Six Syllable Types: Applications for Reading

Objectives

• Develop a basic understanding of the six syllable types related to reading
• Discuss how knowledge of the six syllable types can help students read and comprehend text
• Plan for strategic instruction on the six syllable types

Students Need a Strategy

Vowels can be short or long or have unexpected sounds. Rather than guess or give up, students need a strategy for determining how to pronounce vowels.
Rationale for Teaching the Six Syllable Types

• There are more than 600,000 words in English, and each word can be categorized as one of six syllable types or as a composite of syllable types.

• Students can pronounce the vowel in a syllable if they know the syllable type.

State Standards, K–2

English Language Arts and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (ELAR TEKS):

• Kindergarten (3)(B)
  Use knowledge of letter-sound relationships to decode regular words in text and independent of context (e.g., VC, CVC, CCVC, CVCC words)

• Grade 1 (3)(C)(i–v) and grade 2 (2)(B)(i–vi)
  Use common syllabication patterns to decode words, including the following:
  – Closed syllable (CVC)
  – Open syllable (CV)
  – Final stable syllable
  – Vowel-consonant silent e words (VCe)
  – R-controlled vowel sounds
  – Vowel digraphs and diphthongs

State Standards, 3–8

• Grade 3 (1)(B)(i–v)
  Use common syllabication patterns to decode words, including the following:
  – Closed syllable (CVC)
  – Open syllable (CV)
  – Final stable syllable
  – R-controlled vowel sounds
  – Vowel digraphs and diphthongs

• Grades 5–8 (2)(E)
  Use a dictionary, a glossary, or a thesaurus (printed or electronic) to determine the meanings, syllabication, pronunciations, alternate word choices, and parts of speech of words
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Decoding-Spelling Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5...</th>
<th>...8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonological awareness</td>
<td>Alphabet Sounds</td>
<td>Anglo Saxon consonants and vowels</td>
<td>Compound words</td>
<td>Prefixes and suffixes</td>
<td>Latin roots</td>
<td>Greek combining forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllable and syllable division patterns</td>
<td>Review of all previous material</td>
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</table>

(Henry, 2010)

Syllable

- Word or word part made with one opening of the mouth
- One vowel sound

Six Syllable Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Ends in one vowel; the vowel is long</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Ends in at least one consonant; the vowel is short</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vowel-consonant-silent e</td>
<td>Ends in one vowel, one consonant, and a final e; final e is silent; the vowel is long</td>
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<tr>
<td>r-controlled vowel</td>
<td>Has an r after the vowel; the vowel makes an unexpected sound</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vowel digraph and vowel diphthong</td>
<td>Have two adjacent vowels; each vowel pair syllable must be learned individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final stable</td>
<td>Has a final consonant-le combination or a nonphonetic but reliable unit, such as -tion (-shun); accent usually falls on the preceding syllable</td>
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</tbody>
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