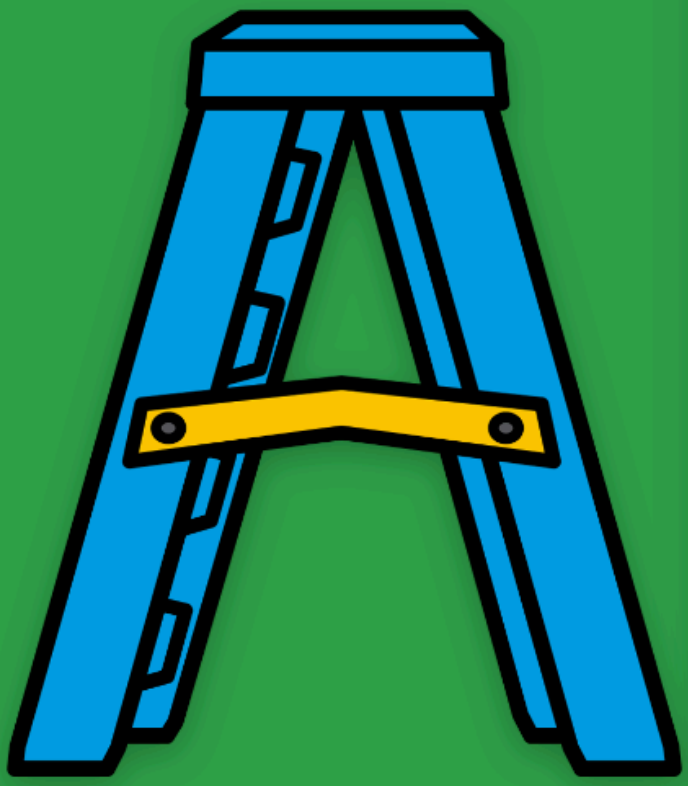
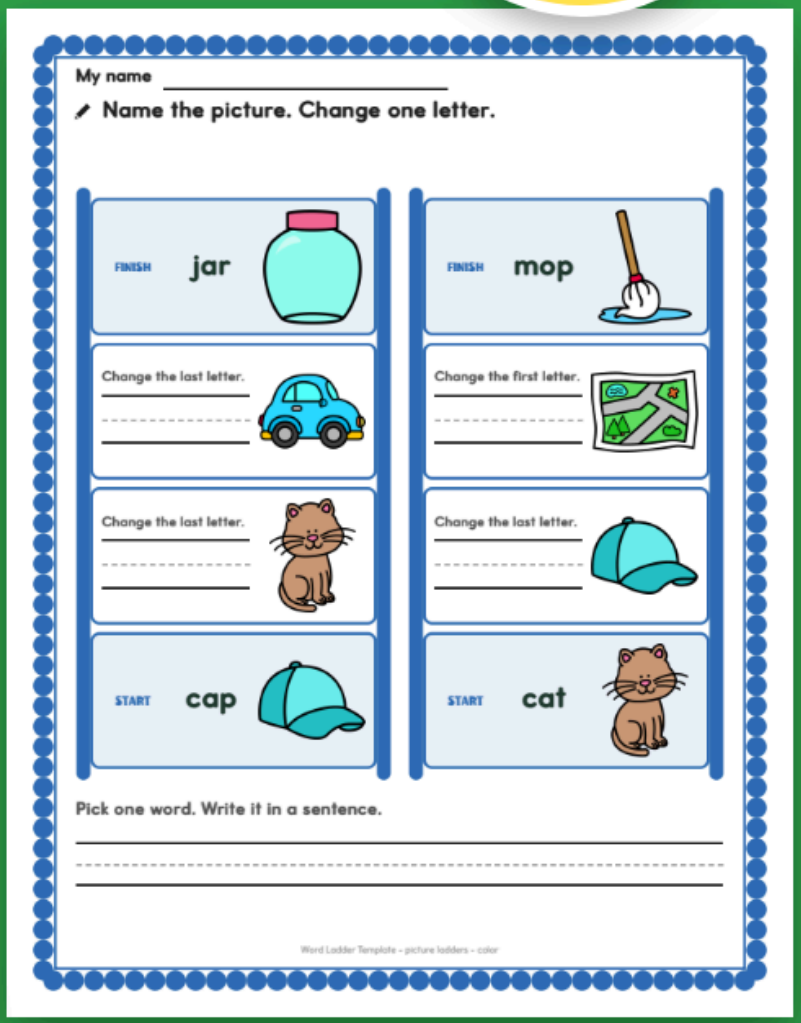
WORD LADDER TEMPLATE

