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# **Word Study for Students with Learning Disabilities and English Language Learners**

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# Introduction

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Reading is likely the most vital skill for a child to acquire. However, for some students, acquisition of reading does not occur easily. This is particularly true for students with disabilities as well as for students who are English language learners. There are many elements of reading that we now know must be taught and mastered by students for them to become fluent, independent readers. Teachers need to have the tools to teach these elements effectively and efficiently.

One of the essential elements leading to reading achievement is word recognition ability. Students' word recognition ability can be improved through word study instruction. Teachers must have effective instructional tools to teach word recognition to all students, particularly students who are English language learners and students with learning disabilities. **The intent of this manual is to meet this need by presenting effective instructional techniques and lessons for all students with reading difficulties including those who are English language learners.**

This manual provides techniques for teaching word study and gives practical applications for the classroom. The first section provides an overview of effective word study instruction. Sample sequences for instruction and adaptations for English language learners are also included. The second section provides lessons and activities to use in the area of word study.

## Overview of Word Study

Word study instruction consists of teachers providing students with very explicit instruction in the use of word analysis strategies in both reading and writing. The main instructional objectives in word analysis are to systematically (or step-by-step) teach letter-sound relations and ensure that students apply their knowledge in order to read words. Especially important for these students is the explicit teaching of word analysis and decoding strategy generalization, from reading words in isolation to those in connected text, first in decodable books, then in trade books. The extra time allotted for this element provides struggling readers with increased opportunities to practice and generalize their learning. This explicit teaching of generalization may take place during word study, during instructional reading, or during both.

## Effective Word Study Instruction

Teaching word recognition requires knowledge of: a) the critical elements of word recognition; b) effective methods for introducing, practicing, and reviewing word recognition strategies; and c) procedures for monitoring students' mastery of these skills. This section presents an overview of information in each of these areas.

## Critical Elements of Word Study:

- Letter/sound knowledge
- Decoding words
- Analogizing words
- Less phonetically regular words
- Spelling words

### Decoding:

converting single letters and letter combinations into sounds and blending the sounds to read words. For example, decoding involves saying each sound in the word *skit*, /s/ /k/ /i/ /t/, pausing, and then blending the sounds together to read the word fast, *skit*. Decoding is sometimes referred to as the alphabetic principle

### Analogizing:

involves recalling words already learned and using parts of the spellings to read new words that have the same spelling or syllable patterns. For example, if students know how to pronounce *sit*, then they can use this knowledge to read the words *skit* and *split*.

### Less phonetically regular words:

contain some letters that do not represent their most commonly used sounds. For example, in the word *shoe*, the letters *o* and *e* do not say their most common sounds.

## Sequence of Word Study Instruction

Students must be taught some letter/sound correspondences before decoding instruction can begin. A sample sequence for teaching individual sounds is presented on page 10. Instruction in decoding can begin as soon as students know enough sounds to make words. You should continue teaching new sounds and practicing decoding with different words to achieve mastery.

Once students have the ability to decode words, instruction in analogizing can begin. A spelling pattern resource list is included in Appendix A to assist with choosing rime patterns for instruction. You should choose rime patterns from the pattern list that contain only the sounds the student has mastered. For example, if a student has mastered *i*, *t*, *p*, and *n*, the rime *-in* can be taught with the words *in*, *pin*, *tin*. As the student learns more sounds, additional words can be practiced with *-in* and new rimes can be taught.

Once students have mastered the individual letter sounds, more advanced correspondences



with letter combinations can be taught. A sample sequence for introducing letter combinations is also provided on page 10. Analogizing instruction can continue with these sounds. For example, when students know the most common sounds of all the consonants and vowels and the letter combinations /th/, /er/, /ing/, /sh/, /wh/, /qu/, /ol/, and /oa/, the rime *-oat* can be taught with words similar to *boat*, *throat*, *float*, etc. Similarly, the rime *-oad* can be taught.

The pattern list in Appendix A is organized in order of patterns with the most utility. This means patterns towards the top of the list are found more frequently in words than patterns towards the bottom of the list. When you are working on a particular sound such as /ee/ you may want to go through the list and find all the patterns with the /ee/ and teach them. Or, you may want to teach patterns with the most utility first and come back to other patterns later after the students have learned many patterns. The list is a resource so that you can make these decisions. Likewise, it is not a comprehensive list of every rime pattern, but rather a list of the most common rime patterns.

More advanced students who have mastered the letter sounds and letter combinations are ready for structural analysis. Structural analysis is the use of structural units or groups of words such as prefixes, suffixes, and base words to read words. Examples of prefixes and suffixes to include in structural analysis instruction are given on the next page.

Each word study lesson should also include practice with spelling targeted words, instruction in less phonetically regular words, and practice reading targeted words in connected text.

| <b>GENERAL SEQUENCE FOR<br/>WORD STUDY INSTRUCTION</b>   | <b>THROUGHOUT INSTRUCTION...</b>  |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teach individual letter/sound correspondences and decoding first</li> <li>2. Teach analogizing using the sounds mastered in letter/sound correspondences</li> <li>3. Teach letter combinations</li> <li>4. Teach analogizing using the letter combinations already mastered</li> <li>5. Teach structural analysis</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice spelling of targeted words throughout this sequence</li> <li>• Teach less phonetically regular words throughout this sequence</li> <li>• Practice targeted words in connected text</li> </ul> |

## One Example of a Sequence for Introducing Letter-Sound Correspondences in English

(example words are provided to show pronunciation of the sound)

*(adapted from Neuhaus Education Center (1992))*

- |             |             |             |             |                |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. i (it)   | 7. l (lip)  | 13. k (kit) | 19. y (yet) | 25. z (zoom)   |
| 2. t (tap)  | 8. d (did)  | 14. c (cup) | 20. j (jam) | 26. qu (quick) |
| 3. p (pig)  | 9. f (fun)  | 15. m (man) | 21. u (us)  |                |
| 4. n (nest) | 10. h (him) | 16. r (ran) | 22. w (win) |                |
| 5. s (sock) | 11. g (get) | 17. b (bat) | 23. v (vet) |                |
| 6. a (at)   | 12. o (on)  | 18. e (Ed)  | 24. x (box) |                |

