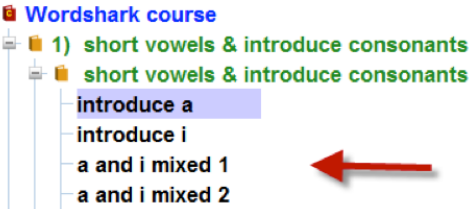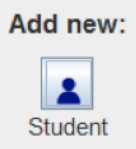# FOR HOME – tips for home use

By 'parent' we mean any responsible person who is helping a student to use *Wordshark* at home. Detailed instructions are available under the separate PDFs and video tutorials.

## Setting Up – A Brief Summary

| | |
|---|---|
| **1** Make sure you are a Wordshark administrator.<br><br>(A list of administrators is available under Users. If a child has become the administrator and has forgotten his/her password, contact tech support if you have problems.) | **5** Choose a word list<br><br>Change word list<br><br>Word list titles in black<br><br>Wordshark course<br>1) short vowels & introduce consonants<br>short vowels & introduce consonants<br>introduce a<br>introduce i<br>a and i mixed 1<br>a and i mixed 2<br><br>If you are not sure which list to use – see next page. |
| **2** Add your students/children using *Admin* in the menu by clicking on:<br><br>Add new:<br>Student | **6** Choose a game<br><br>Choose game |
| **3** Use the Wordshark **course** for work on spelling.<br><br>**4** Click on *Help* in the menu if you need:<br>• videos in the drop down menu<br>• instructions that come up with each game. | **10-15 minutes 2-3 times a week is suggested as helpful. Younger children may need more frequent but shorter sessions.** |

## Which course to choose and where to start

- The *Wordshark course* is recommended for work on spelling. There is a *Test* that can suggest a starting point for this course.
  For more information see the PDF **'Which word list to start with - using Test '** under the section called **'The words'**.
- If you want a list with a particular spelling, for example *sh* just click on *Search* in the menu and type in *sh* and select a list that meets your needs.

## Working through the course

- Once you have found a sensible starting point, it is important to keep up a good pace. Move to the next list when you are getting all the spellings correct or with just one or two mistakes on the current list.
- If you come to lists that are too easy then move on straight away.
- Always include a good number of spelling games and include revision lists – they refresh the words each game.

## Adding your own lists (for spelling homework etc)

- A great way to practise your child's weekly spelling list – find under *Actions*.
- There is a short video under *Help*.
- Have 10 words or fewer (so that games aren't too long)
- Check there are no typing errors!!
- You can play many games with your list – and also print out a word search
- It can be great fun also to add your own recordings and pictures

**Other suggestions for your own word lists**
- A subject reflecting your child's interests
- Words that they need for their reading and writing and that they can be encouraged to practise, words that they have a tendency to get wrong.

## Keeping the program interesting

A good guide is to keep sessions simple at first then add new things:

- Start with just a small number of games then add to the selection
- Change the sprite under your personal settings *Settings for (name)* in the menu – the sprite is 'you' in the games
- Change *Options* – for example change the look of the maze – top left of screen in many games
- Don't forget about adjusting the speed
- Add your own icon under *Settings* – for when you sign on
- Change other personal settings for example choosing your favourite reward games
- Create your own lists under *Actions* and add your own recordings and pictures
- Try *Co-operative play* where 2 users are signed on and take turns

See the PDF 'Tailoring the program' if you want to get the best from the program for particular groups of children. This includes tips for use with younger children, for teenagers, for able spellers, for those with dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD, ADHD or Scotopic Sensitivity.

## Checking what your child has worked on

If you want to see a record of your child's use of the program (including any incomplete games and errors), click on *Admin\Add and manage students and staff* then select your child's name and click on *View*.
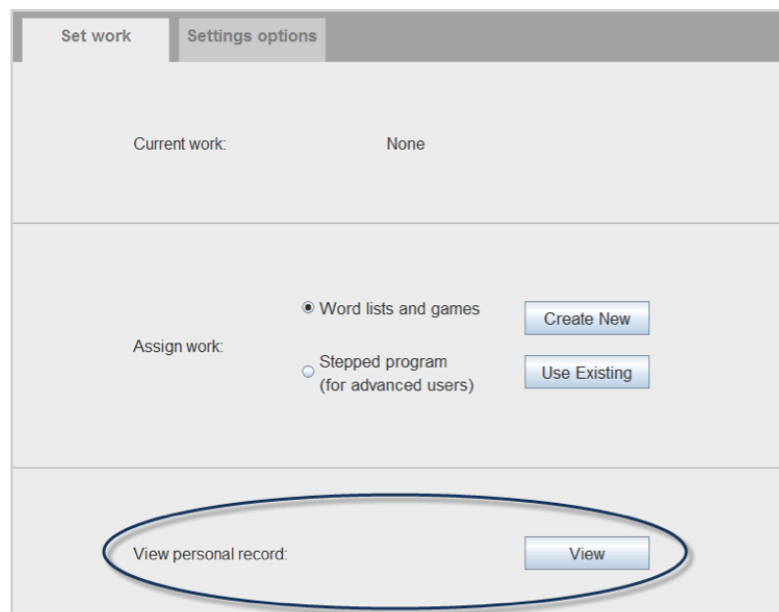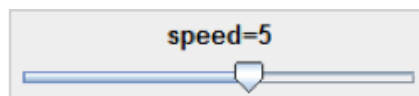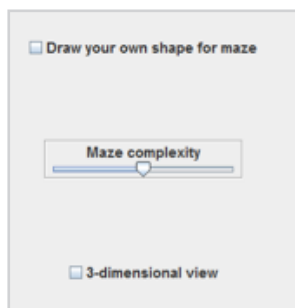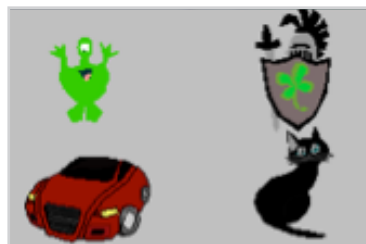
## Maintaining progress

Keep an eye on progress. When left alone, some children may make little gains from the program because they go back to a very simple list, and may play favourite games repetitively. They need to be encouraged to try a variety of games – spelling as well as reading.

When making only 1 or 2 spelling errors in a list – move to the next list. If the next list is known – miss it out. In other words, it's important that word lists **always** set the right challenge for the student.