GRADES 1-3

24 LADDERS





Bright Path Sped

Start Here

Word Ladder Template: blank ladders and clue ladders, grades 1-3

Quick start

1. Read the poster and the finished example together.
2. Hand out a ladder at each child's level, or a blank ladder with your own words.
3. Check each step with the answer key (pages 39–40): one letter changes, and the word is real.

What's inside

Activity	Pages	Level
How it works: a three-rung picture ladder and three steps	3	–
A finished example: 5 rungs with a clue, every step marked	4	–
Blank ladders: two with 4 rungs, two with 5 rungs, one with 6 and one with 7 (the long ones have a clue line on every rung)	5–8	any level
Letter-box ladders: 4 ladders, START and FINISH given, boxes for the words between	9, 10	starting
Picture ladders: 4 ladders, a picture on every rung	11, 12	starting
Clue ladders, 5 rungs: 4 ladders with a clue and the letter to change	13, 14	building
Clue ladders, 6 and 7 rungs: a clue only, no hint about which letter	15, 16	ready for more
Cut-and-glue clue ladders: 2 ladders, 12 cut words	17–19	building
Fix the broken rung: 2 ladders, one rung changed two letters	20	ready for more
Ink-saver, black-and-white copies of every student page above	21–38	line art
Answer key, two pages	39, 40	–

How to use it

- A word ladder is a chain of real words. The child starts at the bottom and changes **one letter** on every step to climb to the FINISH word at the top. Begin with the poster (page 3) and the finished example (page 4).
- Three levels, named in the Level column above (student pages carry no level mark, so nobody's paper looks easier or harder): **starting** – letter boxes or a picture on every rung; **building** – a written clue and the letter to change; **ready for more** – a clue only, or find the broken rung.
- The blank ladders (pages 5–8) are for your own words. Write a START and FINISH word and let the children find the way, or fill in every rung and have children write the clues. The answer key shows how to check a chain.
- The cutting page (19) has pieces edge to edge, so each cut is one straight line.
- Print in color, or use the ink-saver copies on pages 21–38.

Good to know

Every chain on the picture, clue, cut-and-glue and fix pages was checked in code: each step changes exactly one letter, no word repeats, and every word is a common short word. The letter-box and blank ladders accept any real word that follows the rule, so the key lists one way through, not the only way. Every clue is invented.

Our class ladder words: _____

PREVIEW

Preview - Bright Path Sped

My name _____

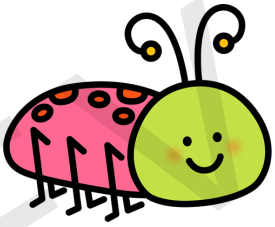
Read the ladder. Point to each rung.

How a Word Ladder Works

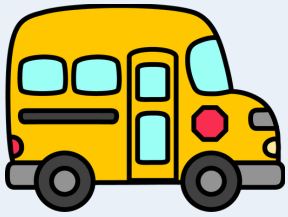
FINISH **bag**



1 **bug**



START **bus**



1. Read the START word at the bottom.
2. Change ONE letter. Make a new word.
3. Climb up to FINISH.

Look

bus to bug: s to g

bug to bag: u to a

Only one letter changes each time.

Change one letter. Make a real word.

Read the ladder out loud, from START up to FINISH.

PREVIEW

Preview - Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Start at the bottom. Change one letter.

FINISH

2

1

START

FINISH

2

1

START

PREVIEW

Words I tried

Preview - Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Climb up. Write a clue for each rung.

FINISH

Clue

4

Clue

3

Clue

2

Clue

1

Clue

START

Clue

PREVIEW

Preview - Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Change one letter. Fill the boxes.

