Word Sort

ABOUT THE STRATEGY

WORD SORT is a morphological analysis strategy that helps students learn unfamiliar words by breaking down words into morphemes (roots, prefixes, and suffixes). It is used before or after reading a text. This strategy can be used to help students categorize, classify, and infer meaning of vocabulary words. Learning to use morphological analysis is a skill that develops over time with students practicing this skill with multiple print and digital texts in diverse media, formats, and lengths.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

− Select the roots, prefixes, and suffixes to teach. Include only a few that are unfamiliar to the students.
− Decide how to categorize the letters, word parts, words, or phrases for a closed sort. In an open sort, students decide how to group.
− Use words or phrases from materials that students have read or will read.
− Explicitly teach the meaning of the selected roots, prefixes, and suffixes.
− Establish the purpose for the strategy.
− Model how to use the word sort to decipher the meaning of unknown words.
− Group students and provide them with cards with word parts on them to sort.
− Give students 5 to 8 minutes to complete their groupings. Scaffold as needed.
− Have students explain their groupings and the reasons for them. Scaffold as needed.

MEASURING PROGRESS

− Teacher observation
− Conferencing
− Student journaling

RESEARCH

Bowers, P. N., & Kirby, J. R. (2010). Effects of morphological instruction on vocabulary acquisition. *Reading & Writing, 25,* 515-537.

Bowers, P. N., Kirby, J. R., & Deacon, S. H. (2010). The effects of morphological instruction on literacy skills: A systematic review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research, 80*, 144-179.

Goodwin, A. P., & Ahn, S. (2010). A meta-analysis of morphological interventions: Effects on literacy achievement of children with literacy difficulties. *Annals of Dyslexia, 60,* 183-208.

WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC
INSTRUCTION

Common Greek Roots

Greek Root	Definition	Example
anthropo	man; human; humanity	anthropologist, philanthropy
auto	self	autobiography, automobile
bio	life	biology, biography
chron	time	chronological, chronic
dyna	power	dynamic, dynamite
dys	bad; hard; unlucky	dysfunctional, dyslexic
gram	thing written	epigram, telegram
graph	writing	graphic, phonograph
hetero	different	heteronym, heterogeneous
homo	same	homonym, homogenous
hydr	water	hydration, dehydrate
hyper	over; above; beyond	hyperactive, hyperbole
hypo	below; beneath	hypothermia, hypothetical
logy	study of	biology, psychology
meter/metr	measure	thermometer, perimeter
micro	small	microbe, microscope
mis/miso	hate	misanthrope, misogyny
mono	one	monologue, monotonous
morph	form; shape	morphology, morphing
nym	name	antonym, synonym
phil	love	philanthropist, philosophy
phobia	fear	claustrophobia, phobic
photo/phos	light	photograph, phosphorous
pseudo	false	pseudonym, pseudoscience
psycho	soul; spirit	psychology, psychic
scope	viewing instrument	microscope, telescope
techno	art; science; skill	technique, technological
tele	far off	television, telephone
therm	heat	thermal, thermometer

Common Latin Roots

Latin Root	Definition	Example
ambi	both	ambiguous, ambidextrous
aqua	water	aquarium, aquamarine
aud	to hear	audience, audition
bene	good	benefactor, benevolent
cent	one hundred	century, percent
circum	around	circumference, circumstance
contra/counter	against	contradict, encounter
dict	to say	dictation, dictator
duc/duct	to lead	conduct, induce
fac	to do; to make	factory, manufacture
form	shape	conform, reform
fort	strength	fortitude, fortress
fract	break	fracture, fraction
ject	throw	projection, rejection
jud	judge	judicial, prejudice
mal	bad	malevolent, malefactor
mater	mother	maternal, maternity
mit	to send	transmit, admit
mort	death	mortal, mortician
multi	many	multimedia, multiple
pater	father	paternal, paternity
port	to carry	portable, transportation
rupt	to break	bankrupt, disruption
scrib/script	to write	inscription, prescribe
sect/sec	to cut	bisect, section
sent	to feel; to send	consent, resent
spect	to look	inspection, spectator
struct	to build	destruction, restructure
vid/vis	to see	televise, video
voc	voice; to call	vocalize, advocate

Common Prefixes

Prefix	Definition	Example
anti-	against	anticlimax
de-	opposite	devalue
dis-	not; opposite of	discover
en-, em-	cause to	enact, empower
fore-	before; front of	foreshadow, forearm
In-, im-	in	income, impulse
in-, im-, il-, ir-	not	indirect, immoral, illiterate, irreverent
inter-	between; among	interrupt
mid-	middle	midfield
mis-	wrongly	misspell
non-	not	nonviolent
over-	over; too much	overeat
pre-	before	preview
re-	again	rewrite
semi-	half; partly; not fully	semifinal
sub-	Under	subway
super-	above; beyond	superhuman
trans-	across	transmit
un-	not; opposite of	unusual
under-	under; too little	underestimate

Common Suffixes

Suffix	Definition	Example
-able, -ible	is; can be	affordable, sensible
-al, -ial	having characteristics of	universal, facial
-ed	past tense verbs; adjectives	the dog walked, the walked dog
-en	made of	golden
-er, -or	one who; person connected with	teacher, professor
-er	more	taller
-est	the most	tallest
-ful	full of	helpful
-ic	having characteristics of	poetic
-ing	verb forms; present participles	sleeping
-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition	act; process	submission, motion, Relation, edition
-ity, -ty	state of	activity, society
-ive, -ative, -itive	adjective form of noun	active, comparative, sensitive
-less	without	hopeless
-ly	how something is	lovely
-ment	state of being; act of	contentment
-ness	state of; condition of	openness
-ous, -eous, -ious	having qualities of	riotous, courageous, gracious
-s, -es	more than one	trains, trenches
-y	characterized by	gloomy