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# 3

## PHONICS, DECODING, AND WORD RECOGNITION

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## Overview

*"The last decades of reading research have confirmed the primacy of word recognition skills in reading. . . . Rapid word recognition frees up mental resources for thinking about the writer's intent and the meaning of the text rather than what word the print represents" (Roberts, Christo, & Shefelbine, 2011, p. 229).*

Estimates of the number of words in the English language range from 600,000 to over one million. The sheer volume of words that students are expected to read quickly and accurately is daunting: 25,000 distinct words in third grade and over 80,000 different words by the end of eighth grade (Juel & Minden-Cupp, 2004). The ability to identify words, then, is a critical foundation of the reading process (Stanovich, 1991). Although we realize that the meaning of text is much larger than the sum of the meanings of each word, it is important for students to have strategies to recognize words that they do not recognize at sight (Hampton & Resnick, 2009).

There are several strategies students use as they encounter words. One strategy is to recognize words by sight. That means that students see the word and pronounce it immediately. There are many words students read by sight. They don't need to try to figure out the words because they are *sight words*. All proficient readers have a large number of words they can read by sight.

No reader, however, knows all words by sight. When students come to words they don't know by sight, they can figure out the words by one or more of these five ways: 1) decoding, 2) analogy to known spelling patterns, 3) using context clues, 4) using structural analysis, and 5) using a dictionary or glossary.

When students encounter a word they can't pronounce, they could try to figure it out initially by using the sounds symbolized by the letters or letter combinations and then blending those sounds together. For example, if the word *enigmatic* is unknown, the student can give each letter one or more sounds from the variety of sounds the letters symbolize to decode the word, trying various pronunciations in an effort to have the word sound like one that has been heard before.

Not all words can be read using their letter sounds. The word *tough*, for example, cannot be pronounced by its letter sounds. Many words that do not have phonetic spelling have syllables that can be read by analogy to a known spelling pattern. For example, students who have never seen the word *tough* can use what they know about the sound of word part *ough* in the known word *rough* to figure out the word. Many words have at least one part that can be read by analogy.

Phonological recoding and analogy can give students a good sense of an unfamiliar word; however, they need to test the words within the context of the text to see whether they make sense. If students use what they know about letter sounds and spelling patterns and the word makes sense in the context of the text, it is probably correct. Context can help students test words, and it is also useful to assist students in recognizing unknown words. Context clues, therefore, can be an additional way for students to identify words.

**Recognizing words is only part of reading.**

Recognizing words is only part of reading. We all have encountered students who can recognize words in a text without understanding what the text is about. That's because words are actually symbols for concepts. Words don't have a single meaning. They have a range of meanings that are unique to each individual. Everyone has had experience with the word *picnic*. Students may each have a different picture in their minds when they read that word. One may picture an idyllic scene by a lake; another one may picture eating fried chicken on a stoop of an apartment building. No one has the exact same concept of any word because all people's experiences are different.

This chapter is about recognizing words using phonics, word patterns, structural analysis, sight, context, and the dictionary. Many sections in Chapter 2 contain ideas that will also be helpful in developing or strengthening students' word recognition (see especially Sections 2.5, 2.8, 2.9, and 2.10).

## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The strategies in this chapter support and extend the K–5 Reading Foundational Skills #3. You can look in the Common Core document for specific wording related to kindergarten through grade five. Above fifth grade, many of these same skills will be important for readers who struggle with text. The strategies in each section can be used or adapted to fit your needs.

Beginning in kindergarten, students are expected to learn common sounds for consonants (letter-sound associations) and the long and short vowel sounds associated with the five major vowels (*a, e, i, o, u*). Students should also learn high-frequency words by sight. As students progress through the grades, consonant digraphs, inflected endings, syllabication, vowel teams, roots, prefixes and suffixes (affixes) are taught so students will be able to use these skills to accurately read words that are not recognized at sight.

Using a step-by-step approach, this chapter provides strategies and resources to help students learn these skills. You will be given multiple ways to help students learn a particular skill that can be adapted to many of the phonic elements (e.g., consonants, vowels, consonant digraphs) and prefixes, suffixes, and root words for various grade levels. There are also lessons in areas not specifically mentioned in the foundational skills of the Common Core. For example, helping students learn flexible word recognition strategies, contractions, compound words, and how to use context clues and the dictionary will provide them with an even larger repertoire of skills that lead to independence in word recognition so attention can be focused on the many demands to comprehend text.

The list below highlights the sections within Chapter 3 that are related to the Common Core Foundational Skills in Phonics and Word Recognition. The K (kindergarten) or numbers refer to the specific grade level and the letters refer to the specific area within that grade. The K–5 Reading Foundational Skills #3 has the specific wording for each grade level.

### **3.1: Phonics: Consonants**

*(use similar approaches with blends and digraphs)*

Ka, 1a, other grades as needed

### **3.2: Phonics: Vowels**

Kb, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2c, other grades as needed

### **3.3: Word Patterns and Word Building**

Kd, 1b, 2b, other grades as needed

### **3.4: Structural Analysis**

1d, 1e, 1f, 2d, 3a, 3b, 3c, 4a, 5a

### **3.5: High-Frequency Words**

Kc, 1g, 2f, 3d, other grades as needed

### **3.6: Sight Vocabulary**

1g, 2f, 3d, other grades as needed

### **3.7: Using Context to Predict Known Words**

4a, 5a, other grades as needed

### **3.8: Dictionary: Word Pronunciation**

Not mentioned, but applicable to grades 2 and above

### **3.9: Lack of Flexible Word-Recognition Strategies**

3c, 4a, 5a

### **3.10: Ineffective Use of Word-Recognition Strategies**

3c, 4a, 5a



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### Behavior Observed

The student has difficulty associating the sounds that consonants symbolize.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will be able to use the sounds of consonants to phonologically recode unknown words.

# PHONICS: CONSONANTS

## Background

The essence of phonics is to give students a means to associate sounds with letters and letter combinations so students can pronounce a word that is not recognized at sight. If the pronunciation can be related to a word in the students' experiences, there is a connection with meaning. Phonics only helps students read (understand) words for which they already have meaning. For example, if the student sounds *yyy-eeeg* and says *yegg*, but has no meaning for the word, phonics is of little value. Fortunately, however, students have meanings for many words, and if they can decode a word, they are often able to associate meaning with the word, especially in the first few years of school.

Using phonics, or the sounds people assign to letters and letter combinations, is one way students can pronounce unfamiliar words. The value of phonics should not be underestimated.

The value of phonics should not be underestimated.

Phonics is one of the cueing systems readers use for words that are not in their sight vocabulary. Unfortunately, the teaching of phonics has been the topic of controversy for decades. An examination of the research literature concerning phonics instruction by the National Reading Panel (2000) led to the finding that "systematic phonics instruction enhances children's success in learning to read and . . . is significantly more effective than instruction that

teaches little or no phonics" (p. 9). It is our belief that phonics should be an important foundation of a quality reading program, and it should be taught as one of the strategies readers can use when they want to identify an unfamiliar word. In short, phonics is a vital component (along with context and structural analysis) of balanced word recognition.

Although there are 26 letters (graphemes) in the English alphabet, there are (depending on the dialect) forty or more sounds (phonemes). Because the consonants are more regular than the vowels, they are often introduced first. For the 25 consonant sounds listed in the box on the following page (adapted from Gunning, 2010), begin teaching sounds that occur with the highest frequency and that are quite easy for students to say (e.g., sounds for *m*, *r*, and *s*).

The basic teaching strategies and practice and reinforcement activities used for initial consonants can be used with other areas of phonics listed in the Common Core Reading Foundational Skills: final consonants, consonant digraphs (e.g., *ch, gh, kn, ph, sc, si, th, ti, wh, wr*), consonant blends in the initial position (e.g., *bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl, br, cr, dr, fr, sch, sm, sl*), and blends in the final position (e.g., *ld, lf, lk, nce, nk, nt*). Gunning (2001) has developed a useful resource manual for teaching a wide variety of word analysis strategies.

### Letter-Sound Correspondences for Consonants

Sound (Phoneme)	Letter (Grapheme)	Initial/Final	Final	Key Words
/b/	b, bb	barn	ebb, cab, robe	bell, ball
/d/	d, dd, ed	deer	bad	dog
/f/	f, ff, ph, lf, gh	fun, photo	half, laugh	fish
/g/	g, gg, gh	gate, ghost, guide	rag	goat
/h/	h, wh	house, who		horse, hat
/hw/	wh	whale		whale
/j/	g, j, dg	jug, gym, soldier	age, judge	jar
/k/	c, ch, k, ck, q	can, kite, quick, chaos	back, ache	cat, key
/l/	l, ll	lion	mail	leaf
/m/	m, mm, mb, mn	me	him, comb, autumn	monkey, man
/n/	n, nn, kn, gn	now, know, gnu, pneumonia	pan	nest, nail
/p/	p, pn, pp	pot	top	pencil, pen
/r/	r, rr, wr	ride, write		rabbit, ring
/s/	s, c, sc, ss	sight, city, science	bus, miss, face	sun, Santa
/t/	t, tt, ed	time	rat, watt, jumped	table
/v/	v [f in of]	vase	love	valentine, vest
/w/	w	we		wagon
/y/	y, i	yacht, onion		yo-yo
/z/	z, zz, s	zipper	has, buzz	zebra
/ch/	ch, c, ti	chip, cello, question	match	chair
/zh/	z, si, g	azure, version	beige, garage	garage
/th/	th	thin	breath	thumb
/th/	th	this	breathe	the
/sh/	sh, ti, ssi, s, si, sci	ship, sure, chef, action, conscience	push, special, mission	sheep
/ŋ/	ng		sing	ring



## EXPLICIT PHONICS

1. Younger students may need to be told directly that letters have a name and that a sound can also be associated with the letter. Sometimes teachers say that letters make sounds, but that is not correct. Letters do not say anything; however, sounds can be associated with the letters. Begin by teaching letter-sound correspondences in the initial position of the word.
2. Print an uppercase and a lowercase *d* on the board and name words that begin with a *d*. Encourage students to think of names of students in the class or friends whose names begin with a *d*. Pictures and concrete objects can also be used.
3. Record the responses on the board as in the example shown below.

<b>D</b>	<b>d</b>
Don	dad
Dave	duck
Donna	dog
Debbi	door
Dan	down
Dion	deer

4. Ask students to examine each list and note similarities and differences between the words. As the discussion continues, develop the concept that the *d* represents the same sound at the beginning of each word listed on the board. Be direct in connecting a sound with the letter.
5. Say each word on the list while you move your hand under the word. Emphasize the *d* sound distinctly so students can hear it. Have students pronounce each word after you. Help students see that all the words begin with the same letter and that the letter *d* stands for the sound /d-d-d/ heard at the beginning of each word.
6. Invite students to think of other words that begin with the sound associated with *d*. Add these words to the list.
7. Conclude the lesson by asking students to listen while you say some words. If a word begins with the sound associated with *d*, have them raise their hand. If the word begins with a different sound, they should not raise their hand. Use words from the list on the board as well as new words (for instance, *Dave*, *Tom*, *door*, *Marie*, *zoo*, *down*).
8. Refer to the Practice and Reinforcement Activities (page 164) for additional ideas.

## STRATEGY 2

## EAR TO EYE PHONICS

1. Say five or six words and have students listen carefully to hear how each word begins. When you say the sounds, elongate but do not separate the sound associated with the initial consonant, for example, *bbbball*, *bbbat*, and *bbboy*.
2. Ask students what they noticed about the beginning sounds of all the words that you pronounced. The expected response is that they all begin with the same sound.
3. Encourage students to give other words with the same sound that is heard at the beginning of *ball*, *bat*, and *boy*.
4. To provide auditory training, say three words (two that have the same beginning sound and one that is different) and have students say the words that begin alike. Elongate the initial consonant sound in each word. Repeat this procedure several times. Pictures and concrete objects can also be used (box, bear, badge, banana, balloon, beaver). The purpose of this activity is to provide ear training for the sound being taught.
5. Write the letter *b* on the board and make a list of words that begin with *b*. Encourage students to suggest additional words. Explore what all the words have in common. Guide students to realize that words all begin alike when you see them and sound alike at the beginning when you hear them.
6. Use a picture or concrete object to help students associate the sound with the letter. Sometimes the pictures can be put together or arranged to make the shape of the letter that is associated with a particular sound being learned, as shown below.



## STRATEGY 3

## USING ALPHABET BOOKS

1. Secure an alphabet book. Various publishers have colorful, small books for each letter of the alphabet. Choose the page dealing with the consonant being taught (for example, *t*).
2. Read the *T* page aloud: “Tiny Tom told Tim to take a toy.” Tell students that many of the words begin the same way. Then read the page again pointing to each word that begins with *t*.
3. Help students realize that *t* spells the sound heard at the beginning of almost all the words.
4. Secure another alphabet book and read the sentence. Invite students to help identify the *t* words. Relate the words in the two books by writing them on the board or a poster. Then show students that the words begin with *t* and have the *ttt* sound.
5. Invite students to practice by providing cards with words from the alphabet books as well as new words (for example, *tag*). Show the word, cover the *t*, point to the remaining part of the word, and say, “This part of the word says *ag*. Now I’ll uncover the *t*. What is the word?” Guide students as needed and provide additional practice using words such as those below.

tail	tall	take	talk
tape	tank	team	ten
tent	tooth	tongue	toot

Refer to the pictures in the alphabet books whenever possible to keep the focus on the word’s meaning. In addition, use students’ names to help practice the letter-sound relationship being taught.

## STRATEGY 4

## USING WHOLE TEXT

1. Read a story to the class that has words with the consonant sound (or other sound) you wish to emphasize.
2. Write several sentences from the story on sentence strips or the board.
3. Read the sentences to the class and have students echo read each sentence after you.
4. Point to the target words and ask students to read them after you.
5. Ask students to identify the letters in the target words. Then ask them which sound is the same in each word. Have the students make the sound with you. Model as necessary.
6. Reread the sentences emphasizing the targeted sound. Then have students read each sentence after you.
7. Encourage the students to read the sentences and to use the letter sound in their writing.



## STRATEGY 5

## WRITE IT

1. In beginning reading instruction, Heron (2008) has recommended teaching students to write words before reading them. Rather than a focus on decoding, attention is given to encoding or constructing words. Over the course of numerous lessons, use letter cards, letter tiles, magic slates, or a pencil to help students learn to write consonant-vowel-consonant words so that the letters and digraphs that represent the 40 or so sounds (phonemes) in English are mastered. Depending on your class, introduce three or four phonemes a week.
2. Begin by building phoneme (sound) awareness using lessons, strategies, and activities in Chapter 2, Sections 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, and 2.10. Do not focus on counting phonemes but on students' mouth movements in saying words.
3. You might begin the initial lesson by saying something like what follows.

*We have been saying words and paying attention to different sounds and the way our mouths move as we say different words. Today we will learn to write some words using paper and pencil. Listen as I say the word sip. [Say the word and have students repeat it, paying attention to their mouth movements.] Have you ever taken a sip of water? [Demonstrate what it looks like to sip water.] Let's see if we can write the word. Who has an idea of how I might begin writing sip?*

4. Guide students through the process as needed, writing the word on the board. Then segment the word orally and have students repeat after you. Invite a few students to share what they have written.
5. Ask if anyone can think of a word that rhymes with *sip*. If the given word rhymes with *sip* (e.g., *tip*), use it. You might say what follows.

*Yes, you're right. Tip rhymes with sip. Because the words rhyme, they are the same at the end. Only the beginning is different. Let's say the words together. Did you hear a different sound in the beginning? [Clarify and explain as needed.] Let's see if we can write tip. Pay attention to your mouth movement as you begin to say the word. How might we write that sound? [Guide and model as necessary. Have students write the word.]*

6. Depending on student knowledge, other words that rhyme with *tip* and *sip* could also be written by students. See Word Patterns in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website for other words that rhyme with the two written words.
7. Remember that letter tiles, magic slates, and white boards can be used for the lesson to add variety.



## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

The following activities are exemplified with the letter *d* but can be adapted to other consonants.

1. Have students look through magazines and stories to find pictures that can be associated with the sound *d*. The pictures can be arranged on a bulletin board or on individual letter sheets. Include the capital and lowercase letters on the display.
2. Use oral sentences where the missing word begins with the letter-sound association being learned. After students share responses that might make sense, have them choose the words that make sense and begin with the correct sound. For *d*, possible sentences might include the examples that follow.

