Initial s Blends

Getting Ready
Write the words scale, skin, sled, smog, snap, spot, stove, and swan on chart paper. Remind students that blends are two or three consonants that are blended together. Ask several volunteers to circle the initial blends sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, and sw. Encourage students to share their observations about the blends. How are these blends the same and different? [The first letter is s in all the blends; the second letter varies.] Read the words, emphasizing the two consonant sounds heard in each blend. Have students read the words.

Show students the green Reading Rods® with sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, and sw. Tell them that they will be creating words with these blends in this activity.

Exploring the Concept
Inform students that they will begin the activity by spelling two words, sell and smell. Have them listen to the beginning sounds as you say the words in parts: /s/ /ell/ and /sm/ /ell/.

Assist students as they connect the blue s rod and the yellow ell rod to spell sell. Then help them connect the green sm rod and the ell rod to spell smell. Make sure they understand that there is one letter sound at the beginning of sell [/s/] and two letters sounds at the beginning of smell [/s/m/].

After students have formed sell and smell, write the words on the chalkboard. Ask students to check the spelling of the words they built. Distribute copies of Blackline Master 1 and have students record the words on word cards. Repeat this procedure until they have built and recorded all of the following words:

- sell, smell, spell, swell
- sack, snack, slack
- sold, scold
- sing, swing, sting
- sip, skip, slip
- sore, score, snore
- sit, skit, spit
- sock, smock, stock

Ask students to read aloud the words on their word cards. Compare the pronunciations of the words. What do you notice about the beginning sounds? [Some words begin with one sound; some words begin with two sounds that are blended together.] Have students...
share other observations about the words. Encourage them to think of ways to sort the words, such as the following:

- rhyming words [sold, scold; sing, swing, sting; and so on]
- words beginning with a single consonant [sack, sell, sing, sip, sit, sock, sold, sore]
- words beginning with a blend [scold, swing, and so on]
- sc words [scold, score]
- sk words [skip, skit]
- sl words [slack, slip]
- sm words [smell, smock]
- sn words [snack, snore]
- sp words [spell, spit]
- st words [sting, stock]
- sw words [swell, swing]

Write their sorts on the chalkboard or on chart paper for everyone to see. Challenge students to add as many s-blend words as possible to each category on the chalkboard.

Assessing Understanding

Choose three new words with an initial s blend, such as store, snip, and swoop. Say the words slowly in parts. Have students build the words with their Reading Rods. Observe their strategies as they spell the two sounds in the blends. Ask them to explain their spelling strategies.

Extending the Activity

Blends with s Display page 8 of Phonics Word-Building Kit Flipbook 1 and the listed Reading Rods in a language arts center for independent practice. Use the activity to give students additional practice with s blends. Encourage them to share their words with a friend.

Making Words: Spelling s Blend Words Ask students to find the letters s, s, l, l, t, m, e, and a. Tell them they are going to spell several words with these letters. Have them record the words. Ask them to spell the two-letter word at. Have them add or change letters to build all, tall, tell, sell, smell, small, stall, and stale. Challenge them to use all the letters to form a word. [smallest] When they are done, sort the s-blend words together. [smell, small smallest; stall, stale]