## One Example of a Sequence for Introducing Letter Combinations in English

(example words are provided to show pronunciation of the sound)

- |               |               |                |                |                |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. th (that)  | 7. ol (cold)  | 13. ai (rain)  | 19. ir (dirt)  | 25. wr (write) |
| 2. er (fern)  | 8. oa (boat)  | 14. ch (chill) | 20. ur (hurt)  | 26. au (haunt) |
| 3. ing (ring) | 9. ar (star)  | 15. or (corn)  | 21. kn (knee)  | 27. aw (law)   |
| 4. sh (ship)  | 10. ea (east) | 16. ay (day)   | 22. oi (join)  |                |
| 5. wh (whip)  | 11. oo (soon) | 17. igh (sigh) | 23. oy (boy)   |                |
| 6. qu (quit)  | 12. ee (see)  | 18. ou (loud)  | 24. ph (phone) |                |

## Examples of Structural Analysis Units

dis, un, able, ful, pre, re, less, ly, le, de, be, tion, ish, ness, a, ment, able, ible, mis, ness, en, er

## Guidelines for Teaching Decoding

By following some guidelines, students will learn how to pronounce individual sounds in words and to blend the sounds together to pronounce words.

- Select words that:
  - consist of previously taught letter/sound correspondences or letter combinations;
  - progress from short VC and CVC (2 or 3 letters) words to longer words (4 or 5 letters) such as *at*, *sat*, *slat*, *splat*; and
  - initially contain continuous sounds in the initial position
- Blend individual sounds without stopping between them
- Follow sounding out of a word with its “fast” pronunciation
- Move from orally sounding out words to silently “sounding out” words

*This material was adapted from the First Grade Reading Academies; Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts.*

## Analogizing: Basic Steps

Many English words contain groups of letters that look and sound the same. These groups of letters or “patterns” are used to read words. If readers know how to read one word they can read many words with the same pattern.

1. Introduce the word pattern (“Today’s new word pattern is the beginning blend str-. The sounds /s/, /t/, and /r/ when you blend them together, make the sounds /str/.” Or, “Today we will learn an ending word pattern. The pattern is -ent. The sounds of /e/, /n/, and /t/, when you blend them together, make the sounds /ent/.”).
2. Ask students to brainstorm words that begin or end with the pattern; for ending patterns (rimes), it may be easier to have students think of an onset (phoneme or letter) to put in front of the rime to create new words.
3. Write the students’ responses on index cards, one word to each card.
4. Have the students read the newly created words. Have them segment the onset and rime. Then blend them together to read the entire word.
5. Review all of the cards again, this time reading the entire word when it is shown.

These steps can be repeated for any new word pattern that you introduce to the students. One newly introduced pattern per lesson is usually enough for the students at first, but as they begin to grasp the concept of word patterns, they may be able to study more than one pattern per lesson. If a new pattern is similar to a pattern with which the students are already familiar, be sure to draw their attention to the similarities and differences.

*This material was adapted from Essential Reading Strategies for the Struggling Reader: Activities for an Accelerated Reading Program.*

## **Progress Monitoring**

Progress monitoring involves frequent assessment of student skill levels in word study. A recording system is needed to monitor students' mastery of the sounds and patterns taught in word study. For example, you may record what patterns the student reads correctly in words. This information is then used to inform future instruction.

You should be sure that students are learning progressively more difficult word patterns. Students have mastered sounds or word patterns if they can read words with those sounds or word patterns accurately and quickly (within 3 seconds) for 3 consecutive days. Words with mastered sounds or word patterns should periodically be reviewed to check for mastery.

In addition, you may want to have the students participate in a progress-monitoring activity, such as a one-minute timed writing of words by each student. The students are given one minute to write any words they know. The goal is to increase the number of words written. The students can then graph the number of words they write correctly. Often the words a student chooses to write are those that follow a similar pattern. This is often the quickest way to write more words and it reinforces the particular word pattern for that student.

Some students may choose instead to write shorter words (such as *it, is, do*) to increase their number; as the teacher, you will need to decide what words to count and graph, to keep the writing consistent and fair. For a period of time, you may want to count syllables, to reinforce syllabication of words, as well as the writing of more complex words; another time, you may choose to count the number of letters, for similar purposes. Whatever the unit to be counted, it is important that the students write words correctly, and/or that they can read them back when asked. It is especially important that they be held accountable for correct spelling of words in their word banks.

*This material was adapted from Essential Reading Strategies for the Struggling Reader: Activities for an Accelerated Reading Program.*

## English Language Learners

For students who are English language learners learning to read in English, you can facilitate the process of decoding and analyzing texts by clarifying and reviewing the meanings of new words as you introduce them. In doing so, you give students opportunities to associate words with their meanings and contexts, which facilitates their learning of vocabulary, decoding, and analyzing of texts. It is also important to teach explicitly the use and meaning of context-specific vocabulary (e.g., homophones or words with multiple meanings).

When the students are examining words and reading phonetically, it is important for you to introduce and/or stress letters that may have different pronunciations or sounds in English than in the students' home language (e.g., the English letter *h* has a different sound than does *h* in Spanish; in Spanish *h* is silent).

Having students study groups of words that contain the same word pattern and explicitly introducing new word patterns to students also helps English language learners learn to decode the English written language in a more efficient and effective manner. It is especially important to teach these students the rules for decoding words that are not phonetically regular (such as sight words and words that are “exceptions” to decoding rules, such as *great* and *been*). Charts and word banks that categorize words according to similar patterns work especially well in facilitating word recognition for English language learners.

*This material was adapted from Essential Reading Strategies for the Struggling Reader: Activities for an Accelerated Reading Program.*

## Word Study Instruction for English Language Learners

- Word vowel diphthongs may be difficult for some English language learners, if these sounds are not present in their first language, or are represented by other letter symbols in their first language. Be sure to have the students practice matching the sounds with the letters and to feel how these sounds are made in their mouth and throat.
- Be aware that the phonological base of the students' first language may be different from that of English. Students may have difficulty hearing differences in sounds in English (e.g., short *e* or short *i*), or may have difficulty producing certain sounds if these same sounds are not present in their first language. Do not continuously correct the students' speech. Review letter-sound correspondence in English, as well as have students feel and hear the way the differing sounds are made.

