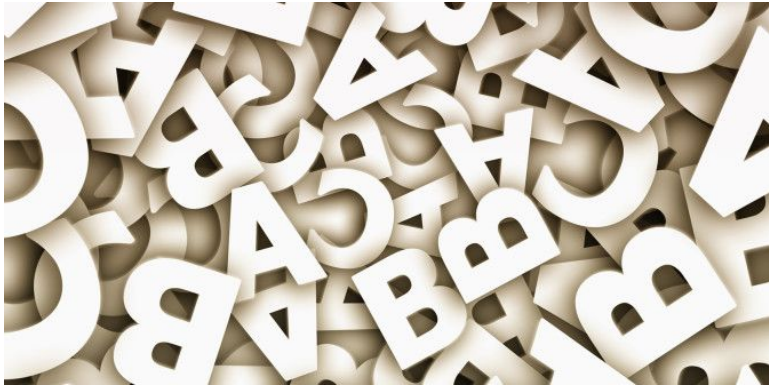

Structured Word Inquiry

— Introduction For —
Classroom Teachers

Amber Cahill
amber.cahill@gmail.com



Purpose of Today's Session:



- Brief Introduction to Structured Word Inquiry
 - Sample Word Study of <does>
 - Benefits of using SWI
 - Discussion of how teachers can begin using SWI in their classrooms
-

Structured Word Inquiry (SWI)

What: A process of scientifically investigating English spelling.

We can develop an **understanding** for **“exception”** words, or **“rule-breakers”** and see the logic in their spelling.

Based on the work of Dr. Peter Bowers.

Teaching How the Written Word Works
by Peter Bowers
Using Morphological Problem-Solving to Develop Students' Language Skills & Engagement With the Written Word

Ln		u
	ease	el
ck		ly
		ness
		ss
		ing
		ed

WORDWORKS LITERACY CENTRE
www.worldworksliteracy.com

ease/ + y → easy
un + ease/ + yi + ly → uneasily
dis + ease → disease

graph

geography, graphics, subgraph

Now includes Making Word Webs & Word Matrices Booklet

"Not only are they teaching their students to read, write and spell, they are teaching the analytical skills for learning."

For a clear explanation of building literacy, citizenship, and business skills based on understanding, Teaching How the Written Word Works

Structured Word Inquiry is NOT...

- A scripted program to be followed.
- The isolated study of morphology.
- Too complicated for students.



SWI and the Scientific Method

SWI starts with a **question**.

The learner presents a **hypothesis** to understand the word's spelling.

The learner seeks **evidence** to either support or disprove their hypothesis.



The Four Questions for Word Study:

Word Scientists Ask....



1. What does it mean?
2. How is it built?
3. What are its relatives?
4. What jobs are the letters doing?

Morphological Structure (affixes and bases)

Etymology (history)

Orthography (graphemes)

Phonology (pronunciation of the word)

The Four Questions for Word Study:

Word Scientists Ask....



1. What does it mean?
2. How is it built?
3. What are its relatives? ⇕
4. What jobs are the letters doing?

Questions #2 and #3 can toggle.

The grapheme/phoneme correspondences are **last** in the investigation.

Understanding How Words are Built

Word Scientists Ask....



1. What does it mean?
2. How is it built?
3. What are its relatives?
4. What jobs are the letters doing?

Every word either **is** a base, or **has** a base.

Affixes are added to the base.

snowy → **snow + y**

Understanding How Words are Built

Word Scientists Ask....



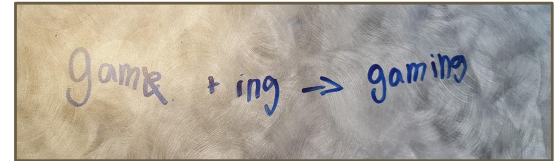
1. What does it mean?
2. How is it built?
3. What are its relatives?
4. What jobs are the letters doing?

English has three suffixing changes:

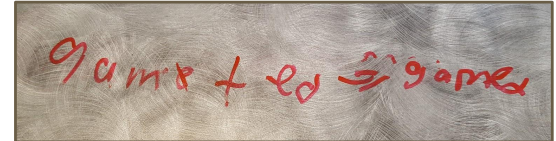
1. Replaceable <e>



2. Change <y> to <i>



3. Consonant doubling



Understanding Word Relatives

Word Scientists Ask....



1. What does it mean?
2. How is it built?
3. What are its relatives?
4. What jobs are the letters doing?

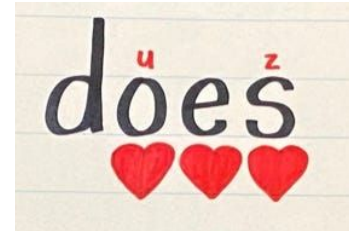
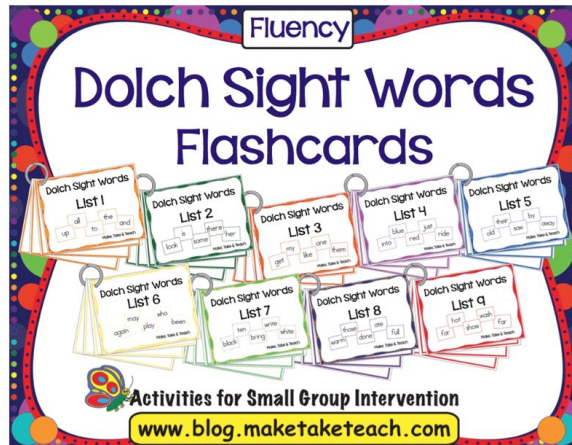
Words can be etymologically related, meaning they share the same historical root.

Words can also be morphologically related, meaning they share a base.

Related words will also share a meaning connection.

Explaining the Spelling of <does>

- Usually considered an irregular word.
- Why is it not spelled <dudz>?
- Could use flashcards or mnemonic device to help students remember the spelling, or...

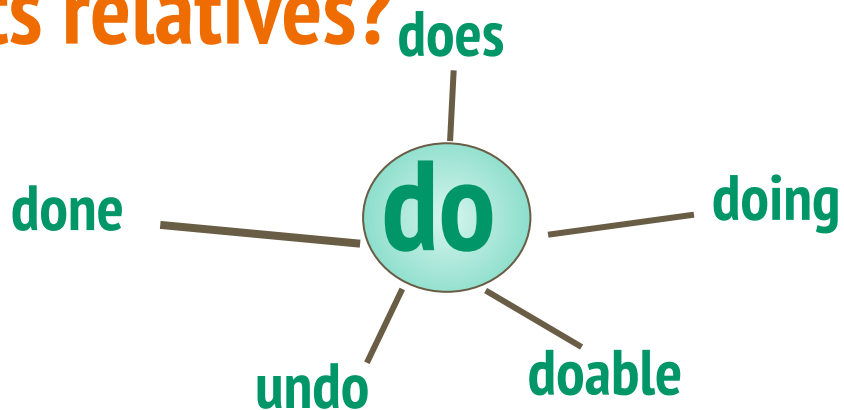


What does <does> mean?

- To do something
- Not the plural of <doe>
 - doe + s → does



What are its relatives?