I brush my teeth every \_\_\_\_\_. (day)

I gave my \_\_\_\_\_ a bone. (dog)

I saw a \_\_\_\_\_ at the farm. (duck, dog)

The toy cost me a \_\_\_\_\_. (dime, dollar)

3. Provide a group of pictures and have students take turns sorting those pictures whose names begin with the sound being studied. Pictures can also be sorted according to whether the sound at the beginning, middle, or end of the words is different or the same.
4. Invite students to bring in objects whose names begin with the sound being studied.
5. Place pictures and/or objects in a box. Some of the items should begin with the sound being studied; a few should not. Have a student reach into the box, take out an item, name it, and indicate whether the initial sound of the object is the same as or different from the sound being studied. Then have the student use the word in a sentence.
6. List words on the board that begin with consonants not being studied which can be erased and replaced with the consonant that is being practiced. Have a student pronounce the word. Then erase the first letter of the word and put a *d* in its place to make a new word. Have students use their knowledge of the letter-sound association for *d* to pronounce the new word. Repeat this procedure with each of the other words listed here. Have students use the new words in sentences. The Chapter 3 Resources (Word Patterns) on the website include a list of pattern words that should be helpful for this lesson.



hot	dot
tip	dip
tog	dog
sent	dent
pig	dig
kid	did
him	dim

7. When students are reading and come across an unfamiliar word that contains the letter or letter combination being taught, encourage them to use the context along with their knowledge of the letter sound to pronounce the word.
8. Orally read sentences where students give a word beginning with the sound being learned. The word must make sense in the sentence. Some examples follow.

Jim's pet is a \_\_\_\_\_. (dog)

Another name for a plate is a \_\_\_\_\_. (dish)

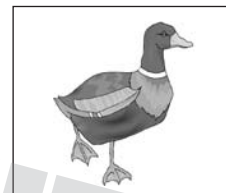
At night it is \_\_\_\_\_. (dark)

It's about time to eat \_\_\_\_\_. (dinner)

9. Have students name objects in the classroom that begin with the sound associated with the letter or letter combination being learned. A variation is to have students find objects in the classroom with the same beginning sounds as their names.

10. Record words that begin with different sounds. Play the recording for students asking them to stand up if they hear a word that begins with the letter *d*.
11. Place 10 or more word cards in a pocket chart, each beginning with a different sound. Ask a student to think of another word that begins with one of the beginning sounds of the words. For example, if one of the word cards contained *little*, the student might say the word *like*. Play until all 10 sounds are used. The meanings of the words in the pocket chart should be known to students.
12. Use the sounds of consonants during your regular school routine. For example, when the class is dismissed for the day, ask students whose last names begin or end with *D* to leave first.
13. Have teams of students create tongue twisters with the letter *d*. A sample sentence follows: Dan drove to the down-town Dairy Dream for diet drinks.
14. Have students think of words beginning with the letter *d*. Students take turns saying a new word without repeating any words. When a student is unable to add a new word, invite another student to suggest one.
15. Place pictures in an envelope and have students sort the pictures according to initial, medial, or final sound.
16. Prepare a list of sentences that have a missing word. Sketch or cut out pictures that complete each sentence. Put them on cards and ask students to select the appropriate card or cards to complete each sentence that begins with a particular sound.

I saw a \_\_\_\_\_.



17. Connect an action with each consonant sound. For example, when you teach the sound *d*, ask the students to dance. You can make a game of this activity after you have taught several of the letter sounds. Make a card with each letter. Show one letter to the class and call on a student to show the class the action you learned for that letter. Examples of actions for consonants, digraphs, and blends follow (Cunningham, 1993).

b	bounce	n	nod	sh	shiver	gr	grab
c	catch	p	paint	th	think	pl	plant
d	dance	r	run	wh	whistle	sw	swim
f	fall	s	sit	br	breathe	sk	skip
g	gallop	t	talk	bl	blink	sl	sleep
h	hop	v	vacuum	cr	crawl	sm	smile
j	jump	w	wiggle	cl	climb	sp	spin
k	kick	y	yawn	dr	drive	st	stand
l	laugh	z	zip	fl	fly	tr	track
m	march	ch	cheer	fr	frown	tw	twist

18. When students have learned several consonant sounds, provide sentences or stories with a word missing and invite students to use the context and their knowledge of certain sounds to predict the word. As an example you could say, We went \_\_\_\_\_ the stairs. Remind students that the word begins with the sound that begins like *dog*. If a word is given that makes sense but does not begin with *d* (for example, up), discuss why it is not the right answer. Invite students to share their thinking about particular responses and guide them as necessary.
19. Cunningham and Hall (1997b) have prepared an excellent book to provide systematic, multilevel instruction in phonics for students in first grade using a month-by-month approach.

# GAMES .....

**Pick Up.** Give each student 10 cards with a different consonant on each card. Lay out the 10 cards on the table in front of each student. Students may have different consonants. As you read a list of words, ask the student to pick up the card corresponding to the initial, medial, or final sound of the word.

**Consonant Rummy.** Use a deck of cards with a consonant on each card. Each player is dealt eight cards. The first player asks another player for the consonant that begins a certain word. For example, "I'd like Jen to give me a letter that begins like the word down." If the player does not have the letter *d*, the caller picks a card from the deck and the next student takes a turn. The first student to have four cards of the same letter is the winner.



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## SECTION

# 3.2

### Behavior Observed

The student has difficulty associating the sounds that vowels symbolize.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will be able to use the sounds of vowels to help decode unknown words.

## PHONICS: VOWELS

### Background

Vowels are much more difficult for students to learn than consonants. Unlike most consonants, vowels can represent more than one sound. Gunning (2010) notes that English contains approximately 16 vowel sounds. Most vowels have two or three common sounds, but there are also many exceptions for certain vowels. For example, the long *e* sound can be spelled 16 different ways: *see, team, equal, he, key, Caesar, deceive, receipt, people, demesne, machine, field, debris, amoeba, quay, and pity* (May, 1990). Although it is not necessary to teach students rules for each of these vowel sounds, there are some vowel generalizations that can help students as they learn to decode words.

Emergent readers need to begin to learn the sounds for long and short vowels, and as students progress in reading, they can also learn about some of the less frequently occurring vowel sounds in the English language. As you teach your students vowel sounds, however, you need to remember that having students learn the sounds of vowels is not useful in itself. The purpose of teaching vowel sounds is for students to be able to make better predictions about unfamiliar words. If you find that you are spending more time teaching the sounds associated with the letters than your students spend reading text, you should probably balance the proportion of time you are spending teaching phonics with opportunities for students to read printed materials (Allington, 2013).

Teaching the various sounds of the vowels will probably span at least two grade levels. Generally, “short” vowels are taught first because they have fewer spellings. Some “long” vowels, however, are quite easy to learn, especially when they are the final letter in two-letter words (e.g., *me, he, we*). Even though vowels can be taught in a manner similar to consonants (see Section 3.1), we have provided teaching strategies for two different vowels.

# 3.2

The following are some of the more common sounds associated with vowels.

## Long/Short Vowels

*a* as in *age*  
*a* as in *an*  
*e* as in *ease*  
*e* as in *end*  
*i* as in *ice*  
*i* as in *inch*  
*o* as in *old*  
*o* as in *odd*  
*u* as in *use*  
*u* as in *up*

## Vowel Digraphs

<i>ee, ea</i>	<i>e</i> as in <i>ease</i>
<i>ai, ay</i>	<i>a</i> as in <i>age</i>
<i>oa, ow</i>	<i>o</i> as in <i>old</i>
<i>oo</i>	<i>oo</i> as in <i>too</i>
<i>oo</i>	<i>oo</i> as in <i>good</i>
<i>ou, ow</i>	<i>ou</i> as in <i>out</i>
<i>oi</i>	<i>oi</i> as in <i>oil</i>
<i>au</i>	<i>o</i> as in <i>off</i>



Teachers need to balance time spent teaching letter sounds with the time students spend reading.

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## STRATEGY 1

### SHORT I

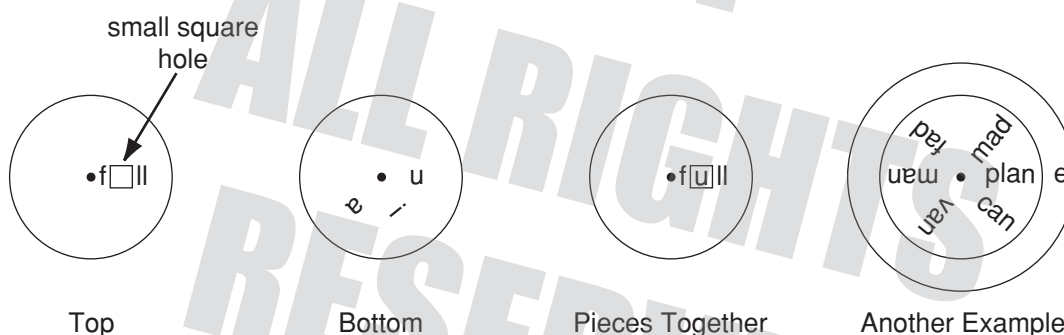
1. For short *i*, students may need to be reminded that our alphabet contains vowels and consonants and that sounds can be associated with both vowels and consonants.
2. Write the vowels on the board and circle the vowel that will be the focus of the lesson. Tell students that there are two common sounds (long and short) associated with *i* and that they will be taught to associate the short sound with *i*.
3. If possible, select some objects and pictures whose names exemplify the short sound associated with *i* (for example, baseball *mitt*, fish's *fin*, jar *lid*). Appropriate names of class members may also be used (for example, *Bill*, *Jill*). Say the words and have students listen for the sound of the vowel.
4. Place the words on the board in a single column. Point to each word and pronounce it, emphasizing the sound associated with *i*. Have the students say each word as you move your hand from left to right under the word.



- Ask students to inspect the words and note their similarities and differences. When students note that all the words have an *i*, emphasize that the sound associated with this letter is called the short sound of *i*.
- Pronounce pairs of words orally (one containing the short sound of *i*) and have students identify the word containing the short *i*. By using some words with the long sound of *i*, students should be able to note how this sound differs from the short sound of *i*. An alternative is to pronounce a word and have students show a card with a short *i* if the word contains that sound. Some possible words you may wish to use are listed below.

fit–fat	rim–ram	mitt–met
line–lit	ham–him	jam–Jim
rid–ride	dig–dog	did–doll

- Encourage students to think of additional words with the short *i* vowel sound. List those words on the board. Have students use the words in sentences.
- If desired, help students understand the generalization that the vowel *i* in the middle of a word and surrounded by consonants usually has a short sound. This generalization can also be applied to other vowels in a similar position.
- After students have learned the vowel sounds, develop word wheels where various words can be made by turning the wheel. Possible words for this activity can be found in the Chapter 3 Resources (Word Patterns) on the website.



## STRATEGY 2

### LONG E

- Tell students that you will help them learn the long sound for *e*. Print *e* on the board and ask students to tell you the name of the letter.
- Help students realize that the name of the letter and the long sound are the same. You might say something like what follows.

*Notice that the name of the letter and the long sound of the vowel are the same.*

Have the students say the sound together.

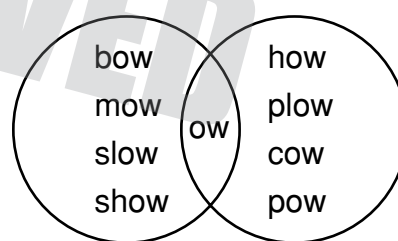
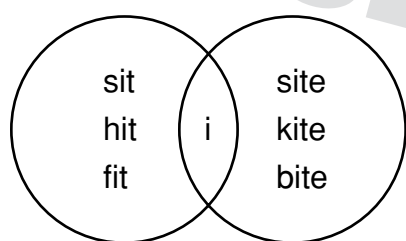
- Then say, “Watch as I put a letter in front of the *e* and make a word.” Print an *m* and say, “I know the sound *mmm* and when I put it with the *e* it makes *me*.” Have the students repeat the sounds and make the word by blending the sounds.
- Guide students in creating other words that end with *e* (*be*, *he*, *we*).

## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

1. Provide cards with the vowel, a key word for that vowel, and a picture for that word. For example, you may want to remember the sound for *i* with the word *twins*. The card should have a picture of twins with the word and the letter.
2. Place a column of words on the board that contain the short vowel sounds. Explain to students that adding a final *e* to the words often changes the vowel sound from short to long. Begin a second column where an *e* is added to each word. Have a student pronounce these words and use each of them in a sentence. Emphasize the change in vowel sound when the final *e* is added. Sample words are shown below.

cub	cube	cap	cape	hat	hate	pal	pale
can	cane	hid	hide	bit	bite	not	note
man	mane	rid	ride	hop	hope	mad	made
tub	tube	rob	robe	cut	cute	kit	kite
rat	rate	tap	tape	dim	dime	fin	fine
mat	mate	pan	pain	rod	rode	sit	site

3. Have students read a short passage and circle words with long vowel sounds. Then copy the words on a separate sheet of paper and have students attempt to categorize them. Each category should then be labeled with a description of what the long-vowel words have in common.
4. Create cards that have long vowel sounds, short vowel sounds, and *r*-controlled vowel sounds. Have students sort each card into the categories by vowel sounds. The Chapter 3 Resources (Words for Use in Teaching Vowel Sounds; Word Patterns) on the website contain possible words to use.
5. Teach students the importance of vowels by placing the cards with the consonants on a table. Ask a volunteer to make a word with the letter cards. The students should quickly see that it is impossible to write words without vowels. Then include vowel cards and ask the students to make words (DeGenaro, 1993).
6. Write high-frequency words using two colors of crayons—one color for vowels and another color for consonants. The Revised Dolch List in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website contains high-frequency words.
7. Provide students with letter tiles and have them engage in word-building activities. Fox (1996) provides many helpful suggestions for word building.
8. Use Venn diagrams, such as those below, to help students explore letters that represent more than one sound in words.



9. Help students experience printed materials that contain specific phonic elements or rhymes. If some of the books are too difficult for independent reading, they can be shared aloud and discussed. Some books that contain phonic elements or rhymes are listed below.

Oppenheim, J. (1990). *Wake, Up Baby!* New York: Bantam. (long *a*)

Ziefert, H. (1990). *Follow Me!* New York: Puffin. (long *e*)

Hoff, S. (1988). *Mrs. Brice's Mice*. New York: Harper. (long *i*)

Schade, S. (1992). *Toad on the Road*. New York: Random House. (long *o*)

Demarest, C. (1998). *Farmer Nat*. San Diego: Red Wagon/Harcourt. (rhyme)

Hague, K. (1999). *Ten Little Bears: A Counting Rhyme*. New York: Morrow. (rhyme)

10. Provide letter tiles and encourage students to build words with onsets and rimes (see Section 3.3). Letters can be written on bathroom tiles (1") with a permanent marker. Velcro can be attached to each letter tile and a small plywood board. After using the letter tiles, they can be secured on the plywood board for easy storage.
  11. Encourage students to write phrases and sentences with rhymes being learned.
  12. Use books that contain patterns being studied. In addition, some of the older phonic readers (The cat sat on a mat, etc.) could be used for practice with certain onsets and rimes.
  13. Use pocket charts so students can manipulate various letters to create words.
- 

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## SECTION

# 3.3

### Behavior Observed

The student is unable to use knowledge about word patterns to identify unfamiliar words.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will be able to identify unfamiliar words by using common word patterns.

## WORD PATTERNS AND WORD BUILDING

### Background

Proficient readers rarely sound out words letter by letter. Instead, they use what they know about common spelling patterns to figure out the word. This means that readers will make the association between spelling patterns they know and unfamiliar words. For example, if students encounter the word *hobbit* in reading, they may know that the word pattern *ob* may sound like *rob* or *mob* and that the pattern *it* may sound like *mit* or *bit*. Using what they know about consonant sounds, students can figure out how to pronounce a word that they do not recognize at sight.

Word patterns is another strategy that students should use as they read. Cunningham (2003) notes that as students learn more words, they use patterns and analogy to decode. Like phonics and context clues, using word patterns is not a panacea; not all unfamiliar words will have familiar word patterns in them. For instructional purposes, however, you should help your students use this strategy as one more way to read unfamiliar words.

A word pattern has two components: an onset and a rime (Adams, 1990a).

- The onset is the initial part of a word that precedes a vowel (for example, the *h* in *hat* or the *sh* in *ship*).
- The rime is the part of the word that rhymes (for example, the *at* in *hat* or the *ip* in *ship*).



Rimes are also known as word families or phonograms. A list of word patterns is included in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website. The list will be helpful for teaching.

An innovative developmental approach that helps students explore letter patterns, letter-sound correspondences, and words has been developed by Cunningham and Cunningham (1992). The approach involves students in making words, and over 300 lessons have been developed for students in elementary school (Cunningham & Hall, 1994a, 1994b, 1997a, 1997b). The steps for making word lessons are shown on the next page (adapted from Cunningham and Cunningham, 1992).

## Planning Lessons to Make Words

1. Choose the word that will be made last in the lesson (for example, *stand*). Consider your students' interests and word knowledge when selecting words.
2. Make a list of other words that can be made from *stand* (*at, sat, as, Stan, Dan, tan, Tad, an, and, sand*). Arrange these words in order from the shortest to the longest.
3. Decide on the words you will use based on patterns, words of various sizes, words that can be made by rearranging the letters (for example, *and, Dan*), and proper names to show the use of capital letters. When making your final selections, keep in mind that most students should have *heard* the words and know what they mean.
4. Make big letter cards to use in a pocket chart or on the ledge of the board. Then prepare an envelope that contains the order of the words and the patterns that will be stressed. Finally, print the words on cards.

