

# ***Word Building Skills***

## **LIST IT AND SKIP IT**

The following activity allows the student to "read on" rather than stopping to sound out unknown words.

1. Give the student a commercial or tutor-made bookmark.
2. Write the phrase, "List It and Skip It" on the bookmark.
3. Tell the student that this is to remind him/her what to do when s/he is reading and comes to a word that s/he doesn't understand.
4. The student can jot the word down on the bookmark or in the margin of the book and go on. Most of the time the meaning will become clear as s/he reads on, but if not, s/he can look its meaning up later. If s/he is reading with the tutor, the tutor can pronounce the word if its meaning does not become clear as the student reads on.
5. The tutor can use this list of words to teach sight vocabulary after the reading section is completed.

Source: Dr. Don Keefe, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville.

## **UNLOCKING THOSE BIG WORDS**

Teach your student to apply the following six-step strategy to figure out multisyllabic words. WHEN you come to a hard word:

1. If you cannot figure the word out, skip it, finish the sentence and see if you can figure it out from the context.
2. Look for prefixes or suffixes.
3. Look for a base or root word that you know.
4. Read to the end of the sentence. Think of a word with those parts (from steps 2 and 3) that makes sense.
5. Try other sounds, syllables, and accents until you form a word that makes sense.
6. If you still cannot figure out the word ask someone, or use the dictionary.

To TEACH the strategy you should model its use, then provide the students with guided and independent practice as follows:

1. Present the steps, using a written chart that students can remember and refer to.
2. Choose a difficult word and put it into a sentence.
3. Demonstrate how you would use the steps, one at a time, to figure out the hard word.
4. Use enough examples to show how a student may use a different number of steps each time to get the correct pronunciation. (Always go through the steps in order.)
5. Provide student with sentences that s/he may use to apply the steps as you provide guidance.
6. Reassure student that the strategy works and encourage him/her to read more until the strategy becomes automatic.

SOURCE: Locating and Correcting Reading Difficulties by Ekwall and Shanker

### **HOW TO INCREASE SIGHT WORD VOCABULARY**

1. Put the word to be learned on a flash card.
2. Use the word in a sentence. Write the sentence or phrase on the back of the card.
3. Have the student practice saying, spelling, and writing the word (in a sentence).
4. Review the word regularly.

#### *TIPS*

- ! Practice selected words in context to reinforce meaning.
- ! Have student match sight word cards to words in a story.
- ! Have student look through a newspaper or magazine article for a given sight word and circle it when found.
- ! Attach a picture to the word card to ease comprehension especially for ESL students and beginning readers.
- ! Mark the card each time the student recognizes the word instantly; retire it after 3 to 5 correct responses.

### **BLENDS**

A blend is a string of two or three consonants (bl, str) which blend together, yet retain their original sounds.

#### *Teaching Blends*

There are two main options for teaching blends:

Select a published adult beginner book that includes instruction on blends. Supplement the activities in the book with extra words. (Refer to Section 3, Building Word Skills, in your tutor training manual, A Guide for Basic Reading Tutors.)

Develop a file or list of key words to help the student practice and remember the sounds of the blends.

1. Generate a list of words that begin with a selected blend. Any reading selection can be used as a source of words to start the list. Consider words of personal significance to the student.
2. Help the student read the list and isolate the sounds at the beginning of the words.
3. Reread the list with the student, emphasizing the blend.
4. After introducing a sound, provide practice for your student either by following an instructional series or by developing your own exercises.

Blends with "l"	bl cl fl gl pl
Blends with "r"	br cr dr fr gr pr tr
Blends with "w"	dw tw
Blends with "s"	sc sp st sk sm sn squ sl sw
<b>Triple</b> blends	scr spr str spl
<b>Diagraph</b> blends	shr thr

Source: LITSTART, Robson, DeVergilio, and DeButts

## DIG UP THE ROOT

Purpose: To develop recognition of word roots and attached prefixes and suffixes.

Materials: Word cards (You can use index cards)

Procedure: You need two sets of word cards. On one set, list a number of root words on individual cards. On the other set, list words composed of the root words plus a prefix or suffix. Have the student match the root word with the new word that contains the root word and the prefix or suffix. Here are some examples:

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. finish    | undecided    |
| 2. reach     | finishing    |
| 3. determine | replace      |
| 4. decided   | nationality  |
| 5. place     | reached      |
| 6. nation    | predetermine |

Source: Locating and Correcting Reading Difficulties, Edkwall and Shanker

### **PREFIX AND SUFFIX CHART**

Purpose: To teach the meanings and uses of suffixes and prefixes

Materials: Chart similar to the example below.

Procedure: Construct a chart like the following and have the student fill in the blank spaces. Put an X in the spaces that are not applicable.

#### *CHART*

<b>Prefix</b>	<b>Prefix Meaning</b>	<b>Root</b>	<b>Whole Word</b>	<b>Suffix</b>	<b>Suffix Meaning</b>
un		do	undo	X	X
X	X	soft	softly		in a way
X	X	play	playful	ful	
	from	port		X	X
pre			X	X	X
X	X	care			without

Source: Locating and Correcting Reading Difficulties, Ekwall and Shanker