Learning Word Meanings with Morphemes

Common Core State Standard

- CCSS.ELA. RF.4.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. a. Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.

Overview

This routine is a 10–15-minute instructional routine that can helps students determine the meaning of unknown words through the analysis of word parts. In this lesson, students will learn to identify word parts, their meaning, and learn the spelling rules associated with different morphemes.

Symbol Key

Explicit Instruction

Opportunities to Respond

Feedback

General Instructional Routine

Teacher Preparation
- Select target words that have the target morphological pattern.
- Choose vocabulary word(s) that:
  - Can be meaningfully connected to current learning (e.g., Social Studies unit, CKLA Science unit - Geology)

Step 1: Introduction (3-5 minutes)
Connect to Previous Learning (if applicable):
- Review previous learning that applies to current lesson
- Reference recent discussions about current lesson

Preview

- Set the scene/Connect to students' lives:
  - Provide a real-world analogy or example of how students might figure the meaning of an unknown word.

- Provide purpose(s)/learning target(s) for students

- Explain real-world importance

Activate Prior Knowledge

- Ask students to spell the two target words by "sounding them out".
  - How difficult was it to spell these words?
  - What strategies did you use to spell these new words?

Review Key Terms
- Define or review key vocabulary words used in lesson
  - Morphologically complex words with target pattern.

Step 2: Meanings of Morphemes (2-3 minutes)
Initial Instruction

- Present the morpheme patterns to the students.
  - Define what the different patterns mean.

- o   Identify what the different morphemes in the target words are (root word and suffix)
- o   Define the word.

Teacher Think-Aloud

- •   Model pattern analysis during think-aloud process
  - o   Example:
    - ▪   "First, I notice..."
    - ▪   Now, I see..."
    - ▪   "This reminds me of..."

Step 3: Guided Pattern Discovery (7-10 minutes)

Explicitly call attention to spelling differences in morphemes.
- •   Identify root word changes in instructional words

Pair students (or create small groups) for collaborative thinking
- •   Review partnership expectations
- •   Partners/groups work together to:
  - o   Provide students a list of words and a graphic organizer with the different spelling patterns.
  - o   Ask students to sort the words into different groups based on their spelling rule.
  - o   Ask students to create a rule for that word.

Teacher Support

- •   Circulate among partners/small groups to:
  - o   Monitor discussions
  - o   Offer feedback
  - o   Provide scaffolded prompts
  - o   Support struggling teams

Team Discussions

- Have pairs/groups:
  - Share discoveries with class
  - Explain the relationships between the words and the spelling rule that they created.

Engagement Check
- Ask questions to check for comprehension
  - "What is the spelling pattern for each morpheme?"
  - "What is the root word? How does it change with this spelling rule?"

Explicitly state the spelling rules associated with each morpheme pattern.
  - Example:
    - -able (e.g., comfortable, enjoyable, likable, solvable)
    - -ible (e.g., edible, visible, possible)
- Demonstrate how to spell the word by parsing the word into its morphemes and spelling each word part according to its phonemes.
  - Example:
    - Comfortable= com-fort/ able

Step 4: Spelling with Morphemes (5-7 minutes)

Divide class into teams of 3-4 students where they will:
- Receive a white board and white board markers.
- Teacher will ask students to spell a word with the selected word pattern.
  - Students will have 30 seconds to identify the correct morphological ending and spelling.
  - At the end of 30 seconds, students will hold up their white boards and teacher will give one point to each group who spells the work correctly.

  - Offer corrective feedback for misspelled words, emphasizing the spelling rule and how it changes the spelling.
  - Student groups can be called on randomly to provide a definition for an additional point.
- Repeat for 5-6 rounds, rotating the vocabulary cards among teams

Step 5: Reflection (2-3 minutes)
- Add the morphemes to a class reference wall or individual vocabulary notebook
- Discuss where students might use this morphological feature in their work.

Materials

Learning with Morphemes

Prior Knowledge Check	
1.	**2.**

Today we are learning about the morpheme(s):   **This word part means**

This is an example of a (circle one): prefix   root word   suffix

Discovering Morpheme Patterns

When morphemes are added to a word, they change the meaning of the root word. But morphemes also have predictable spelling rules. the root word and suffix to sort the words into appropriate categories. Can you figure out the spelling rules?

Comfortable   Likable   Visible   Edible   Solvable   Enjoyable

-able	-able	-ible
The spelling rule for the morpheme _____ is…	**The spelling rule for the morpheme _____ is…**	**The spelling rule for the morpheme _____ is…**

Resources

Identifying Morphemes to Teach

- [List of common morphemes](#)

Morphologically Rich Texts

- Connecting to World Cultures and Languages- [Stories of Words](#)
- [Guidance on creating Texts with AI](#)

Other Morphological Instruction

- [Teaching Morphology Resource Kit](#)
- [Building Morphology Through Word Parts](#)
- [Explicit Morphology Instruction for Secondary Students](#)
- [Literacy Hub: Morphology Instruction](#)