### STRATEGY 1

### MAKING WORDS

1. Use the above box to plan the lesson or consult Cunningham and Hall (1994a, 1994b, 1997a, 1997b) for ready-made lessons. Distribute the necessary letters to each student. Keep the letters in reclosable bags and have individual students pass out the different letters. Each card should contain an uppercase letter on one side and a lowercase letter on the other. At the end of the lesson, the same students pick up the letters they originally distributed. Finally, you should have large letter cards that you can use with a pocket chart or on the board ledge to model as necessary. Below is a sample lesson.
2. Distribute the letters *a, d, n, s*, and *t*. If necessary, hold up the large letter cards and have students hold up their small letter cards that match your card.
3. Say, "Use two letters to make *at*." Use the word in a sentence: We are *at* school.
4. Invite a student to assemble the correct response using the large letter cards in the pocket chart or on the board ledge. Have the student read the word and have students correct their individual responses as necessary. Students should be able to fix their words by comparing their words to the large letter cards.
5. Continue steps 3 and 4 with other word-making directions such as those shown below. Always use the new word in a sentence.
  - Add a letter to make *sat*.
  - Remove a letter to make *at*.
  - Change a letter to make *an*.
  - Add a letter to make *tan*.
  - Add a letter to make *Stan*.
  - See what word you can make with all the letters (*stand*).
6. When all the words have been made, take words you previously printed on index cards and put them in the pocket chart or on the ledge of the board. Keep these guidelines in mind.
  - Do one word at a time.
  - Present the words in the order they were made.
  - Have students say and spell the words with you.
  - Use the words for sorting and pointing out patterns (for example, find the word that has the same pattern as *tan*). Align the words so students can see the patterns.
  - Transfer word learning to writing by asking students to spell a few of the words you say.

7. Remember that word building can be used with upper-grade students and students of all ages who are struggling with reading (Cunningham & Hall, 1994a).
8. Consider using the *Word Wizard* (Falwell, 1998) to introduce Making Words.



### STRATEGY 2

#### PHONOGRAM -AY

1. Write the word *day* on the board or on a sentence strip.
2. Read the word to students, drawing attention to the *-ay* sound.
3. Substitute a different initial consonant such as *m* for *may*. Say, “If d-a-y spells *day*, what do you think m-a-y spells?” Repeat this activity with three or four different consonants. Write each word on the board or a sentence strip. The Chapter 3 Resources (Word Patterns) on the website contain lists of phonograms for both short and long sounds associated with vowels.
4. Ask students to pronounce each of the words. Although this may seem like an easy activity, many young students have difficulty reading rhyming words. Be patient and use more examples as needed (*lay, bay; hay, pay*).
5. Write a sentence for each word or have students write sentences for the words. Ask students to read the sentences aloud and to pay close attention to the word pattern that is being studied.
6. For students who are able to progress to the next step, write an unfamiliar word on the board that contains the word pattern. An example for *-ay* could be *today* or *maybe*.

### STRATEGY 3

#### PHONOGRAM -IG (YOUNGER STUDENTS)

1. Write the word *pig* on the board. Ask for a volunteer to pronounce the word. Then have students explain how they know that the word is *pig*. Guide and question students as necessary.
2. Tell students that the letters *-ig* make the /ig/ sound. Putting a *p* in front of *-ig* spells *pig*. Then tell students that if a different letter is put in front of the *-ig*, words that rhyme with *pig* can be made. Explain, if necessary, what it means to rhyme words (to say another word with the same ending sound).
3. Then invite students to try to think of other words that rhyme with *pig*. To model the process, you might say something like what follows.

*Let me see if I can think of a word that rhymes with pig. If I put a b in front of the -ig, I get the word big. Big, pig. Yes, the words rhyme. [Write big under pig and underline the -ig.] I can hear the rhyme, and I can also tell that the word rhymes because of the letters.*

4. Challenge students to work with a partner or in small groups to think of other words that rhyme with *pig*. Have students write their words on paper.



5. When most students have finished, have them share possible words. Write the words on the board and then guide students in determining whether each word rhymes with *pig*. If the word is correct, underline the *-ig*. If the word does not fit the pattern, erase or cross out that word. Acknowledge nonsense words that fit the pattern but stress that the goal is to identify real words.
6. When the list is complete based on students' words, have students echo read each word after you say it. If there are any words students did not include, you could ask the question that follows.

*How about \_\_\_\_\_ ? Does it rhyme with pig? [Include a few non-examples as well.]*

7. Be sure to discuss the meanings of any unknown words. Encourage students to use the words in sentences. Rhyming words that are nonsense words should be highlighted, and you could say something like what follows.

*I'm crossing out lig even though it rhymes with pig because we want our list to contain only real words.*

8. To extend the lesson, invite students to write sentences using one or more of the *-ig* words. The sentences can be true or fanciful.

#### STRATEGY 4

#### PHONOGRAM -ILL

1. Write *-ill* on the board and ask students what letter would need to be added to *ill* to make the word *hill*.
2. Add the *h* to *ill*, pronounce the sounds, and then blend the sounds as you say the whole word. Have students repeat the blending.
3. Then write *ill* underneath *hill* and ask students what letter should be added to *ill* to make the word *Bill*. Ask a student to blend the sounds to form the word.
4. Invite students to examine the two words and note how they are the same and how they are different. Guide students to understand that the words end with the letters *i, l, l* which make the sounds heard in *ill*; the words are different in the initial sounds and that accounts for the two different words.
5. Continue with other examples and model words like *Jill* and *fill*. Invite students to suggest other onsets that could be used to make a new word.
6. Use the words in oral sentences and written sentences and possibly create stories. Some examples follow.

*Jill* climbed a *hill*.

She looked for *Bill*.

She saw *Bill fill* a bucket.

**MAKING YOUR OWN WORDS**

1. Pick a word from the book you are currently reading that has a variety of letters or that has a particular word chunk you want to emphasize. You may also choose a holiday word. Write the letters in alphabetical order without telling students the word.
2. Have students use letter tiles from the word to create a list of words using those letters. (This strategy would be the opposite of the making words activity described in Strategy 1. Students are asked to come up with the words instead of you supplying the words to make.) Challenge students to think of a big word that uses all of the letters.
3. Have students compare their lists in small groups and then come up with a final list with the entire class. Post the list in the classroom. The list might be titled Words We Made from \_\_\_\_\_ (write the word that was used for the activity).
4. Other activities that use this basic idea include the games Scrabble, Scrabble Jr., and Boggle.

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## SECTION

# 3.4

### Behavior Observed

The student is unable to use word structure to help decode unfamiliar words.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will use word structure to help decode unfamiliar words.

## STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

### Background

When students come to an unknown word that is made up of more than one syllable, they can use structural analysis skills to divide that word into pronounceable units. Structural analysis skills can allow students to focus on the larger units of letter patterns within words. Such letter patterns typically include inflectional endings, prefixes, suffixes, contractions, compound words, and syllabication. You can teach students how to figure out longer words by using their background knowledge about words and word parts, focusing on that knowledge, applying what students know to a new reading situation, and extending what students already know by imparting additional knowledge about words.

The Common Core Foundational Skills in Reading place considerable emphasis on structural analysis skills as students progress from the beginning stages of reading. By the middle and upper grades, students need to “use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to accurately read unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context” (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010, p. 17). You will need to provide numerous lessons for students who are learning to use the strategies in this section. In most cases, your teaching will need to embrace multiple exposures and practice opportunities for students within a specific area (such as decoding multisyllabic words) if competence is to be ensured. The outcome of such efforts should enable your students to become independent learners who can successfully decode unknown words in the texts encountered.

## INFLECTIONAL ENDINGS (YOUNGER STUDENTS)

1. For younger students, draw one of the four figures on the board without the tail. Print the word inside the figure and have students pronounce it. Then ask students to look at the figure and tell you what is missing (the tail).



2. Tell students the missing tail contains an ending that can be put on the word. Draw the tail and put one of the endings in it. Have a student pronounce the new word. Ask another student to use the word in a sentence. Then write the word on the board.
3. Repeat the process with the other endings. Be sure to write the new words under one another as in the example below.

jumps  
jumping  
jumped

4. Draw students' attention to what is the same (*jump*) and different (the ending) in the words. Help students realize that some words have endings. Have students apply this knowledge to a known word with different endings in sentences. Provide some sentences and invite students to locate the common root or base word in the sentences. See the examples below.

I want some food.  
She wants to play.  
He wanted to go home.

They were playing ball.  
He played a board game.  
She plays with her friend.

5. Use some of the other illustrations for additional practice or independent activities. Encourage students to try some different endings on common words to build new words. Use words that do not involve spelling changes. Some examples follow.

look  
play  
pack

walk  
talk  
fill

bark  
laugh  
help

work  
record  
end

6. Conclude the lesson by reminding students that some words have endings. By covering the ending, they may recognize the root or base word. Then they can add the ending and pronounce the word.

## STRATEGY 2

## INFLECTIONAL ENDINGS

1. Tell students that inflectional endings are the endings that can form a plural noun (dogs, quizzes), show the present tense of a verb (barks, wishes), are the present participle of a verb (walking), show past tense (talked), show possession (Jerry's), and show comparisons in adjectives and adverbs (bigger, biggest). Focus on the examples more than the terminology.
2. Present a root word that your students know from previous lessons. Write the word on a sentence strip or on the board. Have students pronounce the word and use it in a sentence.
3. Then have students watch carefully while you add an ending to the word. Have different students pronounce each derived word. If a student makes an error, cover the ending and have the student pronounce the root word. Then have the student try the word again with the ending.
4. Once the words are pronounced correctly, have students use each new word in a sentence. Discuss the change in meaning that occurred when the ending was added. Students should understand that adding an ending to words may change the way the word is used in a sentence.
5. Conclude the lesson by helping students realize that some long words are really root words with inflected endings added. Encourage them to look for such endings when they are unable to pronounce a word at sight.

## STRATEGY 3

## THE NIFTY-THRIFTY FIFTY

1. The Nifty-Thriftly Fifty (Cunningham, 2000, p. 165) is a list of 50 words containing “all the most useful prefixes, suffixes, and spelling changes” that should be understood by most fourth graders. Helping students learn to spell and build words using the affixes and spelling changes will require sustained instruction throughout the school year. Your efforts will be rewarded by students who gain confidence in decoding longer words. The 50 words can be found in the Chapter 3 Resources (The Nifty-Thriftly Fifty) on the website.
2. Teach students to spell the words gradually over time and look for ways in daily instruction to share how the words can help students decode other words. Begin by explaining that many big words are smaller words with prefixes and suffixes added to them. Choose five or six words (e.g., *dishonest*, *employee*, *swimming* [double m], *expensive*, *conversation*) from The Nifty-Thriftly Fifty to teach. Write them on the board.
3. Chant each word several times. Then help students analyze the words by noting prefixes, suffixes, and any spelling changes. Word meanings should also be discussed. For example, you might model by saying what follows.

*Dishonest means not honest. The root word is honest and the prefix is dis. In many words, the prefix dis changes the word to an opposite. An example of another word using dis is disobey.*



# 3.4

4. Invite students to suggest other words with the same prefix. Some possible words are presented below.

discourage	discredit	discolor	disarm
disengage	disappear	disconnect	disassemble
disappoint	disadvantage	disappear	disclaim
disarmament	disapprove	disjointed	discomfort
disband	disarray	disagree	discontinue
disclose	disbelief		

5. Use a similar procedure for the other words in the lesson and then have students write each of the five or six words you have presented. Give clues to the word to be written. Several examples are provided below using words from The Nifty-Thrifty Fifty.

dishonest For number 1, write the word that is the opposite of honest.

employee Number 2 could be used to describe someone who works for a business owner.

swimming Number 3 is an activity that takes place in a lake.

6. Have students check their work by “chanting the letters aloud, underlining each as they say it” (Cunningham, 2000, p. 169).
7. Teach another five or six words the next week and then show students how parts of the words can be combined to spell other words. In addition, because the same word parts can be found in different words, the parts can be used to help pronounce many long words. You might use a think-aloud by saying something like what follows.

*I know the word dishonest. If I see the word displease [write it on the board] in my reading, I can remove the dis and then see the word please. I can then put the two parts together to pronounce the word. If I look for patterns or chunks in the big words in my reading, I can probably use what I know to help pronounce words.*



8. The Nifty-Thrifty Fifty list can be found in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website. Lessons based on this list can be found in Cunningham and Hall (1998). Presenting quality lessons to your students will pay rich dividends in helping them pronounce longer words.





## STRATEGY 4

## AFFIXES

1. Affixes are prefixes and suffixes that are attached to a root or base word. The Chapter 3 Resources (The Nifty-Thrifty Fifty) on the website contain prefixes and suffixes that can be used for teaching and practice. Additional lists of prefixes and suffixes can be found in Section 5.6 of Chapter 5. “If students learn just the four most common prefixes in English (un-, re-, in-, dis-), they will have important clues about the meaning of about two-thirds of all English words that have prefixes” (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001, p. 38).
2. Explain to students that prefixes and suffixes form syllables because they are a pronunciation unit. They can be added to root or base words to change their meanings or part of speech. Provide examples.

*reread*

*re* is a prefix; *read* is a root word

*painless*

*pain* is a root word; *less* is a suffix

3. Have students offer some words that contain affixes. Write them on the board. Then ask students how they think knowing prefixes and suffixes can help them in reading. Through discussion, lead students to the following conclusions about prefixes and suffixes:
  - Knowing them can help me recognize words more rapidly; I don’t have to sound out an unknown word letter by letter.
  - They can help me figure out some of the longer words in reading.
  - Sometimes I can use affixes to help determine the meaning of the word.
4. Model how to figure out unfamiliar words with prefixes and suffixes. Think aloud as you read. For example, if the word is *unicycle*, you might say something like what follows.

*I can’t recognize the word immediately, so I look for the root word. It is cycle, and I know what a cycle is. I can see that the prefix is uni-. I know that the word is unicycle, but what does it mean? Because I know that uni- often means one, I have a pretty good idea that unicycle means a one-wheeled cycle. I may need to look up the word in a dictionary to be sure of its meaning, but I now have an idea of the word and can ask myself whether the meaning makes sense in the sentence.*

## STRATEGY 5

## CONTRACTIONS

1. Tell students that some words in our language, called contractions, are really two words joined together so that not all of the sounds are heard. Give students an example of a contraction such as *didn’t*. Explain that *didn’t* is a contraction for *did not*.
2. Show students how to write the contraction *didn’t* by writing both *did* and *not* on the board. Explain that when forming a contraction, the letters that are not written are replaced by an apostrophe. Show students how to write an apostrophe in the word *didn’t*.
3. Have students write a sentence that uses *did not*. Then ask them to replace *did not* with the contraction *didn’t*.
4. Repeat these steps with other contractions that are found in the Chapter 3 Resources (Commonly Occurring Contractions) on the website.



## COMPOUND WORDS

1. Explain to students that two words are sometimes put together to make a longer word. These words are called *compound words*.
2. Write several compound words on the board or sentence strips. Ask students to pronounce the words and to use each one in a sentence. Write the sentences on strips and highlight the two words that make up each compound word. Take time to discuss the meaning of each compound word. Some possible words you might use are listed below.

farmland	anyone	sailboat	snowball
sunset	newspaper	outside	earthquake
cowboy	birthday	beehive	baseball

3. Stress that looking for compound words in longer words may help students pronounce such words. Make it clear that some seemingly difficult words are actually compound words.
4. Provide additional sentences and invite students to identify the compound word and the two words that comprise it. Sample sentences follow.

I saw a footprint in the snow.

There was an earthquake in California.

Please put the dishes in the dishwasher.

5. Conclude the lesson by helping students realize that they can sometimes recognize a longer word by identifying the two words that comprise it.
6. Repeat these steps with other compound words that are found in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website.
7. Invite students to share the compound words they encounter in their reading. The words could be written on cards and placed on a bulletin board.
8. In a future lesson, you could show students compound words where the two words (e.g., backpack) literally represent the meaning of the compound word. Then move to other words (e.g., baseball, butterfly) where one or more of two words does not represent the literal meaning of the compound words. You want to help students understand that compound words are made of two smaller words, but each may not retain the literal meaning. In the case of *butterfly*, the word *fly* retains its common meaning, but the word *butter* is not represented in the meaning of *butterfly*.



## STRATEGY 7

## DECODING POLYSYLLABIC WORDS

1. Write polysyllabic on the board and invite students to pronounce the word and explain the meaning (many syllables or more than one syllable). Have students give examples of such words. Then tell students how they might go about decoding polysyllabic words by modeling (i.e., showing and talking about what you do).
2. Select a word and write it on the board. Be sure that the word is presented in a sentence. An example follows.

Her *unexpected* arrival caused a change in our plans.

