Understand Word Analysis
Skills & Strategies

Syllables
Compound Words
Structural Analysis
Root words
Affixes, Suffixes, Prefixes
Structural Analysis

Definition:

- “A word recognition skills in which knowledge of the meaningful parts of words aids in the identification of an unknown written word.”

Structural analysis

- aids with the pronunciation of unknown words.
- aids with the understanding of an unknown word.
- the student looks for meaningful parts of an unfamiliar word in order to decode it or to determine what the word means.
Syllable

Definition:

A vowel or a group of letters containing a vowel sound which together form a pronounceable unit that usually does not have meaning on its own.

Heilman, A. W. (1968). *Phonics in Proper Perspective*

pa-per    pen-cil    com-mon    stum-ble
Syllabication
Definition:
The ability to break words into syllables, aids in reading by:

- Helps to pronounce words not recognized as sight words.
- Assisting in spelling of words
Root Words & Base Words

- **Root words** come from another language or language structure and can not stand alone in English as words (Bound morphemes)
- Examples: the root *tain* in the following:
  - Maintain  sustain  pertain
  - Refer  confer  prefer
- **Base words** are English words and can stand alone as words (free morphemes)
- assist/assistance  under/undergo
Adding to Base or Root Words

Affixes

- Letter combinations or syllables added at the beginning or end of a word to change its meaning or part of speech.
- There are two kinds of affixes:
  - Prefixes
  - Suffixes
Prefixes

- Prefixes are attached to the beginning of base words or root words to change their meaning.

- Examples:
  - unpleasant
  - disorganized
  - enable
  - misspell
  - preview
  - resend
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dis-</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>disregard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En-</td>
<td>within</td>
<td>within</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>inactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-</td>
<td>opposite of</td>
<td>unlock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-</td>
<td>again</td>
<td>redo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-</td>
<td>before</td>
<td>preview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mis-</td>
<td>wrong</td>
<td>misrepresent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ir-</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>irresponsible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suffixes

- Suffixes are attached to the end of base words or root words that can change the word’s part of speech or its meaning.

- Two types of suffixes:
  - **Inflectional endings** – the formation of grammatical variants of the same word
    - determine  determined
  - **Derivational suffix** – the process of forming a new word on the basis of an existing word
    - happy  happiness
Common inflectional endings are:

- **s**  dogs
- **es** matches
- **ess** hostess
- **ing** skating
- **ed** helped
- **er** shorter
- **est** tallest
- **ly** softly
Inflectional ending *ed*:
- Can be pronounced as /t/ as in baked
- Can be pronounced as /ed/ as in branded
- Can be pronounced as /d/ as in warmed
Common suffixes

-y consisting of or tends to be—hairy
-ful full of--beautiful
-er, -or resident of or one who does--teacher
-able, -ible capable, worth --adaptable
-less condition of being or without--hatless
-tion, -ion, -ation action --contribution
-ness condition of being--directness
Greek and Latin Roots

Many English words find their roots in Greek and Latin.

For example from the Greek:

- `astro` meaning star
- `naut` meaning sailor

This gives us `astronaut`

- `Aero`  air  aerodynamics  aerobatics
- `Basil`  king  basil  basilica
Can you think of words with these Greek or Latin roots?

- Aqua: water
- Bio: life
- Cycle: circle or wheel
- Geo: earth
- Neo: new
- Phon: sound
- Port: carry
- Psych: mind
- Scribe: write
Compound Words

- Compound words are a combination of two words.
- The new word must keep the pronunciation of the two original words in order to be considered a compound word.
- The new word contains some sense of meaning connection with one or both of the original words.
- Examples: roadway, classroom, bookstore
Syllabication

“The primary reason for teaching or learning how to divide words into syllables for reading or decoding purposes is to give the reader clues to the possible pronunciation of vowel sounds in unknown words.”

Cooper, J. David (2003). Literacy: Helping Children Construct Meaning
By breaking words in syllables or smaller parts, students are better able to pronounce the parts and then blend them back into a word that is familiar to them.

When teaching syllabication, students should be taught to first look for meaningful chunks of the unknown word.
Syllabication Generalizations

- The number of syllables in a word is closely related to the number of vowels in the word.

- Cat  alphabet  pencil  tiger

- Exceptions exist: rate, sweet
  Think about the final e as always silent.
Syllabication Generalizations-cont.

- Affixes usually form separate syllables
  - Examples: redo, capless
- Inflectional -ed ending exceptions:
  - Changed (1 syllable)
  - wanted (2 syllables)
  - loaded (2 syllables)
Syllabication Generalizations-cont.

- Contractions usually consist of one syllable since it is the vowel that is deleted in the formation of the contraction.
  - They’ll (1 syllable)
  - Wasn’t (2 syllables)
Syllabication Generalizations-cont.

- When there are two consonants separating two vowels, the syllable division usually occurs between the two consonants. (VCCV)
  - pen-cil
  - per-haps
  - win-dow

- In a VCCV pattern, consonant blends and digraphs are generally not divided in words.
  - au-thor
  - em-blem
  - graph-ic
Syllabication Generalizations-cont.

- In a VCV pattern
  - usually a word is divided before the consonant (open syllable)
  - Usually divide the word after the first vowel.
    - Pa-per    ho-tel    o-ver
  - In words where the consonant goes with the first vowel (closed syllable), the first vowel usually going to be short
    - Rob-in    riv-er    lim-it
- The key here is to try each and compare with one’s oral language.
Syllabication Generalizations-cont.

- When a word ends with –le and is preceded by a consonant, the last syllable usually consists of the –le and the preceding consonant.
  - sim-ple  cra-dle  nee-dle
  - Exceptions: usually blends and digraphs are not divided
- Words are found divided both ways by authorities
  - an-kle  ank-le
Syllabication Generalizations-cont.

- When dividing compound words into syllables, begin by dividing each word as a separate syllable.
  - birth-day  base-ball  book-store
  - bas-ket-ball
Homographs

- **Homographs** are words that are spelled the same, but have different meanings.
  - Lock: I installed a lock on the door.
  - Lock: The gates of the lock closed and the water began to rise.

- **Homonym**: Words that sound the same, but are spelled different.
  - Loch: I did look for the monster in Loch Ness.
Context Clues

- Readers use a variety of strategies to help them pronounce an unfamiliar word.

- One of the most important strategies is the use of context clues.
Context Clues

• Usually, context clues refer to the text surrounding an unfamiliar word and are thought of as syntactic (language structure) clues, along with semantic (meaning) clues.

• Example: I went to the st_______ to get an apple.

• Example: I have a new p____. I will not be cold in winter with my new coat.
Context Clues

- Unfamiliar words encountered by early readers in their reading materials are usually part of their listening and speaking vocabularies.

- For this reason, using meaningful context is often the most helpful word analysis strategy for early readers.
Context Clues

- Syntactic clues, semantic clues and the reader’s background knowledge work together to assist the reader to pronounce unfamiliar words accurately.