

STAGE 24

VOWEL SUFFIXES

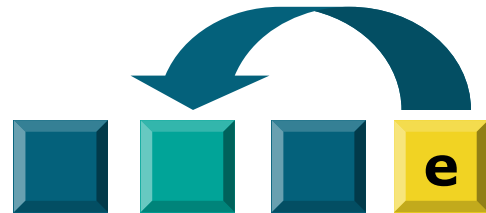


Teaching suffixes is all about protecting short vowels from other vowels. Short vowels can easily be affected by other vowels getting too close. To stop this happening we have to use 'padding'-doubled consonants whose only job is to provide a buffer between vowels.

WHERE TO BEGIN

Begin by recapping 'Magic E' words and doubled consonant words. The child should be able to read the words accurately knowing the rule that 'Magic E' can only jump over one letter. Ask them to identify what role the doubled letter has.

hoped	vs.	hopped
meter		letter
hated		tapped
latest		saddest



You may need to spend some time recapping this principle. Make sure the child is really secure before moving on to vowel suffixes.

VOWEL SUFFIXES



We are teaching a principle rather than spellings. This means we are going to work with many different words and focus on the child's understanding of why the vowel suffix is added as it is. Use all four suffixes when providing example words. Although '-EN' is a less common suffix it follows the same principle which is why we include it here.

Begin by contrasting the 'need padding' with 'does not need padding' words (Rule 1). Once the child understands and can explain this, introduce words that follow rule 2, then 3 and finally 4.

HINTS AND TIPS

This principle is hard to explain on paper, but beautifully simple in practice. It provides a physical and intuitive way of discussing spelling rules.

I sometimes compare it to two friends who always chat in class. The teacher sometimes puts someone between them to stop them talking. This is the same rule, but applied to vowels.

bigger If the 'E' can turn into a 'Magic E' and jump backward we have to stop it. ADD PADDING! i.e. double the consonant.

dampen If there is already enough padding then just add the suffix.

snowed If there is a long or crazy vowel sound then the vowel cannot be affected anyway, so just add the padding.

lined If the word already ends in an 'E' then just add the rest of the suffix. We do not need two letters doing the same job.

cried Just add the suffix, but do not forget the 'Shy I' will not be shy anymore. It will change back to an 'I'.