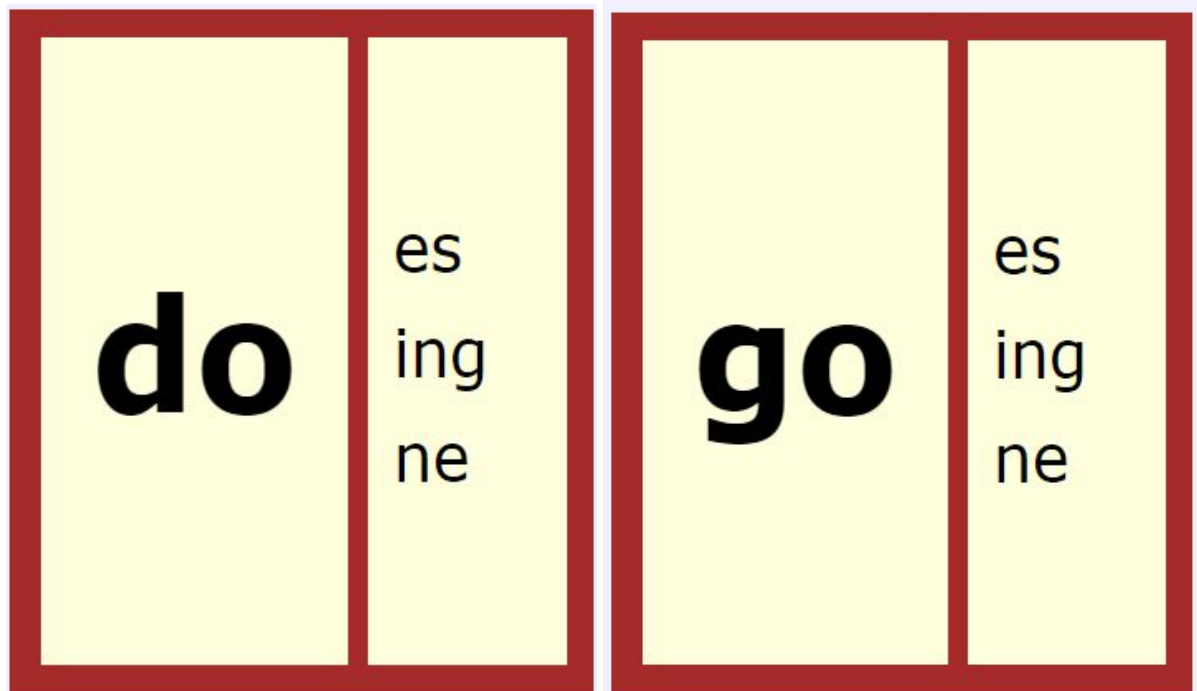
How is <does> built?

do + es → does

do + ing → doing

do + ne → done

We can find evidence for this hypothesis in the word family for <go>.



What jobs are the letters doing?

***The spelling of the base remains consistent even when pronunciation shifts.**

does

<o> as
in
<love>

Third person, singular present
<e> is part of the <-es> suffix
<s> is also part of <-es>, sound as in
<dogs>

Why I Use Structured Word Inquiry

High Student Engagement

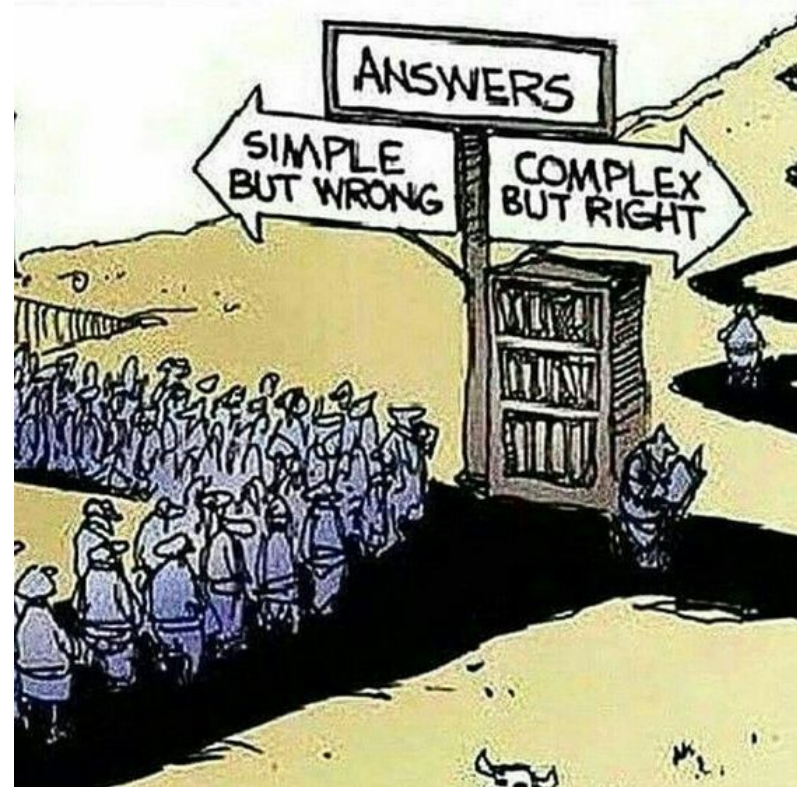
Supports Vocabulary Development

Spelling Instruction Impacts Reading Ability

Cross-curricular Concept Development

Supported by Orthographic Linguistics

Low prep



What You Need for SWI

Questions about spelling

A desire to learn more about English spelling

A willingness to admit when you don't know the answer

Access to the Internet



Who Benefits from SWI instruction?

Students with reading difficulties

Junior High & High School aged students

Elementary Students

English Language Learners



What does this look like in practice?

Frequency?
Types of activities?
Word Choice?

Choosing Words

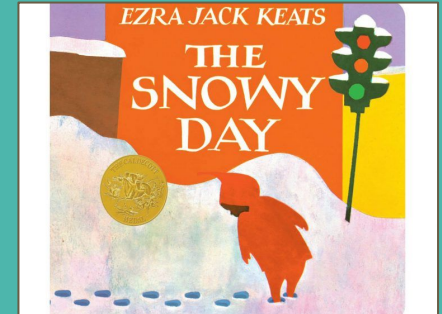
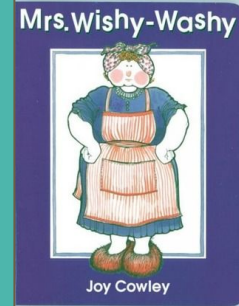
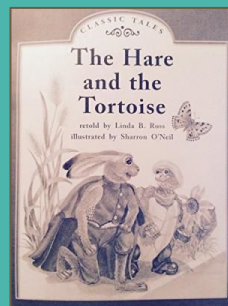
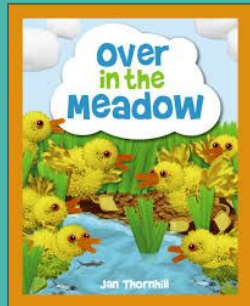
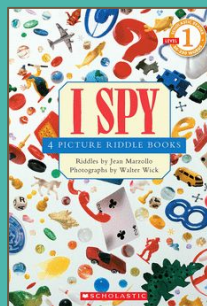
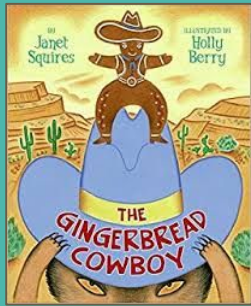
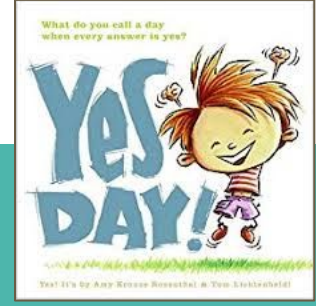
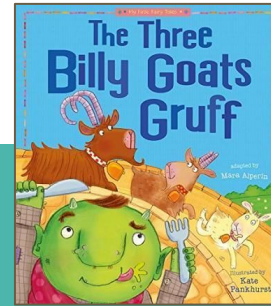
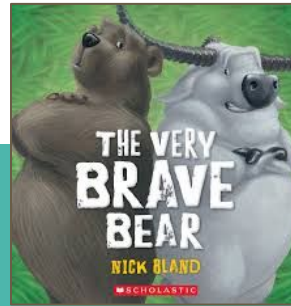
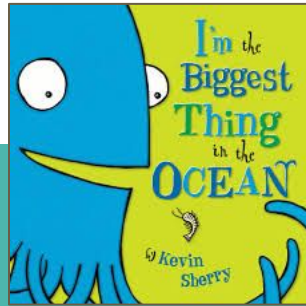
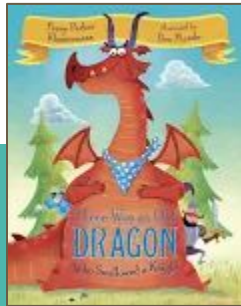
There is no set sequence for introducing spelling concepts. Questions from students are an excellent starting point.

