

# TIPS FOR TEACHERS



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## ISSUE 7 – SYLLABICATION RULES

### READING MANIPULATIVES PRODUCT: Syllable Sort

P/R/S	VC/CV	VC/V	V/CV
nonsense	dentist	study	rumor
fiercely	sentence	river	focus
climbing	pumpkin	olive	vacant

**STEP 1:**  
Divide off affixes.

**STEP 2:**  
Divide between consonants.

**STEPS 3 & 4:**  
When a single consonant is between vowels, divide after long vowel or after consonant if vowel is short.

**Students consider all syllabication rules as they break down two-syllable words.**

Students sort the 40 words in each set by four basic rules, applying them in order. This material provides abundant practice, thereby allowing students to see patterns and decode rapidly.

Once students have worked through these 12 sets, they are then ready to apply steps to longer words. Improving syllabication consciousness is a valuable spelling aid.

**Syllable Sorts**

**310**

**\$30**

### SKILL OVERVIEW: Decode multisyllabic words by applying syllabication rules

Students should possess certain prerequisite skills and concepts before being taught the syllabication rules. Frequently, it is necessary to review short and long vowels, as well as prefixes/root words/suffixes, before proceeding with syllabication. You will see why as you review the following foundation concepts.

1. Each syllable must contain a sounded vowel. It can be a single vowel sound (i•de•a) or used with one or more consonant sounds (be•gin).
2. There are two kinds of syllables: open and closed. A closed syllable ends with a consonant and the vowel is usually short (or a schwa). An open syllable ends with a vowel, which is generally long. The vowel may be a /y/ pronounced as a long /e/ (fun•ny) or occasionally a long /i/ (my•self).
3. Since the first rule deals with dividing between root words and affixes, students must be familiar with prefixes, suffixes, and root words before learning the syllabication rules.
4. Digraphs (two consonants that make one sound—ch, sh, th, wh, ng, nk, ng, ck, ...) are not divided (buck•le, noth•ing, cash•ier, bush•el, fur•ther). In some cases, blends are not divided (se•cret, re•spect, mi•grate, ze•bra). Do not emphasize these instances. Generally, students discover them when identifying open vs. closed syllables. Explain this concept only if the need arises.
5. Words ending in Cle: The consonant with the “le” form the final syllable. These words can be fit into the above categories (open or closed syllables).

Some students, particularly those with weak visual skills, can derive tremendous benefit from the study of syllabication. Once students are taught to see patterns, syllabication gives them strategies to break down unknown words. Even if students can read words with ease in context, syllabication improves spelling.

In order for students to use syllabication strategies effectively, the four syllabication steps noted in the example above must be taught holistically and applied in order. Syllable Sorts help students to master these steps. Then the same rules can be applied to longer words.

## MAKING MATERIALS: Syllable Sorts

1. Line off cover-weight sheets of paper (8.5 x 11 inches) into 10 horizontal strips.
2. Draw vertical lines at 4.25" (center), 2.125" (center of left column), and 6.375" (center of right column).
3. Use the accompanying syllabication resource list. Write the 4 rules at the tops of the columns
4. Write 9 words for each rule below it.
5. Sets must be coded in some way. This can be done with codes or color.
6. Laminate cards. Cut apart and place pieces in zipper bags or other storage devices.
7. Create a checklist to track the completed sets.

### SYLLABICATION RULES — APPLY IN ORDER

**P/R/S** — Check the word for prefixes and suffixes. The first step is to divide between them and the root word. If necessary, affixes need to be reviewed with the students (farm|er, read|ing, mis|take).

**VC/CV** — Check for multiple consonants together between vowels. Divide between the consonants (car|toon, hap|py, el|bow).

If a word has one consonant between vowels, decide whether the first vowel is long or short.

**V/CV** — If the vowel is long, divide after the vowel leaving an open syllable (fa|vor, sea|son, stu|pid).

**VC/V** — Otherwise, divide after the consonant leaving a closed syllable (hon|ey, plur|al, drag|on).

Students consider all of the rules as they sort the words. By the time they have completed several of the Syllable Sorts, they begin to see the patterns. Soon they have the strategies they need to break down unknown multisyllabic words.

### SYLLABLE SORTS

Draw lines. Write the syllabication rules at the top of each column. Then write 9 words that follow each rule below it (RM product 310).

P/R/S	VC/CV	V/CV	VC/V
asking	allow	clover	camel
beside	center	eager	closet
brighter	clumsy	haven	finish
lovely	grammar	ladle	honey
prepaid	hello	major	modern
restless	humble	photo	robin
sliding	signal	rumor	shovel
tallest	silly	season	vision
unkind	suggest	tiny	widow

### SYLLABICATION – LONGER WORDS

The same rules are applied to divide words of 3 or more syllables (RM product 320). In the sample below, division lines have been inserted.

