

VōWac® Publishing Company

SMANTIX!

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An Exclusive Newsletter from the Ant on Apple People

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READING

If we knew everything about it, all kids could read

Improving the odds of success for all students learning to read is primarily dependent on appropriate instruction. The rub is defining or determining just what appropriate instruction looks like. To be sure, there is a plethora of research as well as clinical and classroom experience supporting this notion.

To start, we must have high expectation for **ALL** students. There are well

documented and effective instructional practices available that do, in fact, exist that will help all children become successful readers.

Let's add to this idea that effective reading instruction is quite comprehensive. It should address all of the aspects regarding both strengths and needs of each student. This includes direct instruction of phonemic awareness and phonics.

In addition, oral language development must be included in order to create that independent reader we strive so hard to produce. Reading is not just word reading, but a combination of the development of oral language skills, writing, and comprehension. Let's add to that many opportunities for students to practice and apply the skills being developed. Young readers need to engage in meaningful reading and writing activities.

Flexibility of instruction and allotted time are key elements that teachers need to reach a diverse population of emergent readers; and that depends on

the strength and needs of each student. Informative assessments need to be ongoing. This flexibility component should be expanded by allowing teachers to use methods and strategies that work for individual students - as unorthodox as they may appear at times. Do what works. If what you are doing is ineffective - quit. Do something else. This, in and of itself, is research. Use this knowledge to do it better next time.

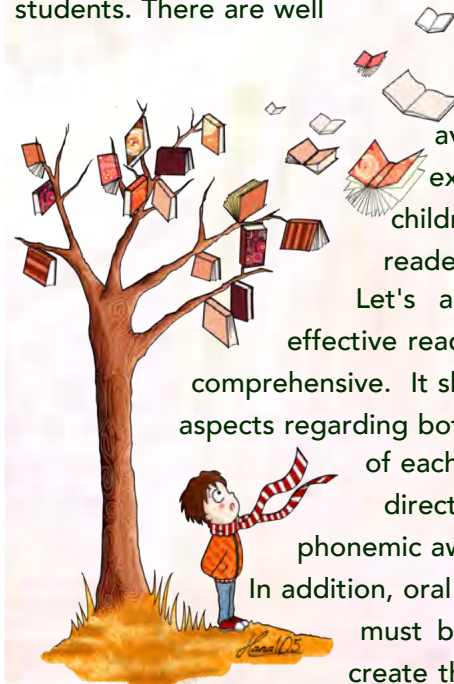
These strengths and needs are what skillful teachers take into account when making adjustments in their instruction. Teachers need to know what students know and do to determine what they need to learn. And skillful teachers need to be able to do this "on the fly".

Teachers be wary. Students with exceptional phonics and decoding skills may experience vast difficulties with comprehension. Be wary of over-loading with direct instruction of phonics skills. Teaching decoding skills in isolation does little to help students expand and develop comprehension skills.

There is no one-size-fits-all. Using that approach may cause struggling students to lose even more ground. Very often, intervention **(Cont. on page 2 Reading)**

If doing something doesn't work, QUIT! Do something else. When you do something that does work - keep doing it. It may not meet the definition of research based strategies, but it may very well meet the needs of a struggling student.

This simple concept is actually the true intent of Response To Intervention.





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READING

(Continued from page 1)

strategies are not successful because the intervention focuses on the wrong need.

The burden shouldn't lie solely on teachers. Yes, they should be well versed in **ALL** aspects of reading instruction, but much of that burden is on teacher preparation. Colleges and universities must also become bigger stakeholders in this effort. Too many institutions focus on one specific philosophy or another. This is misguided at best and devastating at worst.

Schools themselves need to structure and coordinate student learning. It doesn't matter if the curriculum is "canned" or school-based. High quality instruction and effective intervention happens over time. Both teachers and support staff need to be well trained with ongoing professional development.

With today's schools and classrooms becoming more and more diverse each year.... strike that.... each day, the teachers in the trenches have a daunting task in front of them. It is most difficult to stay abreast of the cultural and linguistic challenges faced on a daily basis. Add to that the varying socioeconomics and the family backgrounds and expectations, teachers rely heavily on personal experiences. They need more! They can do more. But they need the proper mind-set and support to meet the unlimited hurdles in the lives of students.

Learning to read is more than letters and sounds; more than fluency and comprehension. It's about making sure we provide students with the tools to be successful readers; allowing them to learn what they want and what they need in order to be successful and productive adults - in their homes and in their communities

Suffix Flow Chart



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NEW!
Included in the TM 3, TM 4,
and RTM-2 teacher kits

Suffixes A "What-do-I-do-now?" Chart

Let's stay with the basic SUFFIX 101 concepts.