3. Model by saying something like what follows.

*I'm going to tell you how I might try to pronounce or decode the word in italics. I will think aloud to help you understand what's going on in my brain. If you already know the word, please don't say anything. In a moment, I'll give you a chance to model what you do when you come across a polysyllabic word that you can't pronounce.*

4. Read the sentence aloud, skipping over the unknown word. Then say something like what follows.

*I've read the entire sentence and skipped the word I don't know. I think I'll look for parts I know. The first part is the prefix un. The next part is the word expect and there is an ed at the end. The word has three parts: un-expect-ed. The un is like the beginning of uncover and the ed is like the end of wanted. I can put the parts together and get un-expect-ed. I have heard that word before. In the sentence it makes sense. Her arrival was not expected and plans were changed.*

5. Present sentences to students that contain one or more polysyllabic words. Ask students to select a partner and think aloud while trying to pronounce the italicized words. Stress that it is best to think aloud only for words that cannot already be pronounced. Develop sentences based on what you know about your students. Several of the following sentences might be used or adapted.

The *seaport* is now *unimportant*, and it is used for *recreational purposes*.  
 Can you name some *important* products that are *exported* from the *shipyard*?  
 The *manager* of the *convenience* store *expressed* his *appreciation* for my *assistance*.  
 I *corrected* the *subtraction* problem in *mathematics*.  
 The *unfriendly* *canine* *barked* loudly at the *mail carrier*.

6. Have students volunteer to share some of their think-alouds. For any words that students are unable to decode, model the process for them. Take time to discuss word meanings when necessary and highlight how prefixes and suffixes can help students determine a word's meaning.
7. Gather additional polysyllabic words and devote a few minutes to modeling think-alouds from time to time. Invite students to share polysyllabic words from their reading and explain how they were able to pronounce them.

**MATCHING WORD PARTS TO BUILD AND DECODE WORDS**

1. Tell students that longer words can often be segmented into smaller parts to help pronounce the words. Then say something like what follows.

*Instead of giving you some longer words to pronounce, I'm going to give you some words or word parts and ask you to make some longer words. I want to see how many different words you can make by joining different parts. Then when you come across longer words while reading, you may be able to see some smaller parts that will help you to pronounce words that you don't recognize immediately.*



2. Reproduce the Matching Word Parts to Build Words on page 185 or from the Chapter 3 Resources on the website so each student has a copy. Mountain (2005) is the source for the word parts.
3. Give students a few minutes to work independently to form longer words. Then have students work with a partner to share unique words thereby expanding their lists.
4. Invite the entire class to share their words as you write them on the board. Invite students to add additional words that may not be on their lists. If necessary, discuss word meanings and invite students to use the words in sentences.
5. Help students realize that they should look for word parts when they encounter difficult words in their reading as an aid to pronouncing such words.
6. To extend learning, invite students to become a master word builder using one of the words or word parts with word parts not on the list to make longer words. You might say something like what follows.

*If I take re and put it at the beginning of view, I can make review. You can try your hand at building new words in your spare time. We'll see how many different words are created in a day or two.*

7. Remind students to look for and use word parts when they come upon difficult words while reading. Periodically, invite students to share their experiences in using word parts to help pronounce longer words.

# Matching Word Parts to Build Words

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Use the word parts below to make longer words. Write the words on the lines.

Words/Word Parts	My Words
phone	_____
scope	_____
auto	_____
way	_____
tele	_____
micro	_____
sub	_____
scribe	_____
vision	_____
graph	_____
mobile	_____

## Master Builder

**DIRECTIONS:** Use the words or word parts from the list above with other words or word parts **not** on the list to make new words. Write your words below. If you need more space, use the back of this sheet.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## SYLLABICATION

1. Tell students that long words can be divided into smaller parts or syllables. By knowing how to divide words into syllables, students will have another strategy to figure out words as they read.
2. Say a multisyllabic word such as *bicycle*. Have students say *bicycle* several times.
3. Tell students that you will clap your hands one time for each syllable in the word *bicycle*. As you say the word, clapping for each syllable, stretch out the word such as *bi—cy—cle*.
4. Say several more words that have more than one syllable, clapping one time for each syllable. Have students clap with you.
5. Explain that there are generalizations for the different ways words are divided into syllables. Spend time teaching the syllables in words that follow the syllable generalizations in the box below. Numerous lessons will be needed.

**Syllable Generalizations\***

1. When there are two like consonants, divide between them as in *pup/py*.
2. When there are two unlike consonants, divide between them as in *wal/rus*.
3. When a consonant is between two vowels, divide after the first vowel as in *si/lent*.
4. Prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional endings are their own syllables as in *pre/heat*.
5. When a syllable ends in a vowel, the vowel is long as in *o/pen*.
6. When a syllable ends in a consonant, the vowel is short as in *cab/in*.

\*McCormick, 2003.

6. Encourage students to use their new knowledge to separate longer words into units that can be pronounced. By trying various pronunciations, students may recognize the word as one they have heard before.
7. Stress to students that the most important aspect of dividing words into syllables is to enable them to try different pronunciations in order to say a word that they have heard before. If a word is not in the student's listening vocabulary, there can be no assurance that the word is pronounced correctly. The student may need to confirm the pronunciation with you or another student who can pronounce the word correctly.



## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

1. Provide sentences containing root words that have the inflected ending omitted. Have students read each sentence and add the appropriate ending. Consider using the examples that follow.

Bill was look\_\_\_\_\_ for his mother.

The cat jump\_\_\_\_\_ over the branch.

I miss\_\_\_\_\_ the school bus.

2. Prepare one set of cards that has root words and another set that contains different inflected endings (such as *s*, *ed*, *ing*, *er*, *est*). The root words for this activity should be those that remain unchanged when an inflected ending is added. Students draw a card from each set and try to match the root-word card with an inflected-ending card to make a new word. Have students write the new word and use it in a sentence. Possible root words for this activity are listed below.

ask  
call  
help  
jump

play  
thank  
new  
small

warm  
deep  
hard  
walk

3. Ask students to circle the inflected endings in one of their pieces of writing. After finding endings in their own writing, they may want to read a story written by a classmate and find endings in a classmate's writing. This activity helps create an awareness of endings.
4. Write two columns of root words on the board, one that requires no change in spelling before adding an *ed*, and the other that requires doubling the final consonant before the *ed* is added. Try to use words that are in the students' sight vocabularies. Pronounce the words in the first group, add *ed* to the words, and have students pronounce the new words. If students have difficulty, cover the ending, have them pronounce the root word, and then try the word with the *ed*. Ask students to use the words in sentences before and after adding *ed*.
5. Invite students to bring personal possessions to the front of the classroom. Tell students that they will be learning different ways of saying the same thing. For example, take Annette's barrette and say the following sentences.

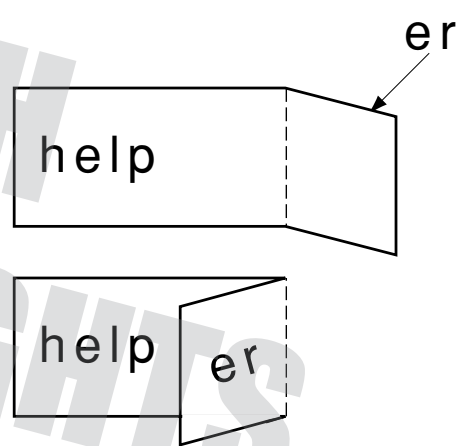
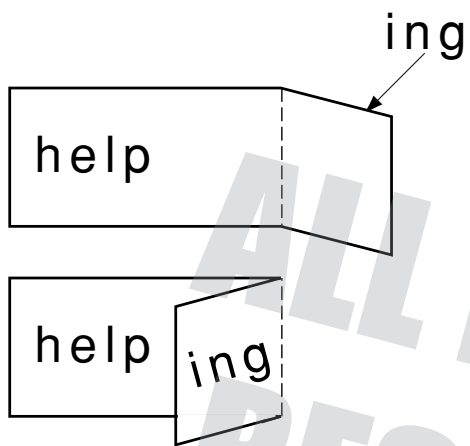
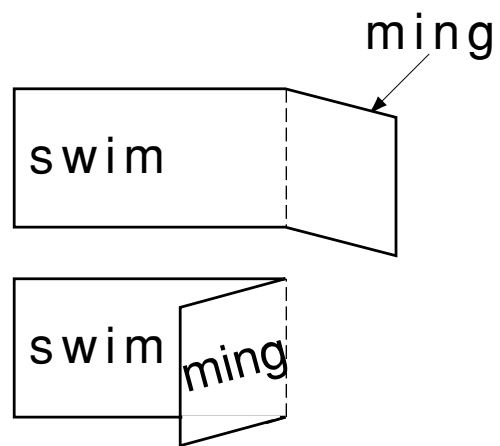
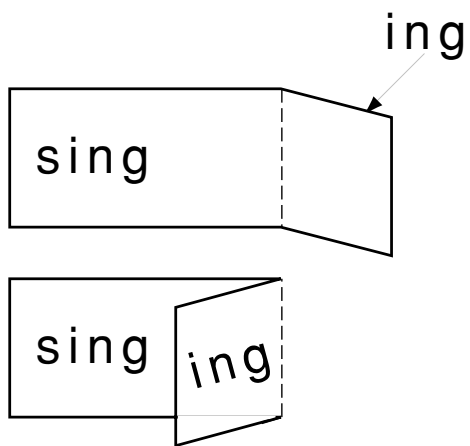
This is the barrette of Annette.

The barrette belongs to Annette.

This is Annette's barrette.

Emphasize that each of the sentences means the same thing. Then write the sentences on sentence strips and direct the attention of the students to the last sentence. Identify the apostrophe and say that the 's on the end of the word *Annette* shows that the noun following her name belongs to her. Encourage the class to suggest phrases or sentences in which 's is used to show possession. Write the sentences on sentence strips.

6. Print prefixes and suffixes on tagboard or file cards. Pass out the cards to students. Write root words on sentence strips. Hold one root word card in front of the class. A student who has a prefix or suffix that would make a new word comes up to the front of the class and places the card in front of or behind the root word card. The student pronounces the word, and, if correct, the student may take the root word. Invite students to use the word in a sentence and, if necessary, help them understand the meaning of the word.
7. As you introduce a new suffix, prepare several flip strips. To create a flip strip, print root words on the front left-hand side of colored strips of construction paper. On the back, print suffixes so that when the paper is folded a new word appears. Give the flip strips to students to practice making words with suffixes. Examples of flip strips are found on the following page.



8. For compound words, make two lists. Write half of the compound words in List A and the other half of the compound words in List B. The words should not be in the correct order. Have students draw a line from a word in List A to a word in List B to form a complete compound word. Invite students to use the compound word in an oral or written sentence.

**List A**

break  
day  
birth  
sell

**List B**

out  
day  
fast  
light

9. Place several headings on the board (for example, places, people, rides, things, times). Have students think of and write compound words that will fit under each heading.
10. Provide a series of words and invite students to write the antonym of each word and then combine the words to make a compound word. A completed example is given below.

rest + in  
*work + out = workout*

Other possible words to use are listed below.

night + dark  
empty + front  
tall + go  
mend + slow

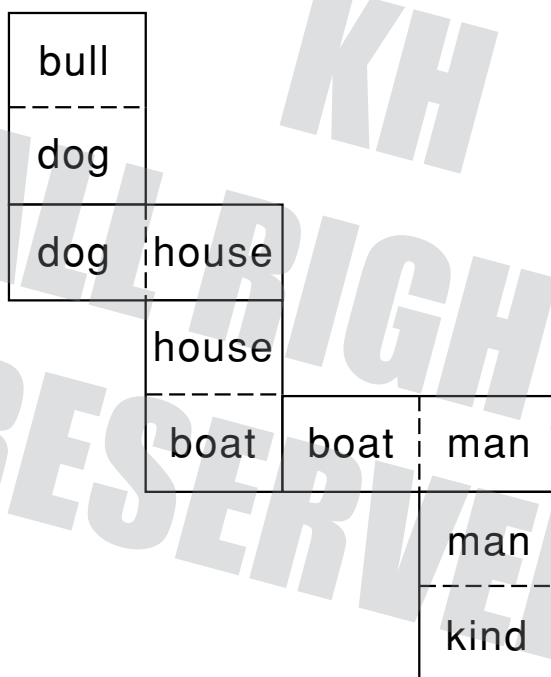
adult + stand  
death + night  
over + sky  
laugh + adult

11. Make sentence strips containing compound words. The sentences should be constructed so they can be illustrated easily. Each student chooses a sentence strip. Have the student copy the sentence on the bottom of a sheet of paper and illustrate the sentence. The picture of the compound word should be circled in red. Display the papers so that students can read each other's sentences, look at the circled pictures of the compound words, and then find the compound words in the sentences. You might use or adapt the sample sentences that follow.
  - The goldfish was swimming in a tank with a red fish and a green fish.
  - There was a hammer, a box of nails, and a piece of wood on the workbench.
  - The blue and red airplane flew above the trees and houses.
  - The typewriter is on the desk next to the lamp and a picture of a family.
  - The big, brown bear climbed the hill to get closer to the beehive.
  - Three boats were sailing near the shore by the lighthouse.
  - The golden dog sat between the doghouse and a big, tall tree.
  - I have a sandwich, popcorn, an apple, and carrots for lunch.
12. Prepare a list of sentences with a blank space for a compound word. Invite students to read the sentence to themselves and have a volunteer suggest a compound word that makes sense. Have the student explain how the word was selected, and, if it is correct, write it in the blank space. Some possible sentences are listed below.
  - At my (*birthday*) party we had cake and ice cream.
  - There was not a cloud in the sky and the (*sunshine*) streamed in through the windows.
  - We did not go to school in the morning, but we did go in the (*afternoon*).
  - The jets and planes flew in and out of the (*airport*).
  - At the movies we had buttered (*popcorn*).
  - The man's boots left deep (*footprints*) in the snow.
  - My sister's chore is to put the dishes into the (*dishwasher*).
  - The woman told me to walk on the (*sidewalk*) and not on the grass.
  - The dog ran into the (*doghouse*).
  - The football player threw the (*football*).
  - I put stamps on the letters and dropped them into the (*mailbox*).
  - At recess, the boys and girls played on the (*playground*).
  - Because it was raining, I wore my (*raincoat*).
  - When the lights went out, my father got a (*flashlight*) so we could see.
  - When Tom was sick, he had to stay (*inside*) the house.
  - Frosty is a famous (*snowman*).
  - The train moves on the (*railroad*) track.
  - I squeezed toothpaste on my (*toothbrush*).
13. Give students several endings (e.g., *-it*, *-ed*, *-ip*, *-et*). Have students select one or more ending and then think of a beginning letter or blend that they could add at the beginning to make different words. Students could make words by themselves, with a partner, or in small groups. After several minutes, review the lists, have students use the words in sentences, and clarify or explain word meanings as necessary.

# GAMES .....

**Group Ball Toss.** Draw a target on a piece of felt with a marker and write in root words. Glue a strip of velcro around a lightweight ball. Mount the target on a wall and beside the target write word endings. Divide students into teams and let them take turns throwing the ball at the target. When the ball hits the target, the student reads the word closest to the ball and then writes the word on the board with one of the inflectional endings. If the word is correct, the team scores one point. The students can play until one team gets 20 points (McCormick, 1995).

**Compound Word Dominoes.** Write two compound words on tagboard or index cards cut in half. Write the words facing the short sides and draw a line down the center. Distribute the cards to four students. Have students take turns making compound words by matching the words with two different cards. A list of compound words that might be useful can be found in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website.



**Twister.** Draw 20 large circles on a 4' x 6' oilcloth and attach words written on cards in the center of these circles. Using two teams, have students from team 1 put a hand on one word and a foot on a second word of a compound word. Then the student places a second hand on a word and a second foot on another word that would make sense as a compound word. If the words are correct, a student from team 2 tries the same activity. The team 2 student, however, needs to manipulate around the student from team 1. Then another student from team 1 joins the two students on the Twister board and so on until no more words can be formed.

**The Affix Stopped Me.** Make a set of 50 game cards. (See the Chapter 3 Resources on the website for a list of compound words.) On 40 of the cards, write compound words. On the remaining 10 cards, write words with affixes. Shuffle the cards and place the deck on the table. Each student takes a turn flipping the cards over one at a time. As each card is turned, the student reads the card and determines if it is a compound word or a word with affixes. If the student correctly

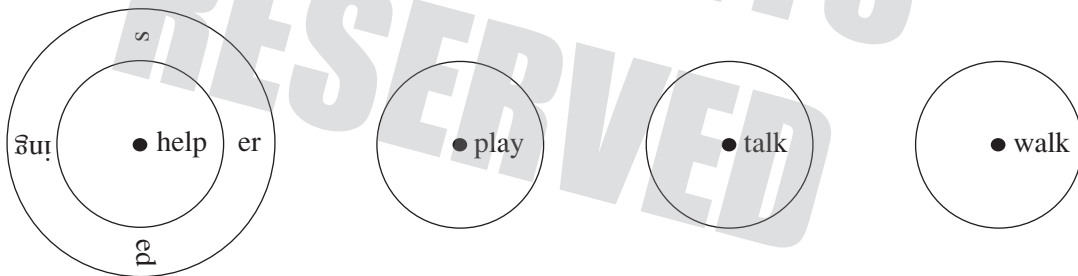


identifies the word as a compound word, the student pronounces the word and, if correct, keeps the card and turns the next card over. The turn continues until the student incorrectly identifies a card or when a word with an affix is uncovered. Continue until the cards are gone. The winner is the student with the most cards. This game is intended for a small group of four or five students. If more students want to play, the number of cards must be increased. Variations of the game include pronouncing the word correctly and using it in a sentence.