FINISH	p	e	t
3			
2			
1			
START	c	u	p

FINISH	z	i	p
3			
2			
1			
START	d	o	t

PREVIEW

Write a sentence with a FINISH word.

Preview - Bright Path Shed

My name _____

Name the picture. Change one letter.

FINISH **jar**



Change the last letter.

_____

_____

_____

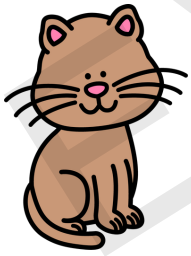


Change the last letter.

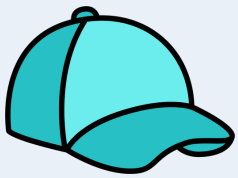
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START **cap**



FINISH **mop**

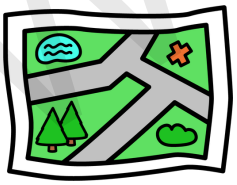


Change the first letter.

_____

_____

_____

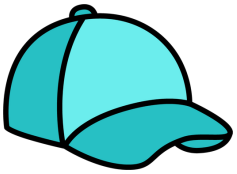


Change the last letter.

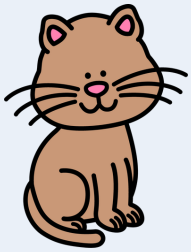
_____

_____

_____



START **cat**



Pick one word. Write it in a sentence.

_____

_____

_____

PREVIEW

Preview : Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Read the clue. Change one letter.

FINISH **fin**

3 Change the first letter.
A happy time at the park.

2 Change the first letter.
It shines in the sky.

1 Change the last letter.
The bread for a hot dog.

START **bus**

FINISH **lid**

3 Change the first letter.
A part of your mouth.

2 Change the middle letter.
The point at the end of a pencil.

1 Change the middle letter.
Turn it on to get water.

START **top**

PREVIEW

Pick one word. Write it in a sentence.

Preview - Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Read the clue. Write the word.

FINISH **nest**

5 You take it at school to show what you know. _____ _____ _____

4 You sleep in it when you camp. _____ _____ _____

3 Not straight. A ___ stick. _____ _____ _____

2 Curve your knee. _____ _____ _____

1 A group that plays music. _____ _____ _____

START **sand**

PREVIEW

Preview - Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Read the clue. Glue the word.

6 Change the middle letter.
It shows where places are.

5 Change the first letter.
You clean the floor with it.

4 Change the last letter.
The sound a balloon makes.

3 Change the middle letter.
You cook soup in it.

2 Change the last letter.
A big hole in the ground.

1 **Start: a farm animal that says oink.**

The words are on page 19. Glue from the bottom up.

PREVIEW

Preview - Bright Path Sped

My name _____

One rung is wrong. Circle it. Fix it.

FINISH	net
	pet
	pit
	pan
START	fan

FINISH	nest
	best
	belt
	bend
START	band

PREVIEW

Wrong word: _____

Fix it: _____

Wrong word: _____

Fix it: _____

Write a sentence with a fixed word.

_____

_____

_____

My name _____

Look at the finished ladder.

A finished ladder. The work is already done.

FINISH — **bag**

3 — **rag**
A scrap of cloth for cleaning.

2 — **rug**
A soft mat on the floor.

1 — **mug**
You drink cocoa from it.

START — **mud**

Step 4
rag to bag
r to b

Step 3
rug to rag
u to a

Step 2
mug to rug
m to r

Step 1
mud to mug
d to g

Read it up: mud, mug, rug, rag, bag
5 rungs, 4 steps, one letter each time.

PREVIEW

Preview · Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Climb up. Write a clue for each rung.

FINISH		Clue		
4		Clue		
3		Clue		
2		Clue		
1		Clue		
START		Clue		

PREVIEW

My name _____

Change one letter. Fill the boxes.

FINISH	p	e	t
3			
2			
1			
START	c	u	p

FINISH	z	i	p
3			
2			
1			
START	d	o	t

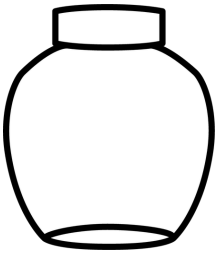
PREVIEW

Write a sentence with a FINISH word.