- When students are examining words and reading phonetically, it is important to introduce and/or stress letters that may have different pronunciations or sounds in English than in the students' home language.
- Directly teach students the sounds of their home language that are transferable to English.
- Use listening discrimination activities to assist students with English sound patterns.
- If students create words by manipulating letters, review the letter sounds with students before handing out the letters.
- Have students study groups of words that contain the same word pattern and explicitly introduce new word patterns to students to help students decode words.
- Use charts and word banks that categorize words according to similar patterns to facilitate word recognition.
- Teach students rules for decoding words that are not phonetically regular (e.g., silent e words, double-vowel words, sight words, and words that are “exceptions” to decoding rules, such as *great* and *been*).
- Teach meanings of words used in word study lessons
- Provide pictures of words to help with identification and understanding of vocabulary or difficult words.
- If using pictures on cards, clarify the name and meaning of each picture card.
- Be sure to check their understanding of blended words when doing activities that involve blending onsets and rimes orally.
- If students are asked to create nonsense or real words, tell them which words are real and which words are nonsense.

*This material was adapted from Essential Reading Strategies for the Struggling Reader: Activities for an Accelerated Reading Program.*

# ACTIVITIES

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# HIDE AND SEEK

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will practice reading words with long and short vowel patterns.

**MATERIALS:**

- Word cards with short and long patterns for the targeted vowel

**LESSON:**

1. Review the vowel pattern.
2. Have the students take turns reading each word card aloud.
3. Place two cards on the table (facing the students) with one example each of a short and long vowel (e.g., *map*, *take*).
4. Ask students to read each card and identify the card with short and long vowel pattern.
5. Choose a student to cover his or her eyes with his or her hands.
6. While the student's eyes are covered, remove one of the cards.
7. Ask the student which card is missing. Once they have answered, return the card that was removed.
8. Have the students read the two cards.
9. Using different cards, repeat activity as time permits.



# SILLY STORIES

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will write and read words containing a specific rime pattern.

**MATERIALS:**

- One dry-erase board and marker for each student

**LESSON:**

1. Give each student a dry erase board and marker.
2. Introduce the rime the students will be using.
3. Have each student say a word containing the rime.
4. Have the students write the word they said on their dry erase boards.
5. Ask the students to write a sentence with the word on their dry erase board.
6. Then ask each student to read the sentences aloud one after the other to make a silly story.

# BAG OF TRICKS

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will practice reading words containing a rime pattern.

**MATERIALS:**

- Paper bag or box
- Cards with letters on them
- Cards with the rime pattern, one for each student

**LESSON:**

Seat students in a circle. Place bag/box containing letter cards in the center of the table where each student can reach it.

1. Introduce students to the rime (e.g., *-at*) and show students how to use rime cards and letter cards to make words (e.g., *cat, bat, hat*). As new words are formed, have the children take turns reading them aloud.
2. Pass out rime cards to students.
3. Have students take turns reaching into the bag to remove one letter.
4. Have each student place the letter at the front of the rime card to form a word.
5. Go around the group having each student read their word aloud and identify it as “real” or “silly.”

# ALPHABET SOUP AND WORD LINE

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will use different letters and sounds to create new words.

## **MATERIALS:**

- Alphabet letters written on a long strip (much like a number line) with spaces in between no less than that of sticky notes that are used
- Rime patterns written on a separate long strip (example, *-ower*, *-ant*, *-own*, etc.)
- Stack of sticky notes with onsets and rime patterns written on them

## **LESSON:**

For this activity, students will place different onset letters and blends in front of rime patterns.

1. Give each student several sticky notes. Be sure the student has some notes with onsets and some notes with rime patterns.
2. Ask each student to take the first sticky note and place it along one of the lines to make a word.
3. Have each student read the new word they made.
4. Then ask students to place that sticky note underneath the letter or rime that made a word.
5. Repeat 1-4 using a different sticky note.
6. After all the sticky notes have been made into words, have all the students read the new words that were created together.

# CONCENTRATION

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will match onsets and rimes to form new words.

**MATERIALS:**

- Index cards, prepared by teacher, with either an onset or a rime pattern written on one side. Be sure that each onset has a matching rime pattern to create a real word.

**LESSON:**

1. Place the cards with onsets and rimes face down in horizontal rows and columns on a table or other surface.
2. Have the first student turn over two cards, read them out loud, and say the word the pair makes. If the pair does not make a real word, return the cards to their face down position. If the cards do make a real word, the student keeps those cards and takes another turn.
3. Have the next student continue in the same manner.
5. The game continues until all cards are used.
6. At the end of the game, have each student read his or her newly formed words to the group.

**ADAPTATIONS:**

Onsets and rime patterns can be written in two separate colors (or on two different color cards) in order to help the student select the correct cards.

# SPINNING WHEEL

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will use word patterns to create and read “real” words and nonsense words.

**MATERIALS:**

- Two teacher-constructed spinning wheels—one wheel should have onsets and the other wheel should have rimes
- Dry erase boards for each student

**LESSON:**

1. Have each student take a turn spinning both wheels.
2. For each spin, ask all the students to write the onset and the rime on their dry erase boards to make a word.
3. Have all the students read the new word together. Then ask students to identify if it is a real word or a nonsense word.
4. Ask the next student to spin the wheels.

**ADAPTATIONS:**

After the list of words is made, ask the students to group the words by pattern.

# LET'S GO FISHING!

## **MATERIALS:**

- 2 large plastic bowls
- Fish heads with onsets and blends written on them and fish tails with rimes written on them

## **METHOD:**

1. Explain to students that today they will go fishing. The bowls are their ponds, and they must catch the fish with their fingers. However, these fish have a problem: they're in two parts! Students must make a whole fish by putting the fish head and tail together. Make sure that students understand that some of the fish may make silly words.
2. Have students go around the room and take an onset and then a rime.
3. When everyone has an onset and rime, give each student a turn to read their fish.

# RHYMING RIDDLES

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will identify rhyming words (words with common ending sounds or rimes).

