Our Objectives

- For participants to understand the importance of:
  - Learning to hear, blend and segment syllables before learning to read or spell multi-syllable words.
  - Reading single-syllable words accurately before teaching techniques for reading multi-syllable words.

- To introduce participants to new techniques to help students read and spell unfamiliar long words.

Syllabication Rules: Focus on Consonants

- Break syllables between two consonants that are the same.
  - rab bit  
  - ten nis  
  - cot tage

- When two consonants are together, break between the consonants.
  - bar gain  
  - vel vet  
  - con ceal

- Keep blends and consonant digraphs together.
  - sub sti tute  
  - ath le tic

But what about gastral?  
  - gast ral  
  - gas tral?

Syllabication Rules: VCV

- When 2 vowels are separated by one consonant, divide the word after the first vowel and before the consonant.
  - V / CV: the first vowel is in an open syllable and is long
    - si lent  
    - e vict  
    - pho to

- If the first try doesn’t work, divide after the consonant and before the second vowel.
  - VC / V: the first vowel is in a closed syllable and is short
    - rob in  
    - van ish  
    - ex act
What Does Readsters Recommend for Teaching Students To Read Words with More Than One Syllable?

Xavier, grade 3, will be our guide for learning about how to teach attacking reading multi-syllable words.

The videos are available in a series called *Looking at Reading Interventions* on the Reading Rockets website: https://www.readingrockets.org/shows/reading-interventions

Select Episode 6

Critical Skills before Teaching Reading and Spelling of Multi-Syllable Words

- Students need to demonstrate they know what a syllable is by saying words and orally breaking them into syllables.
- Students need to be able to read one-syllable words with the spelling patterns in the multi-syllable word.

Importance of Being Able To Read One-Syllable Nonsense Words

- Always make certain that students can read or spell real and nonsense single-syllable words accurately before teaching students to read or spell multi-syllable words.
- They need to be able to read *ab* and *scond* ... before reading the unfamiliar word *abscond*.

Single-syllable to Multi-Syllable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>Variation</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tr>
<td>VC</td>
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<td>week</td>
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| VC      | VC        | app
| VC      | VC        | order   |
| VC      | VC        | abCond  |
| VC      | VC        | abCond  |
| VC      | VC        | abCond  |

Importance of Being Able To Read One-Syllable Nonsense Words

- **ad** (monish) = admonish
- All three syllables have short vowels.
- Two of the syllables are nonsense words.
Teach Students to Read Words Systematically

After students master reading one-syllable words with a spelling pattern, they are ready for multi-syllable words with all patterns they know.

Examples of Spelling Patterns to Introduce Systematically

**Short Vowel Pattern** (closed syllables)
- One vowel before one or more consonants spells the short sound (a, i, e, o, u)
bat, bath, bath, velvet, satan, Wisconsin, appendix

**R-controlled Vowels**
- One vowel before a consonant spells an r-controlled sound (ar, er, ir, ur, or, tar)
mark, cortex, organ, armpit, carton, carnal, compartment, insurgent

**Long Vowels** (3 spelling patterns)
- Open syllables – One vowel at the end of the syllable spells the long sound (o, a, e, i, o, u)
recant, prevent, beyond, tomat, succulent, utility
- Silent e – Two vowels (v-e) with a consonant between them spell the long vowel sound of the first vowel (la, ve, si, co, cu)
shipmate, immune, pulsate, decade, infantile
- Vowel teams - More than one letter spells the long vowel sound (pay, raid, beat, vet, sight, bite, note, waist, can)
repeat, chimpanzee, lackadaisical, although, venue

**Other Vowels**
- More than one letter spells a vowel sound (shout, down, toy, con, boot, new, fuse, cock)
pou, boomerang, acoustic, misconstrue, misunderstood, deployment

The Key to Reading Unfamiliar Multi-Syllable Words: Look for the Vowels!!!

