

Holdouts to the *-before- Rule*

CK-12 English

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Exceptions to the <i>-before-<e> Rule

Words like "weird" and "sovereign" that do not follow the <i>-before-<e> rule

Holdouts to the <i>-before-<e> Rule



[Figure1]

The I-Before-E Rule describes the following five cases:

1. When we're spelling long <e>, anywhere except after <c>, it's <i> before <e>.
2. When we're spelling long <e> after <c>, it's <e> before <i>.
3. When we're spelling long <a> it's <e> before <i>.
4. When we're spelling long <i> at the end of free stems, it's <i> before <e>.
5. When we're spelling long <i> anywhere else, it's <e> before <i>.

Any words that fit any of those cases are instances of the rule. Any words that do not fit into any of the cases are holdouts.

Examples

These five words (*leisure*, *protein*, *seize*, *weird*, and *financier*) are hardcore holdouts to the <l>-Before-<E> Rule. There are seven others: *fiery*, *foreign*, *counterfeit*, *sovereign*, *heifer*, *weir*, *hierarchy*.

Review

1. Below are sixty-four words. All of the words contain <ie> or <ei> spelling either [ā], [ē], or [ī]. Read them carefully and then sort the instances into the matrix below. As you write each instance into the matrix, check it off the list. There are fifty-seven instances.

allergies	feisty	neither	skies
allies	field	niece	sleigh
believe	financier	perceives	sleight
calorie	freight	poltergeist	studied
ceiling	galleries	prairie	surveillance
collie	grief	priest	their
conceit	height	protein	thief
conceive	heir	qualified	underlie
deceit	hurried	receipt	untie
deceiving	hygiene	receiver	varies
dignified	kaleidoscope	reign	veil
dried	leisure	reindeer	vein
eiderdown	magpie	relief	weigh
eight	married	seismic	weight
either	movies	seize	weird
fallacies	neighbor	shriek	yielding

	Instances of the Rule
Case 1: [ē] = <ei> not after <c>	
Case 2: [ē] = <ie> not after <c>	
Case 3: [ā] = <ei>	
Case 4: [ī] at the end of free stems = <ie>	
Case 5: [ī] at the beginning or in the middle of stems = <ei>	

2. In addition to the fifty-seven instances, among the sixty-four words there are just a few holdouts. Two of these holdouts can each be pronounced two different ways. When pronounced one way, they are holdouts. When pronounced the other way, they are instances. These two only apparent holdouts are:

--	--

[Figure2]

3. Four of the other true holdouts have [ē] spelled by an <ei> that does not come after <c>. These four holdouts are:

--	--	--	--

[Figure3]

4. The last of the five true holdouts has [ē] spelled <ie> after <c>. It is:

--

[Figure4]

Review (Answers)

1.

	Instances of the Rule
Case 1: [ē] = <ei> not after <c>	<i>ceiling</i> <i>conceit</i> <i>conceive</i> <i>deceit</i> <i>deceiving</i> <i>perceives</i> <i>receipt</i> <i>receiver</i>
Case 2: [ē] = <ie> not after <c>	<i>allergies</i> <i>believe</i> <i>calorie</i> <i>collie</i> <i>fallacies</i> <i>field</i> <i>galleries</i> <i>grief</i> <i>hurried</i> <i>hygiene</i> <i>married</i> <i>movies</i> <i>niece</i> <i>prairie</i> <i>priest</i> <i>relief</i> <i>shriek</i> <i>studied</i> <i>thief</i> <i>varies</i> <i>yielding</i>
Case 3: [ā] = <ei>	<i>eight</i> <i>freight</i> <i>heir</i> <i>neighbor</i> <i>reign</i> <i>reindeer</i> <i>sleigh</i> <i>surveillance</i> <i>their</i> <i>veil</i> <i>vein</i> <i>weigh</i> <i>weight</i>
Case 4: [ɪ] at the end of free stems = <ie>	<i>allies</i> <i>dignified</i> <i>dried</i> <i>magpie</i> <i>qualified</i> <i>skies</i> <i>underlie</i> <i>untie</i>
Case 5: [ɪ] at the beginning or in the middle of stems = <ei>	<i>eiderdown</i> <i>feisty</i> <i>height</i> <i>kaleidoscope</i> <i>poltergeist</i> <i>seismic</i> <i>sleight</i>

2.

either neither

3.

leisure protein seize weird

4.

financier

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