

WORD RECOGNITION **SAMPLE LESSON**

The Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy adapted with permission from Archer, A. L., Gleason, M. M., & Vachon, V. (2005a). *REWARDS: Multisyllabic word reading strategies*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

TERMS TO KNOW

Nonsense word (or Pseudoword)	A word that is not a real word in English but follows the syllable patterns in real words. For example, the word <i>tig</i> is not a real word, but it follows the consonant-vowel-consonant pattern as in <i>log</i> .
Prefix	A morpheme that comes before a root or base word and modifies its meaning
Schwa	An indistinct vowel sound in unstressed syllables (usually sounds like short <i>u</i> or short <i>i</i>)
Suffix	A morpheme that follows a root or base word and modifies its meaning
Syllable	A minimal unit of speech organized around a vowel sound

(Harris & Hodges, 1995; Moats, 2000)

OBJECTIVE

Students will learn and apply the Multisyllable Word Strategy to read unfamiliar multisyllable words.

PREREQUISITE SKILLS

Before this lesson, the students should have already learned to identify and pronounce open and closed **syllables**. They should have also learned the **prefixes** *un-* and *in-*, the **suffix** *-ly*, and the ending *-ed*, meaning past tense.

MATERIALS

- Multisyllable word list strategy (see Appendix).
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board.
- Overhead transparency.
- Pocket chart.
- Index cards.
- Prepared word list.

PREPARATION

Prepare a list of 6–8 multisyllable words that contain only closed and open syllables and prefixes, suffixes, and endings that students have learned. These words should be made up of only closed syllables in which the vowels are pronounced with their short sounds and open syllables in which the vowels are pronounced with their long sounds. Do not include words that have syllables in which vowels make the **schwa** sound (like the *a* in *ago*) or other vowel sounds (like the *i* in *piano*). Sample words with open and closed syllables and common affixes include *depended*, *accepting*, *unspoken*, *elastic*, *unintended*, *instrument*, *damppest*, *dismissed*.

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:

You have been learning different syllable patterns so that we can quickly recognize and pronounce the parts of words we don't recognize. You have also learned about word parts such as prefixes and suffixes, to help us understand the word meanings. When you are reading on your own and you come to a long word with multiple syllables, you can look for syllable patterns that you know and word parts that you recognize to help you read the word.

Using the overhead transparency, chalkboard, or pocket chart with index cards, quickly review the types of syllables and a few prefixes and suffixes you have already taught. Write examples of words containing these syllable types and familiar word parts, and have students read the words together as a group. If students make errors on a word, point out the syllable types or familiar word parts and read the word to them. Then have the students read the word after you. Continue with the other words, but be sure to return to the problem word later and have the students read it without your help. Finally, have individual students take turns reading one or two words each.

Example words with open and closed syllables and common prefixes and suffixes or word endings: combat, submit, album, exact, witness, bonus, unit, even, uneven, inexact, gladly, exactly, witnessed.

Teacher:

We have learned about closed and open syllables. A closed syllable ends in at least one consonant and the vowel is short. Remember that the vowel is “closed off” by the consonant

at the end of the word. Let's read some words that contain a closed syllable.

Point to "combat," "submit," "album," "exact," and "witness" as students read them together.

Good. Now let's read some words with open syllables. An open syllable ends in what kind of letter—Tamika? Yes, a vowel. And what kind of sound will the vowel have in an open syllable—Simon? Yes, it will make its long vowel sound. Remember that in open syllables the vowel is at the end of the syllable so the vowel is "open" to the rest of the word. Here are some words with open and closed syllables.

Point to "bonus," "unit," and "even" as students read them together.

Teacher:

Wonderful. You have also learned to recognize some word parts that may appear at the beginning or end of a word and that change the meaning of the word. We know that the prefixes *un-* and *in-* mean what, Terri? Yes, they both mean "not". Here are words that begin with those prefixes. Read the prefix.

Point to "un" in "uneven".

Now read the word.

Point to "uneven".

Yes, *uneven*. Now read this prefix.

Point to "in" in the word "inexact".

Now read the word.

Point to "inexact".

Yes, *inexact* means "not exact". Something that is exact is just right in every way, so if something is *inexact*, it is not just right in every way. If your work is *inexact*, it has some mistakes.

These two words end with the word part *-ly*.

Point to "gladly" and "exactly".

If we put *-ly* at the end of the word *slow*, how would we say the new word—Jerome? Yes, the word would be *slowly*. The suffix *-ly* means "in a ___ way," so the word *slowly* would mean "in a slow way". Here are two words that end with the suffix *-ly*. Read the suffix.

Point to "ly" in "gladly".

Now read the word.

Point to "gladly".