## **MATERIALS:**

- Note cards
- Marker

## **LESSON:**

Before the lesson, create riddles such as “What animal name rhymes with *bat* and starts with the letter *c*?” or “What is the name of a furry animal that rhymes with *funny*?” Write the answers (e.g., *cat*, *bunny*) on separate cards. During the lesson,

1. Review with the students that rhyming words are words that share the same ending sounds, giving examples and nonexamples.
2. Explain to the students that they should think of a rhyming word that completes the riddles.
3. Say a riddle, and have the students guess the answer.
4. Give the card to the student who answers the riddle.
5. At the end of the game, ask students to read their cards.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

Place all the answer cards in front of the students before beginning the game. Have students pick the card that answers the riddle.

To make it more challenging, have students write the answers to the riddles instead of giving students the word cards with the answers.

# LADDERS

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will use their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and awareness of phonological sound placement to write and change words.

**MATERIALS:**

- Chart paper or chalkboard with a ladder drawn on it
- Marker or chalk

**LESSON:**

Tell the students they will be writing new words by changing one letter at a time. Then,

1. Write a word on the bottom rung of the ladder (e.g., *bat*). Ask a student to read the word.
2. Ask students to change one letter to form the word *cat*. Do not tell the students which letter to change. Tell the students to write the new word on the second rung.
3. Continue to have students change one letter at a time to manipulate different parts of the word until there is a word on each rung of the ladder.
4. Have the students read all the words on the ladder.

**ADAPTATIONS:**

Have the students add blends, change the vowel sound, or change two letters at a time.

Have the students add only one letter, not changing the original (e.g., add one letter to *pat* to make it say *pant*).



# WORD DETECTIVE

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will practice recognizing, spelling, and writing words from target family.

**MATERIALS:**

- Word cards containing words from a particular word family (e.g., words with rime *-ot*)
- Paper and pencil for each child
- Dry erase or chalk board

**LESSON:**

1. Introduce the lesson; “Today we have some mysteries to solve. You get to be word detectives. We have some words that all have the same ending but mean different things. Your job is to use the ending as a clue that will help you to read the word.”
2. Introduce the rime; “Today the clue is going to be (*write on board*) *-ot*. What sound does this letter make (*point to ‘o’*)? What sound does this letter make (*point to ‘t’*)? What sound do they make when you put them together?” Have each child repeat the rime aloud.
3. Introduce the activity, “Now you know the clue. Here are some mystery words. I will show you a card with a word on it and your job is to use the clue to read the word.”
4. Go around the group randomly asking the children to read a word card aloud.
5. After reading the cards, go around the group at random asking each child to say an *-ot* word. Then ask them to write the word they said on their papers. Check the students’ paper for correct spelling.
6. As the students to generate correct spellings, write them on the board. Ask students to read the words on the board.

# WORD WALL DRILL

**OBJECTIVE:**

Students will practice building and breaking down activities with previously taught rimes.

**MATERIALS:**

- Word wall on poster board
- Koosh or Nerf ball

**LESSON:**

In this lesson students will be reading words aloud and adding, subtracting, or switching prefixes, suffixes, rimes, and onsets.

1. Explain task to student, “Today we are going to see how many words you can make. We will be using our word wall and your job is to read words and make new words. I will throw the Koosh ball to you when it is your turn. When your turn is over, you will throw the ball back to me, and we will begin again.” Ask students to repeat back instructions to check for comprehension.
2. At each turn, ask a child to read a word from the word wall (e.g., *sit*). Then after the child returns the ball, toss it to another child and ask him or her to build up (e.g., add /ing/ to the word, what would that word be?) or break down a word (e.g., take away the /ing/ and the /s/, what word is left?). Use of “silly” words is fine and visual prompts (such as writing the word on the board) may be used.

# SPLITTING COMPOUND WORDS

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will learn to break down compound words into their component parts and then read the word.

**MATERIALS:**

- A written list of compound words for each student
- Pencils

**LESSON:**

1. Review the procedures for breaking apart compound words.
2. Provide students with the compound word list and ask them to draw a line between the two words in the compound words.
3. Ask students to take turns reading the words on the list, reminding them to read each component word to make the whole word.

# MAKING COMPOUND WORDS

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will use cards of monosyllabic words to create new compound words.

**MATERIALS:**

- Index cards with monosyllabic words (use words that can be combined to make compound words)
- Paper and pencils
- Stopwatch

**LESSON:**

1. Show students how to combine two words to make a new word. Show them how reading the two component words helps them to read the new compound word.
2. Give students the pile of cards containing monosyllabic words.
3. Have students use the cards to make new compound words.
4. After 3 minutes, ask the students to stop. Ask the students to take turns reading the words.

**ADAPTATIONS:**

For extra practice using component parts, have students make silly compound words too.

# WORD STUDY BOGGLE

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will review and write word patterns.

## **MATERIALS:**

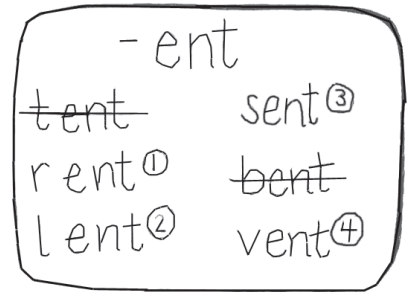
- One dry-erase board (white board), marker, and eraser for each student
- Timer

## **LESSON:**

Tell students that for this game, they must write as many “real” words with the same ending rime as they can in 30 seconds. Hand out the materials.

Then,

1. Have the students write the target rime at the top of their white boards.
2. Set the timer for 30 seconds, and tell the students to begin writing.
3. At the end of 30 seconds, tell the students to stop. Have each take a turn telling the group one word she/he wrote. As the student does this have the other students cross off the word if it is on their lists. If *no* other students have the same word, then the student who is reading places a tally point mark next to the word.
4. Have students count their tally marks. The student with the most marks wins. Or, continue playing the game with another rime.



## **ADAPTATIONS:**

Adjust the time or the difficulty of the rime. Less time will be more challenging as will more difficult rimes.

# WORD HUNT

**OBJECTIVE:**

Using an instructional-level book, the students will identify and write words that follow a specific rime or word pattern found in that book.

**MATERIALS:**

- Chart paper
- Instructional-level book for each student
- Pencil and paper for each student

**LESSON:**

Before beginning this lesson, have the students read through a “decodable” text one that incorporates a specific word pattern or rime (e.g., words that begin with str.)