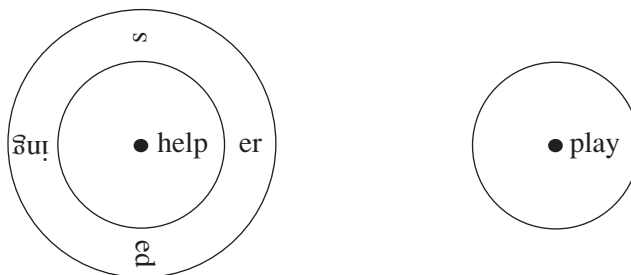
**One, Two, or Three.** Make a deck of 20 cards with each card containing three sentences. One sentence will contain a compound word. Two sentences will not have compound words. Number the sentences 1, 2, and 3. Vary the cards so that the compound word sentences appear in all three locations. To play the game, shuffle the cards and place the deck on the table. The first student takes the top card, reads the sentences, and decides which sentence contains a compound word and reads it. If the student correctly identifies the first sentence as containing the compound word, the student receives one marker: a button or a bean. If the second sentence contains the compound word, the student receives two markers for correctly identifying it. If it is in the third sentence, the student receives three markers, and the turn ends. If the student is incorrect, no markers are earned and the turn is over. The winner is the student with the most markers when all the cards have been used. One variation of the game could include sentences with affixes.

**Four in a Row.** Choose 20 compound words and write them on the board. Each student divides a piece of paper into 16 squares. Then have students choose 16 of the 20 words and write them in the boxes. A box of markers will be needed. To play the game, say one of the words in a sentence. Have students listen for the compound word in the sentence and look for it on their paper. If they find it, they should cover the space with a marker. Continue creating sentences for the compound words until a student has four marked squares in a row. A variation of the game could involve a student creating the sentences.

**Wheel Spin.** Construct two circles of tagboard, one smaller than the other, and fasten them in the center with a brad. Print a verb on the smaller circle and print the endings *s*, *er*, *ed*, and *ing* on the larger circle. Several examples are illustrated below.



Two students can play. One student spins the top circle and pronounces the word that is made. The other student uses the word in a sentence. Students can change the top wheel to gain practice with other words.





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## SECTION

# 3.5

### Behavior Observed

The student cannot identify high-frequency words automatically.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will be able to identify high-frequency words without hesitation.

# HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS

## Background

There are certain words in the English language that occur very frequently in text. Look at the thirteen words below.

**a and for he in is it of that the to was you**

Thirteen words make up approximately 25% of all words used in school texts.

These words account for approximately 25% of all of the words in school texts. Because they occur so frequently, they are called *high-frequency words* or *basic sight words*. You probably noticed that the words are difficult to define or describe. That's because they are *function words*—words that are used to connect other words. They have little meaning themselves. Obviously, students who can read high-frequency words automatically

will have a much easier time reading text, but because many high-frequency words are abstract and irregularly spelled, they can be difficult to teach and learn.

The 13 words listed above are not the only high-frequency words in the English language. In fact, 109 words make up over 50% of the words used in school texts, and only 5,000 words make up 90% of the words in texts (Adams, 1990b). Although that may seem like a lot of words, remember that a typical high school senior will have a vocabulary of approximately 40,000 words and that students generally learn 3,000 words per year. Knowing how quickly students learn words makes the task of teaching high-frequency words much more manageable. You may be wondering what words make up the high frequency list of words. There are several word lists in the Chapter 3 Resources (Revised Dolch List, High-Frequency Nouns, and others) on the website for you to use in selecting sight words to teach.

Because more and more teachers fuse instruction in reading and writing, you might also be interested in the most frequent words students use in their writing. Look at the 10 words below.

**I and the a to was in it of my**

According to a research study conducted by Hillerich (1978), these 10 words account for over 25% of the words used by approximately 3,000 students in grades one through six. These words have great overlap with the 13 most frequently occurring words in the English language. Students should be taught to recognize and spell these words in the beginning stages of the instructional program. In addition, the words in the Revised Dolch List and the Alphabetical List







of the 100 Words Used Most Frequently by Students in Their Writing in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website comprise over half the words students read and write. These lists may be useful for instruction. It is important that students learn to read high-frequency and irregularly spelled words as soon as possible. The Common Core Foundational Skills in Reading indicate that high-frequency words and other grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words should be recognized by the end of third grade. You can use the various word lists in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website for teaching. In addition, we have provided lists of high-frequency words for kindergarten through second grade on the following pages. These 300 words are the most common words in printed English (Zeno, Ivens, Millard, & Duvvuri, 1995). The reason is clear: these high-frequency words are a critical, though not sufficient, component for efficient and effective literacy.

### 25 High-Frequency Words for Kindergarten\*

the	in	for	are	at
of	is	you	they	or
and	that	he	with	from
to	it	on	be	had
a	was	as	his	I

### 100 High-Frequency Words for First Grade\*

not	out	who	down	our
have	if	like	make	must
this	some	could	now	before
but	would	has	way	good
by	so	him	each	too
were	people	how	called	long
one	them	than	did	me
all	other	two	just	years
she	more	may	after	day
when	will	only	water	used
an	into	most	through	work
their	your	its	get	any
there	which	made	because	go
her	do	over	back	use
can	then	see	where	things
we	many	first	know	well
what	these	new	little	look
about	no	very	such	another
up	time	my	even	around
said	been	also	much	man

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# 3.5

## 175 High-Frequency Words for Second Grade\*

great	again	need	number	days
same	important	high	far	animals
came	while	last	person	word
come	something	until	city	let
right	states	children	better	wanted
should	don't	along	white	across
small	why	took	side	American
old	large	together	family	early
think	want	sometimes	night	though
take	few	saw	didn't	four
still	school	enough	country	face
place	often	light	name	best
find	food	got	it's	became
off	under	example	ever	seen
different	always	words	form	himself
part	however	united	usually	sure
found	man	almost	hard	energy
us	air	father	knew	sun
world	asked	live	today	second
away	both	keep	times	feet
life	being	body	soon	really
three	does	end	told	certain
went	going	hand	several	turned
those	big	head	system	toward
own	without	read	state	parts
help	looked	others	upon	black
every	say	year	thing	ways
here	left	since	earth	show
house	began	against	money	means
might	mother	young	become	door
between	during	give	group	special
never	tell	set	government	course
home	land	kind	later	known
thought	next	room	living	move
put	once	eyes	change	yet

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## STRATEGY 1

## WORD WALL



1. Decide which words to include on your Word Wall (Cunningham, 2000). Your Word Wall should include about 100 to 120 words by the end of the school year that students use frequently in their reading and writing. A Word Wall begins with five words, and you should add about five words each week. Consider words from two lists included in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website: Revised Dolch List and Alphabetical List of the 100 Words Used Most Frequently by Students in Their Writing. Teachers in the primary grades often begin with students' names and then add high-frequency words students need for reading and writing.
2. Write the words in big, black letters on different colored paper. Be sure to use a variety of colors for words that are frequently confused (*then, when*) or words that are pronounced the same (*to, two, too*). Some teachers cut around the shape of the word to provide another clue for students. Place the words in alphabetical order where all students can see them easily.
3. Begin the activity by having students number a sheet of paper from 1 to 5. Pronounce each word, use it in a sentence, and have a student locate and point to the word on the Word Wall. Then have students clap and chant the spelling of the word before they write the word. Repeat this basic process for each of the remaining four words.
4. Lead students in checking the accuracy of the words they have written and make corrections as needed. The charting, writing, and checking can take about 10 minutes. As the school year progresses, students become more proficient in this basic activity, and a few minutes can be spent on an activity (see number 5) using the back of the paper on which the five words were written.
5. Consider some of these activities that Cunningham (2000, p. 64) identifies as the “most popular and productive.”
  - **Easy Rhyming:** Teach students how Word-Wall words that rhyme help them pronounce and spell words (for example, *be, he, she, we*). Use the words in context and have students write the words.
  - **Easy Ending Activity:** Help students add an ending to five Word-Wall words (for example, *s* to *boy, car, girl, school, tree*; *ed* to *ask, want, need, play, walk*). Other related activities include *ing* or *er*.
  - **Harder Ending Activity:** Work on how to spell five Word-Wall words when different endings are needed. Provide a sentence and have students find the word on the Word Wall, identify the end, decide how the word is spelled, and write it on their papers (*wanted, playing, walks*).
  - **Combine Rhyme and Endings:** Say a sentence containing a word that rhymes with a Word-Wall word (for example, My bicycle *brakes* are broken). Model how you can find *make* on the Word Wall, change the beginning to make *brake*, and add an *s* to make *brakes*. Have students spell the word aloud before writing it.
  - **Mind Reader:** Think of a word on the Word Wall, write it on a piece of paper without students seeing it, and give students five clues to the word. Have students write a word after each clue. By the fifth clue, all students should have read your mind. An example follows.
    1. It's one of the words on our Word Wall.
    2. It has five letters.
    3. It begins with *n*.

4. Both vowels are *e*.
5. It makes sense in this sentence: I \_\_\_\_\_ walked on the moon. (never)

Then show students the word (*never*) and find out which students read your mind and wrote *never* next to numeral 4, 3, 2, or 1.

6. Refer to Cunningham's (2000) book for many additional ideas. Remember that the real power in a Word Wall comes from **using it**—not just having it. That means using Word-Wall activities on a daily basis for about 10 minutes. Remember that Word-Wall words should be spelled correctly in students' writing.

## STRATEGY 2

### EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION

1. Select a word that students want to learn to read by sight. The word may be one that is in a text the class is reading, or it may be one that students need for writing.
2. Write the word on the board and ask students to write the word on a card. If a student is unable to copy the word correctly, you may want to write it for him or her. Chant the word.
3. Locate a story or create a language experience story that uses the word several times.
4. Read the story to the class. Each time you say the sight word, ask students to raise their cards.
5. Ask students to read the word on their cards, saying the word and then each letter.
6. Cut the word into letters and ask students to arrange them to make up the word. Place the letters in envelopes so that students can practice arranging the letters at other times during the day.
7. Write several sentences on the board with a blank space for the word. Ask students to write the word in the blank and then read the sentences out loud.
8. Give students text in which the word being learned occurs frequently. Ask students to be alert for the word while reading.

## STRATEGY 3

### PATTERN BOOKS

1. Select a pattern book that emphasizes the word you want students to learn.
2. Read the book aloud to students. If possible, secure a big book version so students can follow along.
3. Read the book again, asking students to join in whenever they can. Point to each word as it is being read.
4. Ask students to take turns reading the book with you and to each other.

5. Write the text of the book on sentence strips or ask students to write it for you. Then ask students to read the text from sentence strips.
6. Write the word being studied on word cards. Ask students to match the word to the sentence strips.
7. Cut the sentence strips into words. Mix up the words and ask students to arrange them in order.
8. Take out the word being studied from the sentence and ask students to write the word from memory.
9. Ask students to create a sentence using the targeted word.
10. Create a rebus story using the word being learned. Draw pictures for the nouns so that students must read the high-frequency words.

#### STRATEGY 4

### LEARNING THROUGH REPETITION

1. Use a partial list of high-frequency words on the Revised Dolch List in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website and have the student read the words. While the student reads, record miscues. Encourage the student to say “skip” or “pass” whenever he or she finds a word too difficult. The object is to recognize the high-frequency words immediately.
2. Make a set of flash cards for the student with the words that were missed. (The list of words can be printed on card stock and cut out.) You might include words that the student hesitated on as well as the ones missed. Generally, one second or less means the basic sight word is known. Select three to five missed words for initial teaching.
3. Present three to five words to the student, saying the word as you place the card on the table facing the student. After the student seems to recognize the words in that position, move the cards around until automaticity is achieved with these words. Keep these words separate from the rest of the deck.
4. Begin the next session with a review of the words learned in the previous session. Any missed words will be reviewed again in this session. Place known cards to the side. Add new cards for any missed words and review these using the same procedure as stated above. Keep these cards separate from the known and unknown piles. (An envelope can be a great way to keep the cards organized. Clip the words that are missed or newly learned on the outside of the envelope. Keep the new cards clipped together inside with the learned ones in another clip.)
5. In subsequent sessions, review the three to five words first, add them to the known pile, and then have the student pronounce all the words. Unknown words are taken out each time and reviewed. If there are still new words to learn, enough are added to make three to five words that are taught to the student.
6. After the student has learned the whole set, review them until the student can automatically recognize the words three times in a row. Send the cards home for continued practice and review.



# 3.5

7. Assess the student with the word list again to check mastery in another print form. Words that are missed can be added to a new set of cards from the next level of sight words after they are tested. Follow the same procedure with the new word list.
8. Other activities that can be done with the cards are listed below.
  - Do word sorts (number of letters, beginning sounds, vowel sounds, etc.).
  - Put the words in alphabetical order, saying the words as they are moved around.
  - Play concentration with a student at the same level. Make two sets of word cards for the student.
  - Find the words in a poem or text, on a Word Wall, or in print in the room.
  - Learn to spell the words.
  - Use one or more words in a sentence.
9. As words are mastered, use the words in phrases so the student is given an opportunity to recognize and practice the words in context. Later, short sentences containing high-frequency words and nouns can be read by the student to help promote confidence and automaticity. Create phrases and sentences from the Revised Dolch List and High-Frequency Nouns in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website. A few phrases and sentences are provided below.



a long day      their old dog      going home      over the top

Will you help me?      She saw him.      The book is in my hand.

There are also several pages of phrases and sentences found in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website created from high-frequency words. You can cut these sheets and use them for student practice to develop greater automaticity with the words.

## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

High-frequency words generally need to be practiced many times to become automatic. The following activities are designed to reinforce these words.

1. Place the sight words on a Word Wall as explained in Section 3.5, Strategy 1.
2. Have students put selected high-frequency word cards in alphabetical order.
3. Have students sort the words by categories. They may make up imaginative categories for the words, because most of them have little concrete meaning. Sample categories for some of the words on the Revised Dolch List in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website are shown below.



Category	Examples
Numbers	one, two, three
Other People	he, her, him, she, them
Talk Words	call, say, tell, ask
Action Words	run, leave, put, walk
Question Words	who, what, when, would
Size/Shape Words	big, little, long, round
Color Words	black, blue, white, red
Temperature Words	cold, hot, warm



4. Ask students to find the words in texts around the room. For example, the word *and* may be on a "Friends and Neighbors" bulletin board.
5. Use word games such as Bingo, Hangman, Word Dominoes, Word Checkers, or Go Fish.
6. Have students use the buddy system to practice word cards.
7. Place word cards in a file box to use as a word bank of known words for writing.
8. Prepare cards that contain an illustrated sentence with the high-frequency word underlined. Cards containing words and phrases may also be used.
9. Develop line searches. Be sure that the words only go from left to right. Ask students to circle the hidden word among each line of letters. Students can also be asked to use the word in an oral or a written sentence. Following are examples of line searches.

m f d b i g k      d d s a b l u e d s      d e t h a t d s      d e s d w h e n d s

10. Use familiar rhymes to help students learn high-frequency words in a meaningful context. Write a rhyme on the board or on sentence strips. Write the high-frequency words in a color that is different from the color of the rest of the rhyme. In the following example, the high-frequency words are in italics.

Humpty Dumpty  
Sat *on a* wall.  
Humpty Dumpty  
*Had a* great fall.

11. Chant the spelling of words. Clap together as the class spells a word out loud.
12. Have students write words. Writing provides a kinesthetic mode to help students learn and remember words.
13. Have students unscramble words they are learning as in the following example.

tge      flul      mrfo      egno      tgo      og      dogo  
*get*      *full*      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_

14. Use a tachistoscope (a quick-exposure device) or cards to briefly expose a word, phrase, or sentence. Give students repeated practice over several days.
15. Provide sentences where the student writes the correct word in the blank. Provide choices for the answer.