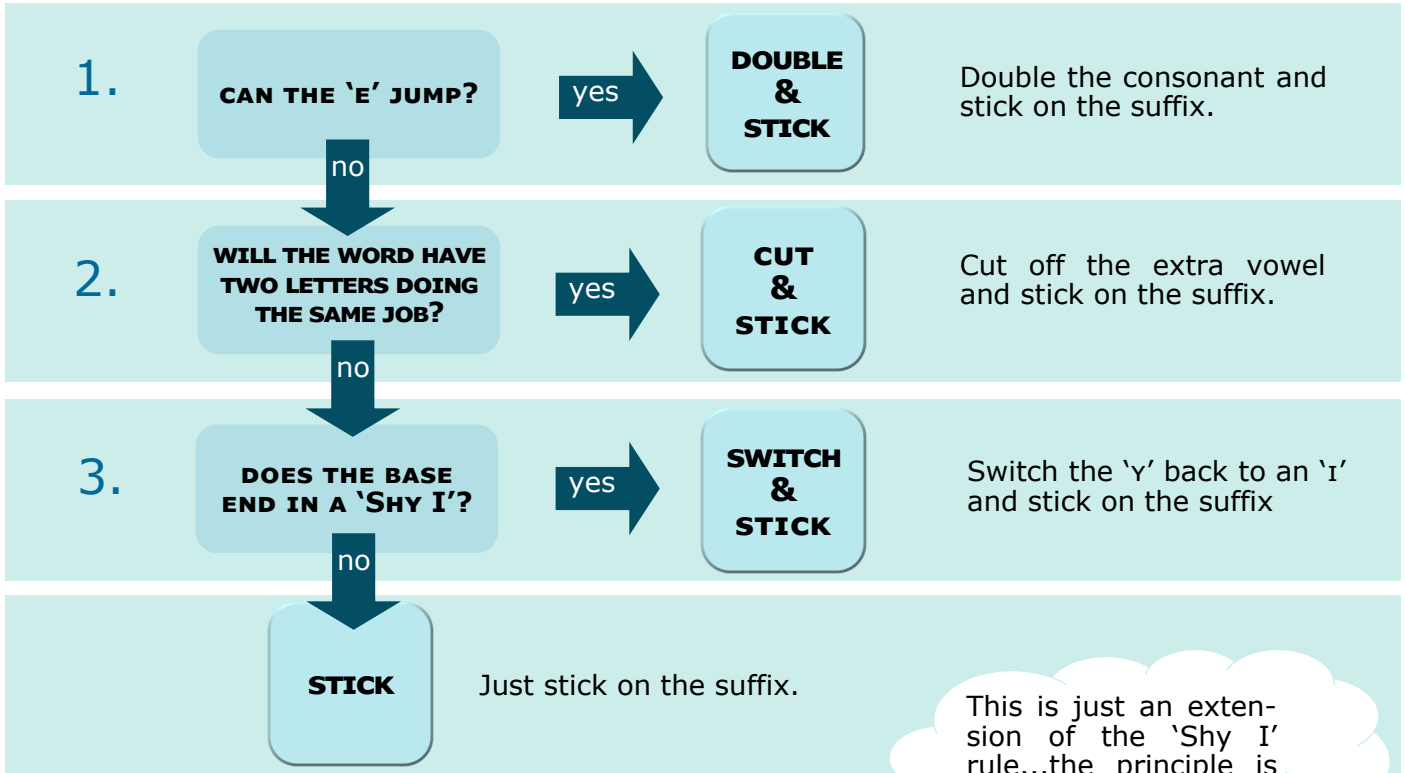
TERMINOLOGY

When we are talking about adding suffixes we are going to use the words 'double', 'stick', 'cut' and 'switch' to describe the decisions we are making. This allows us to use the same language when talking about our actions when we are engaged in physical word building activities, as when we are taking about the same decision making at an abstract level.

THE DECISION MAKING TREE



Ask each of these questions in turn to help the child move through the decision making process.



This table shows the same information in a different format.

BASE WORD	NEEDS PADDING	DOES NOT NEED PADDING			
		1	2	3	4
END OF BASE WORD	Single consonant	Double consonant	Long or crazy sound	Has 'magic E' already	Ends in 'Y'
WHAT WILL HAPPEN	'E' will jump	Already padded	'E' will not change the sound	We do not need two letters doing the same job!	Check if the 'Y' is busy. If not it will change back to 'I'
HOW TO ADD SUFFIX	Double then add suffix	Add suffix	Add suffix	Just add rest of suffix	Change back to 'I' - and add the suffix
	DOUBLE & STICK	STICK	STICK	CUT & STICK	SWITCH & STICK
EXAMPLE WORDS	patted bigger fattest bitten	cracked smaller shortest dampen	seemed slower loudest beaten	lined nicer latest widen	cried drier driest

VOWEL SUFFIX ACTIVITIES



BASE WORDS

Always begin with the complete base word. Then focus on changes taking place in the suffix to make sure we can add it to the base word. To avoid confusing children do not with say that we take off the 'E' from the base word and then add '-ED', as this adds an additional step to the decision making process. The base word remains stable and the suffix is added.

TEACHING VOWEL SUFFIXES

LOGIC NOT RULES!

This is a logical process. There are no arbitrary 'rules' to learn, but rather a logical process that needs to be applied.

Initially, work with paper words that can be overlapped (where we need to loose an 'E',) drawn on (where we need to double a consonant) and altered (where we need to change a 'Y' to an 'I'). Use the magnetic suffix units only for reference to begin with.

Start by physically altering the words, sticking and cutting the bits together, writing in the extra letter. Use the terms 'cut', 'stick', 'double' & 'switch' in the context of what you are describing to begin with. This way there will be a gradual shift towards an abstract understanding of the terms that can be used in games.



HINTS AND TIPS

For children who are gestural learners develop hand-signs for the different rules.

cut- make a scissor movement

double- turn both palms up

switch- turn from palm up to palm down

stick- make a fist like holding a glue stick

EXAMPLE VOWEL SUFFIX ACTIVITIES

Word Sums – Present a base word and a suffix as a word sum. Work through the 'decision making tree' to figure out how to attach the suffix to the base word. Physically cut and stick the bits together to make the whole word.

No Nonsense – Present words that follow the rules along with other words that break the rules e.g. 'biger' 'lined'. Make sure the base word is written in a different colour to the suffix. The child needs to work out which words are nonsense words and say why before putting them in the bin. This improves reading accuracy.

Sentence Pairs – Provide two sentences that can be completed by doubled/undoubled versions of the same spelling. e.g. taped and tapped. The child has to decide which word is correct for the sentence. Begin by providing the sentences orally and presenting only the two words the child needs to choose between. To practice reading accuracy present the two versions of the sentence as text and ask the child to select the correct one. For example,

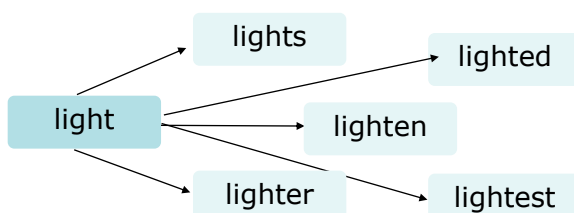
The box was tapped shut

the box was taped shut

Buzzer Games – Place a sign for each of the difference options on the buzzers—'cut' 'double' 'swap' and 'stick'. Provide the child with the base word and suffix and the child presses the buzzers to show what they would do to add the vowel suffix. Build up speed. You can strengthen word visualization skills by providing the word orally. However, this only works if you are sure the child can spell the base words accurately.

TEACHING BASE MAPS

Base maps are a great way to demonstrate how knowing a single base word spelling allows us to spell many related words.