1. Have the students read through the book again, either individually or in pairs, looking for words that follow the word pattern.
2. After the students find a word, have them read it and write it on their papers.
3. After students have found all the words, have them review by reading their lists as you write them on chart paper. Have the other students check off words on their papers as they are called out.

**ADAPTATIONS:**

Have students look for more than one word pattern, sorting them by writing the words in different columns. Or, have the students look for sight words that they have been studying.

# FISH FOR WORD PATTERNS! (or FISH FOR RIMES!)

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will match cards that have the same ending word pattern (rime).

## **MATERIALS:**

- At least 20 word cards (more if the group is larger than 3), with rimes in sets of two (total of 20 cards, 10 or fewer rime sets). Make sure the words cannot be read through the back of the cards.

## **LESSON:**

Read through all the word cards with the students. Review the rules for playing the game “Go Fish!” Explain that in this game, “matches” are words with the same rime. Then,

1. Shuffle all the cards, and deal three to each student.
2. Have the students check their cards for any pairs of words that have the same ending pattern (such as *fat* and *cat*). If a student has a “pair,” she/he places it on the table and reads the two words in order to keep them.
3. Continue playing the game as in “Go Fish”: The first student asks another student if he/she has a card with the rime \_\_\_\_ (*-at*). If the second student has an *-at* card, he/she gives it to the first student. If the student does not have the card, he/she says, “Go fish!”
4. The first student then picks a card from the face-down deck in the middle.
5. Continue the game with steps 2-4.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

Make only two cards of each rime, use more complex/simpler rimes, or have students match vowel patterns or blends.

Have an “exception” word (e.g., *great*) be the “shark” word (the losing card, similar to “Old Maid” but with the “exception” card being the losing card).

# STAND AND BE READ!

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will create words by physically manipulating letters.

## **MATERIALS:**

- Chart paper
- Marker in bold, dark color
- A list of words that, when taken apart, make smaller words (see *Making Words* [Cunningham & Hall, 1994] for ideas).
- Construction paper of various colors with each letter of the chosen word written with a bold marker on a different color sheet of construction paper

## **LESSON:**

This lesson should be done with a group of 4-5 students. Otherwise see **Adaptations** below.

1. Randomly give each student one piece of construction paper with a letter written on it (the letters, when put in order, should create one “big” word). Have the students stand with their construction paper facing outward.
2. Tell the students that they are to make words out of the letters they have in front of them. The words may be as long or as short as they wish. When they think they have a word, they are to stand together to create it (e.g., the students with the letters *i* and *s* may stand together to create *is*).
3. When the students have created a word, write it on chart paper to be read back later. Then have them move back with the group to make new words. Finally, have them see if they can make the “big” word.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

If fewer than five students are in a group, give each student a piece of paper, a pencil, and a set of small cards or sticky notes with the letters written on them to **manipulate** physically.

Emphasize vowels by writing the consonants and vowels on different colored paper.



# LETTERS AND WORDS

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will learn word patterns by creating and reading “real” words and nonsense words.

## **MATERIALS:**

- Magnetic letters, one set per child **or**
- Sticky notes with onsets and rimes written on separate notes

## **LESSON:**

For this activity, the students will place different onset letters and blends in front of rimes. Choose a rime from which the students will build words (this can be a new rime, one that the students have learned previously, or one that is challenging for them). Then,

1. Have the students create the rime with magnet letters, or write it on a sticky note.
2. Tell the students to add a letter or two at the beginning of the rime (move a letter magnet or write a letter on a different sticky note) to create a word. Remind them that they can also use two letters at the beginning to create new words.
3. Have the students create at least 3-4 “real” words with that rime.
4. Then have the students create “nonsense” or “silly” words by placing other letters before the rime (e.g., *vide*, *kide*, or *thide*). Continue with other rimes, as time permits.

bp  
r p mat  
h s f

# S BLENDS

## OBJECTIVE:

The students will read words with initial blends beginning with the letter *s* (*sn-*, *st-*, *sk-*, *sl-*). NOTE: This lesson can be used with any type of blend, not just s-blends.

## MATERIALS:

- Short-vowel words written on cards or paper (e.g., *nap*, *top*, *kid*, *lip*, *lap*)
- Pencil and paper for each student
- Small (1 X 1.5 inch) sticky notes with the letter *s* written on them

## LESSON:

Review short-vowel words that the students are able to read (e.g., *nap*, *top*, *kid*, *lip*, *lap*). Then,

1. Take a word card and place a sticky note with the letter *s* written on it in front of the word to make a new word (*nap* becomes *snap*). Read the new word together and have the students write the new word on their paper.
2. Continue placing the sticky notes in front of the other words, creating and reading new words with initial blends. Have the students write the new words on their paper.
3. After going through all the words, adding *s*, have the students read back all the words they have written.



## ADAPTATIONS:

Instead of providing word cards with the short-vowel words written on them, dictate the words to the students and have them write the words on cards or paper.

Have the students move the *s* to different positions in the word, such as the end of the word, to create plural or “silly” words.

# WORD PATTERN MATCH

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will match word cards that have the same ending pattern.

**MATERIALS:**

- Word cards (as many as possible) from the same familiar word pattern
- A second set of word cards with a pattern that is somewhat new to the group

**LESSON:**

Review the concept of word patterns with the group. Then,

1. Read through all the word cards with the students, including words with a recently introduced pattern.
2. Pick three cards, two that share the pattern and one that does not.
3. Ask the students, “Is there a word in this group that has a pattern that doesn’t match the others?”
4. On the table have the students sort the cards by word pattern.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 with the next three cards.

**ADAPTATIONS:**

Have students match word cards with rhyming picture cards.

Include a card with a word that has the same ending word pattern, but is an “exception” (e.g., if the students are studying the *-ea* pattern, include the word *great*, which is an “exception”).

Choose a second set of word cards for words that have a pattern similar, but not identical, to the first, to help the students learn to attend to all aspects of the word pattern.

# CHANGE ONE LETTER

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will use their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and awareness of phonological sound placement to write and change words.

