



# **Reading Skills Review**

**SUZANNE CHANCE**

**CONSTANCE E. HOCKMAN**

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## **SUZANNE CHANCE**

Basic Skills Coordinator  
Great Oaks Joint Vocational District  
Cincinnati, Ohio

## **CONSTANCE E. HOCKMAN**

Instructional Supervisor  
Butler County Joint Vocational School District  
Hamilton, Ohio

GREGG DIVISION

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# To the Student

Basic skills—reading, writing, mathematics—are essential to the development of all future skills. They exist in all fields of study. For example, a truck driver must read and understand information about the cargo, meet federal regulations by writing a daily log, and compute everything from tonnage to mileage. No matter what your field of interest, a solid foundation in these three areas will give you the necessary tools to develop your full potential. The basic skills presented in this text are taught in the context of real-life skills and skills needed for the world of work.

Whenever attempting to learn new material, it is important to properly prepare yourself and your place of study to ensure success. Select an area to study that is well lit and as free from distractions as possible.

Each of the three basic skills texts is divided into chapters that examine the fundamental skills one step at a time. Each chapter begins with an objective that clearly states what is to be accomplished, and a brief introduction that provides an overview of the chapter. The strategies that follow are the real “how to” or “nuts and bolts” of accomplishing the objective. Examples and practice exercises are contained within each strategy.

After you work through the practice exercises, check your answers in the key located at the end of this book. After the chapter is completed, a review is provided to prepare you for the test. If you provide the correct answers on the review, you will be ready to take the test. The answers to the review are located in the answer key; the answers to the test are not. Your instructor or school administrator will give you instructions on test-taking procedures.

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*Suzanne Chance  
Constance E. Hockman*

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## CHAPTER 1

# Decoding Words



**OBJECTIVE** To be able to pronounce an unknown word by dividing it into syllables and applying knowledge of vowel sounds.

When you are reading, you may come across a word that is not familiar to you. It is possible, though, that if you were to hear the word spoken aloud you would recognize it. To pronounce a word, you need to decode it—that is, break it into small parts called syllables and sound out each part.



## STRATEGY ONE

Use the following guidelines to divide a word into syllables.

- Each syllable must contain a vowel. (Vowels are *a, e, i, o, u*, and sometimes *y*; all other letters are consonants.)

*Example:*    design (two vowel sounds, two syllables)  
                  accelerator (five vowel sounds, five syllables)

- Find the vowels in the word. If the next two letters after a vowel are consonants, divide the word between the consonants.

*Example:*    ad/mit

- If there is just one consonant after a vowel, divide the word between the vowel and the consonant.

*Example:*    re/tire

**Note that**

*r* remains with the vowel before it (for/est)

*h* remains with the consonants *c, p, s, t,* and *w* (me/thod)

*le* remains with the consonant before it (ta/ble)

**PRACTICE 1** ■ Divide the following words by drawing a slash (/) between the syllables.

- |                |                  |                |                   |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. l a b o r   | 4. m i s s i n g | 7. t a b l e t | 10. s e c t i o n |
| 2. m a g n e t | 5. b e g i n     | 8. d e s i g n | 11. c a b l e     |
| 3. m e l o n   | 6. c a r t o o n | 9. h a b i t   | 12. m a c h i n e |



## STRATEGY TWO

Once you have divided a word into syllables, you need to figure out what each syllable sounds like. A particular vowel can be pronounced in different ways depending on the other letters around it. There are long and short vowel sounds. Use the following guidelines to decide whether a vowel is long.

- Long vowels sound just like the letter itself.

a as in ape  
e as in be  
i as in ice  
o as in toe  
u as in due  
y as in my

- When a word ends in *e* and has only one consonant between the *e* and any vowel before it, the *e* is silent and the other vowel is long.

*Examples:* mate, plebe, bike, vote, tube

- When a word has two vowels together, usually the first vowel is long and the second vowel is silent. When a word like this is divided into syllables, the two vowels usually stay together. However, there are some words that may be divided between two vowels.

*Examples:* drea/mer  
du/a!

- When the vowel is the *last* letter in the syllable, the vowel is long. This is called an open vowel syllable.