EXAMPLE BASE MAP ACTIVITIES

Base Map Building – Give the child a base word and see if they can make more than one new word using the suffixes. They write each new word on a new 'brick' to build a tower. Include words which take few suffixes and words that take all of them.

sharp sharpen sharper sharpest

short shorten shorter shortest shorts

clean cleaner cleanest cleaned cleans

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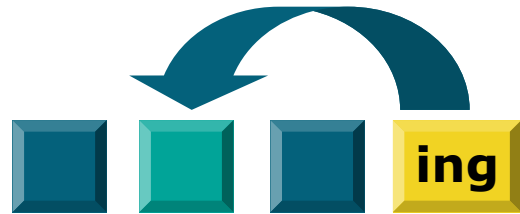
VOWEL SUFFIX - ING



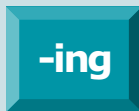
WHERE TO BEGIN

Begin by recapping Magic E words and considering at how 'I' jumps too. These are words that often trip up readers. Exactly the same rules apply when adding '-ING' as when adding any other vowel suffix.

hopping	vs.	hoping
tapping		taping
cutting		hating
mapping		noting



VOWEL SUFFIX



EXPLANATION

For younger children – 'I' is the older cousin of 'E' and they can do the same job. When the 'I' arrives on the suffix '-ING' he tells his little cousin he can go home. You do not need two letters doing the same job, so just use the 'I'.

For older children – 'E' is not the only letter that can jump. 'I' has the same power. We do not need two letters doing the same job, so when we are adding the suffix '-ING' we do not need the 'magic E' as well as the 'I'.

The principles are exactly the same as when adding any other vowel suffix. Just keep reiterating that the 'I' does the same job as the 'E'. The only other issue to highlight is the anomaly with words that end in 'Y'. This does not occur often but is worth addressing now.

This is tricky...you can't have two 'I's together... it would look too odd, so you just stick!

BASE WORD	NEEDS PADDING	DOES NOT NEED PADDING			
		1	2	3	4
END OF BASE WORD	Single consonant	Double consonant	Long or crazy sound	Has 'magic e' already	Ends in 'y'
WHAT WILL HAPPEN	'E' will jump	Already padded	'E' will not change the sound	We do not need two letters doing the same job!	BUT can't have a double 'I' - it would be too odd.
HOW TO ADD SUFFIX	Double then add suffix	Add suffix	Add suffix	Just add rest of suffix	Add suffix
	DOUBLE & STICK	STICK	STICK	CUT & STICK	STICK
EXAMPLE WORDS	patting ripping sitting winning	cracking smelling dressing counting	slowing spoiling shouting surfing	taking biting joking tuning	crying drying spying

STAGE 25

CONSONANT SUFFIXES



WHERE TO BEGIN

If a child has a good understanding of the principles of vowel suffixes and doubling rules then consonant suffixes do not really need to be taught. The same rules apply, only this time it is really easy. Every consonant suffix can simply be stuck onto the base word. Contrast consonant and vowel suffixes in games and activities, encouraging the child to notice the first letter of the suffix before any other decisions are made.

HINTS AND TIPS

It may seem counterintuitive to teach consonant suffixes after vowel suffixes. The reason for teaching suffixes in this order is because we want the child to automatically evaluate each suffix before adding it. If children begin with consonant suffixes they develop a default mode of simply sticking the suffix straight on the end of the word before they have really thought about the consequences.

CONSONANT SUFFIXES

-ful

-ly

-less

-ness

-ment

Y BECOMES I

The only instance you will need to practice with the child is changing 'y' back to 'i' if it becomes trapped in the middle of a word.




This is found in relation to adjectival 'y' in words like 'dirty' and 'hungry', where the final 'y' is making a long /ē/ sound. When the 'y' reverts to an 'i' you can hear it clearly in words like 'dirtyly' or 'hungrily'. Adjectival 'y' is taught as a specific rule later so address this spelling pattern only after you have introduced adjectival 'y'. Then focus on applying 'the y becomes an i rule' and provide the base word spellings for the child to start with. Provide examples where the 'y' is too busy to change (i.e. it is part of a digraph or diphthong) and examples where the 'y' reverts back to an 'i'.

EXCEPTIONS

There are plenty of exceptions to these rules. However, the aim of this programme is not perfect spelling. The aim of this programme is to teach simple rules of thumb that will be memorable and accessible.

Once a child is confident about what 'should be done' they will be able to categorise words according to which are following the rule and which are breaking the rule. This level of recognition is already a vast improvement on simply feeling confused by everything.

Common exceptions can be addressed once the child is confident, but for now just stick to words that follow the rules in the games and activities you work with.