Try looking for spelling questions in:

- Homophones & Homographs
- Compound Words
- Content Area Vocabulary
- Children's Literature & Poems
- Student's Writing

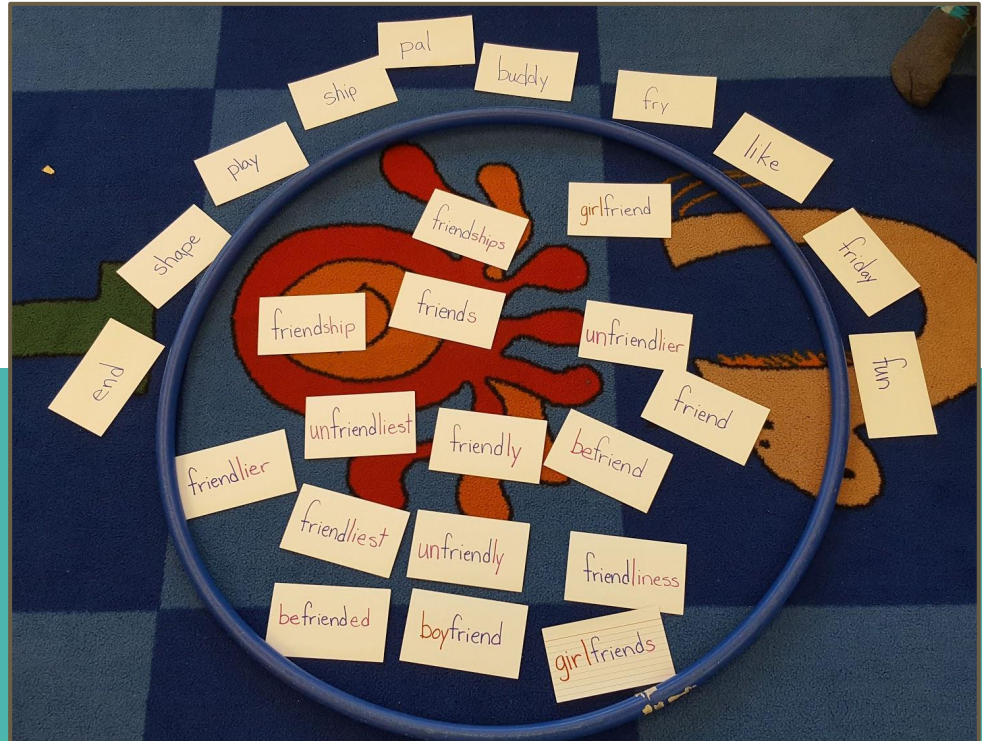


Inspiration from Children's Literature



Word Families

Word Family refers to a group of words that are etymologically and/or structurally related.



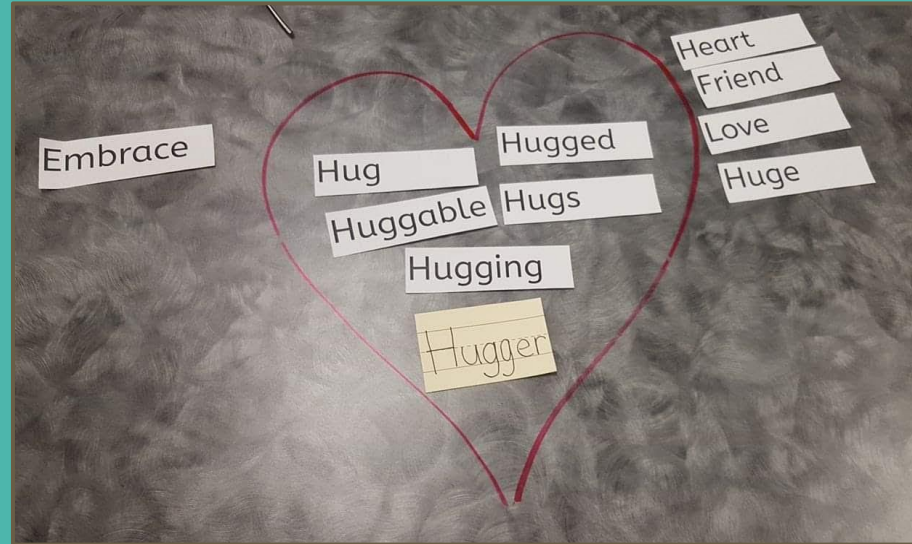
In SWI, “word family” is NOT a group of rhyming words (i.e. red, bed, Ted).

Word Family Activities

Word Bags: Write a sample of words on index cards. Include both words that are related and some that are not.

Students take turns pulling a word out of a bag. They decide if the word should be included in the family or not.

Adapted from [Lyn Anderson](#)



