

## PRINCIPLES FOR HOW WORDS WORK

Words have parts you can hear.

- Use letter clusters: beginning, middle, end to figure out the word.
- You can add letters to the beginning of a word to make a new word (h + and = hand).
- You can add letters to the end of a word to make a new word (sea + t = seat).
- You can use a word you know to solve a new word (car, cart; part, party).
- You can add endings to make new words (book, books; read, readings).
- You can change the beginning and ending letters of words to make new words (his, hit, sit).
- You can change the middle letter or letters to make new words (cat, cut).
- You can add letters or letter clusters to make new words (it, pit; pitch, pitcher).
- You can use parts of words you know to figure words you don't know (tree + play = tray; she + make = shake).
- Some words have one part (syllable) others have two or more.
- You can apply your understandings of one syllable words to the separate syllables in a multi-syllable word.
- Some words sound the same, look different ( sail, sale) and have different meanings: homophones (one kind of homonym).
- Some words look the same but sound different (present, present) and have different meanings: homographs

Reference: Guiding Readers and Writers Grades

3-6 by Irene Fontas and Gay Su Pinnell

- Compound words may represent the two combined words (sideboard), mean something very different from the two combined words (butterfly), or may have a metaphorical significance (firestorm).
- Adding inflectional endings to words adds meaning to the word or changes the tense or part of speech.
- Prefixes and suffixes change the meaning of the word and/or part of speech.

## VOCABULARY & MEANING

- **New words for concepts already known**
  - synonyms
  - related words
- **Words that mean the opposite**
  - antonyms
  - non-examples
- **How context affects meaning**
  - "cover the charge"
  - "cover up the mistake"
- **New meanings for known words (multiple meanings)**
  - shell = 1) animal's exterior; 2) something empty
  - run = 1) tear in stocking; 2) point in baseball; 3) locomotion
- **Figurative use of words**
  - "wolfed his food"
  - "delicious words"
- **Connotative meaning** (feeling or associations connected to word—different from explicit meaning)
  - "collaboration" during WWII had a negative meaning
  - sarcasm "Ya, we're really wealthy."

## Rivet

Rivet is a word study activity invented and named by Pat Cunningham. She named the activity *rivet* because as students engaged in it, they were riveted to the task. The version outlined here has been modified by Beverly Eisle, reading consultant.

Rivet is played at the end of a guided reading lesson. The words used are drawn from the text the students have just read. They, however, have been pre-selected by the teacher to facilitate teaching points as well as build vocabulary.

Each student needs a small white board, marker, eraser, and dictionary.

Teacher tells students, "I'm thinking of a word with \_\_\_ letters." Students draw a line for each letter, "hangman" style.

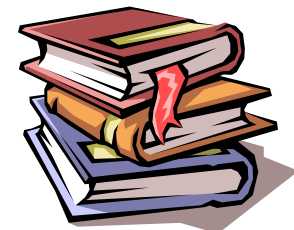
Teacher then gives students a series of hints. After each hint, she asks the students if they think they know, and the group discusses possibilities. Sample hints follow:

"The first letter goes in the first blank. It sounds like / /."

"/ / is the second sound."

"When someone is a pest, we say he is this."

Once the word is "guessed" students spell it. They then divide it into syllables, discuss its part of speech and use a dictionary to confirm spelling, syllabication, and part of speech.



Montgomery County Public Schools  
Office of Curriculum  
Judy Barylske, Supervisor

## PARTS OF SPEECH

- **Noun:** names a person, place, thing, or idea
  - **FEATURES TO DISTINGUISH**
    - 1) **common or proper**
    - 2) **singular or plural**
    - 3) **possessive**
- **Verb:** shows action (or links two ideas-  
-only *is, are, was, were, am, be, been*)
  - **FEATURES TO DISTINGUISH**
    - 1) **tense: present, past, future**
    - 2) **ed** to indicate past tense
    - 3) **will** (helping verb) to indicate future
- **Adjective:** describes a noun or pronoun
  - **PLACEMENT**
    - 1) **usually before word** it describes
    - 2) **sometimes after is or are** and describes the subject of the sentence
  - **WHAT THE ADJECTIVE TELLS**
    - 1) **what kind**
    - 2) **how many**
  - **FORM WHEN USED TO COMPARE**
    - 1) **two nouns er or more**
    - 2) **three or more nouns est or most**
- **Adverb:** describes a verb or tells how the action was done
  - **OFTEN ENDS IN ly**
  - **WHAT THE ADVERBS TELLS**
    - 1) Time: **how often** or **when**
    - 2) Place: **where**
    - 2) Manner: **how**

## SYLLABICATION

- **Orally Counting Syllables:** clap and count or have students **hold a hand under their chin and say the word;** count how many times their chin touches their hand.
- **Dividing Printed Words into Syllables:**
  - have students **DRAW vertical lines** between the letters where they think the syllables divide.
  - **CHECK each syllable for a vowel sound.** (Place *v* above sound.)
  - **CHECK that syllables divide between two consonants and in front of one**
    - 1) Syllables divide between double consonants or between two consonants. (can · non, har · bor) VC · CV
    - 2) Do not divide consonant digraphs (*ch, th, etc.*) and consonant blends. (weath · er, se · cret, cel · e · brate)
  - A single consonant between vowels usually goes with the second vowel; first syllable long vowel sound. (fa · mous, sta · tion, spi · der) but may go with the first (rap · id) V · CV  
**CHECK EXCEPTIONS:** first syllable short vowel sound. (drag · on, lem · on, mel · on cab · in) VC · V
  - Occasionally, when words contain two vowels next to each other, divide between the vowels. (li · on, po · et cre · ate) V · V
  - Word endings *-ble, -cle, -dle, -gle, -kle, -ple, -tle, -zle* are the final syllable. (The *le* ending is grouped with preceding consonant.)
  - Inflectional endings like *ing, es, ed* are usually syllables.
- **USUALLY, prefixes and suffixes are syllables**
- **CONFIRM** by checking a dictionary or Franklin speller (Teach mark used in dictionary or speller to note syllable divisions.)

## • Vowel Sounds in Syllables

- **open syllables:** when a syllable ends in vowel, vowel sound is usually long.
- **closed syllables:** when a syllable ends in consonant, vowel sound is usually short.

## SPELLING PRINCIPLES

- Always put a *u* after *q*.
- The “soft” sound of *c* or *g* is usually followed by *i, y, or e*. (cinder, gym, gentle)
- Write *i* before *e* except after *c* or when sounded like *a* as in *neighbor* or *weigh*.
- Simply add endings to most root words. (walk to walks, walked, walking)
- When a word ends in silent *e*, drop the *e* when adding an ending that begins with a vowel. (come, coming)
- Change the *y* to *i* when adding an ending unless the ending is *ing*. (carry, carried, carrying)
- Double the final consonant before adding an ending that begins with a vowel. (hop, hopping, hopped)
- When you add a prefix, the spelling of the root word doesn’t change. (pre · view, re · read)

## WORD SOLVING PRINCIPLES

- You can read or write some words by thinking about
- the sounds. (man, hot, bed, hit, cup)
  - the way they look. (the, pie)
  - what they mean. (suitcase, two/too)
  - what you know about a word to figure out a new word. (tree, my-try; connect, connection)
  - and using reference materials: dictionary, charts, computer program.