak, read and use English – a playful but rigorous learning adventure.

The world of wonder comes bouncing into the classroom as each rhyme is explored, helped in no small measure by the wonderful illustrations of Sydney artist, Noeline Cassettari.

So – put some zip and zap into the chant words as you say them out loud.  
Keep the beat going as you meet the quirky characters in the story lines.

Drama improvisation, creative thinking, researching, science, geography, history, drawing, mathematics, vocabulary development, spelling accuracy, mouth muscle awareness, speech clarity, teamwork, putting thoughts into words and visualisation skills are just some of the many high-level outcomes achievable in this Mighty Mouth Mover package.

**Illustrations Noeline Cassettari**

Ellie Hallett Books  
[www.readingworks.com.au](http://www.readingworks.com.au)

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cart kite cut coat  
That castle has a deep dark moat.  
caught kit cot cat  
This drawbridge has a fancy mat!

**Visual Discrimination Game: Word detective**

*This rhyme is good for reinforcing the vowel sounds and letter patterns ar i-e u oa augh i o a.*

*Various games and activities can be devised to teach and reinforce these sounds. A simple but effective one is called **Word Detective** and can be played by finding other words which have the same written vowel pattern but possibly a different sound. A hunt through specially 'fixed' sentences devised by the teacher can be made into either a team or individual race.*

Examples:

The duke sat on a large mule and ate two hot pies for lunch. (**u**)

'Can we all fit in that small motor-boat?' asked the holidaying coach passengers. (**a**)

These can be embellished and extended by the learners.

**This and that; that and this:**

*This rhyme provides a valuable discussion topic for a lesson illustrating the difference between these two words. The word **this** is usually for something closer in reach, while **that** often describes something further away by comparison.*

*Children can have a silent thinking session before saying their examples demonstrating the usage of **this** and **that** around the circle. Nothing needs to be written because the emphasis here is on creative thinking, speech clarity and the boosting of oral language skills.*

Examples for the teacher to demonstrate (if needed):

This garden grows gardenias well, but that garden is best for potatoes.

This painting is from the baroque period. That one over there is definitely post-modern.

**Spelling Game: Pass it along**

*The class can be divided into groups of about five learners per group to play this game.*

*Each child needs a pencil and a single sheet of paper (resting on a hard-cover leaner).*

*At the top of their pieces of paper, a sentence is written by each child. One of the vowel sounds listed above has to be used somewhere in a sentence. A time limit is given.*

*The paper is then folded back under the sentence and passed on to the next person in the group, who writes another sentence, using their choice of a different vowel sound to the one they wrote in their first sentence on their first piece of paper.*

*The papers are passed along to each member of the group until a sentence from each person has been written on each piece of paper - a bit like the old game Consequences.*

*Papers are then opened to find the vowel sounds and to make any spelling corrections. Each person's own name should be at the top of the page. A coloured pencil ring can be drawn around the vowel groups in all the sentences on their page to identify them, and spelling corrections made neatly in lead pencil. Each child corrects the whole page.*

*If any child is in any doubt as to the spelling on their sheet of paper, the Super Speller (i.e. the teacher or a class bright spark) can be consulted.*

*The page is then returned a child at a time in reverse order so that each person can see and discuss the corrections. The teacher checks the papers.*

### **Vocabulary and Spelling:**

The word **castle** has a silent **t**. Find and collect other words which have **-stle**.

Examples: bustle, castle, hustle, jostle, nestle, pestle, rustle, bristle, gristle, thistle, trestle, whistle, wrestle, sandcastle.

### **Research: Castles**

Find out other words that name parts of a castle. Examples: battlements, parapet, watchtower, moat, gatehouse, drawbridge, keep, approach, portcullis.

*Six and seven-year-olds are especially keen on castles, and will learn these words quickly. (Never underestimating the ability of any child is a good maxim for teachers.)*

### **Poem to learn:**

***The King's Breakfast** by A A Milne has strong rhythmic appeal and is a perfect memorisation/performance piece. Reading and saying a line each around the class circle is a painless way to memorise a poem. This can also be a very good minute-filler when waiting for the bell to ring, and it has the bonus benefits of being the perfect vehicle for learning how to add vocal and facial expression.*

### **Word Analysis: Compound words**

Think of other pairs of words which go together to make a new word - such as **draw** and **bridge** to make **drawbridge**. Words can added by class members at random times. An invitation to family members to contribute would also work well.