*Example:* ae/fend

**PRACTICE 2** ■ In each word below, underline the long vowel or vowels.

- |                   |                    |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. di <u>e</u> d  | 4. cr <u>ea</u> te | 7. to <u>a</u> st  |
| 2. ki <u>te</u>   | 5. cr <u>ea</u> m  | 8. de <u>f</u> use |
| 3. ag <u>e</u> nt | 6. ro <u>l</u> e   | 9. tra <u>i</u> t  |



## STRATEGY THREE

A vowel sound can be short. Use the following guidelines to decide when a vowel has a short sound.

- Short vowel sounds have a special sound, as shown below.

a as in man  
e as in end  
i as in ill  
o as in odd  
u as in up  
y as in myth

- When the syllable division comes after a consonant, and the vowel is *not* the last letter in the syllable, the vowel is usually short. This kind of syllable is called a closed vowel syllable.

Example: in/vent

- Sometimes a vowel is short even though it is in an open vowel syllable.

Example: me/thod

- Usually the vowel *i* has a short sound, whether it is in an open or a closed syllable.

Example: vi/si/ble  
fab/ric

### PRACTICE 3 ■ In each word below, underline the short vowel or vowels.

- wagon
- fifteen
- planets
- trip
- problem
- sister

Say the following words and listen for the vowel sound. Write an L above the long vowel sounds, an S above short vowel sounds, and an O above silent vowels.

S S L O  
7. a g i t a t e

L S  
9. s i l e n t

S L O  
11. i n s i d e

L L O  
8. r e v i s e

S S S  
10. c o m p r e s s o r

L L O  
12. c r e a t e

## ■■■■■ STRATEGY FOUR

Some vowels are paired with other vowels or consonants to make a special sound.

aw as in awful  
au as in author  
oi as in soil  
oy as in toy  
ou as in bounce

oo as in fool  
oo as in book  
ew as in new  
eu as in neutral  
ow as in blow or how

### PRACTICE 4 ■ Use the vowel combinations shown above to fill in the blanks to complete the following words. If you try pronouncing a word and it doesn't sound right, try



changing the vowel sound and pronouncing the word again. If it sounds right to you, it may be because you have heard it before.

- |              |               |               |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. c _ _ ard | 4. l _ _ ndry | 7. c _ _ tion |
| 2. cl _ _ d  | 5. _ _ kward  | 8. v _ _ ce   |
| 3. br _ _ m  | 6. l _ _ al   | 9. st _ _ d   |

**Job Related** Below is a list of words you may find in your work. Divide each word into syllables. Then write an L above the long vowel sounds and an S above the short vowel sounds. If a vowel is silent or is a combination vowel, underline it.

- |                         |                     |                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 10. e l e c t r i c a l | 14. a d a p t e r   | 18. g e n e r a t o r |
| 11. a c c e l e r a t e | 15. v e h i c l e   | 19. r a t i o         |
| 12. a n n o u n c e     | 16. r e g u l a t e | 20. c a l i p e r s   |
| 13. c a u t i o n       | 17. v o l u m e     | 21. l u b r i c a t e |

## REVIEW

Divide the following words into syllables. Then write an L above the long vowel sounds and an S above the short vowel sounds. Silent vowels and vowel combinations do not need to be marked.

- |                          |                       |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. d e / c i d e         | 7. m y / s e l f      | 13. m y s t i c       |
| 2. c a / p a / b l e     | 8. o p / p o n e n t  | 14. p o l l u t a n t |
| 3. i m / p e r / f e c t | 9. a p / p e t i t e  | 15. i n / f o r m     |
| 4. e l i m i n a t e     | 10. h e s i t a t e   | 16. H o w a r d       |
| 5. c o / l u m / n i s t | 11. h o n o r a b l e | 17. b o i l e r       |
| 6. d o c u m e n t       | 12. v a c a t e       | 18. b y w a y         |

## TEST ■ CHAPTER 1

## Decoding Words

Underline once the words with a long vowel sound. Underline twice the words with a short vowel sound.

- |                 |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. <u>weak</u>  | 4. <u>boast</u> | 7. <u>solve</u> |
| 2. <u>gift</u>  | 5. <u>note</u>  | 8. <u>aid</u>   |
| 3. <u>glass</u> | 6. <u>fret</u>  | 9. <u>clue</u>  |

Divide the following words by drawing a slash (/) between the syllables. Then if a vowel is long, write an L above it; if a vowel is short, write an S above it. Silent vowels and vowel combinations do not need to be marked.