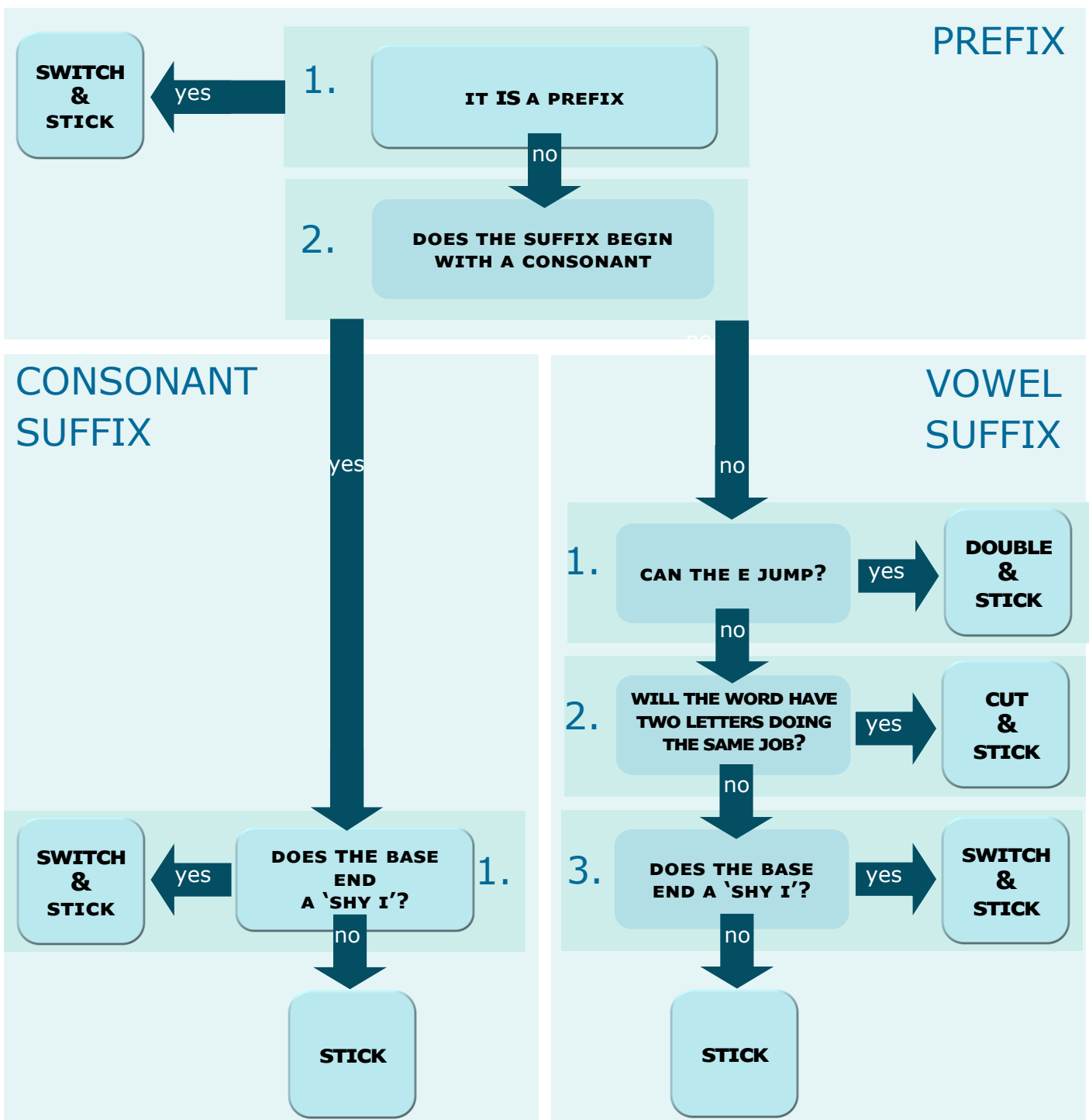
BASE WORD	DOES NOT NEED PADDING		
	1	2	3
END OF BASE WORD	Base does not end in 'y'	Base ends in 'busy y'	Base ends in 'y'
WHAT WILL HAPPEN	The suffix is safe to add	The 'y' is too busy to change back to an 'i'	Can't have 'y' in the middle of a word
HOW TO ADD SUFFIX	Add suffix 	Add suffix 	Switch 'y' to 'i' and add suffix. 
EXAMPLE WORDS	faithful slowly careless cleverness development	playful coily joyless coyness payment	merciful dirtyly penniless hungriness accompaniment

AFFIX DECISION MAKING TREE

This decision tree can be used to add both prefixes and suffixes to base words. Work with the child until they internalise the steps they need to run through to choose the correct spelling. Some children work well with a child friendly version of this 'tree'. Other children work better with guided questioning taking them through the same steps for each word they approach.

Although this seems complicated it encapsulates dozens of rules usually taught individually. It allows the child to think logically about spelling as a problem solving exercise rather than as a set of disparate rules applied for no particular reason. This method works with core concepts about how sounds and letters interact.

There will be a substantial lag between using this technique to approach individual words and incorporating this method into independent writing. Just be patient and make sure the child understands that they are not expected to understand and use this approach instantly.



AFFIX ACTIVITIES



TEACHING SUFFIXES

Continue to use a word sum format. This allows the child to see the relationship between the base word spelling and the complex word spelling each time. Make sure you both construct and deconstruct complex words during the activities.

fizzy + ness = fizziness

Remember to build up slowly-

1. Focus on the oral skill of breaking words into sections, or combining sections into words.
2. Focus on the spelling changes necessary to join the words.
3. Focus on writing the whole word, base word first.
4. Focus on mentally planning before writing the word from start to finish.

EXAMPLE SUFFIX TEACHING ACTIVITIES

What Dots – Provide the child with dots or stickers in three colours to stand for the prefix, base and suffix. Provide the child with a word to split orally, tapping the corresponding dot as they say each of the composite parts. Include words with multiple suffixes. Be clear this is not about rhythm or syllables.

