Base Word Detectives

Spot when a suffix changes the base word's spelling.

5.2.A.iv "decoding words using advanced knowledge of the influence of prefixes and suffixes on base words; and"

NAME _____ DATE _____

BASE SPELLING CHANGES

When you add a suffix, the base word's spelling changes. A final e may drop, a y may change to i, or a final consonant may double.

funnier

BASE SPELLING STAYS

When you add a suffix, the base word's spelling stays the same. Read the base word, then read the suffix.

graceful

1 SORT

8 items

For each word, circle CHANGES if the suffix changes the base word's spelling or STAYS if it does not.

1.	writable	CHANGES	STAYS
2.	kindness	CHANGES	STAYS
3.	carried	CHANGES	STAYS
4.	swimmer	CHANGES	STAYS
5.	slowly	CHANGES	STAYS
6.	fearful	CHANGES	STAYS
7.	biggest	CHANGES	STAYS
8.	payment	CHANGES	STAYS

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new word for CHANGES and one new word for STAYS.

CHANGES _____

STAYS _____

CHALLENGE

Write a word with both a prefix and a suffix. Name the prefix, base word, and suffix, then explain whether the suffix changes the base word's spelling.

ANSWER KEY # Base Word Detectives

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	writable	**CHANGES**	write + -able drops the final e.
2	kindness	**STAYS**	kind + -ness keeps the spelling of kind.
3	carried	**CHANGES**	carry + -ed changes y to i.
4	swimmer	**CHANGES**	swim + -er doubles the final m.
5	slowly	**STAYS**	slow + -ly keeps the spelling of slow.
6	fearful	**STAYS**	fear + -ful keeps the spelling of fear.
7	biggest	**CHANGES**	big + -est doubles the final g.
8	payment	**STAYS**	pay + -ment keeps the spelling of pay.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **CHANGES**: hoping
- **STAYS**: playful

Challenge: Unhappily has prefix un-, base happy, and suffix -ly. The suffix changes the y in happy to i.

Part 2 responses should identify the base word and suffix and accurately describe the spelling change or lack of change. Part 3 sample words: hoping is hope + -ing, with the final e dropped, and playful is play + -ful, with the base spelling unchanged.