Examples:

butter fly butterfly; snow man snowman; sand pit sandpit; table cloth tablecloth; door bell doorbell.

Some words can be turned into a compound word by adding another small word.

Examples:

broom, (broomstick); grass (grasshopper); goat (scapegoat); him (himself); foot (football; footloose, surefooted); there (therefore); home (homemade, homework, homerun); mother (grandmother).

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laughed loafed lift -  
Let's rest our oars and quietly drift.  
leafed left loft -  
That fledglings' nest looks very soft.

**Pronunciation:**

Can you find the three main sounds which are found in all chant words? (**l f d**)

What position does your tongue have when saying each of these three sounds?

When you say **f**, watch your top teeth in your mirror, and describe what happens. Is this a voiced or an unvoiced sound? (*unvoiced*)

What does your breath do when you say each of the three sounds? Check if you are exhaling as you say each sound by placing your finger-tips very close to your mouth to feel your breath. Which sound needs the most air? (**f**)

Which needs a little less air? (**d**) Which doesn't seem to require much air at all? (**l**)

Say **l** a few times, but experiment saying this sound while you push your fingers firmly onto your cheeks, so that your tongue is gently squashed by your cheeks and cannot move. This stops any air coming through your mouth.

Do you sound like a bee that has suddenly stopped buzzing? Similarly, to prove that you do indeed need air to say this sound, cup your hand over your mouth as you say **l**. What happens?

**Punctuation:**

Look at the two words in this rhyme which have an apostrophe - **Let's** and **fledglings'**. What does the apostrophe do in each word?

*In **Let's**, there is a letter left out, the unabbreviated version being **let us**. In the word, **fledglings'**, there is an ownership apostrophe, so that when you ask, 'Whose nest?', the answer is, 'the fledglings', because are several fledgling in the nest. The apostrophe therefore comes **AFTER** your answer. (If, on the other hand, the rhyme used the words, 'fledgling's nest', it would mean there was only one fledgling in the nest.)*

**Feeling the Beat:**

The dashes have an important role to play, as they tell you to wait a moment - and in this case, a whole beat.

To help you feel the beat of this rhyme, tap your desk as you say the rhyme. Each chant word has one beat, and each dash also has one beat. The stressed words/syllables of the story lines are: **rest oars qui- drift fledg- nest ve- soft.**

For variety, tap your fingers in a soft clap as you say the rhyme to feel the beat. Don't forget to clap where the dashes are at the end of both chant lines.

Find yourself a partner and clap each other's hands as you say the rhyme. Try to sound like one person instead of two by being exactly together as you clap and speak.

### **Rowing Game:**

In pairs, fours or eights (one 'boat' only with a cox), sit one behind the other on the floor. 'Row' your racing shell while the rest of the class says the rhyme. Use your arms as imaginary oars. Gradually slow down but keep your arm movements together. The cox says 'stroke' on each beat, and is in charge of the tempo.

*(The teacher might need to explain the concept of rowing.)*

### **Vocabulary: Baby Birds**

The word **fledgling** - meaning a bird which has just grown its first flying feathers - is one of several names for baby birds. What other names do you know or can find out?

Note: The illustration has chicks in the nest rather than fledglings.

Baby-bird word examples:

**chick** (a bird too young to leave the nest); **squab** (a baby pigeon); **callow** or **unfledged** (a baby bird without flight feathers or a bird yet to take its first flight); **altricial** (newly hatched, blind and non-feathered baby bird); **precocial** (covered with down, eyes open and able to leave the nest soon after hatching).

*The words **altricial** and **precocial** have been included because they are so unusual. They are for teachers rather than learners although there will be learners who will also love them.*

### **Spelling and Word Study:**

Look carefully at the spelling for the word **laugh**. Can you deduce how these other **gh** words which say **f** are spelt?

Examples:

cough rough tough enough trough.

There are quite a few words which have **-dge** at their end.

Listen to these examples, and then work out how you would spell them:

edge, badge, budge, dodge, bridge, dredge, drudge, fudge, grudge, hedge, judge, ledge, lodge, nudge, pledge, ridge, sledge, sludge, smudge, trudge, wedge.