My name _____

Name the picture. Change one letter.

FINISH **jar**



Change the last letter.

_____

_____

_____



Change the last letter.

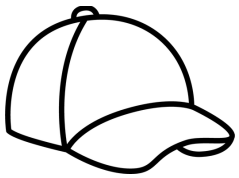
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START **cap**



FINISH **mop**

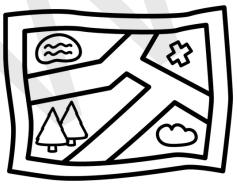


Change the first letter.

_____

_____

_____

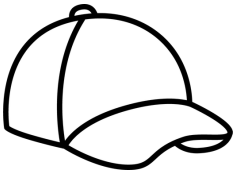


Change the last letter.

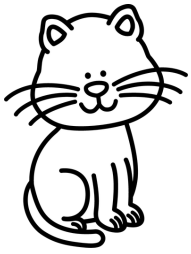
_____

_____

_____



START **cat**



Pick one word. Write it in a sentence.

_____

_____

_____

PREVIEW

My name _____

Read the clue. Change one letter.

FINISH **pig**

3 Change the middle letter.
A sharp little tool for holding cloth.

2 Change the middle letter.
You cook eggs in it.

1 Change the first letter.
You write with it. It has ink.

START **ten**

FINISH **hop**

3 Change the middle letter.
The opposite of cold.

2 Change the first letter.
A tiny house made of sticks.

1 Change the middle letter.
What you do with scissors.

START **cat**

Pick one word. Write it in a sentence.

PREVIEW

Preview · Bright Path Sped

My name _____

Read the clue. Write the word.

FINISH **nest**

5 You take it at school to show what you know.

4 You sleep in it when you camp.

3 Not straight. A ___ stick.

2 Curve your knee.

1 A group that plays music.

START **sand**

PREVIEW

My name _____

Read the clue. Glue the word.

6 Change the middle letter.
It shows where places are.

5 Change the first letter.
You clean the floor with it.

4 Change the last letter.
The sound a balloon makes.

3 Change the middle letter.
You cook soup in it.

2 Change the last letter.
A big hole in the ground.

1 **Start: a farm animal that says oink.**

The words are on page 37. Glue from the bottom up.

PREVIEW

My name _____

One rung is wrong. Circle it. Fix it.

FINISH	net
	pet
	pit
	pan
START	fan

FINISH	nest
	best
	belt
	bend
START	band

PREVIEW

Wrong word: _____

Fix it: _____

Wrong word: _____

Fix it: _____

Write a sentence with a fixed word.

_____

_____

_____

Answer Key (2 of 2)

Pages 9 and 10: letter-box ladders

Many chains work. These are the shortest ways through (4 steps; no shorter way exists in this pack's word list). Accept any chain where every rung is a real word and every step changes one letter.

Page 9: cup to cap to cat to pat to pet
Page 9: dot to dog to dig to dip to zip
Page 10: band to bend to bent to best to nest
Page 10: flop to flip to clip to chip to chin

Page 20: fix the broken rung

Ladder 1: shown fan to pan to pit to pet to net. The wrong rung is **pit** (pan to pit changes two letters). Words that fit: **pat, pen**. The original ladder: fan to pan to pat to pet to net.
Ladder 2: shown band to bend to belt to best to nest. The wrong rung is **belt** (bend to belt changes two letters). Words that fit: **bent**. The original ladder: band to bend to bent to best to nest.

Pages 5 to 8: blank ladders

Answers vary. To check a ladder, read it from START to FINISH: (1) is every rung a real word? (2) does every step change exactly one letter, and only one? (3) does any word repeat? Ask the child to say which letter changed on each step.

Ideas for your own ladders

- Start with a word the child can read, then choose a FINISH word with the same number of letters.
- Keep to words your class has already practiced.
- Have children trade blank ladders with a partner and write clues for each other (pages 7 and 8).

Every clue and ladder in this pack is invented.

PREVIEW