We teach students the following about vowels:

- Every spoken syllable has a vowel sound
- Almost every written syllable has one or more letters that spell the vowel sound
- Vowel letter basics:
  - *a e i o u* are almost always vowels
  - *y* is always a vowel at the end of a word
  - *u* is not a vowel when it is after the letter *q*

Questions To Help Students Read Multi-Syllable Words

1. **How many vowel letters in the word?**
   - Students show answer with fingers

2. **Are they together or apart?**
   - Students put plans together for “together” or separate hands for “apart”

3. **Is there a silent e at the end?**
   - Students give thumbs up or down

4. **How many syllables in the word?**
   - Students show answer with fingers

Reading Multi-Syllable Words with Short Vowels

(e.g., bathtub, napkin, fantastic, establishment)

Questions To Help Students Read Multi-Syllable Words at the Short Vowel Stage

1. **Ask these 3 questions because the students don’t know about silent e yet.**
   - How many vowels letters?
   - Are they together or apart?
   - How many syllables in the word?

2. **Optional: Do you see a silent e at the end?**
   - If older students know about silent e, you can add the question about silent e, even though none of the words has a silent e.
   - This gets the students in the habit of looking for the silent e.

Typical Rules for Syllables Do Not Apply

- Any way of breaking the syllables that will get to the pronunciation works.
- “Admonish” might be broken these ways:
  1. *ad mon ish* (The “syllable rule” way)
  2. *ad mo nish* (The more typical oral way)
    - Because the student only has been taught short vowels, the ‘o’ will probably be read with a short vowel sound.
    - If the student reads the middle syllable with a long vowel sound, tell him to “flex” the ‘o’ to a short o.
- *adm o nish* will NOT work
  - Because in English, the letters ‘dm, are never together in a syllable, and they are never pronounced as a blend. The /d/ and the /m/ are always separate sounds in separate syllables.
Rules You Might Teach

- Break between two consonants that are the same, and only pronounce the consonant once.
  - rab bit  ten nis  ad dress  slug gish

- Keep digraphs together
  - ac com plish ment  graph ic  (or gra phic)

Most of the time . . . shep herd

If Necessary, Help the Student Break the Word So Each Syllable Can Be Pronounced

1. If the student writes:  adm o nish
   - Point out that the syllable ‘adm’ isn’t easy to pronounce, and have the student move the ‘m’ to the middle syllable.
   (Most students have an innate sense of syllable division, although a few don’t.)

2. If the student writes:  admon ish
   - Remind student that when three vowels are apart, there will be three syllables.

3. If the student writes:  ad moni sh
   - Remind student that every syllable has a vowel.

The Steps on the Previous Slide Are a Starting Point

- Start with all the steps (asking about vowels, having students read each syllable out of order, etc.)
- After a few times using all – or most of – the steps, have students break words into syllables without any help.
  - Correct a student’s syllable division only if necessary:
    - If a student breaks a word  adm – on – ish, explain that dm cannot be pronounced at the end of a syllable, and we need to move the m to the next syllable”
    - If a student break a word admo – nish, ask if every syllable has only one vowel and let the student self-correct by moving the letters so that it has three syllables.

inhabit

1. How many vowel letters?
   - Raise fingers to show me.
2. Together or apart?
   - Put hands apart to show me the vowels are apart.
3. How many syllables?
   - Use fingers to show me.
4. Draw lines.

5. Write syllables.  in hab it  or  in ha bit
6. Read each syllable out of order.
7. Read each syllable in order.
8. Read whole word.

Schwa

| Α | Ə |
Schwa: \( \Theta \)
The Most Common Sound in English

- Schwa is important for reading and spelling multi-syllable words, especially for struggling readers or spellers.
- Most words with two or more syllables have a schwa sound.

We Do

More Words with Schwa - /\( \Theta \)/
- along
  - the \( \Theta \) spells schwa, not short a or long a
- problem
  - the e spells schwa, not short e or long e
- rapid
  - the i spells schwa, not short i or long i
- dragon
  - the o spells schwa, not short o or long o
- ‘U’ spelling schwa is not a problem. (Wonderful)

To Request Lesson Plan for Teaching Schwa

- Email michael@readsters.com and ask for the Schwa Lesson Plan packet.