I like \_\_\_\_\_ *that* \_\_\_\_\_ one.  
not      that      came

He \_\_\_\_\_ do his work.  
any      didn't      about

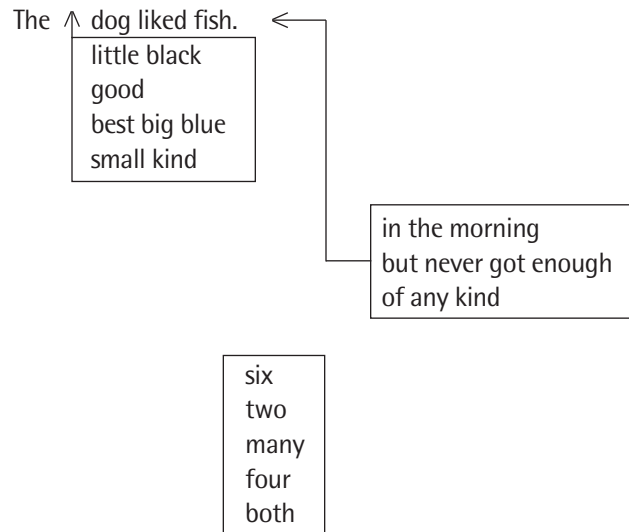
The night seemed \_\_\_\_\_ long.  
must      very      no

He \_\_\_\_\_ many nice things.  
such      when      does

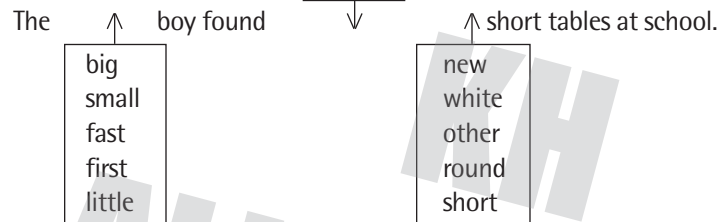
16. Have students locate the most common high-frequency words (*a, and, for, he, in, is, it, of, that, the, to, was, you*) in newspapers or magazines. This activity will help students realize how frequently such words occur. Use a selection about 100 words in length.
17. Create "flexible" sentences using words from the Revised Dolch List and the list of High-Frequency Nouns in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website. Students can read the many different sentences with a partner when the words and phrases in the boxes are inserted. Two examples are shown on the following page.



### Example 1



### Example 2



18. To aid in the practice of words such as *in*, *on*, *under*, *over*, and *behind*, get a cup and straw. Place the straw in various positions and ask students to use a word that answers the question, "Where is the straw?" Alternative ideas include using a stuffed animal and a cardboard box for questions you ask.
19. Give students plenty of opportunities to read lots of easy materials (Allington, 2009; Johns, 2012; Johns & Berglund, 2010).



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## SECTION

# 3.6

### Behavior Observed

The student's sight vocabulary is so limited that it interferes with reading fluency.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will increase his or her sight vocabulary.

## SIGHT VOCABULARY

### Background

Students who know words by sight are able to pronounce them automatically. A large sight vocabulary enables students to read fluently and to focus their attention on making sense of the text. It also helps students use other reading strategies, such as context clues, more effectively.

A student's sight vocabulary, then, is composed of all of the words recognized in an instant. Some words recognized on sight occur very frequently in printed materials and are often referred to as high-frequency words (for example, *when, then, the*). These words are a vital part of the student's sight vocabulary but are a subset of the total number of sight words a student may recognize. The partial example to the right shows some high-frequency words in relation to the student's sight vocabulary.

High-frequency words tend to be abstract words. The other words that comprise sight vocabulary usually refer to real things or are adjectives or adverbs. This difference generally permits greater variety in teaching and practicing words that are not high-frequency words.

When selecting words to teach as sight words, remember that many repetitions of the word may be necessary before the word becomes part of the student's sight vocabulary. Gates (1931) found that average students may need 35 repetitions of a word before recognition becomes automatic. The crucial variable is often the meaningfulness of the word to the student. The word *sled*, for example, might become a sight word quickly for a student who uses a sled frequently. A student who has never used a sled may have greater difficulty learning the word.

### Total Sight Vocabulary\*

<b>when</b>	elephant	bookmark
<b>big</b>	Illinois	Bryan
<b>there</b>	Ms. Grant	grandma
<b>so</b>	Garfield	library
<b>was</b>	baseball	chocolate
<b>where</b>	video	Hannah

\*High-frequency words are in bold print.

## STRATEGY 1

## SIGHT WORDS

1. When possible, use the actual object or a picture of the word being taught. Have a student identify the object. If you have no access to a visual representation of the word, begin with the next step.
2. Pronounce the word and write it on the board. Have students pronounce it. If necessary, discuss the meaning of the word with students. Have students try to think of synonyms for the word. Students should also be encouraged to relate the word to their experiences.
3. Encourage students to use the word in different sentences. Write some of these sentences on the board and underline the word being taught. If a word has more than one meaning, be sure sentences are provided that exemplify these meanings.
4. If students are confusing two or more words (for example, *chair* and *chew*), compare the words by having students point out similarities and differences between the words. Students might also close their eyes and visualize or picture the word that is being taught.

## STRATEGY 2

## STUDENT-DICTATED STORIES

1. The language experience approach (Hall, 1981; Stauffer, 1980) uses student-dictated stories to create reading materials. It is based on an experience and can be used with individuals or groups.
2. Share a photo, illustration, or experience with an individual student or a group of students. For example, you might use a picture of children playing in a park. In this example, a group of students will create the story.
3. Elicit comments from students relating to the picture. Following discussion, invite the students to dictate sentences that could form the story. As sentences are shared by students, write them on chart paper or the board. Below is a possible story.

There are children in the park. (Troy)  
The children are having fun. (Angel)  
Some children are swinging. (Mati)  
Some children are playing tag. (Eric)  
A girl is kicking a ball. (Coty)  
A boy is sitting under a tree. (Reann)  
I wonder if they will have a picnic. (Kyle)

4. Read each sentence and ask students if any changes are needed. As students share ideas, make agreed-upon changes directly on the chart paper or board.
5. When the story is complete, read each sentence to the students and have them read it after you. Use a pointer so students can focus on each word as they read it.

6. Recopy the story at a later time. In the next session, read the story with students. Some possible areas of focus are listed below.
  - reading the story together
  - focusing on particular words or phrases
  - using the story to help teach or reinforce a particular phonic element
  - asking comprehension questions (e.g., Who can read the sentence that tells what the girl did?)
7. In subsequent lessons, the story can be written on individual sentence strips and placed in a logical order. Sentences can also be cut apart in phrases and/or individual words so students can put the words and/or phrases in proper order.
8. Individual word banks can be prepared by using two envelopes for each student: Words I Know and Words I'm Learning.
9. Student-dictated stories can also be made into books and placed in the class library. The books can be taken home by students to share with family members or caregivers.
10. Informational student-dictated stories can also be developed on a wide variety of topics that support the ongoing curriculum or class routines (e.g., steps to follow in a fire drill, how to check out books, proper care for our class animal).

### STRATEGY 3

## RHYMES, POEMS, AND SONGS

1. Select a rhyme, poem, or song that most of your students know. You can also choose something that is likely to be of interest to them. Begin with something easy to learn because of the rhyme or rhythm. The example for this lesson is “Jack and Jill.”
2. Help students learn the rhyme by oral repetition over a period of several days.
3. When the rhyme is known orally, write it on chart paper or the board. Tell students that the rhyme they know is now printed for their closer inspection.
4. Read a line or sentence, pointing to each word. Then have students echo it back. Repeat the process again, followed by having the class or group read it together.
5. Take time to discuss the content and vocabulary. For example, in “Jack and Jill,” discussion will probably be needed to clarify or explain the meanings of *fetch*, *pail*, and *crown*.
6. If appropriate, focus on a word that can be the basis for further word study and vocabulary development (e.g., *pail*). For example you might say something like what follows.

*Let's see if you can use your knowledge of other sounds and change the first letter of pail to make other words. For example, if I erase the p in pail and add an n, I will make the word nail—something you can pound with a hammer. What ideas do you have? Look at the alphabet at the front of the room to get ideas for letters to try.*

# 3.6

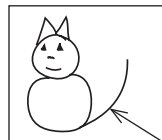
- Elicit student ideas, guiding and clarifying as needed. Write the new words on the board. Then have volunteers use the words in sentences. Possible words that can be made by students are listed below.

pail  
rail  
Gail

tail  
nail  
mail

sail  
jail  
fail

- Words that are judged to be of greater frequency and usefulness can be written on index cards for further practice. If a word can be represented by a picture or illustration, place it on the other side of the card to aid recognition. Be sure to provide ample practice opportunities in other contexts (e.g., phrases and sentences).



## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

- See Section 3.5 for additional teaching strategies and activities.
- Students should read many books that are easy for them. There are many books appropriate for students who have limited sight vocabularies.
- For words that can be represented by a picture, print the word on the front of a card under the picture. The back of the card should contain the printed word. You can use logos from stores and businesses for some sight words.
- A list of leveled books for students in the early stages of reading has been provided by Gunning (1998). Several titles recommended for emerging to beginning readers are listed below. You can also consult various websites.

Avery, M. W., & Avery, D.M. (1995). *What is Beautiful?* Berkeley, CA: Tricycle.

Cocca-Leffler, M. (1994). *What a Pest!* New York: Grosset and Dunlap.

dePaola, T. (1994). *Kit and Kat*. New York: Grosset and Dunlap.

Farjeon, E. (1996). *Cats Sleep Anywhere*. Scranton, PA: HarperCollins.

Ziefert, H. (1995). *Nicky, 1-2-3*. New York: Puffin.

Gunning (2000) has also compiled a list of "best books" for grades one through six.

- Provide many varied opportunities for students to interact with print. Use some of the techniques that are listed below.
  - sustained silent reading
  - read-along stories and books
  - repeated readings
  - shared reading
  - poems, songs, and rhymes



# GAMES .....

**How Many?** Have students write the words they need to practice on cards. Each word should have at least four cards. The students can then play the card game "How Many?" The word cards are shuffled and the deck is placed face down. Students take turns rolling a die to determine how many word cards are drawn from the deck. Each word is pronounced, placed on the table, and used in a sentence. Any words pronounced incorrectly are returned to the bottom of the deck. The student with the most words wins.

**Word Sort.** Prepare 10 word cards relating to each of the categories appropriate for the words. Shuffle the cards and deal them to each of the players. Players take turns rolling a die until a "one" or "two" appears. The player can then place one or two words under the correct category based on the number on the die.

**Around the World.** Using sight word flash cards, show a card to a pair of students. The student who responds correctly first can move on to another student. The object is for a student to make it around the class, or around the world. The winning student can then hold the cards for you while the class resumes play.

**Word Hunt.** Place several sight word cards around the room. Ask the students to hunt for the cards, reading them aloud when they find one. The student with the most cards wins.

**Concentration.** Place several pairs of sight word cards face down on a table. Have students take turns uncovering and pronouncing two cards, looking for pairs. When a student finds a pair, he or she pronounces the word and takes the cards. The student with the most pairs of cards wins the game. Phrases can also be used for variation.





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### Behavior Observed

The student has difficulty using context clues to anticipate a familiar word.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will use context as one reading strategy to anticipate known words.

# USING CONTEXT TO PREDICT KNOWN WORDS

## Background

The context of a word can be the words surrounding it. One of the ways to identify words is to use the other words in the sentence and to make a thoughtful prediction about what word would make sense. Using context clues to anticipate known words can make reading a more efficient process.

To make a good prediction about a word, the student's prior knowledge and experiences play an important role. For example, consider these sentences.

The dog was chewing on a \_\_\_\_\_.

Peaches grow on \_\_\_\_\_.

The baby began to \_\_\_\_\_.

Students with prior knowledge about dogs, peaches, and babies should have little difficulty supplying words that would make sense in the sentences. These students are able to draw upon their existing knowledge to make a logical prediction about the missing words.

Unfortunately, some students' reading comes to an abrupt halt when they come across a word they don't recognize on sight, even if only one word would make sense in the sentence. For example, peaches only grow on trees. No other response would make sense in the sentence. For the other sentences, however, the student would also need to consider at least the initial sound in the unknown word. For example, the baby began to *sm-* or the baby began to *cr-* would elicit two different responses, each correct in the context. Context clues, therefore, are helpful but should not be considered the only strategy to use when students try to pronounce unfamiliar words.

## STRATEGY 1

## WORD PREDICTION

1. Before students arrive in the classroom, write several words on the board and cover them. Develop a sentence containing each word that should be helpful in predicting the covered word. These sentences will be part of the lesson. Some examples are listed below.

Covered Words	Sample Sentence
bark	I heard the dog _____.
book	I was reading chapter 2 of the _____.
tree	The squirrel climbed a _____.
rings	School begins when the bell _____.
laughed	The joke was funny and I _____.

2. Tell students that they can sometimes use the other words in a sentence to predict or guess a word they have heard before. Stress that the sentence may contain helpful clues.
3. Point to the card covering the word *bark* and ask students if they know the word behind the card. They may have many ideas, but they are only guessing. Tell students that if that word were in a sentence, they might be able to use sentence clues to make a better guess or prediction. Ask students to be word detectives and focus on the clues in a sentence you are going to write on the board.
4. Place a line for each word in the sentence and begin to write the sentence as shown below.

\_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ heard \_\_\_\_\_ .

After writing *heard*, invite students to predict things they might hear. Write these words on the board and stress that the words are things that can be heard. Suggest a few additional words (*thunder, smoke, light*) and have students evaluate whether they would be good choices. Model as needed. For example, “*Smoke* would probably not be a good choice, because I don’t hear *smoke*. I see *smoke*.”

5. Continue writing the sentence on the lines but do not include the last word.

\_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ heard \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ dog \_\_\_\_\_ .

Most students will say the word *bark* after you have written *dog*. Take a moment to have a student explain why the word makes sense. Then uncover the word to confirm it. Invite students to suggest other words that would also make sense (*cry, run, growl*). Confirm such words as good choices. Note that authors can sometimes use several words, but the author decides which words to use.

6. Use some of the other words and sample sentences as needed. Invite a student to assist you and model as necessary. Be sure to help students realize that they may not always predict the exact word, but they should at least predict words that make sense.
7. Take time to have students create oral or written sentences and omit a specific word in each sentence. Give students an opportunity to share sentences with a partner and make predictions about the missing word.
8. Conclude the lesson by telling students that they can sometimes predict a word in their reading by using the other words in the sentence. Then share a few preselected sentences from books in your classroom and have students listen carefully and try to predict the missing word. An example from *A Prairie Year* (Bannatyne-Cugnet, 1994, p. 4) follows.

“For Matthew, January means no sleeping in and no Saturday morning cartoons on \_\_\_\_\_.”

## ADVANCED WORD PREDICTION

1. Consider adapting the approach used in Strategy 1 with students by using specific examples from instructional materials. Extend the lesson by including initial letter clues to help students refine their predictions.
2. Be sure students understand that context refers to words around a particular word. Help them realize that sometimes they can use their background knowledge and sense of language to predict a word—even before seeing it in print.
3. Provide an example and guide the process for students. A sample sentence from *The Giver* (Lowry, 1993, p. 78) that might be used follows.

“The man paused, seeming to search his mind for the right words of \_\_\_\_\_.”  
(description)

4. Write the sentence on the board, replacing the last word with a line. Have students read the sentence silently and think of words that might make sense in the blank. Students should write their ideas on a piece of paper.
5. Ask students to form small groups and share their words. Encourage each group to decide on its best word choices. Take time for students to share their words and reasons for their choices. Write these words on the board.
6. Compliment students on their predictions and then say something like what follows.

*You have suggested some good possibilities that fit the context of the sentence. I'm now going to provide a further clue to help you eliminate some of your words and help you refine your predictions. The first letter of the word is d. Which words can we eliminate? Which words are still possible? Are there any new words you want to suggest?*

7. Continue providing additional letters in *description* until students identify the word. Invite students to share their thinking. Guide the process as necessary.
8. Tell students that the sense of the sentence and letter clues can sometimes be used to help pronounce a word that they have heard before. Repeat the core lesson using other sentences. Include at least one sentence where the context will probably not help predict the word because it is not a known word in students' listening vocabularies. For example, I took a walk near the *quay*. Other sentences for possible use are listed below.

- The job was very *dangerous*.
- I ran so far that I was *exhausted*.
- The camper needed to *filter* the liquid.
- *Fingerprints* can be used to identify a specific person.
- The sun helped the water *evaporate*.
- *Flippers* help seals and whales swim.

## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

1. Daily routine activities will help students use context skills to predict words. Some examples follow.

Today is \_\_\_\_\_.

The two students absent are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Read familiar pattern books to students, pausing at appropriate places so students can predict the missing word.
3. Make recordings of books and omit several words. Give students a copy of the text to underline the words omitted on the recording.
4. Use a text at the students' independent level and mask selected words with removable tape. (Post-it® notes also work well.) Have the students make predictions for the words before the tape is removed. Then remove the tape to see what the author has written. Discuss different responses to determine overall appropriateness.
5. Create or provide a passage from a text in which selected words have been replaced with lines. Instruct students to read the passage and write in their choices of words. Stress that their words should make sense. Later, discuss their choices in conjunction with the words used by the author.
6. Using a text the students will be reading, read several sentences while omitting several words and have students predict the words that have been omitted. Then tell students the words used by the author and develop the idea that it is sometimes possible to predict a word the author will use.
7. Select a text that the students will need to read. Preview the text and determine which words might give the students difficulty. Model how you would use the context to help figure out the words. Think aloud so the students can hear your strategies. Choose at least one example where context is not particularly helpful.
8. List some common topics that students might be asked to read about and encourage them to list words that are likely to appear in the stories. Develop the notion that certain words might logically be expected to be associated with a particular topic.
9. Present incomplete sentences orally and have students suggest words that would make sense. Begin with sentences in which a large number of meaningful responses are possible and conclude with a sentence in which only a few choices make sense. Help students understand that if they listen to a sentence they can usually think of a word that makes sense. Some possible sentences follow.

I like to eat \_\_\_\_\_.

One day of the week is \_\_\_\_\_.

There is no school on \_\_\_\_\_.