Buzzer Game – Extend by including both vowel and consonant suffixes and base words covering all the different spelling variations. Provide the base word as text but provide suffixes orally. Build speed.

Word Ladder – Using a whiteboard ask the child to write a word, then provide new target words by asking the child to add and remove prefixes, suffixes and bases so that each successive word is still a real word e.g. 'distaste, distasteful, distastefully', 'powerfully, powerful, power, empower, empowerment'. Adapt the words to match the child's vocabulary.

TEACHING MULTIPART COMPLEX WORDS

Once the child is confident with adding a prefix or a suffix begin looking at words with both prefixes and suffixes, and even words with multiple suffixes. Children really enjoy tackling long words once they reach this point.

un + happy + ness = unhappiness

Many children with dyslexia have vocabularies that far outstrip their ability to spell. Use words commensurate with their vocabulary rather than their reading ability.

dis + content + ment = discontentment

EXAMPLE COMPOUND VS COMPLEX ACTIVITIES

Word Hunts – Use different coloured highlighters to highlight prefixes, base words, and suffixes found in the text. Score points for each new prefix and suffix highlighted, or search for the longest word.

Word Sums – Provide word parts for a word building activity. Include base words that can take more than one suffix (e.g. 'carelessness', 'carefully') or suffix-affix combination (e.g. 'unthankful', 'thankfulness').

Base Word Blast – Choose base words that form part of many common words using a variety of suffixes and prefixes. Use the bonded affix units to help prompt the child to try each in turn and add 'real' words to a spider chart with the base word in the centre. If there is a word the child does not recognise help them to think about what it might mean given the meaning of the prefix/suffix used.

RESOURCES AND UNIT SIZE

Most of the time it is possible to use bonded units for both prefixes and suffixes. However, some children work best when they can physically 'switch' or 'cut' the letters from the suffix. For these children use magnetic bonded units as a reference, but use paper versions to work with. That way they can physically interact with the word as they build it. Overlapping printed base words and suffixes is a neat way to demonstrate the importance of removing the extra letter. Read words as they would sound if the extra letter was not removed to demonstrate the difference.

line + ed = lined

not lineed

cute + er = cuter

not cuteer

late + est = latest

not lateest

STAGE 26

ADJECTIVAL Y



WHAT IS AN ADJECTIVE?

At its simplest level, an adjective is a word that describes a thing. The things being described are nouns. Anything you can name is a noun. It is not important that the child understands the grammatical terms. However, if you use them when referring to the words it will make them more familiar.

The **black** cat.
A **beautiful** day.
An **angry** boy.

sleep	—	sleepy
mess	—	messy
mud	—	muddy

Often adjectives are made by adding a 'y' to the end of a noun. This 'y' makes the long /ē/ sound. It transforms the noun into an adjective. Adjectives can also be made from verbs or even other adjectives, but for now we are just going to focus on the noun to adjective transition as it provides a simple way to explore the spelling patterns for adding the suffix 'y'.

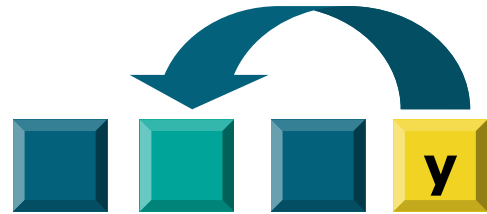
ADJECTIVAL Y

-y

WHERE TO BEGIN

Begin by recapping 'Magic E' words and their 'Busy Y' counterparts. We explored this quite a while ago so recap thoroughly.

laze	vs.	lazy
nose		nosy
wave		wavy
lace		lacy



THE 'Y' DOES TWO JOBS:

1. It jumps just like a 'magic E'
2. It makes the long /ē/ sound

The child should already be able to read some common words which follow this pattern, e.g. lazy, wavy. As a reminder use structured questioning to help the child work out the two jobs the letter 'y' is doing, and think about why we cannot just use an 'e'. We now need to extend their understanding to include instances where the 'y' simply stands for the long /ē/ sound.

EXPLANATION— BUSY 'E' RECAP

For younger children – When 'E' is at the end of the word it is using all its magic up helping the first vowel shout its name. It doesn't say its own name. But sometimes it needs to be super-powered. It needs to help the first vowel AND shout its name too. When that happens it breathes in so much that it turns into a 'Y' (model with playdough). In fact most of the time when an 'E' is by itself at the end of the word it takes a deep breath and turns into a 'Y' when it shouts its name.

For older children – We know that when an 'E' is at the end of the word it is usually using its magic to help the first vowel shout its name. But sometimes we need to hear the /ē/ sound at the end of a word too. We can not use an 'E' because people would get confused and not know if it was magic (and therefore not saying its own sound), so instead, if we want to add the long /ē/ sound to the end of a word we actually write a 'Y'.

Consider examples where that 'Y' is busy also acting as a magic 'E'

stony

grimy

BUT also lots of examples of words with a final 'Y' just making a long /ē/ sound.

happy

angry

Only move on when the child can read and write these words. This can take a while.