Content Area Words with Short Vowels
MATH (some with schwa)

- element
- expand
- extend
- model
- product
- statistic
- hexagon
- hexagonal
- connect
- random
- problem
- subset
- subtract
- gallon
- metric
- segment
- octagon
- octagonal
- pentagon
- solid
- constant
- complex
- convex
- mathematics
- input
- maximum
- minimum
- profit
- axis
- limit
- compliment
- construct

SOCIAL STUDIES (some with schwa)

- cabinet
- citizen
- civil
- abolish
- annex
- assassin
- capitalism
- amendment
- radical
- rebel
- republic
- republican
- democrat
- democratic
- scandal
- pacifist
- political
- propaganda
- protestant
- public
- misconduct
- element
- conflict
- custom
- elastic
- ethnic
- fossil
- investment
- product
- dissent
- politics
- central
### Content Area Words with Short Vowels

**GEOGRAPHY** *(some with schwa)*

- capital
- capitol
- canyon
- continent
- ethnic
- fossil
- grasslands
- planet
- delta
- tropical
- subtropical
- tundra
- Volcanic
- canal
- continental
- inland
- peninsula
- savanna

**SCIENCE** *(some with schwa)*

- abdomen
- adapt
- constant
- contract
- convex
- expand
- filament
- fossil
- funnel
- habitat
- sediment
- skeleton
- fungus
- habitat
- infect
- insect
- magnet
- mammal
- piston
- pollen
- retina
- sediment
- skeleton
- fulcrum
- gamma
- Kelvin
- kinetic
- ligament
- magma
- magnetic
- malignant
- meniscus
- metabolism

### Flexing Vowel Sounds

Schwa Can Help with Pronouncing Unfamiliar Words

1. The student reads “petition” as pea’ – ŭ – shun
2. You say: You decoded it correctly. Flex the ‘e’ to schwa.
3. Student says: puh – ŭ – shun
4. You say: Yes, everyone point to and read “petition”.

### Teach Students to “Flex”

Teach students to try different vowel sounds

- If cóm món, doesn’t work, “flex” the second vowel to a schwa.
- If ā void, doesn’t work, flex the first vowel to a schwa.

### What are the two different pronunciations? Where is the schwa?

1. record
   - rĕ cord - noun
   - rĕ cord - verb
2. present
   - pré zent - noun
   - pré zent - verb
3. conduct
   - cũn duct - noun
   - cân duct - verb
4. convert
   - cüm vert - noun
   - cân vert - verb
Teaching Multi-syllable Words with Silent E

Add one new question to help the student chunk the syllables around vowels.

1. How many vowels?
2. Are they together or apart?
3. Do you see a silent e?
   - The silent e will belong with another vowel in a syllable.
   - Show thumb up for yes, thumb down for no.
4. How many syllables?

complicate

1. How many vowel letters?
   - Raise fingers to show me. (4)
2. Together or apart?
   - Put hands apart to show me the vowels are apart. (apart)
3. Do you see silent -e?
   - Show. (thumb up)
4. How many syllables?
   - Use fingers to show me. (3)
5. Draw lines.
6. Write syllables.
7. Read each syllable.
8. Read whole word.

Usually, VCE spellings are at the end of a multi-syllable word

Sometimes vce at the end of a multi-syllable word spells a long vowel sound:
- replace antelope
- subscribe demonstrate
- exclude centipede
- complete illustrate
- alcover contribute
- capsizel sanitize
- lactose imitate
- octane bellicose

Sometimes vce at the end of a multi-syllable word spells schwa:
- palace opposite
- lettuce populace
- terrace adjective
- service literate
- justice effective
- Candice instinctive
- cursive apprentice
- confederate cowardice

literate

1. How many vowel letters?
   - Raise fingers to show me. (4)
2. Together or apart?
   - Put hands apart to show me the vowels are apart. (apart)
3. Do you see a silent -e?
   - Show. (thumb up)
4. How many syllables?
   - Use fingers to show me. (3)
5. Draw lines.
6. Write syllables.
7. Read each syllable.
8. Read whole word.

