

#### 4.4 Noun Pluralization and Spelling: F-Endings

**key words:** spelling, nouns, suffixes, morphology

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.2f Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., *word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts*) in writing words.

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/3/2/f>

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.2d Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/4/2/d>

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.2e Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/5/2/e>

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1. Give the plural forms of these words.

chief

belief

giraffe

cuff

safe

Write a rule to describe the spelling pattern. "When the word ends in \_\_, then you \_\_\_."

2. Now consider these words and give their plural forms.

wolf

life

elf

self

knife

leaf

Write a rule to describe the spelling pattern of these words.

3. Give the plural forms of these words.

roof

hoof

scarf

wharf

dwarf

Is there more than one way to correctly spell these words? Discuss what you find here.

[Teacher Notes: The words in (3) have two standard spellings, either with just –s or with –ves replacing the –f. Students may wonder why we change those <f>s to <v>s. because in Old English the vowel before the final "s" was pronounced and a rule of Old English was that when a fricative sound like /f/ came between "voiced" vowel sounds, it too became voiced (produced with vocal cord vibration). So, for example, the plural of *wulf* meaning 'wolf' was [wulvas] phonetically, though it would be spelled 'wulfas.' So our current state of pluralization of words that end in /f/ illustrates the conflict between our natural phonological rule of pluralization (just add –s) and the influence of spelling on pronunciation. ]