Divide into syllables. Apply rules in order.			
Prefix/Root/Suffix 1. Remove affixes.	VC/CV 2. Look for multiple consonants in middle. First syllable is closed.	VC/V Closed syllable (short/schwa) 3. Determine whether syllable is open or closed.	V/CV Open syllable (long/schwa)
in dus try	pa tri ot ic	ex pla na tion	
com pu ter	ab sorb ing	com mun i ca tion	
cul ti vat ed	gra cious ly	ap pro pri ate	
dis ap pear ance	sup ple ment	ac ci den tal	
un con di tion al	con struc tion	triv i al	
gen er a tion	ben e fi cial	hy dro gen	
sup er i n ten dent	cel e bra tion	trans por ta tion	
con ser va tion	un sus pect ing	ad ver tise ment	
es tab lish	ac cept a ble	per son al i ty	
re place ment	stim u la tion	de mol ish	

# Syllabication Rules

Prefix/Root/Suffix First, identify and remove affixes.			VC/CV Divide between consonants.		
actor	faster	really	after	custom	office
asking	fearful	recount	apple	dentist	pattern
bashful	forecast	refill	arrow	dizzy	pencil
beside	foolish	repay	artist	elbow	penny
bigger	freedom	restful	athlete	enjoy	picnic
blindness	friendly	rosy	balloon	fancy	picture
boldly	furry	sadly	basket	fifty	pistol
booklet	graceful	salty	berry	filter	plastic
bossy	handy	sleepless	blister	follow	plenty
breathless	harden	sleepy	blossom	forbid	problem
bumpy	hilly	slowest	bottle	forget	puppy
careful	hotter	smaller	bunny	frantic	pumpkin
climbing	improve	smiling	butter	funny	purple
closest	itchy	softly	button	gentle	puzzle
cloudless	joyous	soggy	cabbage	gossip	rabbit
coming	likely	stopping	candle	grammar	ribbon
countless	longest	subway	candy	gutter	rubber
creamy	lovely	sweeter	canvas	hamster	scissors
crying	louder	tallest	carbon	happen	sentence
darker	lucky	thankful	carrot	hello	signal
darkness	misspell	thinking	cattle	helmet	silly
dearest	mistake	thirsty	channel	hobby	sister
deeper	morning	thoughtful	circle	hurry	soccer
discount	noisy	throwing	coffee	kitten	subject
discover	nonsense	tractor	common	ladder	sudden
disgrace	package	treatment	compete	letter	suffix
dreaming	painless	truthful	concrete	lettuce	summer
dropper	partly	unfair	contest	lobster	target
drowning	payment	untied	cotton	lumber	thunder
endless	peaceful	upward	council	mattress	turkey
export	planted	vastly	current	mister	whisper
farmer	playful	wanted		monkey	window
	preview	warmest		monster	winter
	quickly	windy		muffin	wisdom
	rainy	wooden		napkin	wonder

VC/V  
First syllable closed  
(short vowel)

atom  
banish  
bevel  
body  
bother  
bucket  
cabin  
camel  
chapel  
chisel  
city  
civil  
clever  
clinic  
closet  
column  
comet  
comic  
copy  
credit  
critic  
devil  
digit  
disease  
dragon  
figure  
finish  
forest  
fragile  
glamour  
granite  
gravel  
habit  
honey  
honor

image  
lavish  
legend  
lemon  
level  
lily  
limit  
linen  
liver  
lizard  
logic  
madam  
magic  
manage  
medal  
melon  
menace  
menu  
metal  
mimic  
minute  
model  
modern  
modest  
money  
nickel  
novel  
olive  
panel  
panic  
pedal  
peril  
petal  
pity  
pivot  
planet  
plural  
present

profit  
proper  
punish  
quiver  
radish  
rapid  
ravage  
ravel  
rebel  
relic  
relish  
rigid  
river  
robin  
salad  
satin  
savage  
scholar  
seven  
sheriff  
shiver  
shovel  
shrivel  
study  
tenant  
timid  
topic  
tragic  
travel  
tropic  
venom  
vigor  
visit  
vivid  
volume  
vomit  
wagon  
widow

V/CV  
First syllable open  
(long vowel)

agent  
apron  
baby  
bacon  
bagel  
basic  
basin  
basis  
begin  
behind  
bison  
cable  
cedar  
cement  
climate  
clover  
cocoa  
cradle  
decay  
demand  
destroy  
digest  
donate  
donor  
duty  
eager  
easel  
equal  
even  
event  
evil  
fatal  
favor  
female  
fever

final  
flavor  
focus  
global  
grocer  
hero  
hotel  
holy  
human  
humid  
humor  
item  
label  
labor  
lady  
legal  
local  
locate  
major  
minor  
minus  
moment  
motel  
motor  
music  
nation  
notion  
obey  
odor  
omit  
open  
oval  
paper  
photo  
pilot  
polar  
pony  
pretend

private  
pupil  
radar  
raven  
razor  
reason  
recess  
regard  
resist  
rival  
robot  
rotate  
rumor  
secret  
silence  
silent  
siren  
soda  
sofa  
solo  
spider  
stable  
stupid  
super  
table  
tepee  
tidy  
tiger  
total  
tuna  
unite  
vacant  
vapor  
veto  
virus  
visor  
wager  
zero