WORD FAMILY CARDS

hugger	huggers	
hugged	hugging	
huggable	hug	hugs

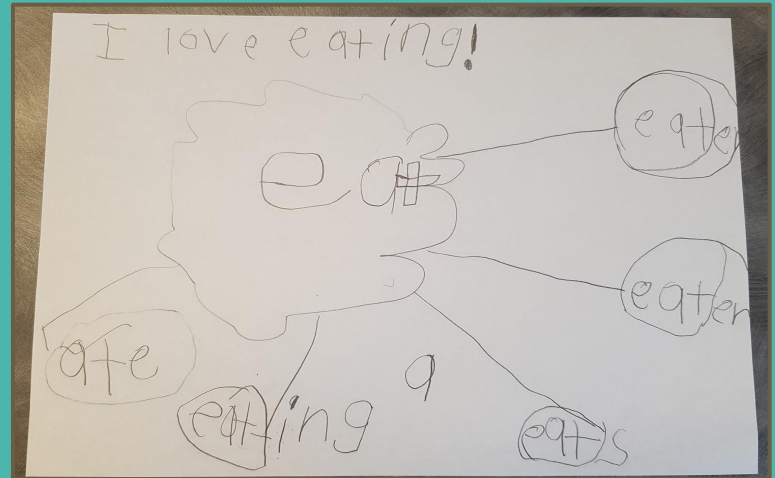
WORD FAMILY CARDS

- FOOLS

bug	hum
huge	love
friend	heart
embrace	warm

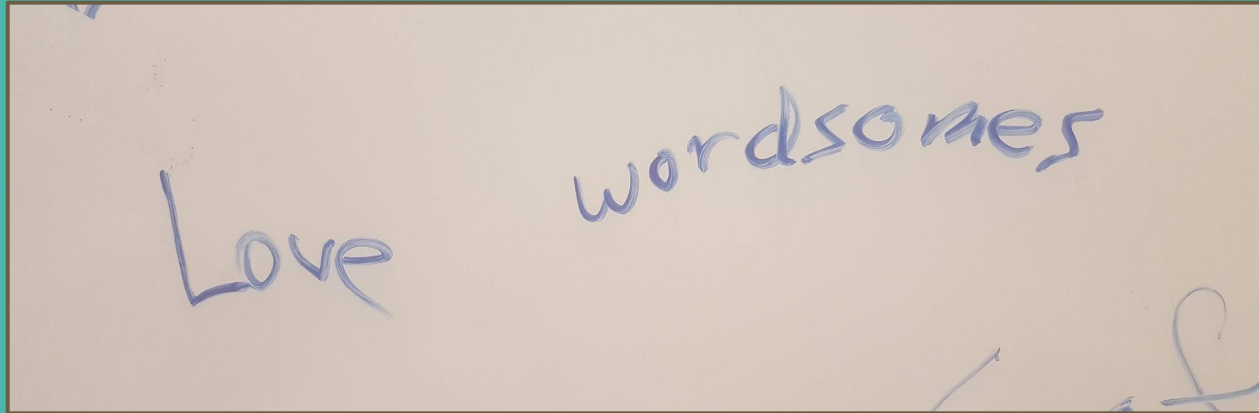
Word Family Activities

Word Webs: Start with one word and brainstorm words from its family.



Adapted from [Lyn Anderson](#)

Word Sums & Matrices



Word Sums & Matrices

A **word sum** refers to writing out the structure of a word by breaking apart its affixes and bases.

friend + s → friends

friend + s → friends

un	friend	ly
be		s
boy		ed
girl		ship
		s

friend + ly → friendly

un + friend + ly → unfriendly

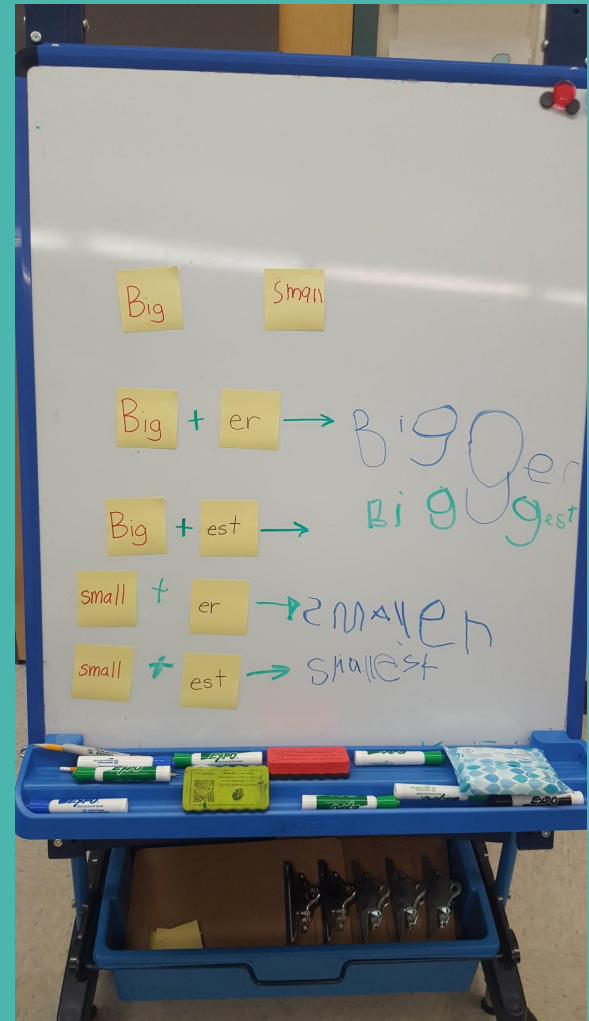
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Word Sums & Matrices

Post-it Note Word Sums:

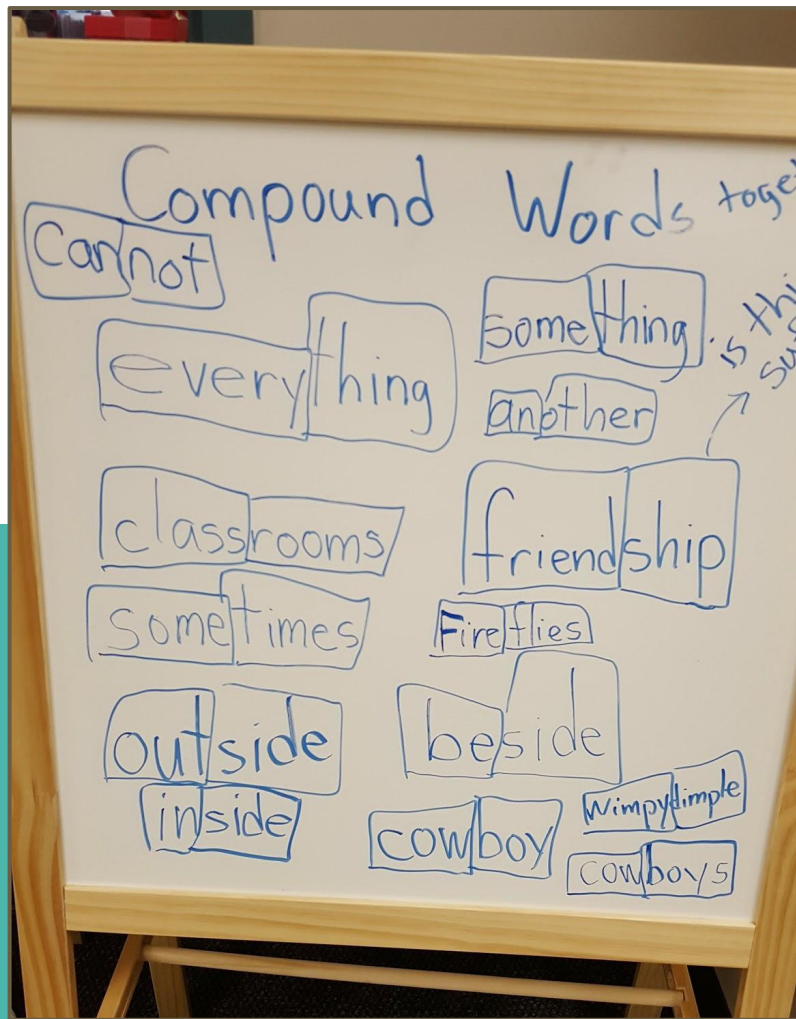
Use post-it notes to represent affixes and bases.