Most of the time VCE comes at the end of a multi-syllable word, but exceptions exist

- These may look like possible vce words, but they are not because silent e is almost always at the end of a word:
  - electric
  - kinetic
  - calendar
  - delectable
  - relevant
  - selection

- Compound words are exceptions when a silent e can be in the middle of a word:
  - makeshift
  - lakefront
  - timekeeper
  - lamebrain
  - blameworthy
  - wineglass
  - bonehead
  - polecat
  - sideburn

- Base or root words with consonant suffixes are exceptions when a silent e can be in the middle of a word:
  - timeless
  - hopeful
  - amusement
  - lifeless
  - bravely
  - requirement
  - likeness
  - falsehood
  - lonesome
Reading Multi-syllable Words with Vowel Teams

With vowel teams, the second question becomes relevant

1. How many vowels letters?
2. Are they together or apart?
   When vowels are together, they usually represent one vowel sound.
3. Do you see silent -e?
4. How many syllables?

clairvoyant
1. How many vowel letters?
   - Raise fingers to show me. (4)
2. Together or apart?
   - Show with hands. (some together & some apart)
3. Do you see a silent -e?
   - Show. (thumb down)
4. How many syllables?
   - Use fingers to show me. (3)
5. Draw lines.
6. Write syllables.
7. Read each syllable.
8. Read whole word.

Words Students Can Read

reveal          underneath
increase        disappear
release         leadership
repeat          chimpanzee
prevail         overload
cockroach       disagree
mushroom        bassoonist
approach        discontinue

Spelling Multi-syllable Words

The Power of Understanding How to Use Syllables When Spelling

Matt

This was in 2001 and it was impromptu.

With planning, we would have shown the word and said it, then proceed with the lesson.

When Matt spelled each syllable, he would have said the syllable, then looked at the word to spell the syllable.
Spelling Multi-Syllable Words Starts with Hearing the Syllables

• Many students try to memorize the spelling without paying attention to matching spelling to syllables.

• We need to teach students to spell by syllable so they understand that they do not have to memorize a string of letters.

Two Situations for Helping Students Spell Multi-Syllable Words

1. Teach students to spell specific words
   • Always show the word first.
   • Teach students to match oral syllables to written syllables.

2. Answer: “How do I spell _________?”:
   • Ask the student to say the word, then break it into syllables.
   • Guide the students to spell each syllable correctly.
Summary of Important Points

Students Need to Know:

- How to orally segment and blend syllables.
- Every syllable has a vowel sound.
- Almost all syllables have one or more vowel letters.
- \(a, e, i, o, u\) are almost always vowels.
- \(y\) is always a vowel at the end of a word.
- \(u\) is not a vowel after \(q\).

Reading Multi-Syllable Words

- Students break words into syllables around the vowels in order to read them.
  - When one vowel is by itself, it will create a syllable; except silent \(e\)
  - Silent \(e\) stays in the syllable with the vowel before it.
  - When two vowels are together, they will create a syllable. (There are exceptions: chaos, violin, etc.)
- If the word doesn’t sound right, “flex” the vowels.

Learning to Spell Multi-Syllable Words

1. The teacher shows the word and says it.
2. Teacher guides students to break words into syllables orally and draw a line for each syllable.
3. Teacher guides students to spell the word by syllable on the lines drawn.
   - Use a heart or other device to draw attention to letters that are difficult to remember.
4. Students spell the word.
Overview of Steps for Reading A Difficult Multi-Syllable Word

1. Ask:  How many vowels do you see?  Students show number with fingers
    Are the vowels together or apart?  Students show hands together or apart
    Do you see a silent e?  Students show thumb up or down
    How many syllables?  Students show number with fingers

1. Students draw a line for each syllable.  ___  ___  ____
   – If the student draws the incorrect number of lines,
     ask the student to count the vowels again.

2. Students write one syllable on each line.  ad  van  tage
   – Teacher guides student to correct syllables with questions and suggestions.

3. Call on one student to read each syllable individually, out-of-order.
   – Teacher guides student to correct syllables with questions and suggestions.

4. Call on a different student to read each syllable individually in order,
   then blend them into a word.

5. Ask all students to read each syllable individually in order, then blend
   them into a word.
Overview of Steps for Teaching Spelling of a Difficult Multi-Syllable Word

1. **Briefly introduce the word**
   1. Show the word
   2. Say the word
   3. Have students repeat the word
   4. Quickly give a brief definition for unfamiliar words, then have students repeat the word

2. **Guide students to orally break word into syllables**

3. **Draw lines for each syllable**
   1. Teacher and students draw a line for each syllable
   2. Call on several students to say the first, last, second, etc. syllable as you point to the line.
   3. Point to each line and have all students say each syllable, then say the word.