Yes, *gladly*. Now read this word part.

Point to "ly" in "exactly".

Good. Now read the word.

Point to "exactly".

Yes, *exactly* means “in an exact way” or “just right in every way”. The last word on our list has an ending you know well—*ed*. What does that tell you about the action in the word—Javier? Yes, it means that it happened in the past. Now look at the word, everyone. Read the first part.

Point to “*wit*” in “*witnessed*”.

Yes, *wit*. Now read the next part.

Point to “*ness*” in “*witnessed*”.

Yes, *ness*. Read those parts together.

Point to “*witness*”.

Now add the *-ed* ending and read the whole word.

Point to “*witnessed*”.

Yes, *witnessed*.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:

Today, you will learn a strategy, or plan, to read words with more than one syllable. You will be able to use this strategy in any class to help you read words with more than one syllable.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Expository or narrative

Grouping: Whole class or small group

Display a poster with the steps for the multisyllable strategy written on it. (This poster will be kept in the room for student reference as they learn the strategy.)

FIGURE 103. MULTISYLLABLE WORD READING STRATEGY.

Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy	
1.	Find the vowels.
2.	Look for word parts you know.
3.	Read each word part.
4.	Read the parts quickly.
5.	Make it sound like a real word.

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Teacher:

I'm going to show you how I would use the strategy if I were trying to read a word I didn't know. You might already be able to read the word that I'm going to write, but, if you can, don't say it out loud. I want to show you what you could do if you were trying to read a long word that you don't know.

Write "fantastic" on an overhead transparency. Think aloud as you model each step of the strategy for the students.

The first step in the strategy is, "Find the vowels." I know that every syllable must have a vowel sound, so finding the vowels will help me find the syllables in the word.

Point to the word "fantastic" on the overhead.

In this word I see an *a*, another *a*, and an *i*. I'm going to circle the vowels in the word.

Circle the vowels in the word "fantastic".

Step 2 of the strategy is, "Look for word parts you know." Hmmm. I see something that looks like *fan* at the beginning. That isn't one of the prefixes we have worked on, but it is a word part I know. I'm going to underline it.

Underline "fan" in "fantastic".

I also see two more closed syllables in the word. I'm going to underline the closed syllables.

Underline "tas" and "tic" in "fantastic".

Step 3 is, "Read each word part." OK. Since these are closed syllables, I think the vowels will have their short sounds. *Fan-tas-tic*.

Step 4 is, "Read the parts quickly." *Fantastic*. That makes sense! The word is *fantastic*.

Step 5 says, "Make it sound like a real word." The word I read sounds right. *Fantastic*. I don't think I have to change it. It sounds like a real word.

*Be sure to emphasize the accented syllable: "fantastic". At first, it may be helpful to demonstrate how placing the emphasis on the wrong syllable will make it into a **nonsense word**: "fantastic," "fantastic". Changing the emphasis to the correct syllable can be part of Step 5: Make it sound like a real word.*

HELPFUL HABIT	For English language learners, teach this strategy: Whenever you hear a new multi-syllable word, pay attention to which syllable has the emphasis. You can put a dot under it or underline this syllable. The next time you hear or read the word, this mark will remind you of the correct pronunciation.
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GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole group or small group

Teacher:

Now, let's do one together.

Write the word "unimpressed" on the overhead transparency.

Teacher:

What is the first step of our strategy—Ta’Michael?

Student:

Find the vowels.

Teacher:

Ta’Michael, what are the vowel letters?

Student:

A, e, i, o, u, and sometimes *y*.

Teacher:

Good. Please come up and circle all of the vowel letters you see in this word.

Ta’Michael circles “u,” “i,” “e,” and “e.”

Thank you, Ta’Michael. What’s the next step in the strategy—Terri?

Student:

Look for word parts you know.

Teacher:

Terri, do you see any word parts you know?

Student:

It has *un-* at the beginning.

Teacher:

Excellent, Terri. You found the prefix *un-* in the word. What does that mean—Javier? Yes, *un-* means “not.” Terri, come up and underline the prefix *un-* in the word. Great, thank you. What other word parts do you see in the word—Simon?

Student:

I see *-ed* at the end. That means it’s in the past.

Teacher:

Excellent, Simon. Please come up and underline the *-ed*. Now, do you see any syllable types you know? Remember, the vowels can help you find the syllables since each syllable has one vowel sound in it. Tamika, what do you see?

Student:

I think there are two closed syllables: *im-* and *press*.

Teacher:

Wow, Tamika, you are really using what you know about syllables! Please come underline those two word parts. The next steps in the strategy are to read the parts, and then read them quickly. Everyone, read the first part.

Point to “un-”.

Teacher:

Yes, *un-*. Read the part.