10. Write sentences with a missing word on the board and have students suggest words that make sense. Supply additional words, including some that do not make sense, and ask students why a particular word is or is not appropriate. Discuss clues within the sentence that may help students make decisions. Underline such clues. For example, in "I like to eat \_\_\_\_\_," the words *like* and *eat* are important clues; *eat* is probably the most important clue. Some additional examples are shown below.

I was listening to the \_\_\_\_\_. (radio, iPod, music, etc.)

The old \_\_\_\_\_ was shiny and beautiful. (car, ring, etc.)

The weather was \_\_\_\_\_. (cool, sunny, rainy, etc.)



**Behavior Observed**

The student is unable to use the dictionary to help pronounce unknown words.

**Anticipated Outcome**

The student will be able to use the dictionary as one strategy to help pronounce unknown words.

# DICTIONARY: WORD PRONUNCIATION

## Background

We know that using the dictionary to help pronounce unknown words is a difficult undertaking for many students. There are numerous skills that the students must possess: knowledge of the alphabet and alphabetical sequence, how to use guide words and the pronunciation key, and how to actually apply these skills to arrive at the pronunciation of an unknown word.

The focus of dictionary use in this section is to help students pronounce unknown words. Section 5.4 offers strategies for using the dictionary to help determine the meanings of an unknown word. Sections 3.8 and 5.4 may be taught together if desired.

Dictionary use should be purposeful and meaningful to students. It is seldom the strategy of choice when a word is unknown in either pronunciation or meaning. Other strategies (context, phonics, structural analysis, morphemic analysis) that were taught are the logical and efficient places to begin. When the word is still unknown, a dictionary should be a viable resource. Using a dictionary for pronunciation can be difficult, even for adults. The pronunciation key seems to work well when we can already pronounce the word. When the word is unknown, however, the pronunciation key often becomes very challenging. The goal in using the pronunciation key is to enable students to associate various sounds with letters and letter combinations in an effort to try to say the word and hopefully recognize the word because it has been heard before. If the word is unfamiliar, students will be unable to decide whether it was pronounced correctly. An expert source (you or another student) would be needed to confirm the correct pronunciation.

The use of a pronunciation key, pronunciation symbols, or phonetic respellings to help pronounce unknown words is a complex skill that requires good instruction, guided practice opportunities, and plenty of encouragement to students as they apply what was taught. The teaching strategies in this section represent some useful beginnings. Be sure to adapt and extend the strategies so they are meaningful and useful to your students.



## STRATEGY 1

## ARRANGEMENT OF ALPHABET IN DICTIONARIES

1. Be sure students know the alphabet in sequence. If the alphabet is in the classroom, use it to visually demonstrate what alphabetical sequence means. Then tell students that the words in a dictionary are arranged in alphabetical sequence or order. Have students survey their dictionaries to confirm this arrangement.
2. Take time to develop the understanding that not all letters encompass the same number of words. For example, help students locate the number of pages devoted to words beginning with *s* and *x*. They will see that there are more *s* words. Use other examples as needed. Tell students that approximately one-fourth of all the words are covered by the letters *a* through *d*; the remaining three-fourths of the words are covered by the following groups of letters: *e* through *l*, *m* through *r*, and *s* through *z*. Present this information in a chart like that shown below.

a–d a b c d	e–l e f g h i j k l	m–r m n o p q r	s–z s t u v w x y z
----------------	------------------------	--------------------	------------------------

3. Model how this information can be used to find where a word is located. You might say the following.

*If I want to look up the word language, I can see that l words are near the middle of the dictionary. [Point to the l in the chart.] I can then open my dictionary to about the middle to possibly find the l words.*

4. Invite students to use their dictionaries and try to open them to the middle to see if *l* words are there. Show students what to do if they open to a different set of words. Model as needed. For example, you might say something like what follows.

*When I opened my dictionary to find the l words for language, I was in the n section, because I see words beginning with n at the top of the page. By looking at the chart, I see I need to turn the pages toward the front of the dictionary. [Turn more to the front.] Yes, now I've found the l section.*

5. Use numerous examples with students to practice finding the general place in a dictionary where specific words could be found. The goal of this activity is to locate the general area, not the specific word. Invite students to suggest words and locate the general area of the dictionary where the words can be found. Some possible words to use are listed below.

ball	run	noon	infest	pot
energy	contest	unicorn	solar	fortify

6. Conclude the lesson by asking students where their names could be found if they were listed in a dictionary. Refer to the chart and have students gather in one of four groups (*a–d*, *e–l*, *m–r*, or *s–z*). Students could group themselves in three different ways for practice: first names, last names, and middle names.

## ALPHABETICAL ORDER

1. Tell students that words in a dictionary are arranged in alphabetical order (*a* to *z*) by first letter and then second letter, and so on. Then tell students that you are going to help them learn how to find words in a dictionary.
2. Use the names of two students whose names begin with the same first letter and write their names on the board. The following names will serve as examples.

Jerry  
Jana

3. Explain that because both names begin with the same letter, you go to the second letter and ask, “Which letter comes first in the alphabet—*e* or *a*?” Point to the two letters on an alphabet wall chart so students can see which letter comes first. Because *a* comes before *e* in the alphabet, *Jana* would come before *Jerry* if the words were to be placed in alphabetical order. Place these two words in alphabetical order on the board.
4. Ask for volunteers whose names begin with the same letter to come forward and print their names on the board. Repeat the above process and, if needed, show how you would go to the third or fourth letter of the names. Several examples follow.

Jane  
Jana  
Jamall

Have students make a name card and practice with classmates whose names begin with the same first letter. Name cards for both first and last names can be used.

5. Then have about one-half of the students arrange themselves in alphabetical order by first name. Invite classmates at their seats to help verify the order and ask questions when needed. Using last names, repeat the activity with the remaining group of students.
6. Transfer this knowledge to the dictionary by supplying several words on cards and having students put the words in alphabetical order. Once correct alphabetical order is achieved, tell students the page numbers in their dictionaries where each word can be found and have students check the page to find the word to confirm alphabetical order. Consider using only guide words from students’ dictionaries in the initial practice exercises. Two sets of examples are shown below, but you should select words from your students’ dictionaries.

crown, p. 173	dachshund, p. 179
crutch, p. 174	dahlia, p. 180
cyclist, p. 179	dapper, p. 181

7. Provide students with more practice but increase the difficulty as appropriate. Include three or four words that appear on the same page of the students’ dictionaries and have students put them in alphabetical order. When they are finished, tell students the page numbers where the words are found so they can check whether the words were alphabetized correctly.

daisy	daffodil	daddy-longlegs	(p. 180)
example	exact	excellent	(p. 246)
fossil	foul	forty	(p. 281)

Keep the focus on understanding alphabetical order, not actually looking up words. The next lesson will help students use guide words in a dictionary to help locate words.

8. To provide practice in using guide words, give students the actual guide words and page numbers from several pages of their dictionaries. In a second column, provide words and have students indicate on what page the word would be found. After completing the exercise, students can self-check their work by consulting their dictionaries and noting whether they were correct. A sample is shown below.

Guide Words and Page	Word	Page	Were You Correct?
close-club, 134	collect	_____	_____ yes _____ no
collar-colon, 139	compass	_____	_____ yes _____ no
compare-complain, 145	cloth	_____	_____ yes _____ no
compost-concern, 147	concept	_____	_____ yes _____ no
	complain	_____	_____ yes _____ no
	collier	_____	_____ yes _____ no
	cloud	_____	_____ yes _____ no
	compete	_____	_____ yes _____ no
	cologne	_____	_____ yes _____ no
	compress	_____	_____ yes _____ no
	clover	_____	_____ yes _____ no

## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

- Use daily opportunities in the classroom, such as the following activities, to help students practice alphabetical order.
  - Have students put three spelling words beginning with the same letter in alphabetical order.
  - Ask students who are wearing a particular color of clothing to line up in alphabetical order.
  - Invite students to offer short lists of words (states, birds, games) that classmates could put in alphabetical order.
- Make a chart like the following example.

a-d	e-l	m-r	s-z
a b c d	e f g h i j k l	m n o p q r	s t u v w x y z

Have students tab (using Post-it® notes) these areas in their dictionaries: the beginning of the *e*, *m*, and *s* words. If necessary, tell them the page numbers where to place the tabs. Then have them use the chart along with their dictionary tabs to locate the general area of the dictionary where words could be found. Begin with areas in the dictionary that are easier to find and remind students to use their tabs. Some possible words to use are listed below.

accordion	mailbox	reel
zebra	scooter	dimple
equator	bicycle	quill

# GAMES .....

**Envelope Alphabet.** Prepare a group of envelopes, each with 10 to 15 index cards to be arranged in alphabetical order. Have the students take an envelope, remove the cards, and place them in correct alphabetical order. The game can be made self-checking by numbering the cards on the back or putting an answer key inside the envelope. Number the envelopes and make the higher numbers increasingly difficult to arrange. Three increasingly difficult lists are given below in alphabetical order.

List 1	List 5	List 10
1. almost	1. about	1. hinge
2. for	2. after	2. hint
3. happy	3. back	3. hip
4. just	4. because	4. hippopotamus
5. pretty	5. day	5. hire
6. red	6. did	6. his
7. street	7. do	7. hiss
8. then	8. we	8. history
9. where	9. will	9. hit
10. yellow	10. would	10. hive



## 3.8

### STRATEGY 3 GUIDE WORDS

1. Ask students to open their dictionaries to a predetermined page. Direct their attention to the top of the page where the two guide words are found (for example, *cook* and *copra*).
2. Tell students that guide words will help them determine whether a particular word can be found on that page just by using the guide words. Show students that *cook* is the first word or entry on that page and *copra* is the last word or entry. Have students turn to other pages in their dictionaries to confirm this basic information about guide words.
3. Then tell students that you will help them learn to use guide words. Use the example provided or preselect several students' names that begin with the same letter and choose two names as guide words. Add additional names if needed. Then write the two names on the board as guide words (Hayes and Hull, for example).

Hayes

Hull

4. Model for students how you would determine if Hernandez would be found on this page. For example, say something like what follows.

*I begin with the first letter (h) and know I'm in the right area of the dictionary. Then I look at the second letter in Hernandez (e) and the second letter in Hayes (a). Because the e comes after the a, I know Hernandez comes in the alphabet after Hayes. Next, I look at the second letter in Hull (u) and ask myself whether the second letter in Hernandez (e) comes before or after u. Because e comes before u in the alphabet, I know that Hernandez comes before Hull. Because Hernandez comes after Hayes and before Hull, I know that word will be found on the page with those guide words.*

5. Model several additional examples to help students see how some words would be found on earlier pages or later pages. Then invite students to share their thought processes with additional words. Some possible names to use with the Hayes/Hull example are listed below.

Earlier Page	On Page	Later Page
Harris	Henry	Humphry
Harty	Hill	Hurley
Hanson	Holt	Hynd
Hall	Hoover	Hynes

6. Invite students to play detective by deducing whether a list of words would be found on a particular page of their dictionaries. Choose a page from their dictionaries and develop a list of words. Use examples that reflect students' general level of understanding. Some words can be very easy to assign to one of the three categories below. Write the list of words on the board and have students work in pairs to assign the words to the appropriate category. A completed example is shown below for the guide words *cook* and *copra*.

Earlier Page	On Page	Later Page
brain	cool	copse
archer	coop	corn
convey	coot	cork
control	copilot	delta
continue	copper	fawn

7. Discuss the completed chart and clarify as needed. Encourage students to share their thinking and reinforce students who were able to explain and show why their answers were correct or incorrect.
8. Challenge students to apply their learning by completing a sheet where you present two guide words from their dictionaries and a group of four words. Have students complete the sheet before looking in their dictionaries. Check their work. For further practice, students could actually write the page numbers for those words on an earlier or later page. A Dictionary Detective reproducible is included on the next page and in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website for this activity.





## Dictionary Detective

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Words \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where would the four words printed above be found in your dictionary? Use your detective skills, knowledge of guide words, and alphabetical order to put the words where they belong. For the words that come before and after the guide words, look up the words in your dictionary and write the page numbers where they are found.

Guide Words		
Earlier Page		Later Page
page _____	word _____	page _____
page _____	word _____	page _____
page _____	word _____	page _____
page _____	word _____	page _____



## STRATEGY 4

## PRONUNCIATION SYMBOLS

1. Be sensitive to your students' dialects and the region of the country in which you live. Dictionaries show how words are pronounced by people who speak what is called General American. Canadian dictionaries will have a number of pronunciation differences when compared to dictionaries published for the United States. Keep this information in mind when you teach the pronunciation symbols—they may not be entirely appropriate for the area where you live. Remember also that this lesson is an introduction. Students will need numerous opportunities to learn and use pronunciation symbols in their dictionaries.
2. Introduce pronunciation symbols by having students find them at the bottom of one of their dictionary pages. Tell students that the special symbols in parentheses after the entry word, when used with the pronunciation key at the bottom of the page, are intended to help with word pronunciation. Take time to teach or review the long mark (macron) for the vowels (ā, ē, ī, ō, ū), no marks for the short sounds of the vowels, and perhaps some of the special marks shown below. Refer to the pronunciation key as needed.

## Some Special Pronunciation Symbols

Name	Symbol	Example	Name	Symbol	Example
Two-dot a	ä	căr	Tilde u	ü	für
Circumflex o	ô	hôn	Schwa	ə	a in ago

3. Give students an opportunity to look at the special symbols in parenthesis in their dictionaries, especially for words they can pronounce. Then have them look up a word they can pronounce (for example, *be*). Write the pronunciation symbols for *be* on the board (bē). Help students see how this information, while easy to use with a word they know, can be used with a word that might be unknown. You could use a think-aloud by saying something like what follows.

*The word be is easy for me to pronounce, but I can remember that the long mark over the vowel means that I say the name of the vowel when trying to pronounce a vowel. I can use that sound along with other sounds in the word and try different pronunciations. If I say a word I've heard or spoken before, I've probably pronounced the word correctly.*

4. Present only the pronunciation symbols for *bias* (bī'ās). Cover everything but the *bi* and ask for a volunteer to pronounce that part of the word. Then present the remaining pronunciation symbols and point out the accent mark and the spacing that indicates that the word has two syllables. Invite students to refer to the pronunciation key to try to pronounce the word. Encourage different pronunciations and stress to students that they are probably right if they say a word with those sounds that they have heard before. Confirm the pronunciation and take time to find the word and examine the meanings for *bias*.
5. Write (kē) on the board. Ask students what word it represents. Most students should say *key*. Have them confirm the word by locating it in their dictionaries and looking at the pronunciation symbols. You might also take time to explore the different meanings that can be associated with *key*.

6. Use similar activities with the pronunciation symbols for other words. Invite students to try to pronounce the words. Confirm the correct pronunciation and, if necessary, refer to the dictionary for meanings. Be sure to try to build on the students' existing knowledge. Some possible words to use are given below along with the pronunciation symbols from a dictionary. Be sure to use symbols that are in your students' dictionaries.

Pronunciation Symbols	Words
(kik)	kick
(kil or kiln)	kiln
(kid 'nē)	kidney
(kip 'ər)	kipper
(kin)	kin
(joor 'ē)	jury
(jōōlī)	July
(sit 'ē)	city
(sūr' kəs)	circus

7. Conclude the lesson by stressing that pronunciation symbols can be useful aids to help pronounce unknown words. Remind students that they need to be willing to try different pronunciations until they say a word they have heard before.

### STRATEGY 5

### PRONOUNCING UNKNOWN WORDS

1. Begin by helping students realize that pronouncing words is not the same as reading words. When a word is read, one or more meanings are associated with the word. Remind students that a dictionary can be a resource for both meanings and pronunciations.
2. Select a few words from upcoming lessons that students may be unable to pronounce. Adapt the procedure used with the word *quay*. Remember, however, that the real power of such lessons comes from using words students have encountered or will encounter in their reading.
3. Tell students you will show them how to use a dictionary to help pronounce an unknown word. Write the word *quay* on the board. Then write the sentence that follows.

The dog was near the quay.

Have students read the sentence to themselves and then offer possible pronunciations for *quay*. It is possible that most students will agree that the word is pronounced kwā to rhyme with *way*.

4. Explore students' ideas about the meaning of the word. List their ideas on the board. Then ask students how they could find out the pronunciation and meaning. Common responses include asking someone and using a dictionary.
5. Place the following information on the board or have students use their dictionaries.

quay (kē, kā) a wharf for loading or unloading ships, usually made of stone or concrete

6. Have students use the pronunciation symbols to pronounce the word and compare it with their initial ideas. Help students realize there are two pronunciations given in this dictionary entry. You might model word pronunciation by using the think-aloud below.