Adapted from [Rebecca Loveless](#)



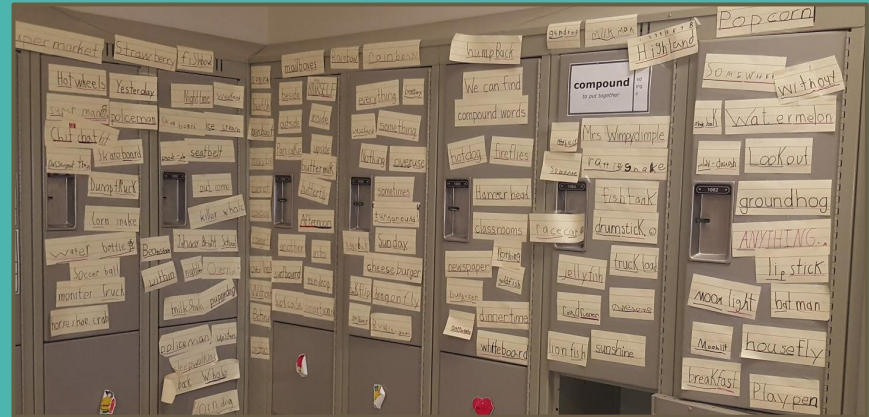
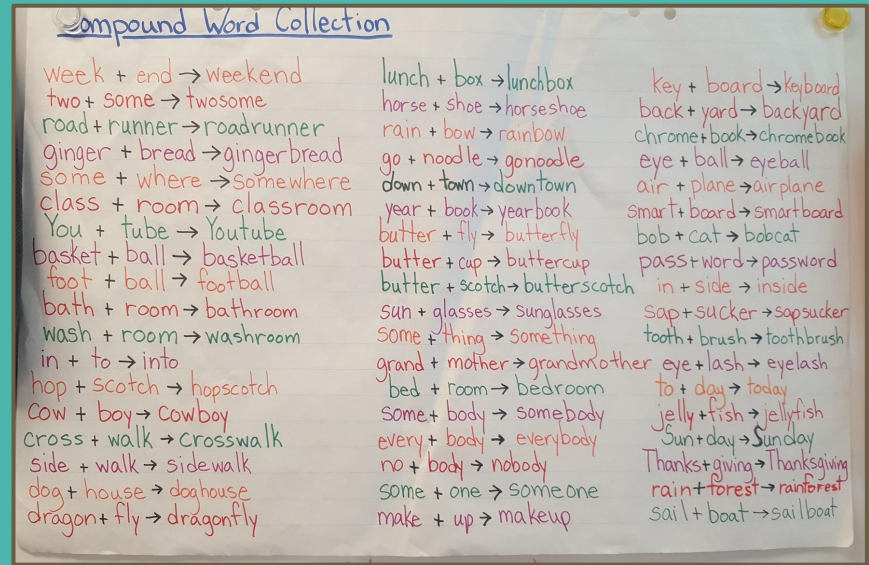
Compound Words

Compound words are easy for students to find and interesting to study. They offer a great introduction to using word sums.



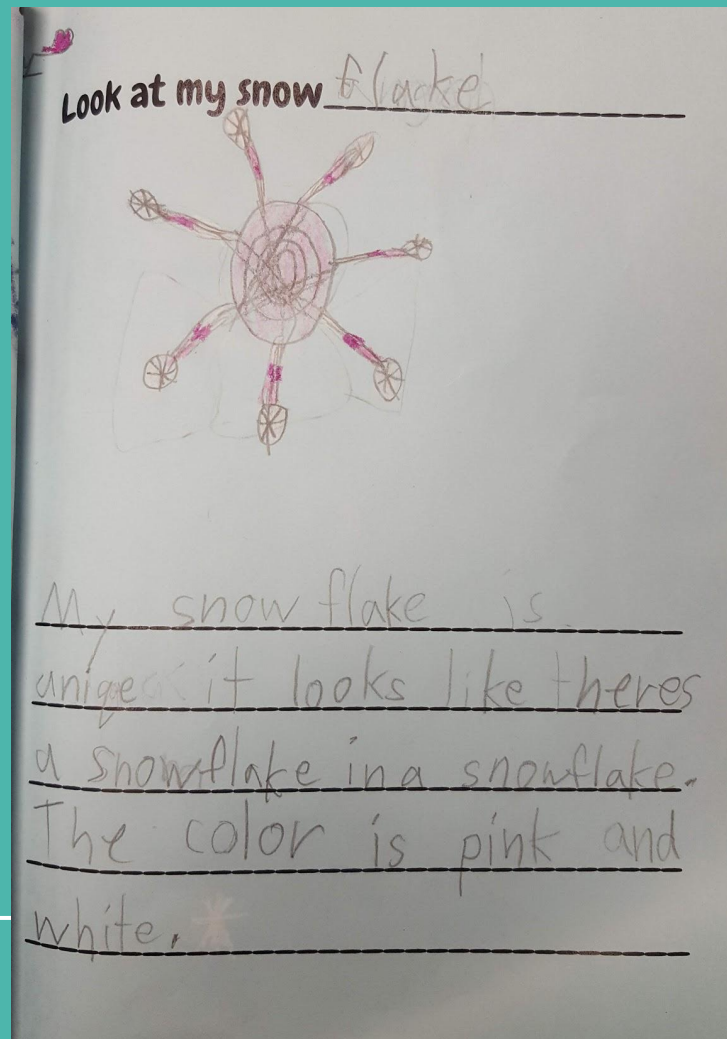
Compound Words

Compound Word Collection:
Invite students to find compound words in their reading. Collect them using an anchor chart or bulletin board.



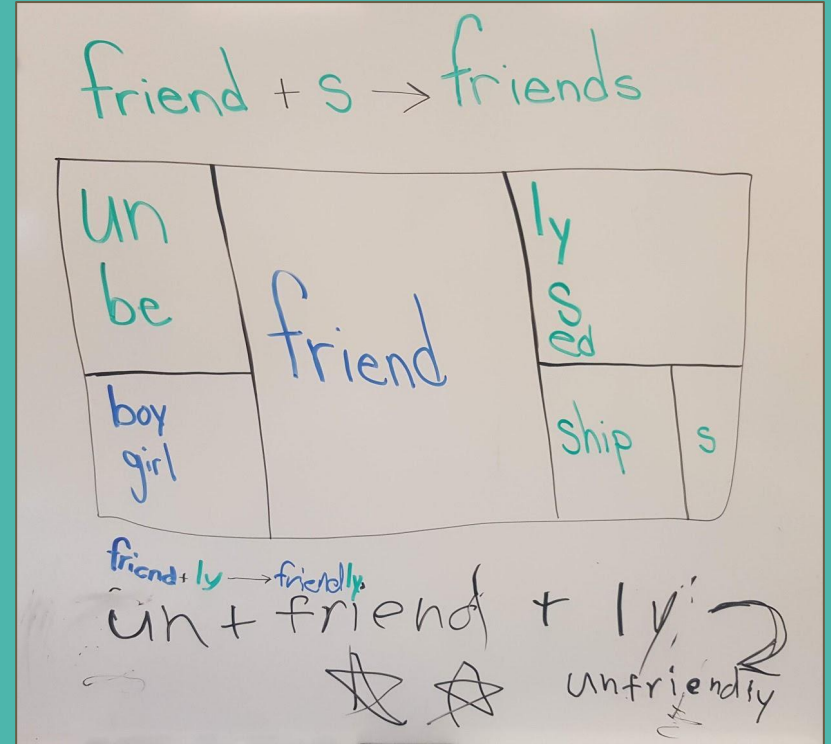
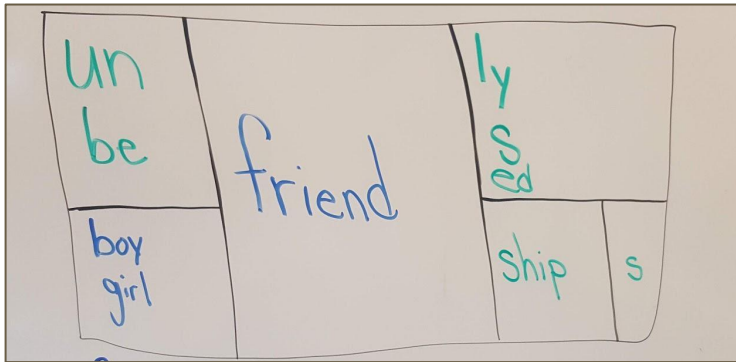
Compound Words

Compound Word Creations:
Have students illustrate pages showing their own compound word.