4. **Students spell each syllable orally while teacher writes spelling on the board**
   1. Show the written word.
   2. Call on individual students to orally spell each syllable, and teacher writes syllables on the lines on the board.
   3. Discuss and mark any tricky spellings while you spell.
   4. Students then spell each syllable on lines they have drawn, marking tricky spellings.

5. **Students write spellings on each line and mark tricky spellings.**

6. **Students draw lines and spell each syllable independently, and mark tricky spellings**
   1. Teacher and students erase or cover spelling before students draw lines and spell words
      - Suggestions: use a dry erase board, fold paper, write on back of paper, write on different piece of paper
   2. All students quietly say the word by syllable and draw a line for each syllable.
   3. All students spell each syllable on the lines.
   4. All students mark tricky spellings.

7. **Students spell the word as a whole word.**
   1. Students erase or cover previous spelling before writing the word
Steps to Learn Reading Multi-syllable Words

1. **How many vowel letters?**
   - Show with fingers.

2. **Together or apart?**
   - Show with hands.

3. **Do you see a silent -e?**
   - Show thumb up or down.

4. **How many syllables?**
   - Show with fingers.

5. **Draw lines.**

6. **Write syllables on lines.**

7. **Touch and read each syllable.**

8. **Trace under and read whole word.**

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## Two to Four Syllable Words with Short Vowels & Schwa

### Compound Words

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### Two Syllable Words

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### 3 Syllable Words

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### 4 Syllable Words

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<td>inconsistent</td>
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</table>
Content area words with short vowels and schwa

**MATH**
connect
digit
mathematic
problem
subset
subtract
nickel
gallon
metric
seven
common
compass
element
expand
label
model
product
statistic
tenth
hexagon
octagon
pentagon
segment
solid
vertex
width
constant
complex
depth
extend
exact
express
given
input
minimum
profit
axis
random
subscription
limit
compliment

**SOCIAL STUDIES**
construct
convex
hexagonal
segment
tangent

**SCIENCE**
cabinet
citizen
civil
abolish
amendment
annex
assassin
capitalism
central
communism*
conflict
custom
dissent
draft
elastic
ethnic
granges
fossil
investment
product
pacific
political
Protestant
public
radical
rebel
republic
republican
democrat
scandal
trend

**GEOGRAPHY**
capital
canyon
compass
continent
ethnic
fossil
grasslands
planet
tropical
vast
volcanic
canal
canyon
continental
grid
inland
sediment
silt
subtropical

**LITERATURE**
abdomen
adapt
constant
contract
convex
expand
extinct
filament
fossil
funnel
habitat
hatch
infect
insect
instinct
magnet
mammal
model
pollen
retina
sediment
skeleton
solid
tendon
combust
conduct
connect
distill
dominant
element
electron
fulcrum
fungus
ingest
Kelvin
kinetic
ligament
magnetic
malignant
meniscus
metabolism*
nonmetal
pistil
piston
plasma
pollen
solvent
specific

* The final syllable does not have a vowel letter.
ALL KINDS OF VOWELS

2 syllable words

exclude  convene  acquaint  approach
estate    inscribe  restrain  faucet
decade    canteen  ailment  subdue
compose   toffee   applaud  saucer
incline   trolley  acclaim
fixate    prevail  ensuing

3 syllable words

valentine tuxedo  imitate  baloney
distribute congregate  nominate  dominate
demonstrate absolute  manicure  committee
recognize comprehend  duplicate  remainder
incomplete elastic  halibut  appraisal
isolate    demolish  dominate  revenue
microscope populate  altitude  autograph
develop    delegate  complicate  authentic
consonant  execute  indicate  flamboyant
stimulate  maximize  absentee  loyalty
romantic  medicate  chimpanzee

4 syllable words

microscopic tonsillitis  evaluate

5 syllable word

hippopotamus
Identify the Letter that Spells Schwa

1. Read the word correctly.
2. Read the word with two short vowel sounds.
3. Circle the letter that spells the schwa sound.
4. Say the name of the letter that spells schwa.

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