*When I saw the word in the sentence, I thought it was pronounced (kwā). Now that I've looked at the pronunciation symbols, I see I was wrong. The word is pronounced as key (kē) or kay (kā). I can see that some words can be pronounced more than one way. I also see that the meaning of quay is a wharf. That means that the dog was near a wharf which is near a body of water. The dictionary helped me with both pronunciation and meaning.*

7. Present several additional words that are difficult for most students to pronounce. Give them the dictionary pages on which the words are found and have small groups work together using the pronunciation symbols to say the words. Any student who already knows how to pronounce any of the words should not participate for that particular word. Instead, the student can be the expert source when the correct pronunciation is needed. Spend time with the meanings of the words and encourage students to relate the words to their experiences.
8. For additional practice, use words that are pronounced in different ways. Have groups of students use their dictionaries to find or confirm the different pronunciations. Help students realize that some of these differences are due to the part of speech. Other pronunciations are due to regional differences. Some possible words to use for this activity are given below.

either	data	object	read
route	creek	wind	bow
tear	house	minute	lead
dove	wound	live	idea

9. Conclude the lesson by telling students that a dictionary is a source to use to help pronounce unknown words. Have students offer other strategies that can also be used (e.g., context, phonics, structural analysis). Remind students that they should be flexible in their approach and remember that a dictionary should be used if the other strategies have not been helpful and the pronunciation or meaning of the word is needed.

## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

1. Invite students to use the pronunciation symbols from their dictionaries and answer questions like those below.

Which is part of a building?

(ruf) (flou'ər) (sē'ling)

Which is an insect?

(flī) (bēd) (spē'dar)

Which one crawls?

(snak) (wôm) (kat'ər pil'ər)

2. Provide pronunciation symbols for some words and have students use these symbols to try to pronounce the words. Then provide a helpful context where the pronunciation is likely to be confirmed. Remember that different publishers use different pronunciation symbols. Some examples of words and sentences are presented below.

(kwit)

I *quit* playing the game.

(māt)

Where is the *mate* to my sock?

(sit'ē)

Do you live in a large *city*?

(sūr kəs)

I saw a clown at the *circus*.

(rēd)

I will *read* the exciting story.

3. Use electronic dictionaries for students who have not yet learned how to use pronunciation symbols. Such dictionaries can also be useful for readers who struggle because these dictionaries pronounce the word and read the definition. Remember, however, that the definition spoken may not fit the context of the sentence being read.
4. Choose some particularly interesting words in terms of spelling and pronunciation and have students look up the words and use the pronunciation symbols to try to pronounce the words. Some possible words are listed below.

aviary

axis

calyx

czar

depot



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## SECTION

# 3.9

### Behavior Observed

The student does not use a variety of word-recognition strategies.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will use various strategies for recognizing unknown words.

# LACK OF FLEXIBLE WORD-RECOGNITION STRATEGIES

## Background

Students experiencing difficulty in reading often do not apply all of the word-recognition strategies they have learned. They may, for example, use decoding, but they rarely use the context of the sentence when they encounter an unknown word. Good readers, however, recognize that the most efficient method of figuring out unknown words varies with the reading situation. Therefore, you need to emphasize that students need to be flexible in their use of reading strategies to employ the ones most appropriate for the situation.

The following ideas are meant to help you begin to refine the process of teaching students to develop a set of flexible word-recognition strategies.

### STRATEGY 1

## WORD WIZARDS

1. Use the Word Wizards on page 223 or the larger ones in the Chapter 3 Resources on the website as a visual for this lesson. You have several options:
  - Enlarge them and make posters.
  - Make a copy for each student.
  - White out the faces so students can put in their facial features.
2. Tell students that you want them to become better Word Wizards. Explain that Word Wizards have a variety of ways to try to figure out unknown words. Invite students to name some of the things they do when words are unknown and write their ideas on the board. Guide students as necessary. The list may look something like the one presented below, but remember to be sensitive to the specific skills you have taught.



# 3.9

Sound it out.  
Chunk the word.  
Skip it.  
Say blank and read to the end of the sentence.  
Look it up.  
Use the pictures.  
Look for parts you know.  
Ask someone.  
Look at the beginning letter and try to think of a word that makes sense.  
See if the word has prefixes and/or suffixes.

3. Commend students for their suggestions. Then say something like what follows.

*When we read and come upon an unknown word, our Word Wizards know different things that we can try. There is not just one thing to do. And if something doesn't work, we can try another thing on the list. That's called being flexible, and our Word Wizards are flexible. Over the next several days, we'll learn more about some of the best things to try when you come across unknown words in your reading.*

4. Choose one or two of the items from the list and model how a good Word Wizard would use that strategy. Be sure to combine strategies when appropriate and help students realize that the same strategy is not used all the time. The Word Wizard is flexible and tries various strategies.
5. Below are some ideas for using three major strategies: context, phonics, and word parts. Be sure to use examples with each of the ideas. The examples should be appropriate for the students you are teaching.

## Context

- I can try to think of a word that would make sense.
- I can say *blank* in the place of an unknown word and read to the end of the sentence. Then my Word Wizard could ask, *What word would make sense in the sentence?* (Later show students how the context and initial letter or word parts can be used along with context.)
- I can read the sentence with the word I put in, and my Word Wizard could ask, *Does that word sound right?* (If the word doesn't sound right, I could try to think of another word.)
- I can look at any pictures or illustrations for a clue of what the word might be.

## Phonics

- I can look at the beginning of the word. Then my Word Wizard could ask, *What word begins with that sound that makes sense in the sentence?*
- I can say the sounds in the word slowly and then faster. My Word Wizard could ask, *"What word has those sounds that I have heard before? If that doesn't work, I can say the word differently to come up with a word that I have heard before. I might have to try this a few times."*

## Word Parts

- I can look for parts in the word that I know.
- I can see if the word has endings like *-ed, -ing, -ly, -ness, -tion*, and so on. My Word Wizard can ask, *"If I take off the ending, will I recognize the word? If yes, let me add the ending and try to say the word."*
- I can see if the unknown word is similar to other words that I know. My Word Wizard can then ask, *"Can I use the sound in the part I know along with sounds for the unknown part and say a real word?"*





- I can look for two smaller words that make up the larger word. My Word Wizard can ask, “*Do I see two smaller words in the bigger words? If so, let me say each of the two smaller words and then say the larger word.*”
  - I can look for prefixes, suffixes, and root words to help break the larger word into parts. My Word Wizard could ask, “*Does this longer word have a prefix and/or suffix along with a root word? Let me say the root word and then add the prefix and/or suffix to try to pronounce the word.*”
6. Systematically teach each of the above items using helpful examples from your curriculum and students’ daily reading. Then show how the Word Wizard combines strategies and is flexible in the use of strategies when trying to pronounce unknown words. Several brief examples follow.
- Mike saw *everyone* at the party.  
I didn’t recognize *everyone*, but I saw the two smaller words (*every* and *one*), and the word was then easy to say. If I hadn’t known *party*, I would have said *part* (a word I know) and then try an ending sound for the *y*.
  - The *buses* were on the road.  
I didn’t immediately recognize *buses*, so I read to the end of the sentence and asked myself, “What can be on the road that begins with *bbb*?” I knew the word *cars* made sense, but that was not the right beginning sound. I then noted the *-es* at the end and quickly saw *bus*. I then added the ending and said the word. It made sense in the sentence.
  - A group of people was *preparing* dinner.  
I saw the prefix *pre-* and the ending *-ing*. I then said the word *pär* and then added the *pre-* and *-ing*. The word *pre-pär-ing* did not make sense, so I tried another way to say *par*. I tried *pear* and when I added the prefix and ending, the word made sense. It’s like the group was making dinner.
7. Create a Word Wizard bulletin board where students can add examples similar to those above to show how their Word Wizards helped them figure out unknown words.

## CSSR: CONTEXT, STRUCTURE, SOUND, REFERENCE

Ruddell's (1993) four-step strategy is described briefly and linked to other sections in this book. An example for modeling is also provided.

1. **C Context.** Tell students that when they come to a word they don't know, they should read to the end of the sentence to see whether the rest of the sentence defines the word. Students needing practice in figuring out unfamiliar words from context should be taught the strategies in Sections 3.7 and 5.6.
2. **S Structure.** If the word cannot be identified by the context, students should look at the parts of the words. They should look for any familiar word parts that can help them understand the new word. For teaching strategies using the structure of words, see Sections 3.3, 3.4, and 5.6.
3. **S Sound.** If the word has familiar word parts, students should try to pronounce the word using their knowledge of the sounds of consonants and vowels. After trying to give some of the letters the sounds they represent, students should reread the sentence, thinking about the way the word is used. Often students will be able to read the word using these three steps. For teaching strategies using the sounds associated with letters, see Sections 3.1 and 3.2.
4. **R Reference.** If students are unable to identify the word, they may use reference materials such as a glossary or a dictionary. After finding a word in the dictionary, however, students still need to determine how it is used in the context of the sentence. For teaching strategies using a dictionary, see Sections 3.8 and 5.1.
5. You may want to model the CSSR with your students. For example, consider the unknown word *amicable* in the sentence "The family came to an amicable agreement about vacation plans." You might say what follows.

*I don't know the word a-m-i-c-a-b-l-e, so I would first read to the end of the sentence. I know that the word describes agreement, but nothing in the sentence tells me what kind of agreement they had. It might have been friendly, but it might not have been. After reading to the end of the sentence, I look for word parts that I know. The word has parts I can pronounce, but it doesn't have a base word or affixes that will help me understand the word. Next, I try to read the word by giving the letters the sounds that I know [sound out word]. I know the sounds in the word, so I can pronounce it. After pronouncing amicable, I reread the sentence. Yes, I've heard the word before, and it makes sense in the sentence. Just to be sure, however, I check the dictionary and find that amicable means "friendly or peaceable." I think I'll remember the word the next time I see it.*

## SECTION 3.10

### Behavior Observed

The student knows word-recognition strategies but does not use them effectively.

### Anticipated Outcome

The student will become more effective in using word-recognition strategies.

# INEFFECTIVE USE OF WORD-RECOGNITION STRATEGIES

## Background

One student always seems to sound out unknown words. Another student substitutes a word that makes sense but changes the author's meaning. A third student stops reading completely when confronted with an unfamiliar word. These and other reading behaviors, when observed consistently, can work against students becoming proficient readers.

The basic problem is that often the student has not learned why a particular strategy works and/or when to use it for figuring out unfamiliar words. It is also possible that the student does not know when to abandon one strategy and move to another. Usually, the student is overreliant on one word-recognition strategy even though he or she may have learned other strategies. This situation usually occurs because the student has not been taught how to use a *combination* of strategies flexibly when confronted with an unknown word. Your primary responsibility in such a situation is to help the student use word-recognition strategies in combination with one another to produce a word that makes sense in the sentence and has graphic characteristics similar to the word printed in the text. Students might be told that this is the “sound-sense strategy.” If a specific strategy like context or phonics needs to be taught, refer to the ideas presented in this chapter. The following strategy should help you begin to refine the process of teaching students to develop a set of flexible word-recognition strategies.



Could this student be pondering which strategy will help him figure out a word?

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## BE FLEXIBLE

1. Invite students to share some of the strategies they use when they come across an unknown word. Typical responses may include sounding it out (phonics), skipping it, trying to figure it out from the other words in the sentence (context), breaking it into parts (syllabication), looking it up in a dictionary, and asking someone. Acknowledge that all these strategies may be used at one time or another and encourage students to provide examples of times when they have used each of them. List all of them on the board.
2. Tell students that strategic readers are flexible in terms of how they try to recognize unfamiliar words. This means that they know several strategies and use the most efficient and/or effective one(s) to figure out unknown words. Provide several examples where context can be used to figure out the unknown word. Have them identify the strategy that is used.

The man put a \_\_\_\_\_ on his head. (hat; cap)

The color of milk is \_\_\_\_\_. (white)

3. Help students recognize that there are times when context can be used; moreover, stress that skilled readers also rely on context clues. Guide students to realize that context clues are used to help answer the question “What word would make sense in the sentence?”
4. Provide another sentence for which context clues can be used to predict more than one word that may sound right or make sense in the sentence.

Jake climbed a tree and picked a red \_\_\_\_\_.  
(for instance, apple, cherry)

After the words have been given by students, list them on the board and ask, “Does *apple* make sense in this sentence? Why?” Repeat this question for each word listed on the board. Then use a word that does not make sense and have students explain why the word would not be a good choice.

5. Ask students whether the word the author used in step 4 can be correctly predicted from its context. Because it cannot, provide an initial letter clue.

Jake climbed a tree and picked a red a\_\_\_\_\_.

Students should now be able to determine that the word is *apple*. If additional clues are necessary, supply another letter or two. Once the correct word is supplied, help students realize that they used context and some letter clues to figure out the word. Stress that context and phonics were used in combination. Use other examples, such as those included below, and have students think aloud.

I like \_\_\_\_\_.

The game lasted more than \_\_\_\_\_ hours.

In the first example, a student might say, “I like. . . . Let’s see. There are many words that make sense here: *soccer*, *candy*, and *music*. From the context or words provided, I can’t really know the word so I need some letters in the word [teacher writes in a *b*]. The word could be *bears*, a girl’s name like *Brenda* or *Barb*, or. . . . No, wait, it can’t be *Brenda* or *Barb*, because a small *b* is there and people’s names begin with capital letters. It must be *bears* or *beans* or something like that. I still need more information [teacher writes *ban*]. Well, I guess it can’t be *bears* or *beans* because they are not spelled that way. Perhaps the word is *bands*. I need more letters [teacher writes *banan*]. No, it isn’t *bands*; *ban-na*, *ba-nan* [student tries different pronunciations]. Oh, *banana* could be the word; I mean *bananas*, because it makes sense, and I think that’s the way the word is spelled.”

6. After several similar examples, remind students that in reading all the words are always there. It is easier to make predictions because both context and letter clues are readily available in natural text.
7. Provide another example in which the missing word is difficult for students to pronounce and have them try to predict the unknown word. With context clues, many words are possible.

The story was \_\_\_\_\_. (unbelievable)

Supply the initial letter and students are unlikely to know the word. Then supply the second letter. Sometimes it is possible to find prefixes, suffixes, endings, and a root word. Write the word in the sentence and encourage students to use this knowledge. Draw lines between the major word parts and have students try to pronounce the word. Encourage discussion about how affixes can be used to determine the word's meaning. Then ask whether it sounds like a word they know and whether it makes sense in the sentence.

8. When numerous activities such as the foregoing have been completed, help students develop a flexible approach to use when figuring out unknown words. Two charts that you might adapt are shown below.

### Strategies to Figure Out Unknown Words

1. Use the words around the unknown word to help think of a word that makes sense in the sentence.
2. Use the letters, the sounds associated with the letters, and the words around the unknown word to say a word that makes sense in the sentence.
3. Look for root words, prefixes, suffixes, and endings. Try to pronounce the various word parts to see whether you have heard it before. Try various pronunciations, especially for the vowels.
4. Continue reading. Later sentences may help you figure out the unfamiliar word.
5. As a last resort, use the dictionary, ask someone, or skip the unknown word.

### Questions for Figuring Out Unknown Words

1. What makes sense here?
2. What sound does it start with?
3. Are there root words, prefixes, suffixes, or endings that I know?
4. Should I skip the word and keep reading?
5. Can a dictionary help me?
6. Should I ask someone?

9. Help students realize that *flexibility* is essential to recognizing unknown words. Good readers don't keep trying something that doesn't work; they move to another strategy. Strategy 3 in Section 6.5, where the notion of a critter is developed, may be useful in helping students monitor the effectiveness of the strategies they use to recognize unknown words.



## Practice and Reinforcement Activities

1. Begin with the first sentence on the board, invite predictions, and then write the next sentence. Have students share a word they are unable to figure out, along with the context in which it is found. If the student is unable to share his or her strategies, model how a combination of strategies might be used to figure out the unknown word. Help students refine the effectiveness of their strategies.
2. Encourage students to record and share their successful attempts at figuring out unknown words by verbalizing the various strategies they used.
3. Develop exercises where a modified cloze procedure is used to refine students' ability to use context and letter clues. Discuss how the word choices change as students move from the first sentence to subsequent sentences in the example below.

She left a \_\_\_\_\_ on the table.

She left a p \_\_\_\_\_ on the table.

She left a p \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ on the table.

She left a p \_\_\_\_ n on the table.

Students may request another letter to determine whether the word is *pin*, *pen*, or *pan*.

4. Younger students may profit from picture clues in cloze exercises, as illustrated below.

There is a \_\_\_\_\_



5. Have students write sentences with space for a word that is missing. Students can exchange papers with one another and attempt to fill in the missing word. Papers are returned to the authors for verification. If students have difficulty, the authors can supply the first letter or two of the missing word. This activity may also lead students to an understanding of synonyms.
6. Have students keep a log in which they record unfamiliar, unknown words, the context (a phrase or sentence containing the unknown word), and the strategies used to pronounce the words and determine their meanings. Provide opportunities for small group sharing. Be sure especially useful efforts are shared with the entire class. Be sure to acknowledge that strategy use is not always successful.

Date	Book/Page	Underlined Word in Sentence	What Was Done
3-12	Sitting Bull, p. 1	But inside the cone-shaped, buffalo-hide <u>tipi</u> on the south bank of the river . . .	From the words buffalo hide and cone-shaped, I decided it was a tepee. When I looked up the word tipi, I was correct.

7. Apply strategies for recognizing unknown words within the ongoing instructional program.