## **MATERIALS:**

- One dry-erase board (white board), marker, and eraser for each student

## **LESSON:**

Tell the students they will be writing new words by changing one letter at a time. Say that they must listen carefully to discern which letter they will have to change. Then,

1. Give the students a word to write on their white board (e.g., *man*). Check all students' boards to make sure they have spelled the word correctly. Have the students track their index finger under the word *man* as they read it.
2. Tell the students that they should change one letter to make the word say *mat*. **Do not tell the students which letter to change!** It is important that students listen to the placement of the sound in the word and change the letter according to their understanding.
3. Make sure all the students have changed the correct letter (changed *n* to *t*). If they have not, have them write the word *man* again, and tracking a finger under the word *man*, say the word *mat*. Usually this is all it takes for the students to realize that it is *n* that needs to be changed to *t*.
4. Continue to have the students change one letter at a time to manipulate different parts of the word.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

Have the students add blends, change the vowel sound, or change two letters at a time.

Have the students add only one letter, not changing the original (e.g., add one letter to *man* to make it say *mān*) they may give two different answers, depending on the students' understanding of vowel patterns (they may write *main* or *mane*). What a great way to open a discussion on homophones!

# WORD SLIDE

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will learn different vowel patterns corresponding with specific vowel sounds.

## **MATERIALS:**

- White board, marker, and eraser for modeling
- Word slides containing different vowel patterns corresponding with one vowel sound/phoneme

## **LESSON:**

Tell the students they will be learning different patterns that correspond with one vowel sound. Then,

1. Write words that show the different ways to spell the target vowel sound on the white board.
2. Read the words and call attention to the different spellings.
3. Write more examples of words with the target sound on the white board, categorized by spelling pattern. Have students read the words as they are introduced and written.
4. Point to the words in a random order and have students read the words again.
5. Tell students they will be making a word slide to read words containing one of the vowel patterns. You may want to review the list of words containing this pattern again.
6. Give each student a word slide containing one of the vowel patterns.
7. Help students write one or more words from listed on the white board onto their construction paper strip, around the spelling pattern tag board strip. Assist the students in writing or copying additional words from the white board onto their word slide.
8. After the students complete their word slide, and read all the words as they slide the tag board, ask them to exchange slides to read one another's words.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

Allow individual students to choose various words from the white board, or other words not listed, as appropriate given each student's reading/word knowledge level.

On the following or another day, teach or review the other spelling patterns with the same target sound. Have students compare various words across spelling patterns, noting the various positions of each pattern within words.

Depending on the reading level of the group, two or three patterns may be learned during one day.

This activity may be adapted by playing Concentration with word cards made with different spelling patterns of the target vowel sound, instead of making slides for these patterns. Words are considered "matches" if they contain the same spelling pattern of the target sound and the student is able to read both words correctly.

# TIC-TAC-TOE

**OBJECTIVE:**

The students will read and review words studied during the week.

**MATERIALS:**

- Large word cards or sentence strips with nine words of the week
- Tic-tac-toe white board with nine words of the week written in the squares, one for each pair of students
- Dry-erase markers and erasers, one each for each pair of students

**LESSON:**

Review the word cards with the students, discussing their meanings while using the words in sentences. Review the rules for playing “Tic-Tac-Toe.” Explain that to gain a square on the board, they will select a word from the board that they can read, and use the word correctly in a sentence. Then,

1. Give each pair of students a Tic-Tac-Toe board and markers. Have them decide who will use “X” and who will use “O” to mark their squares.
2. Instruct the students that the Tic-Tac-Toe squares are filled with the words they have already reviewed. One student begins the game by choosing a word from the board, reading it out loud, and using it in a sentence.
3. The other student in the pair decides whether the word was both read and used in a sentence correctly. If so, then the first student can put an “X” or an “O” in the Tic-Tac-Toe square containing that word.
4. Repeat until there is a winner or the game is tied.

**ADAPTATIONS:**

This game may be modified by instructing students to choose words from the list of words of the week, and to write them on the spaces of the game board during their turn. After reading, choosing, and writing the word on the game board, the student must then use it in a sentence, continuing with Steps 4 and 5. If they choose a word without being able to accomplish this, they should pick a different word.

# STICKY BOOKS

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will write and read words containing a specific word/spelling pattern.

## **MATERIALS:**

- List of words containing a specific word/spelling pattern, for teacher use
- Sticky books for each student, consisting of a blank 3" x 9" tag board card (or 1/3 of a sentence strip) with the appropriate number of sticky notes stapled at the left edge
- White boards, one for each student
- Dry-erase markers and erasers, one for each student
- Chart paper and permanent marker for recording words

## **LESSON:**

Tell the students they will be learning words containing a specific pattern (the \_\_\_\_ pattern). Review the sounds of the letters, if any are silent, and how the pattern is read. Give students a few oral and/or written examples of words containing this pattern. Then,

1. Ask students to brainstorm words containing this pattern. Explain that they will have one, (two, three) minute(s) to write as many of these words as possible on their white board.
2. Pass out the boards and markers. Set the timer. Instruct students to begin.
3. When the timer rings, have each student read his/her words to the group. Write the words on a master chart paper list. Reread the master list with the students when all have given their words. Keep track of words the student may have brainstormed that have similar sounds when read, but contain different spelling patterns, to use later for comparison.
4. After rereading the words, provide clues to other words students might not have generated.
5. Give each student a sticky book with the beginning or ending word pattern written on the tag board (leave sticky notes blank). Or, have students write the pattern on the tag board.
6. Have students write the remaining letters (onsets) on the sticky notes to complete the words and the book.
7. Read the sticky books together.
8. Allow students to take their books home to read for practice.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

Pencil and paper may be used to brainstorm word patterns if white boards are not available.

Have students roll letter dice, using the rolled letter as the onset to add to the rime, to create words. Clarify if words created are real words or nonsense words.

# SHORT OR LONG?

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will distinguish between long and short e sounds and vowel patterns in words and will sort them accordingly (including words that are “exceptions”).

## **MATERIALS:**

- Word cards with short e and long e vowel patterns (e, ea, ee patterns)

## **LESSON:**

After reading through all the word cards with the students and reviewing word meanings, as well as reviewing the sounds of the ea and ee vowel patterns,

1. Ask the students to sort the word cards according to the sound (short or long) of the e vowel patterns. Students must also decide how to sort any “exception” words.
2. Monitor students as they sort the words, providing guidance when necessary.
3. Have the students further sort the words into their pattern groups (e, ee, ea, and exceptions) if time permits.

