

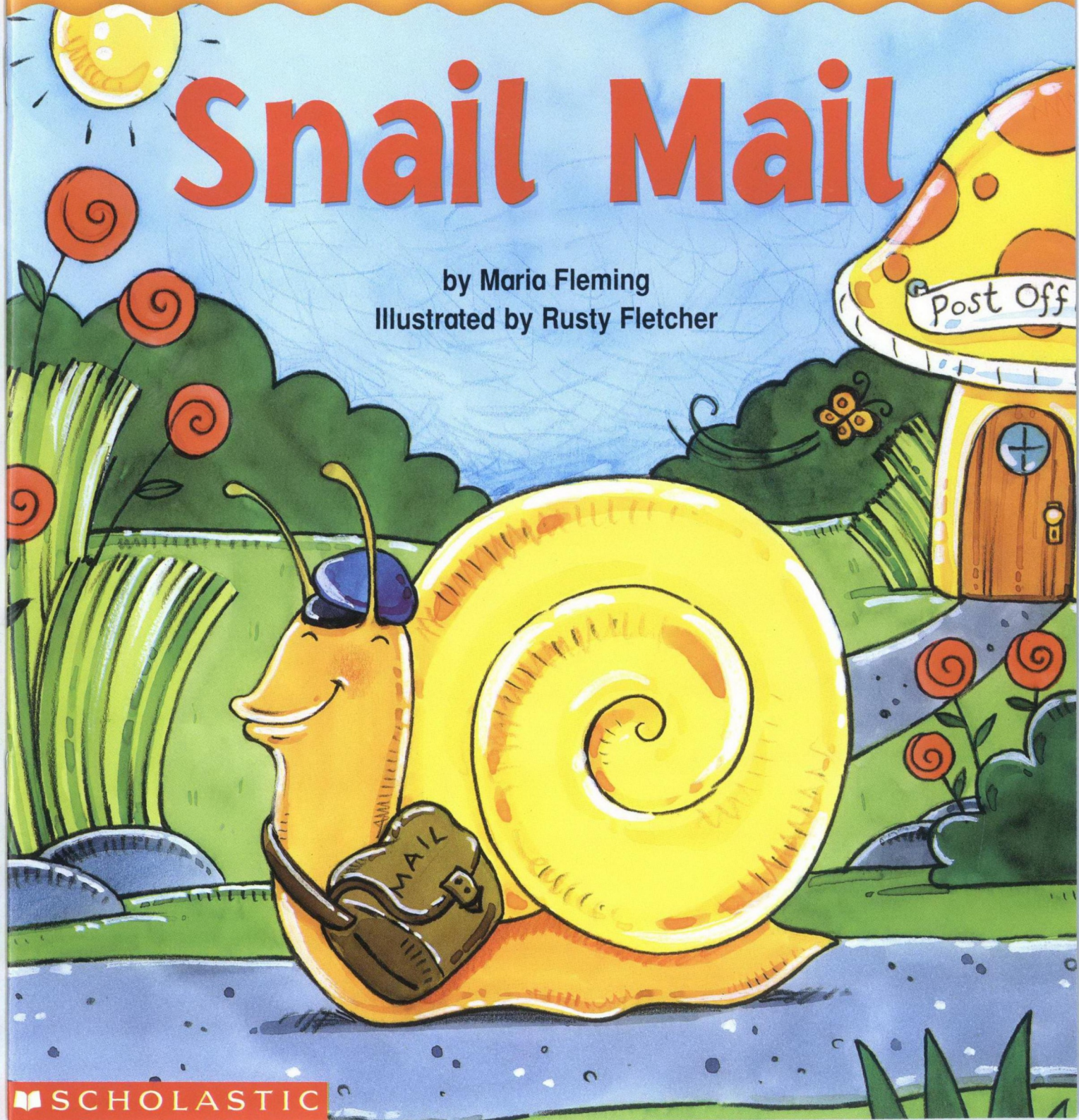
WORD FAMILY TALES™



-ail

Snail Mail

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Illustrated by Rusty Fletcher





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Snail loves his job delivering the mail.
Through rain, sleet, snow, and hail,
Snail delivers the mail without fail!



Snail follows a trail through the forest as he brings letters to all the animals.



There's just one problem. Snail is slow.
Very . . . very . . . very slow. And the mail is
always late. Very late.