TEACHING ADJECTIVAL Y

This is taught just like any other vowel suffix. It follows the same rules. Keep the focus on writing the base word first and then adding the 'y' ending. Once the child has accepted that the letter 'y' has magic powers just like the 'Magic E' then all the doubling rules fit into the same framework.

BASE WORD	NEEDS PADDING	DOES NOT NEED PADDING			
	0	1	2	3	4
END OF BASE WORD	Single consonant	Double consonant	Long or crazy sound	Has 'magic E' already	Ends in 'y'
WHAT WILL HAPPEN	'y' will jump	Already padded	'E' will not change the sound	We do not need two letters doing the same job!	These do not exist
HOW TO ADD SUFFIX	Double then add suffix DOUBLE & STICK	Add suffix STICK	Add suffix STICK	Just add rest of suffix CUT & STICK	Note: Some words are correct both ways: E.g. nosy/nosey joky/jokey But stick with one rule as it is easier.
EXAMPLE WORDS	foggy dotty boggy funny	fully dusty fishy minty	foamy leafy moody chewy	wavy rosy flaky icy	

There are other types of words that also have 'y' making long /ē/ rather than a long /ī/ sound, but most are adjectives. They all follow the same rules if adding 'y' to a base word. We practice with nouns because they use familiar whole words as the base.

WHY?

THE IMPORTANCE OF ASKING FOR EXPLANATIONS

It is absolutely vital that the child you are working with understands the doubling rules and is not just guessing or going with a hunch. Ask them to explain their decision making.

Often children will think that if you ask 'why?' it is because they have made a mistake. They will revert to blind guessing. Be really clear that 'why' is a question asking for an explanation. They need to be able to vocalise their decision making process. Make sure you develop these skills along side their encoding and decoding skills.

When a child is uncertain, or is just selecting what looks familiar they are not ready to move on. They will not be able to apply the doubling principles to new words with confidence. For children with great memories provide unfamiliar words so they cannot simply fall back on word recognition. Take time with this. It is something that many children without literacy difficulties find challenging.

TYPES OF FINAL 'Y'

Recap that there are three types of 'y'.

Y THAT IS A SHY I

This represents the long /ī/ sound at the end of a word.

shy

cry

sly

Y THAT IS A BUSY E

This represents the long /ē/ sound at the end of a word.

happy

cozy

tidy

Y IN A DIGRAPH

This 'y' is busy helping another vowel so it can't turn back into an 'i' even if it is trapped in the middle of the word.

play

toy

played

toying

ADJECTIVAL Y ACTIVITIES



SHY 'I' AND BUSY 'E' TERMINOLOGY-

Although we write the letter 'y' it is important that the child recognises that it stands for another sound completely. The relationship between the near neighbours is complex and referring to the 'y' by what it represents along with the letter name can help cement this understanding.

That 'y' is really a 'Shy I'

That 'y' is really a 'Busy E'

TEACHING Y RECOGNITION

Initially focus on hearing the difference between words ending in the long /ē/ and /ī/ sounds when represented by a 'y' at the end of the word. This helps phonemic awareness as they have to listen to the word and decide what sound they can hear. Highlight the three types of final 'y' in different colours.

try

toy

tidy

Move on to identifying which sound makes sense in context.

EXAMPLE 'Y' RECOGNITION ACTIVITIES

Shy I and Busy E Sorting – Using sorting circles ask the child to decide if the word ends in a 'Shy I' or a 'Busy E'. Then provide pictures to match so the child can self check their decisions.

Flip Stick – Put a long /ē/ symbol and a long /ī/ symbol on opposite sides of a lollypop stick. Practice reading a word ending in 'y'. Read 'Shy I' and 'Busy E' words by holding the stick both ways over the final 'y' and choosing the word that is familiar. Extend by embedding words in sentences and also using contexts cues.

TEACHING NOUNS TO ADJECTIVES

Most words that end in a final /ē/ sound finish with a 'y'. There are a few that end in 'ee' or 'ea' but these are a minority. They never have a recognisable base word if you remove the final /ē/ sound.

agree

flea

tea

Practicing moving from a recognizable base word to an adjectival 'y' ending. Provide opportunities for the child to apply these rules to new words, and to recognize their application in words they already know.

sun

sunny

bag

baggy

EXAMPLE NOUNS-TO-ADJECTIVES ACTIVITIES

Silly Sentences – Provide base words that can be converted to adjectives along with a picture to be described. Once the child has converted all the nouns into adjectives, put them together to make a silly sentence, e.g. *The funny cheeky clown is skinny and smelly*.

What is my Base? – Provide adjectives and ask the child to identify and spell the base word. Include words where the adjectival form is more common than the noun, e.g. 'baggy', 'chewy', 'zippy'. Talk about how the adjective relates to the noun.

Note: avoid example words with a base 'le' ending, e.g. 'tingly', because we have not looked at the 'le' or 'el' endings yet.

TEACHING READING FLUENCY

By now 'magic e' endings (CVE) will be automatically read at least some of the time. We need to encourage this degree of automaticity for 'Busy E' endings (VCY). Speed reading activities are intrinsically dull, so make them engaging by structuring games around them.