Point to “im”.

Read the part.

Point to “press”.

Now read those parts together.

Students:

Unimpress.

Teacher:

Good. Now add the ending to make it show that it happened in the past.

Students:

Unimpressed.

Teacher:

Terrific. Does it sound like a real word—Maia?

Student:

I think so. I’ve heard the word *impress*, like you wear a really cool shirt to try to impress your friends.

Teacher:

That’s a great example, Maia. You’re right. The base word is *impress*. If you impress someone, you make them think that something is very important or special. So what would *impressed* mean—Tamika?

Student:

Well, I think the *-ed* ending means I did it in the past.

Teacher:

Yes it can mean that. We could say, “I impressed all my friends when I wore my new shirt.” There is another meaning for this word. I could say, “I was impressed when I saw Maia’s cool new shirt.” That means I saw the shirt and thought it was very special. Now what would it mean if I said, “I was *unimpressed* when I saw the boy tell a joke.” Anyone?

Student:

If *un-* means “not,” I guess I did not think it was very special. I didn’t like the joke very much.

Teacher:

Exactly! If you are unimpressed by something, you don’t think it is very special. Simon, can you finish this sentence—I was unimpressed when...

Student:

I was unimpressed when...I saw last night’s basketball game.

Teacher:

Why were you unimpressed when you saw the game?

Student:

We lost. We played bad.

Teacher:

OK. That makes sense. Everyone, please read the five steps of the strategy together.

Point to the poster as the class reads. Repeat, if necessary.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Teacher:

You did a very good job of using the strategy to read this long word. Now I'm going to give you a chance to read some words with your partner. Listen carefully to my directions. When you get together with your partner, I will give you a list of words. First, Partner 1 will use the strategy to read a word. Partner 2 will check Partner 1's work and remind Partner 1 how to use the strategy, if needed. If both partners are not sure about how to use the strategy to read the word, raise your hands and I will come to help you figure it out. When you have finished a word, raise your hand and I'll come to check you. Then you switch jobs, and Partner 2 uses the strategy to read the next word, while Partner 1 helps.

What will you do first when you get into your partners—Javier?

Student:

Partner 1 will read the first word.

Teacher:

Yes. Remember that you will use the five steps in our strategy to read the word. What will Partner 2 do—Simon?

Student:

Help Partner 1, if needed.

Teacher:

What if you both get stuck on the word—Tamika?

Student:

Raise our hands and you'll come.

Teacher:

Yes. And what will you do when you have figured out a word—Ta'Michael?

Student:

Raise our hands so you can check it.

Teacher:

Excellent. Please move over next to your partners.

Give each pair a list of six to eight multisyllable words that are made of open syllables; closed syllables; and prefixes, suffixes, and endings that they have learned.

IMPORTANT: Do not include irregular words or those that have syllables in which the vowels do not make their predicted sounds (i.e., the long sound in open syllables and the short sound in closed syllables. At this point students should not have to do Step 5 of the strategy. They should not have to “play with” the vowel sounds in the word to make it sound like a real word.) After students have mastered the strategy, teach a lesson on reading words with the schwa sound, in which you model how to make it sound like a real word. See page 237 for a description of Step 5 of the Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy.

Have students work in partner groups to read the words, following the directions above.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:

How might you use the Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy to help you outside of this class?

Student:

It could help when we try to read hard words.

Teacher:

Yes. When you are reading in your science, social studies, English, or math classes, I want you to remember to try the strategy. It may not work for all the hard words you see because we haven't learned all the syllable types yet, but try it anyway. You may be able to figure out most of the words this way. I'm going to ask you tomorrow how you used the strategy in your other classes.

Do you think you might be able to use the strategy at home?

Student:

Maybe when I'm reading my new comic book. Sometimes they have some long words in them.

Teacher:

Good idea, Simon. Anytime you read, at home or at school, and you come to long words that you don't know, try the strategy. I can't wait to find out how it works for you.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check students' work carefully as they work with their partners to read words.

Plan several lessons to review the strategy and have students apply it in more challenging words, especially as you teach more syllable types.

Provide opportunities for students to partner-read selected passages that contain multiple examples of multisyllable words that contain the syllable types the students have learned. Remind students to try the strategy to read words that have more than one syllable. Have partners remind each other to use the strategy to help them read unfamiliar words. Monitor their reading closely and provide feedback.

PERIODIC/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Review the strategy often, and teach more lessons on using the strategy, as needed. It may require several lessons and opportunities to practice before students begin to use the Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy independently. Share this strategy with your students' content area teachers so that students can follow the same procedure in other classes and generalize the strategy. Ask the content area teachers to remind students to try the Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy when they come to a long word they don't know.