A suffix is a letter, or group of letters, that is added to the end of a root (base) word. Common suffixes include **s**, **ed**, **ing**, **ly**, and **tion**. A suffix changes the meaning of the root or base word. Therefore, children need to understand the meanings of suffixes and how they affect the words they're attached to. By helping children quickly identify a suffix and visually remove it to identify the base word, you'll help them figure out the meaning of the whole word.

Adding a suffix sometimes changes the spelling of a base word. Children need to be directly taught the suffixes that cause changes. The three most common spelling changes resulting from the addition of suffixes

are: 1) Consonant doubling (runner, running), 2) Changing y to i (flies, happiest, loneliness), and 3) Deleting the silent e (making).

This easy-to-use chart makes it simple for struggling students to get the correct spelling when adding a suffix. (The chart does not apply to plurals.)

It is important that students often review the chart in order to gain mastery. Once mastery is achieved, the chart is useful as a spelling reference. Ideally, students should be able to visually internalize the chart through frequent use.

At some point, students will realize that very few words will not follow the chart's flow, i.e., *truly* and *mileage*. Often in other cases, a word may be spelled in two ways, one that follows the chart and another that does not.

(Wall Chart • Item SFC Student Version • Item SFC-ST)

SUFFIX FLOW CHART

Activities & Games

Visit www.vowac.com. On the home page under the 'RESOURCES' tab, you'll find 'Free Downloads'. Click on this to gain access to a list of words and suffixes that can be used with some of the activities on this page. Root words and suffixes can be printed on card stock and used randomly. Suffixes can also be printed on 'dots' and transferred to dice. Use your imagination and your students will have an enjoyable learning experience.

The Longest Route

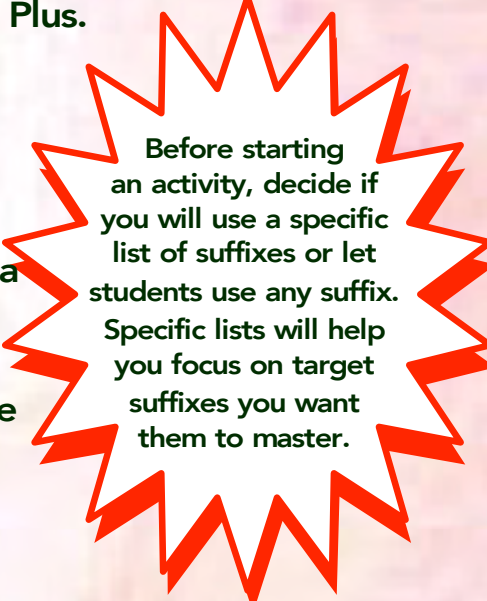
Students randomly choose a word and suffix. Award one point for each step traveled to get to the correct spelling. Have student(s) write the word correctly and place a circled number beside it to indicate the number of steps it took to reach the final destination. This can be played as single player or as team play.

Write Right

This is a game of skill that is best be played in pairs or triplets. Verbally provide a word to the teams. Without using the chart, teams decide how they think the word is spelled correctly. Teams then use the chart to decide if they have the correct spelling. Award one point for each correct new word. Option: Teams can save their words to use with Write Right Plus.

Parts of Speech Quest

This activity can be played as a one or two-person team. Provide a root word. Players are to correctly add and spell a new word, creating as many parts of speech as possible. Option: Have students use the new words in a sentence or paragraph.



Before starting an activity, decide if you will use a specific list of suffixes or let students use any suffix. Specific lists will help you focus on target suffixes you want them to master.

Suffix Scattergories

All of the words used in this activity must contain a suffix. Divide the class into teams of two, three or four. Each team will divide a piece of paper into four columns labeled *Verbs*, *Nouns*, *Adjectives* and *Adverbs*. Give the class a letter of the alphabet (e.g. D). Teams will have two minutes to correctly write as many words as they can starting with that letter. Words must be written in the correct column to score a point.

Write Right Plus

This game is a continuation of Write Right. Provide any suffix to the teams. Teams decide which root words the suffix can be used AND must spell the new word correctly. Award one point for the correctly spelled new word.

What's the Word

Using the suffixes *-ly*, *-ful*, *-er*, *-ness*, *-less*, and *-able*, read a definition. Students are to correctly write the new word to match the definition. *Example: full of spite or suspense ... the correct words are spiteful or suspenseful; a state of being clean would be cleanliness.* Challenge your students to come up with definitions of their own and let classmates write the correct word.