Sample word sort:

### Short e sound

step  
met  
then  
test  
yes  
fed  
weather  
bread  
head

### Long e sound

see  
tree  
green  
eel  
bleed  
feel  
eat  
heat  
pea  
dream  
beach  
steam

### Exceptions

steak  
great  
been



# ADD “SILENT e” TO MAKE NEW WORDS

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will learn to read words containing the silent e word pattern.

## **MATERIALS:**

- Word cards with the following words on them: *pin, fin, hid, rob, con, tub, cut, man, and tap* (Leave a space at the end of each card to add a silent e sticky note)
- Nine sticky notes with e’s on them
- Instructional level book with silent e words

## **LESSON:**

Explain to students that adding a silent e to the end of a word often changes the vowel sound in that word from a “short” sound to a “long” sound.

1. Review the “short” sound of each vowel.
2. Have the students read the word cards using short vowel sounds.
3. Explain that when you add an e to the end of these words, the vowel sound will change to say its name, or to make the “long” sound. Review the long sound of each vowel.
4. Add the sticky notes with the e to the end of the word cards and have the students reread the cards with the long vowel sounds.
5. Mix the cards, leaving some with the e and some without. Instruct students to pay close attention to the vowel sound and the presence or absence of the silent e as they reread the cards.
6. Read a book containing many silent e words for practice.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

For extra practice, have students write the words in their notebook.

Depending on the level of students’ understanding, you may want to follow this lesson by studying words with silent e containing only one or two vowels at a time (e.g. *\_a\_e* words or *\_i\_e* words) for added reinforcement.

# BUILDING WORDS WITH BLENDS

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The students will match initial blends with word endings to read words.

## **MATERIALS:**

- A variety of blends written on sticky notes (all the same color)
- A variety of matching word endings written on sticky notes (all the same color, but a different color from the blends)
- A few cards with familiar words beginning with blends
- Either chart paper with three columns or large table space

## **LESSON:**

Tell students they will be making words with beginning blends and word endings using the sticky notes. Remind them that blends consist of two consonants that are read together quickly.

1. Review the cards with the familiar words beginning with blends. Say other familiar words with initial blends, if students need more examples.
2. Place the sticky notes in two columns on the chart paper or table: one for beginning blends and the other for word endings.
3. Tell the students to take turns selecting one sticky note from each column, placing them together, and reading the word built from the two stickies. If the word read is a nonsense word, the student should look to see if either the blend or ending could be switched with another to make a real word.
4. Place the created word in a third column. Continue Step 3 until all the words have been built. Then, have students read all the words in the third column.

## **ADAPTATIONS:**

Have the students add a sticky note of their own with a different blend, vowel, or ending, to make a different word.

Have students write the words in their notebooks after building and reading them.

This activity may also be adapted by writing the words with blends on cards and playing Concentration. Words are considered “matches” if they contain the same beginning blend and the student is able to read them correctly.

# APPENDICES

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# Appendix A

## Spelling Pattern Resource List

| Rime | Related Words                          | Extensions       |
|------|--|------------------|
| -it  | it/sit/hit/fit                         | split            |
| -in  | in/pin/fin/bin                         | begin            |
| -at  | at/that/sat/hat/rat/bat                | splat            |
| -an  | an/can/than/man/plan/ran/fan           | began            |
| -en  | when/then/men/ten/hen                  |                  |
| -et  | get/set/let/yet/met/net/pet/wet        |                  |
| -ot  | not/got/hot/pot/shot/spot/rot/dot/trot |                  |
| -op  | stop/chop/cop/hop/top/shop             |                  |
| -up  | up/cup/pup                             |                  |
| -ut  | but/cut/hut/nut                        |                  |
| -oo  | too/coo/zoo/moo                        | shampoo/igloo    |
| -ay  | way/day/may/say/play/stay/lay          | birthday/highway |
| -ake | make/take/bake/rake/cake/lake          | pancake          |
| -ade | made/fade/grade/trade                  | handmade         |
| -ee  | see/three/tree/free/bee/flee           | degree/agree     |
| -ike | like/bike/hike/strike                  | dislike          |
| -ime | time/dime/lime/crime                   |                  |
| -ore | more/store/bore/shore                  | before           |
| -oke | joke/coke/poke/broke/woke              | awoke            |
| -all | all/small/fall/ball/wall               | recall/baseball  |
| -aw  | saw/draw/law/paw/raw/straw             | outlaw           |
| -ap  | map/tap/cap/gap/clap/snap              |                  |
| -and | and/hand/land/stand/band               |                  |
| -ed  | red/bed/fed/Ted/sled                   |                  |
| -ep  | step/pep/rep/prep                      |                  |
| -ill | will/still/fill/bill/hill/pill         |                  |
| -im  | him/slim/trim/rim/dim                  |                  |
| -ob  | job/Bob/cob/knob/rob/sob               |                  |
| -un  | run/sun/fun/pun/nun                    |                  |
| -um  | sum/gum/drum/slum                      |                  |
| -ape | shape/cape/tape/grape/scrape           | escape           |
| -ale | pale/hale/scale/tale                   |                  |
| -eed | need/deed/feed/seed/bleed/weed/speed   | indeed           |
| -eep | keep/deep/sleep/beep                   |                  |
| -ite | write/white/bite/kite                  |                  |
| -am  | am/dam/ham/slam                        |                  |

