

Reading Foundations Skills Glossary

Affix: a morpheme attached to the beginning or end of a baseword to modify its meaning.
Example: “im” in “impossible”, “ing” in “jumping”.

Articulatory Gestures: Mouth movements necessary to enunciate sounds in language.

Automaticity of Words from Memory: The ability to recognize the pronunciations and meanings of written words immediately upon seeing them without expending any attention or effort decoding the words.

Base Word: The root part of a word in which the base element or basic meaning is contained.
Example: “possible” in “impossible”, “jump” in “jumping”.

Decode: The ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships in reading.

Digraph: Two letters used to represent one phoneme. Example: “sh” or “ea”.

Encode: Ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships in writing.

Grapheme: A letter or a number of letters that represent a sound (phoneme) in a word. Another way to explain it is to say that a grapheme is a letter or letters that spell a sound in a word. Some written scripts are simple in which one letter usually represents one sound.

Graphophonic Cues: These involve the letter-sound or sound-symbol relationships of language. Readers identifying unknown words by relating speech sounds to letters or letter patterns are using graphophonic cues. This process is often called *decoding*.

Graphophonemic Knowledge: The recognition of letters and the understanding of sound-symbol relationships and spelling patterns. Note: Graphophonemic knowledge is often referred to as *phonics*.

Graphophonological Relationships: The ability to match letters (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes).

Letter Identification: The ability to name a letter in two forms: uppercase and lowercase, as well as the ability to recognize letters both in isolation and within a word.

Morpheme: The smallest grammatical units of a language, each constituting a word or meaningful part of a word that cannot be divided into smaller independent grammatical parts. Example: “unfruitful” has three morphemes, the affixes “un” and “ful” and the baseword “fruit”.

Phoneme: Any of the perceptually distinct units of sound in a specified language that distinguish one word from another, for example /p/, /b/, /d/, and /t/ in the English words *pad*, *pat*, *bad*, and *bat*.

Phoneme segmentation: The ability to break words down into individual sounds.

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Phonics: A method of teaching reading by correlating sounds with letters or groups of letters in an alphabetic writing system.

Phonological Awareness-Phonemes: The ability to recognize that words are made up of units of sound (called phonemes) and the ability to manipulate phonemes (segment, delete, substitute, blend).

Phonological Awareness-Syllables: The ability to recognize that words can be divided into syllables, to segment and blend syllables in multisyllabic words, and to identify syllable type.

Plural: More than one.

Possessive: Shows ownership

- Singular possessive: adds an 's, belonging to one person or animal
- Plural possessive: adds an s', belonging to a group of people or animals
- Possessive personal pronouns: no apostrophe (his, hers, yours)

Prefix: An affix placed at beginning of base word. Example: “un” in “unkind”.

R-controlled: Any vowel followed by r.

Salient Sound: The most noticeable or strongest sound in a word.

Schwa: a vowel sound typically occurring in unstressed syllables in English. Example: “alone”. The “a” in “alone” is an unstressed syllable and makes a schwa sound (in this case pronounced /u/). The symbol for this sound is /ə/.

Suffix: An affix placed at end of the base word; changes the part of speech (educate, educator, education, educated)

Syllable: an individual beat in a word containing a vowel sound.” For example, the word “moment” contains two syllables (or beats), each with it’s own vowel sound; “mo” and “ment”.

Syllable Types:

- **Closed:** syllable with a single vowel followed by one or more consonants (vowel sound is “closed” by the consonant.) Note: Vowel is usually short. Examples: cab, dog, in, dish, letter
- **Open:** syllable that ends with a single vowel (vowel is not closed by a consonant; it is left open.) Note: Vowel is usually long. Examples: hi, me, go, sky
- **V-C-e:** syllable with a single vowel followed by a consonant, then the vowel e. First vowel is usually long and final e in the syllable is silent. Examples: bike, skate, note, close
- **V-r:** (ar, er, ir, ur, or): syllable with one or two vowels followed by the letter r. The r influences or controls the vowel sound. Examples: car, her, for, dollar
- **Vowel Teams:** (oa, ue, ai, ea, ie, ay, a/ew, oo): syllable that has two consecutive vowels. Note: The letters w and y act as vowels. Examples: long vowel teams (meat, road, mail, say); variant vowel teams (amount, look, paw)
- **C-le (al, el):** syllable that has a consonant followed by the letters le, al, or el. The vowel sound in this syllable type is the schwa (/ə/).

Vowel Diphthongs: Two or more letters that begin with one vowel phoneme (sound) and *glide* into another (**ouch**, **point**).

Vowel Team: Any vowel or letter combination that equals a vowel sound.