

[n] Spelled

CK-12 English

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[n] Spelled <gn>

[n] spelled <gn> usually involving "sign" or "reign"

[n] Spelled <gn>



[Figure1]

The sound [n] is also spelled <gn> in the word *reign*, as in “The king reigned for fifty years.” *Reign* comes from the Latin word *regnum*, which meant “the power of a king” and in which the <g> was pronounced.

But [n] is also spelled <gn> in *sovereign* and *foreign*, which come from the Latin words *superanus* and *foranus*, with no <g>s. So why are there <g>s in *sovereign* and *foreign*? Long ago people decided that *sovereign* and *foreign* must have come from the word *reign*. So they changed the spelling to make the three words look more alike.

Examples

There are several English words in which [n] is spelled <gn>. Many of them come from the Latin word *signum*, which meant “mark, sign.”

sign assign consign design resign ensign

Review

Five of the six words below all contain a prefix plus the free base *sign*. Write each of these five words in the table below and analyze each one into prefix and base, showing any [assimilation](#) that occurs. (The prefix *en-* in *ensign* is the French form of the prefix *in-*, “in, into.”)

sign assign consign design resign ensign

Word	= Analysis
1.	=
2.	=
3.	=
4.	=
5.	=

Very often when you add suffixes to these *sign* words, you can hear the <g>. Analyze each one as instructed. Then in the right column write down whether or not you can hear the <g> in the word in the left column.

Word	= Analysis	Do you pronounce the <g>?
6. signal	= Free base + suffix =	
7. resignation	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
8. designate	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
9. insignia	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
10. signature	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
11. signing	= Free base + suffix =	
12. designer	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
13. resignation	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
14. unsigned	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
15. consignment	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
16. assigns	= Prefix + free base + suffix =	
17. signify	= Free base + suffix =	
18. signet	= Free base + suffix =	

19. In *design* and other words with the base *sign*, [n] is spelled _____.

20. And [n] is also spelled <gn> in the words _____, _____, and _____.

Review (Answers)

Word	= Analysis
1. <i>assign</i>	= a <i>dj</i> + s + <i>sign</i>
2. <i>consign</i>	= co <i>m</i> + n + <i>sign</i>
3. <i>design</i>	= de + <i>sign</i>
4. <i>resign</i>	= re + <i>sign</i>
5. <i>ensign</i>	= en + <i>sign</i>

Word	= Analysis	Do you pronounce the <g>?
6. signal	= Free base + suffix = <i>sign</i> + <i>al</i>	Yes
7. resignation	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>re</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>ation</i>	Yes
8. designate	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>de</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>ate</i>	Yes
9. insignia	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>in</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>ia</i>	Yes
10. signature	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>sign</i> + <i>ature</i>	Yes
11. signing	= Free base + suffix = <i>sign</i> + <i>ing</i>	No
12. designer	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>de</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>er</i>	No
13. resignation	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>re</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>ation</i>	Yes
14. unsigned	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>un</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>ed</i>	No
15. consignment	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>co</i> <i>mn</i> + <i>n</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>ment</i>	No
16. assigns	= Prefix + free base + suffix = <i>a</i> <i>dy</i> + <i>s</i> + <i>sign</i> + <i>s</i>	No
17. signify	= Free base + suffix = <i>sign</i> + <i>ify</i>	Yes
18. signet	= Free base + suffix = <i>sign</i> + <i>et</i>	Yes

19. In *design* and other words with the base *sign*, [n] is spelled <gn>.

20. And [n] is also spelled <gn> in the words reign, sovereign, and foreign.

1.0 REFERENCES

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