| Rime  | Related Words                        | Extensions           |
|-------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| -ad   | had/glad/mad/bad/sad                 |                      |
| -elp  | help/kelp/yelp                       |                      |
| -end  | end/bend/send/trend/blend            |                      |
| -id   | did/hid/slid/kid                     |                      |
| -ip   | ship/dip/lip/sip/trip/rip/strip      |                      |
| -ox   | box/ox/fox/pox                       |                      |
| -ock  | rock/knock/mock/sock                 |                      |
| -unk  | dunk/punk/chunk/trunk                |                      |
| -ug   | bug/hug/mug/drug/rug                 |                      |
| -ail  | sail/fail/mail/pail/rail             |                      |
| -ait  | wait/bait/gait/trait                 |                      |
| -eet  | feet/meet/sheet/sweet                |                      |
| -eem  | seem/deem                            |                      |
| -ive  | live/five/drive/dive                 |                      |
| -ight | right/light/might/night/fight/bright | delight              |
| -old  | old/told/hold/cold/gold/scold        |                      |
| -oot  | root/boot/shoot/hoot/smooth          |                      |
| -oop  | loop/coop/hoop                       |                      |
| -oom  | room/doom/zoom/bloom                 | bedroom              |
| -ash  | bash/cash/dash/trash                 |                      |
| -ack  | back/black/Jack/stack/sack           |                      |
| -ell  | well/tell/spell                      |                      |
| -ent  | went/bent/sent                       |                      |
| -ig   | big/dig/pig/rig                      |                      |
| -us   | us/bus/plus/thus                     |                      |
| -uck  | truck/duck/luck/suck                 |                      |
| -ame  | name/same/come/game/fame             |                      |
| -eel  | feel/heel/peel/wheel/kneel           |                      |
| -eek  | week/seek/peek/sleek                 |                      |
| -arm  | farm/arm/harm/charm                  | alarm                |
| -een  | seen/green/keen/queen/teen/screen    | canteen              |
| -ide  | side/wide/ride/slide                 | inside/divide/beside |
| -ile  | while/mile/smile/pile/tile           |                      |
| -ome  | home/dome/Rome                       |                      |
| -ar   | car/far/star/bar/tar                 |                      |
| -art  | part/start/cart/smart                |                      |
| -ard  | hard/card/yard                       |                      |

| Rime  | Related Words                   | Extensions      |
|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| -ort  | short/fort/sport/snort          |                 |
| -ord  | ford/lord/cord                  |                 |
| -ir   | fir/stir                        |                 |
| -irt  | dirt/shirt                      |                 |
| -ird  | bird/third                      |                 |
| -urn  | turn/burn/spurn/churn           | return          |
| -urt  | hurt/blurt/spurt                |                 |
| -ast  | last/fast/past/blast            |                 |
| -ag   | bag/lag/sag/tag/flag/brag       |                 |
| -eg   | leg/beg/peg/Meg                 |                 |
| -ess  | less/mess/bless/chess           |                 |
| -ish  | fish/wish/dish/swish            | finish          |
| -iss  | miss/kiss/bliss/hiss            |                 |
| -ust  | just/must/dust/rust             |                 |
| -uch  | much/such                       |                 |
| -ump  | jump/bump/dump/lump/stump       |                 |
| -ing  | thing/sing/ring/bring/sting     | something       |
| -ung  | sung/rung/hung/lung/swung/clung |                 |
| -air  | air/pair/fair/hair/stair        |                 |
| -ate  | state/date/gate/late/hate/rate  |                 |
| -oat  | boat/coat/goat/float/oat/throat |                 |
| -oad  | road/load/toad                  | unload/railroad |
| -eft  | left/theft/cleft                |                 |
| -ever | never/ever/lever                |                 |
| -ick  | pick/kick/sick/stick            |                 |
| -ush  | rush/hush/brush/slush           |                 |
| -ea   | sea/pea/tea/flea                |                 |
| -eat  | eat/heat/beat/feat              |                 |
| -ead  | bead/read/plead/knead           |                 |
| -ife  | life/knife/wife/strife          |                 |
| -ine  | fine/line/mine/nine/pine        |                 |
| -ouse | house/mouse/blouse/spouse       |                 |
| -ound | sound/found/ground/round        | around          |
| -ass  | pass/class/grass/glass/mass     |                 |
| -ask  | ask/task/mask                   |                 |
| -ull  | pull/full/bull/dull/skull       |                 |
| -est  | rest/test/west/pest             | interest        |

| Rime  | Related Words                                | Extensions           |
|-------|--|----------------------|
| -ect  | object/subject                               |                      |
| -ix   | six/fix/mix/Kix                              |                      |
| -ist  | list/mist/wrist/fist                         |                      |
| -out  | about/shout/scout/sprout/clout               |                      |
| -ave  | wave/gave/cave/save/brave                    |                      |
| -ase  | base/case/vase/chase                         |                      |
| -ean  | mean/bean/dean                               |                      |
| -eak  | speak/beak/leak/peak/weak/sneak              |                      |
| -each | reach/beach/peach/teach                      |                      |
| -own  | own/known/shown/blown/thrown                 |                      |
| -elt  | felt/belt/melt                               |                      |
| -ain  | contain/explain/rain/train/main/strain/plain | maintain/remain      |
| -aint | paint/saint/faint/taint                      |                      |
| -ear  | year/near/hear/clear                         |                      |
| -our  | our/sour/flour                               |                      |
| -ark  | mark/dark/park/lark                          |                      |
| -ood  | food/mood                                    |                      |
| -ant  | plant/pant/grant/slant                       |                      |
| -act  | fact/pact/tact/act                           |                      |
| -ept  | kept/wept/crept/slept                        |                      |
| -eld  | held/meld/weld                               |                      |
| -inch | inch/pinch/finch/clinch                      |                      |
| -ane  | plane/cane/Jane/mane                         |                      |
| -ote  | note/rote/vote/wrote                         |                      |
| -ow   | show/know/grow/tow/sow/crow                  | pillow/shadow/window |
| -oy   | boy/joy/toy/Roy                              | annoy/enjoy          |
| -oil  | boil/soil/toil/foil/coil                     | turmoil              |
| -eal  | deal/heal/meal/peal                          |                      |
| -eam  | team/ream/beam/dream/steam                   | stream               |
| -oon  | soon/moon/soon/spoon                         | raccoon/teaspoon     |
| -ool  | school/cool/fool/pool                        |                      |
| -orm  | form/dorm/norm/storm                         | conform/perform      |
| -are  | care/bare/dare/fare                          |                      |



# Appendix B

## High Frequency Words:<sup>1</sup>

A list of the 100 most common words in English (from left to right):

the of and a to in is you that it he was  
for on are as with his they I at be this have  
from or one had by word but not what all were we  
when your can said there use an each which she do how  
their if will up other about out many then them these so  
some her would make like him into time has look two more  
write go see number no way could people my than  
first water been call who oil its now find long down day  
did get come made may part

<sup>1</sup>Taken from Fry, E. B., Kress, J. E., & Fountoukidis, D L. (1993). *The reading teacher's book of lists: Third edition*. Paramus, NJ: Prentice-hall, Inc.