- |               |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 10. conductor | 14. odometer  | 18. damage    |
| 11. coolant   | 15. explosive | 19. hydraulic |
| 12. specific  | 16. splitter  | 20. tandem    |
| 13. battery   | 17. sedan     |               |



## CHAPTER 2

# Word Structure



**OBJECTIVE** To be able to determine or clarify the meaning of a word by using an understanding of common prefixes, suffixes, and roots.

Once you have decoded an unknown word, you will probably still be unsure of its meaning. Although it is sometimes necessary to use a dictionary, there are a number of ways for you to discover the meaning of a word without looking it up. The following strategies will help you to effectively attack the meaning of unknown words.



### STRATEGY ONE

Learning the meanings of some common prefixes may help you determine the meaning of a new word.

- A prefix is a group of letters joined to the beginning of an existing word.
- A prefix has a meaning of its own, and it changes the meaning of the existing word.

Prefix	Meaning	Example
dis-	apart, not	<u>dis</u> agree
ex-	out of	<u>ex</u> port
in-, im-	not	<u>in</u> correct, <u>im</u> possible
mid-	in the middle	<u>mid</u> way
mis-	wrong	<u>mis</u> lead
post-	after	<u>post</u> mark
pre-	before	<u>pre</u> view
re-	again, back	<u>re</u> call
un-	not	<u>un</u> certain

- The following is a list of prefixes you may encounter on the job.

Prefix	Meaning	Example
con-	with	<u>consolidate</u>
counter-	against	<u>counterclockwise</u>
de-	from, down	<u>decelerate</u>
inter-	between	<u>intercontinental</u>
intra-	within	<u>intrastate</u>
mono-	one	<u>monorail</u>
sub-	under	<u>substitute</u>
tele-	distant	<u>telescope</u>
trans-	across	<u>transatlantic</u>
ultra-	beyond	<u>ultralight</u>

## ■■■■■ PRACTICE 1

Change the meaning of each word by adding a prefix. Refer to the prefix lists if necessary.

Word	New Meaning	New Word
1. cover	open	<u>uncover</u>
2. paint	again	<u>repaint</u>
3. courteous	not polite	<u>discourteous</u>
4. date	date after	<u>postdate</u>
5. judge	judge wrongly	<u>misjudge</u>

Write the meaning of the underlined word.

6. I will repay the loan at the end of my trip.

pay back

7. The salesperson misrepresented the product.

represented wrongly

8. He started a new job midyear.

in the middle of year / January

9. The directions to his house were unclear.

not clear. Don't know how to get there

10. He reinjured his shoulder when he lifted the heavy box.

injure again

**Job Related** The following sentences contain words with prefixes that you may encounter on the job. Write the meaning of the underlined word.

11. To remove a flat tire, turn the bolts counterclockwise.

\_\_\_\_\_

12. When our fleet of trucks cannot handle a shipping load, the load is subcontracted to an independent trucker.

---

13. The deflated tire caused a three-hour delay.

---

14. I prefer to work for an intrastate trucking firm so that I am not away from home so often.

---

15. Major companies have not needed to open new plants because they use transcontinental trucking.

---




## STRATEGY TWO

A word can also change its meaning by adding a suffix.

- A suffix is a group of letters added to the end of an existing word.
- A suffix has a meaning of its own, and it changes the meaning of the existing word.

Suffix	Meaning	Example
-able, -ible	capable of being	reachable
-ance	act of	disturbance
-ence	state of being	difference
-ful	full of	careful
-ic	having to do with	heroic
-ish	like, tending toward	childish
-ism	state or quality of	realism
-ive	of or having to do with	active
-ly	in the manner of	slowly
-ous	full of	famous

- The following is a list of suffixes you may encounter on the job.

Suffix	Meaning	Example
-age	action or process	coverage
-al	of, like	personal
-ate	of or having to do with	regulate
-er	more or one who does	carrier
-ial	relating to	commercial
-ity	state	authority
-ment	act or state of	shipment
-ous	full of	tremendous
-tion	the act, process, or state of	distribution
-ure	act of process of	procedure

**PRACTICE 2** ■ Change the meaning of each word by adding a suffix. Refer to the suffix lists if necessary.

Word	New Meaning	New Word
1. boy	like a boy	<u>boyish</u>
2. thank	full of thanks	<u>thankful</u>
3. depend	capable of being depended on	<u>dependable</u>
4. flex	capable of being flexed	_____
5. support	of or having to do with support	_____

Underline the word in each sentence that has a suffix. Then write its meaning on the line.