Word Sums & Matrices

A **matrix** refers to the chart that lays out the order in which affixes and bases can be joined.

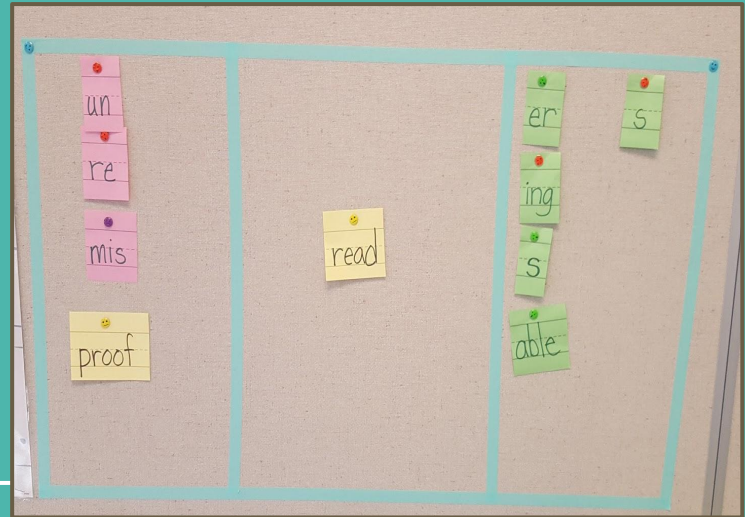


Word Sums & Matrices

Classroom Matrix Display:

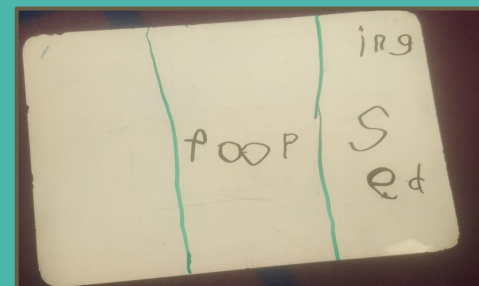
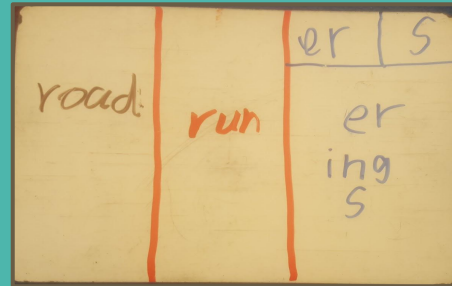
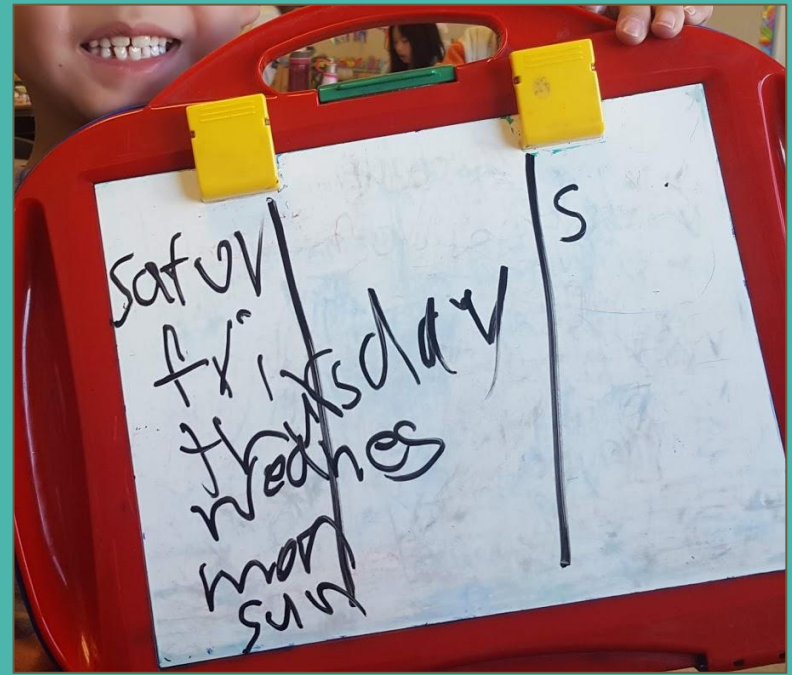
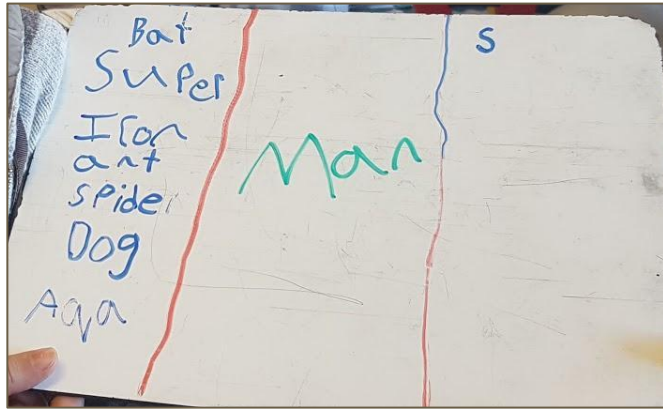
Display an interactive matrix.

Collect attested prefixes, bases and suffixes.



Word Sums & Matrices

Make a Matrix: Use mini whiteboards for students to create their own matrices.



Word Sums & Matrices

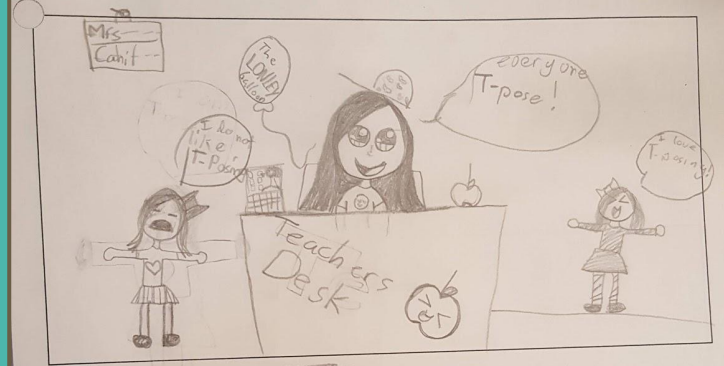
Word Journals:

A handwritten word journal for the word "friend". The word "friend" is written in the center. To its left, the letters "un" and "be" are written vertically. To its right, "ly" and "ed" are written vertically. Below the word, there are four boxes containing the following word sums:

- friend + s → friend
- friend + ship → friendship
- be + friend + ed → befriend
- friend + ship + s → friendships

At the bottom, there is a box containing the word sum: un + friend + ly → unfriendly.