EXAMPLE NOUNS TO ADJECTIVES ACTIVITIES

Speed Read Stepping Stones – Set up 'stepping stones' that can be jumped on in a circle on the floor. Flashcard words to be read at speed (CVE, VCY and distractor words). The child jumps forward one stone with each word they read. Encourage them to build up speed. Move stones further apart for a more energetic version of the game.

THE MEANING OF SUFFIXES



When working with suffixes it is important to recognise their role in changing the meaning of the base word. Ask the child to consider groups of words with the same suffix and see if they can figure out the meaning of the suffix for themselves. This page includes some less common suffixes that can be introduced when the child is ready. Initially just stick to the most common suffixes already outlined.

-ED

Past tense marker

*played
slowed
wiped*

-ER

It means 'one who...'

*driver
rider
cooker*

-EST

It means 'to be the most...'

*greatest
lowest
lightest*

-EN

It means 'to increase the quality of...'

*sharpen
frozen
deepen*

CHOICE OF SUFFIXES

These suffixes have been chosen as they often attach to common recognisable base words. There are many more that will be addressed later.

-ING

It means 'the act of...'

*taking
sleeping
sneezing*

-IST

It means 'one who does or is...'

*artist
cartoonist
tourist*

-ISH

It means 'to be like...'

*foolish
selfish
childish*

-IZE

It means 'to make or do'

*finalize
visualize
specialize*

-IFY

It means 'to make or do'

*identify
simplify
falsify*

-Y

It means 'having the quality of...'

*crunchy
slimy
peppery*

-FUL

It means 'to be full of...'

*painful
useful
helpful*

-LY

It means 'in the manner of...'

*mostly
rudely
safely*

-LESS

It means 'does not have...'

*endless
restless
jobless*

-NESS

It means 'quality of being...'

*illness
fitness
sadness*

-MENT

It means 'the act of...'

*payment
movement
pavement*

-WISE

It means 'in the manner of...'

*clockwise
likewise
streetwise*

MULTISYLLABIC WORDS

The rules change for words with longer words as they are influenced by the stress placed on different syllables. For now stick with shorter words that follow the rules.

USE EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING TO BUILD SKILLS

Use questioning to guide the child through the decision making process. Use the same three step format every time and gradually withdraw support until they are verbalising the process independently.

Make sure they can explain their decisions and use unfamiliar or nonsense words to check their understanding. As the child becomes more familiar with suffixes this process will become internalised.

NONSENSE WORDS

These are a great way to check understanding.

graze + y = grazzy

smip + ing = smipping

flay + ful = flayful

gry + ed = gried

EXAMPLES OF GUIDED QUESTIONS

GIVE TARGET WORD	'HOPPED'	'HOPED'	GIVE TARGET WORD
What is the base word? Write it down.	hop	hope	What is the base word? Write it down.
What is the suffix? Write it down.	-ED	-ED	What is the suffix? Write it down.
Are you going to need padding to stop the 'E' jumping? -	yes	No 'EE' is long	Can you put two E's together? Just add what you need.
Ok- write them together.	hopped	hoped	Ok- write them together.

GIVE TARGET WORD	'SHADY'	'SHADING'	GIVE TARGET WORD
What is the base word? Write it down.	shade	shade	What is the base word? Write it down.
What is the suffix? Write it down.	-Y	-ING	What is the suffix? Write it down.
Remember y can do the same job as magic 'E'. It has two jobs.	Yes- cancel E	Yes- cancel E	Remember 'I' can also jump. Two letters can't do the same job.
Ok- write them together.	shady	shading	Ok- write them together.

VOWEL SUFFIXES ORGANIZED BY BASE WORD



THE THREE STEP PROCESS

Use a 3 step approach. Although initially the child will need to change letters, over time they will be able to complete the process without writing the entire base word.

Check you are using all base word types.

This is the same information as on the previous two pages, but presented by base word type rather than by suffix type. This is useful for checking you are using all base types in games and activities.

1. BASE	IDENTIFY BASE WORD—WRITE IT DOWN
2. JOIN	WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE TO ALLOW THE SUFFIX TO JOIN
3. SUFFIX	ADD THE SUFFIX

VOWEL SUFFIXES	-ED	-ING	-ER	-EST	-EN	-Y
Words ending in short vowel consonant (CV)	DOUBLE AND STICK	DOUBLE AND STICK	DOUBLE AND STICK	DOUBLE AND STICK	DOUBLE AND STICK	DOUBLE AND STICK
	skipped hopped noddod	running skipping sitting	runner hotter bigger	biggest slimmest wettest	sadden bitten rotten	sunny funny muddy
Words ending in two consonants (VCC)	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK
	fished filled ducked	wishing chucking missing	miller locker printer	kindest sickest swiftest	soften damped lessen	itchy pushy smelly
Words where the last vowel is long or crazy	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK
	slowed rained stayed	cooking playing streaming	waiter sooner meaner	lowest slightest loudest	lighten beaten wooden	rainy gluey snowy
Words where there is a final Magic E (VCE)	STICK REST	CUT AND STICK	STICK REST	STICK REST	STICK REST	CUT AND STICK
	chased loved noted	moving rinsing wiping	trader timer wiser	cutest widest nicest	shaken given liven	mousy shady shaky
Words that end in a 'Y' making /ē/ sound	SWITCH AND STICK	STICK	SWITCH AND STICK	SWITCH AND STICK	Note: The final 'Y' making an /i/ sound does not change for -ER and -EST endings.	
	carried hurried studied	copying envying relying	happier uglier trickier	mistiect dizziect jumiect		
Words that end in a 'Y' making an /ī/ sound	SWITCH AND STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	There are very few of these words, and they are not common so only teach if needed.	
	tried cried fried	drying frying trying	shyer dryer slyer	slyest shyest		

CONSONANT SUFFIXES ORGANIZED BY BASE WORD



Use the same 3 step approach. Children soon begin to recognise that consonant suffixes can simply be added to the base word unless there is a 'y' ending. Use this table to check you are using all the base word types in games and activities.