6. I had fun at the amusement park.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. The enormous traffic jam caused a two-hour delay.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. I know I will be successful in my new job.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Some people think there is too much violence on TV.

\_\_\_\_\_

10. There has to be an alternative for me.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Job Related** The following sentences contain words with suffixes that you may encounter on the job. Write the meaning of the underlined word.

11. Trucking regulations responded to the need for safer roads.

\_\_\_\_\_

12. We reached an agreement on the two-year contract.

\_\_\_\_\_

13. It is posted that commercial trucking is prohibited on some roads.

\_\_\_\_\_

14. I have seniority in my department.

\_\_\_\_\_

15. There are restrictions on transporting hazardous materials.

\_\_\_\_\_



## STRATEGY THREE

Finally, knowing the root of a word can also help you to discover the meaning of a word.

- The root (or derivative) of a word refers to its core or base meaning and is the basis of an entire family of words.

*Example:* The root *port*, meaning "to carry," is found in *porter*, *import*, *export*, and *portable*.

- The following is a list of common roots. You may notice that in the examples many of the roots have prefixes or suffixes.

Root	Meaning	Example
aud	hear	<u>audible</u>
auto	self	<u>autograph</u>
bio	life	<u>biography</u>
cept	take	<u>intercept</u>
chrono	time	<u>synchronize</u>
electro	electric	<u>electromagnet</u>
graph	instrument that writes or describes	<u>telegraph</u>
gress	step	<u>progress</u>
phono	sound	<u>phonograph</u>
rupt	break	<u>rupture</u>
tort	twist	<u>distort</u>

**PRACTICE 3** Listed below are five roots and their meanings. Write one word that contains the root for each. (There will be more than one correct answer for each root.)

Root	Meaning	Word
1. meter	to measure	_____
2. cycle	circle, ring	_____
3. therm	heat	_____
4. man	hand	_____
5. ped	foot	_____

The meaning of a prefix, suffix, or root may be difficult to use, depending on the situation. Therefore, if the meaning of a word is still unclear, look it up in the dictionary.



## REVIEW

Match the prefix, suffix, or root to its meaning. Write the letter that indicates the correct meaning in the answer blank (*continues on page 12*).

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. dis-   | a. within |
| 2. chrono | b. again  |

Answer

1. \_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_



- |           |                         |         |
|-----------|-------------------------|---------|
| 3. ped    | c. hear                 | 3. ____ |
| 4. -er    | d. apart, not           | 4. ____ |
| 5. re-    | e. time                 | 5. ____ |
| 6. aud    | f. foot                 | 6. ____ |
| 7. -ous   | g. full of              | 7. ____ |
| 8. -ish   | h. more; one who does   | 8. ____ |
| 9. intra- | i. like, tending toward | 9. ____ |

**Job Related** The underlined word in each sentence contains a prefix, suffix, or root. Use the meaning of the prefix, suffix, or root to determine the meaning of the underlined word. Write the letter of the correct meaning on the answer blank.

- |   | Answer       |
|---|--------------|
| 10. The music was barely <u>audible</u> .<br>a. able to be heard<br>b. common<br>c. quiet   | 10. <u>a</u> |
| 11. I know her speech will <u>mislead</u> the public.<br>a. feature<br>b. accurately direct<br>c. wrongly guide   | 11. <u>c</u> |
| 12. In <u>residential</u> areas the speed limit is 25 miles per hour.<br>a. an area of stores<br>b. an area of houses<br>c. areas of heavy city traffic | 12. <u>b</u> |
| 13. We need to <u>synchronize</u> our watches before the trip.<br>a. make agree in time<br>b. inform<br>c. replace                                      | 13. <u>a</u> |
| 14. She was given <u>immunity</u> from prosecution.<br>a. resistance<br>b. freedom from<br>c. a fine  | 14. <u>b</u> |
| 15. He used the <u>intercity</u> bus route.<br>a. within the city<br>b. between cities<br>c. suburban   | 15. <u>b</u> |