Just For Fun: Draw your teacher a picture.



Handwritten word matrices for various words:

- farm**: farm | ers | s
- freeze**: un | Freeze | er
- corn**: R | corn | s
- Walk**: Pig | sty | er | s
- side**: s | side
- side**: side | s
- Play**: Re | Play | er | s

Word Sums & Matrices

Use your content area vocabulary to create word matrix activities.

re	freeze "cold"	able
un		es
deep		ing
anti		er
		ie
		s

freeze + er → freezer
 freeze + ing → freezing
 freeze + ie → freezie
 un + freeze → unfreeze
 freeze + er + s → freezers
 freeze + es → freezes
 re + freeze → refreeze

ten

teen	preteen
teens	
teenagers	
fourteen	fifteen

protein

15th

un	sink	able
		ing
	go	s
	underwater	
		er
		s

dis	place	able	
ir		re	es
mis			ed
un			ing

dis + place → displace
 re + place → replace
 mis + place → misplace

~~boy~~

buoy
 a signal that floats

S
ant
ance
y

Homophones

Homophones offer a rich opportunity to explore how spelling is primarily focused on *meaning*.



Homophones

Compare
grapheme
selection

Homophone Collection:

Encourage students to listen for homophones in their daily activities. Collect these homophones on an anchor chart or class book.

The image shows a piece of paper with handwritten text and drawings. At the top, the word "no" is written in red with a red prohibition sign above it. The word "know" is written in blue with a drawing of a person's head and a thought bubble containing a key. Both words have a yellow and orange underline. Below this, there are two numbered sentences: "1. My mom said 'no'. I can't play my iPad." and "2. I already know that." At the bottom, there is a section labeled "Challenge" with the sentence "I know that there is no school today." The word "no" in this sentence is written in red.

no **know**

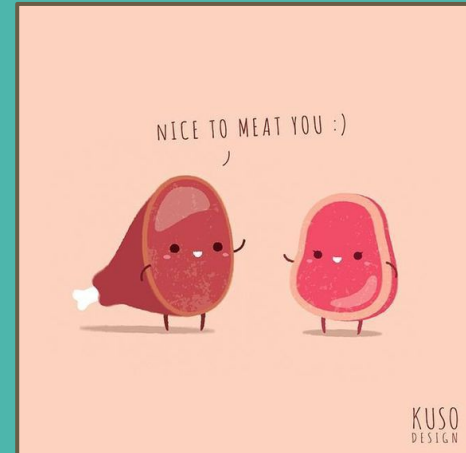
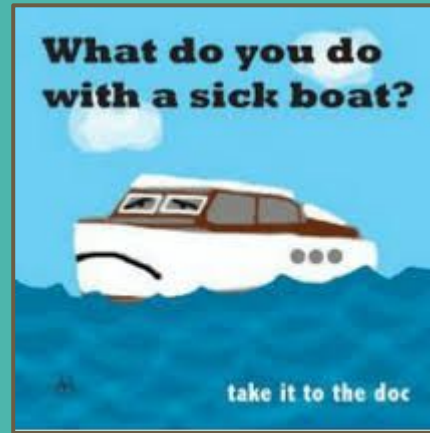
1. My mom said "no". I can't play my iPad.

2. I already know that.

Challenge
I know that there is **no** school today.

Homophones

Jokes and Puns: Show students a variety of jokes and puns. Can they find the humour in homophones?



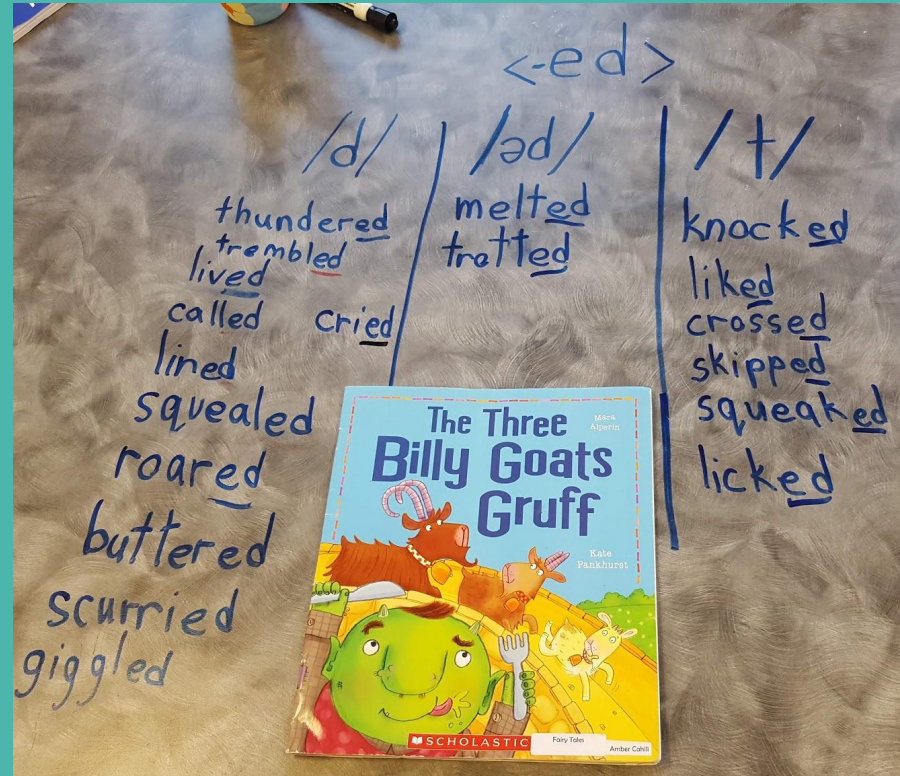
Sample SWI Lesson

Purpose:

To explore the pronunciation of an <-ed> suffix.

Lesson:

1. Read the book *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* by Kate Pankhurst.
2. Show students the word <thundered>.
3. Discuss its structure.
4. Find other words in the book with the same <-ed> suffix. Sort words by pronunciation of the suffix.



Adapted from Peter Bowers

Sample SWI Lesson

Purpose:

To explore suffixes used for pluralizing words.

Lesson:

1. Read the poem *100 Words* by Meish Goldish.
2. Students highlight pluralized words.
3. Discuss the <-s> and the <-es> suffixes.
4. Discuss the difference between plural suffixes and the <'s> found in the poem.

100 dogs, 100 cats,
100 heads for 100 hats.
100 women, 100 men,
100's more than 5 or 10.
100 buttons, 100 coats,
100 sails for 100 boats.
100 cookies, 100 cakes
100 kids with bellyaches!
100 shoes, 100 socks,
100 keys for 100 locks.
100 puddles mighty dirty,
100's even more than 30.
100 daughters, 100 sons,
100 franks on 100 buns.
100 trees, 100 plants,
100 picnics, 100 ants!
100 is a lot to count,
100 is a LARGE AMOUNT!
100 kisses, 100 hugs,
100 bats, 100 bugs.
100 bees, 100 birds,
This poem has 100 words!