CONSONANT SUFFIXES	-LY	-NESS	-FUL	-MENT	-LESS
Words ending in short vowel + consonant (VC)	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK
	sadly madly badly	fitness madness wetness	bagful jarful careful	shipment development equipment	jobless chinless sunless
Words ending in two consonants (VCC)	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK
	costly sicky mostly	fullness limpness richness	restful wishful helpful	adjustment detachment punishment	helpless reckless selfless
Words where the last vowel is long or crazy	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK
	newly woolly deadly	slowness deafness deadness	painful joyful playful	payment agreement enjoyment	sightless clueless aimless
Words where there is a final 'Magic E' (VCE)	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK	STICK
	safely rudely lovely	lateness rudeness ripeness	useful hateful spiteful	movement pavement basement	lifeless homeless timeless
Words that end in 'y' making /ē/ sound	SWITCH AND STICK	SWITCH AND STICK	SWITCH AND STICK	SWITCH AND STICK	SWITCH AND STICK
	icily easily tidily	haziness tidiness laziness	plentiful fanciful pitiful	merriment embodiment	bodiless penniless pitiless
Words that end in 'y' making /ī/ sound	STICK	STICK	Why do the /i/ sound words not change to an 'I'? Keeping the 'y' tells us it is a long /i/ sound.		
	shyly dryly slyly	dryness shyness slyness			

dryly tidily

shyness vs. laziness

slyer uglier

HOW LONG TO TEACH SUFFIXES

Teaching suffixes and vowel suffixes in particular is a long and complex process. However, it is also a great opportunity to practice spelling using all the sounds they have learnt. For children who need a lot of consolidation work in this area I would continue to teach them r-controlled and complex controlled vowels and incorporate these new sounds into their suffix work.

EXTENDED AFFIX ACTIVITIES



REDUCING THE COGNITIVE LOAD

For some children the cognitive load of affix work is simply too much. If you are working with a child and you know they will struggle, or you are working with a child and it is clear that this is more than they can manage then recalibrate your expectations.

The Synesthetic Approach works to maximise the level of literacy that is achievable for a child. Not all children will be ready for the same input at the same time. For children where working memory or cognitive skills are more of an issue than phonological skills this input will need to be adapted to their needs. You may want to return to affix work much later, after they have learnt all the phonemes. In relation to suffixes just **focus on padding**.

1. Use physical activities to visually show and demonstrate the relationship between vowels.
2. Avoid considering relatively low frequency occurrences like words ending in 'y'. These are not a priority.
3. Focus on decoding (reading) words accurately rather than on writing them. This will be more manageable and provide more opportunity for practicing a single skill.
4. Stick with example words that are familiar. If a child is already feeling overwhelmed then unfamiliar and nonsense words can be alarming.

INCREASING COGNITIVE LOAD

Children with dyslexia who have good cognitive skills and working memory but poor phonological skills often sail through affix work. This is because we have moved away from needing an awareness of sounds to guide our spelling. For these children adapt activities so that they write the base words themselves using their spelling knowledge.

TEACHING AFFIX FLUENCY

As the child becomes more familiar with complex words we shift the focus tackling these words in text rather than individually. A drop in fluency and comprehension is likely as the complexity of text increases.

Just like with sound work, make sure you focus only on those joins that the child struggles with. Be targeted with your time and activities.



HINTS AND TIPS

Where base words are irregular all their affix variations will maintain this irregularity. This approach hugely reduces the number of 'irregularities' to be learned. However, it is dependent on the child recognising the known base word.

have — having

one — oneness

most — mostly

EXAMPLE AFFIX FLUENCY ACTIVITIES

Break Down – Provide a written word. Get the child to use coloured acetate rectangles to cover the prefix and suffix and then read the word one part at a time. Dispense with the acetates when the child no longer needs them.

Double Trouble Word Hunt – Provide a red pen so the child can complete an error hunt. Embed common affix spelling errors in the text. Discuss the errors. What did the author do wrong? This is great for developing independent checking and self correcting skills.

Spot The Difference – Present the child with text that describes a picture. Include plenty of complex words. However, include some descriptive errors in the text. It is particularly effective if the errors rely on an understanding of what a prefix or suffix means. The child circles the differences on the picture. This is great for reading for meaning, e.g.

Picture — *A grumpy girl holding a big brown short haired dog in a sparkly collar.*

Text— *'Gemma had the sweetest smile. Her brown dog was fluffy and smallish with an unattractive collar.'*