One day, Snail delivers a birthday card to Quail...



“I didn’t know today was your birthday!”
Snail says cheerfully.
“It isn’t,” Quail huffs. “My birthday was
three months ago! Snail, you are late
with the mail again!”



Snail feels terrible about the late card. He slides sadly along the trail. Finally, he reaches Frog's pond.



“I have a postcard from your aunt,” Snail says.

“When is she getting back from vacation?”

“She’s been back for five months!”

Frog croaks. “Snail, you are late with the mail again!”



Snail hates being late. He starts to wail.
“I am the worst mail snail that ever lived!”
he cries. Snail cries so hard, his tears
make a little stream.



The stream of tears gives Snail an idea!
Snail finds an old pail. He adds pail after pail
of water from the pond to make his stream.
Soon the stream becomes a river.



Snail pulls a leaf from a plant.
“This will make a perfect sail for a boat!”



Next, Snail finds a fat twig. “Now I just need to attach the sail to this twig!”



Then Snail borrows a hammer and a nail from Frog. He nails the sail in place.



Snail climbs aboard his new boat. Now he can sail down the trail with the mail!
“I’ll never be late with the mail again!”
Snail says happily. And he isn’t—not even when it hails!

-ail

Word Family Riddles

Listen to the riddle sentences. Add the right letter or letters to the -ail sound to finish each one.

- 1 Let's walk along the nature ____ail.
- 2 You can put the water in a ____ail.
- 3 I need a hammer and a ____ail.
- 4 The big storm brought rain and ____ail.
- 5 The cute little puppy wags its ____ail.





- 6 "I move slowly," said the ___ail.
- 7 You might receive a postcard or a letter in the ___ail.
- 8 The boat will move faster if you raise the ___ail.
- 9 I like trains. I love to travel by ___ail.
- 10 If water comes into your boat, use a bucket to ___ail it out.

Now make up some new riddle sentences using -ail



-ail Cheer

Give a great holler, a cheer, a yell
For all of the words that we can spell
With an A, I, and L that make the sound **-ail**,
You'll find it in **pail** and **snail** and **tail**.
Three little letters, that's all that we need
To make a whole family of words to read!








Make a list
of other **-ail**
words. Then
use them in
the cheer!



Reading Tips

-ail

Here are some quick and fun ways to use this story to help children learn the word family -ail.

-  Explain to children that you are going to read a story that has many words with the -ail sound, made by the letters A, I, and L. All these words belong to a group called a word family.
-  Ask children to find the -ail word ending at the top of the front cover. Review aloud with children the sound these three letters make together. Can they find two words in the title with the -ail sound?
-  Flip over the book and read the story summary on the back cover. Ask children to point out the words they hear with the -ail sound. Explain that the story you are about to read includes many more words that end in -ail. Can they help you find them?
-  Read aloud the story once for pleasure and enjoy the whimsical illustrations. Then reread the book, emphasizing the -ail word ending in the appropriate words. Ask children to listen closely and identify all the words that end in -ail (they might raise their hand or clap when they hear one, or you might choose a volunteer to point to the word on the page). As they do so, make a list on chart paper of all the -ail words.
-  Write each of the words from your list on an unlined index card. Use a different color for -ail than the rest of the word. Read each word on the cards with children. On another reading of the story, distribute the cards to children and have them hold up their card as their word is read.
-  Pages 14–15 of the book feature 10 riddles with answers that require a word ending in -ail. Read each riddle aloud and have children volunteer answers.
-  Read aloud the cheer on page 16 several times, with lots of energy and enthusiasm. Invite children to join you in reciting the cheer when they feel ready (you might even choose a “cheerleader”).

Other words in the -ail family:

ail	detail
bail	hangnail
frail	pigtail
jail	ponytail
nail	thumbnail
rail	toenail
tail	fingernail
airmail	monorail

-ail

Through rain and sleet and snow and hail—

Snail is committed to delivering the mail.

But the problem is his

super-slow pace!

Read and see how

cleverness saves

the day.



WORD FAMILY TALES™ are humorous read-aloud stories created to build early phonics skills by teaching children to recognize “families” of words that share the same spelling pattern. This key reading strategy helps kids decode new words with ease—and become stronger readers, writers, and spellers. Set learners on the path to literacy success with these rib-tickling tales—one for each of the top 25 word families!

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