Meish Goldish

Sample SWI Lesson

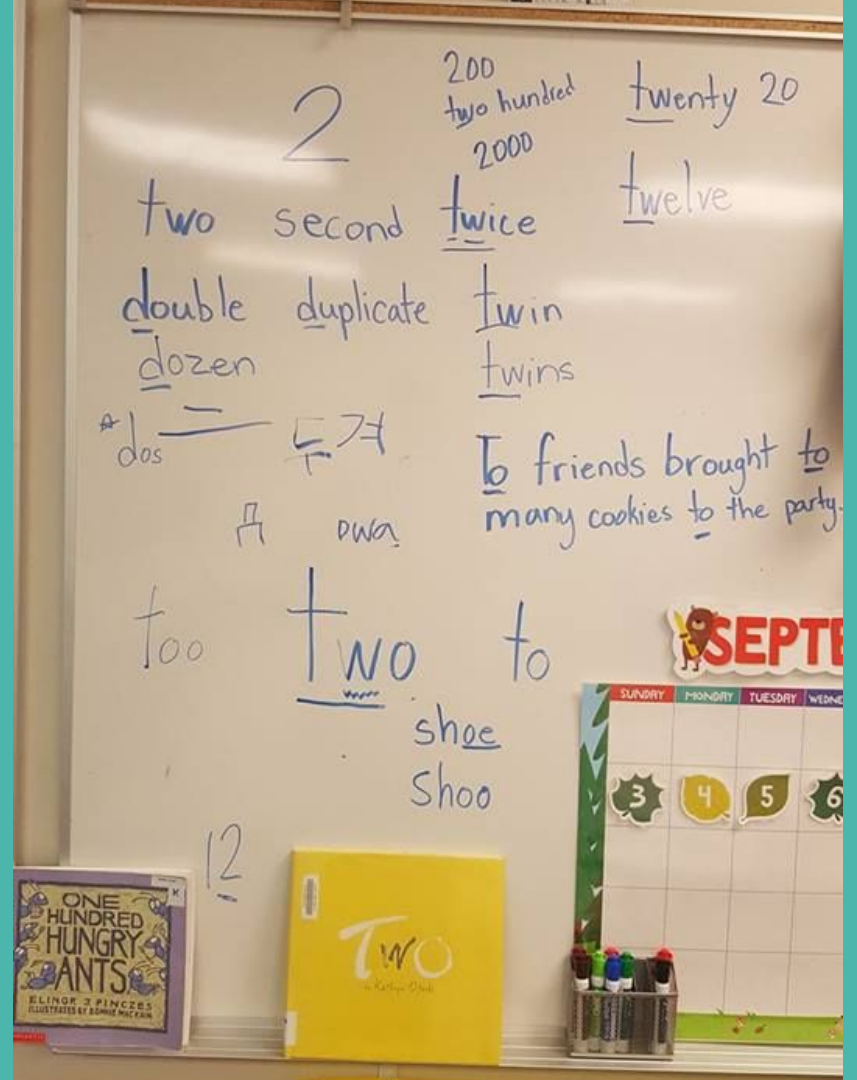
Purpose:

- To explain the <w> in <two>.
- Introduce homophonic principle.

Lesson:

1. Read the book *Two* by Kathryn Otoshi.
2. Discuss other words that we use in place of <two> but that share a meaning. Record ideas.
3. Discuss homophones <to> and <too>. What would happen if we spelled all of these words the same way?

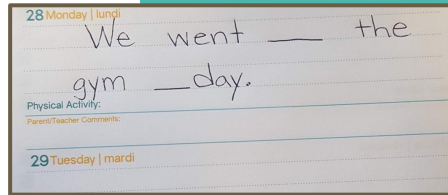
[Onion Video](#)



Sample SWI Lesson

Apply In Writing

- Fill-in-the-blanks agenda message or morning message.

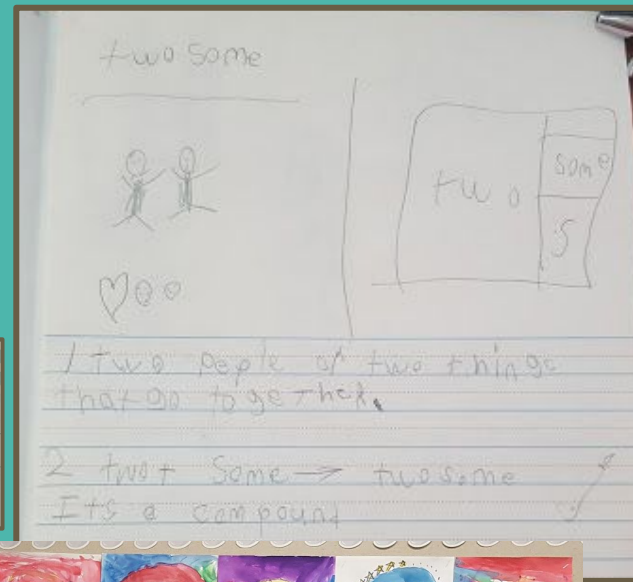


Introduce New Vocabulary

- two + some → twosome

Use Art

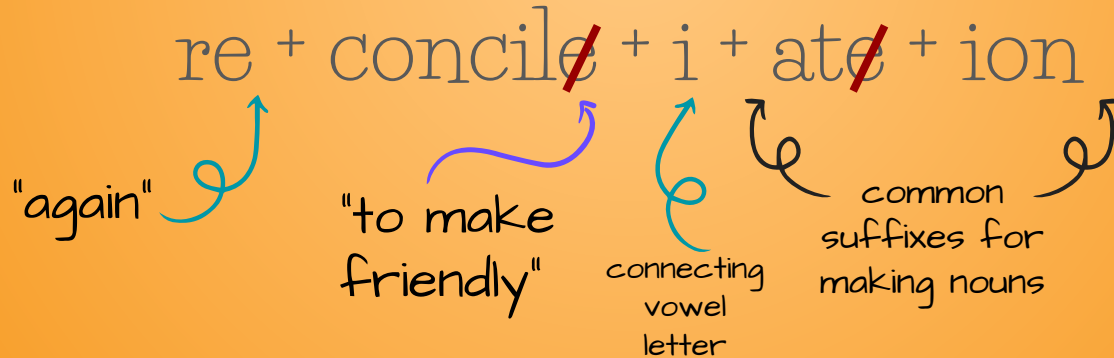
- Reinforce directionality of <2>
- <2>s can look different from each other



What does
"reconciliation"
mean?

To make a relationship friendly again.

How is "reconciliation" built?



What words are
related to
"reconciliation"?

reconcile
conciliatory
irreconcilable

SWI Helpful Websites

Helpful Tools:

Mini Matrix Maker:

<http://www.neilramsdn.co.uk/spelling/matrix/>

Word Searcher:

<http://www.neilramsdn.co.uk/spelling/searcher/>

Etymology: <http://www.etymonline.com/>

Real Spelling Toolbox: <https://www.tbox2.online/>

Websites and Blogs:

Word Works:

<http://www.wordworkskingston.com/WordWorks/Home.html>

Linguist Educator Exchange:

<https://linguisteducatorexchange.com/>

Rebecca Loveless:

<http://rebeccaloveless.com/blog/>

Beyond the Word:

<http://wordsinbogor.blogspot.ca/>

Real Spellers: <http://www.realspellers.org/>

Word Torque: <https://wordtorque.com/>

Level Up: <http://leveluped.com/blog/>



Please feel free to contact me by email if you would like to ask more questions about SWI.

amber.cahill@gmail.com

Check out my Instagram account

www.instagram.com/swiclassroom