**Tricky Verbs**

**Objectives**

In this mini-lesson, students will:
- Identify tricky verbs.
- Brainstorm tricky verbs.
- Write sentences using tricky verbs.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**
- Chart paper and markers
- Tricky Verbs (BLM 3)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

**Advanced Preparation**
If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text, the Tricky Verbs anchor chart, and the practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. If necessary, draw a two-column chart on chart paper for the “Strategies to Support ELs” activity.

**1. Focus**

**Explain Tricky Verbs**

*Say:* Some verbs in English are hard to remember. Tricky verbs often have irregular spellings in the past tense, such as *to sink* or *to lie*. When do you use *sink* or *sank*? When do you use *lie* or *lay*? The verbs *to lie* and *to lay* give most of us trouble. Like other tricky verbs, the correct use of them may not sound right to us. One way to think about these verbs is that *lie* is something a person does. Today, I lie down. Yesterday, I lay down. But the verb *to lay* is an action done to an object: Today, I lay the book down. Yesterday, I laid the book down. Like *lie* and *lay*, most of these verbs are irregular. There’s no easy way to figure them out. We just have to memorize their forms and uses. Let’s look at some more tricky verbs.

**Model Using Tricky Verbs**

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources, and read it aloud to students.

What would I do if it sank? I don’t remember how many days the boat trip took.

**Modeling Text**

*Say:* Sank and took are both tricky verbs. Sank is the past tense form of sink. Took is the past tense form of take. Neither of these verbs follows any pattern for forming the past tense; you just have to memorize their spellings.

Begin an anchor chart for tricky verbs that students can add to during the practice part of the lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sink</td>
<td>sank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>took</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie</td>
<td>laid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lay</td>
<td>knew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td>flew</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Tricky Verbs Anchor Chart**
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Tricky Verbs

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sing</th>
<th>drink</th>
<th>drive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bring</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>choose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ask students to work with a partner to determine which verbs are tricky verbs.

Invite partners to choose two tricky verbs. Ask them to use both the present tense and past tense of these two verbs in written sentences.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Sentences with Tricky Verbs

Invite volunteers to share their sentences with the class. Make note of student pairs who struggle with this activity. Use this information to plan further instruction.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that the spellings of some verbs in the past tense are unusual, or tricky. They don’t follow any rules. You have to learn and memorize them. As you write your memoir, be aware of verbs that you find tricky and be sure to use the correct forms.

If you would like to give students additional practice using tricky verbs, have them complete BLM 3.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud their answers to BLM 3. Use students’ answers to provide corrective feedback.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Beginning ELs will need significant support to learn tricky verbs in the past tense. Concentrate on one or two very common verbs that they need to use in oral language (e.g., see/saw; eat/ate). Create a two-column chart with the column heads “Present” and “Past” and write the present and past tense of these verbs in the appropriate columns. Read the words with students and use them in sentences as you pantomime actions to build understanding. For example:

I see the students today.
I saw the students yesterday.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers to develop sentences. Make sure that students understand the meaning of each word before they begin the activity.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: past/el pasado; verb/el verbo.