Step 1: See & Say

These are the menu options for See & Say, the step in the routine that helps students connect the written word to its phonological representation, or pronunciation. Our goal is for students to see the word, hear it spoken, and say it themselves.

See It, Call It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- Auditory feedback phones/reading phones

WHAT: Rosenthal and Ehri (2011) found that orally saying words enhanced vocabulary word learning more than reading words silently. Auditory feedback phones, also called reading phones, allow students to hear their voice amplified, which provides immediate phonological feedback. In this activity, students look at the word, say the word, and then use a reading phone to say the word again.

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

> **T:** Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.
>
> **S:** *bat*
>
> **T:** Pick up your reading phone and say the word while I point to it.
>
> **T:** (Points to the word.)
>
> **S:** (Students pick up phones.) *bat*

TIPS
- Make sure students wipe off the phones with an antibacterial wipe before storing them in a secure bag or box.
- Make the reading phones out of PVC piping or buy them from your local or online teacher store.

See It, Say It, Sing It/Shout It/Robot It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it

WHAT: Students look at the word, say it, and then sing or shout it, or say it in a robot voice. As Richard Gentry and Gene Ouellette (2025) remind us, the goal is to "bombard or flood students with sounds to tune up the hearing and sound-processing brain areas known to be involved in the neurological reading circuit."

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.

S: *bat*

T: Now say it in your best singing voice (or shouting or robot voice), like this (sings/shouts/robots the word *bat*). You try.

S: *bat* (in singing/shouting/robot voice)

TIPS

- Have fun using your singing voice! Take the word *bat* and go up and down on an octave scale or pretend it is the last note you are hitting in the opera.
- Robot voice is a great option when volume and silliness need to be kept in check.

See It, Say It, Mirror It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- Pocket mirrors/handheld mirrors
- Articulation cards from your classroom sound wall (if available)

WHAT: Images of mouth formations, otherwise known as articulation cards, help students learn letter-sound correspondences (Loftus & Sappington, 2024). They provide visual reminders of what's happening in students' mouths when they say a sound and connect it to a letter. Pocket mirrors, a device long used by speech language pathologists to assist students in articulation, allow students to examine their tongue, lips, and teeth as they produce letter sounds.

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.

S: *bat*

T: Pick up your mirrors.

T: (Points to the first letter in the word.) See how my lips come together to make the /b/ sound? I bring my lips together before pushing it out to make that sound. Now you try it.

- If you've got articulation cards, point out the proper lip positioning.

S: (Students pick up mirrors and examine mouth formation in /b/ sound.)

- **T:** (Potential prompting questions) What do you see in the mirror? How do your lips look?

T: Let's use the mirrors to see how our mouths look for the /a/ sound. Watch me. To make this sound, I open my mouth halfway. I feel the tip of my tongue against the back of my bottom teeth. Now you try it.

- If you've got articulation cards, point out the proper lip positioning.

S: (Students pick up mirrors and examine mouth formation in /a/ sound.)

- **T:** (Potential prompting questions) What do you see in the mirror? How do your lips look?

T: (Points to the last letter in the word.) The last sound is the /t/ sound. I can't see it, but I feel how I move my tongue up to touch the bumps on the roof of my mouth to make this sound. Now you try it.

S: (Students pick up mirrors and examine mouth formation in /t/ sound.)

- **T:** (Potential prompting questions) What do you see in the mirror? How do your lips look?

T: Now let's look in the mirrors as we push all of these sounds together in the word *bat*. You try it.

S: (Students look in mirrors while saying, /b//a//t/, *bat*.)

TIPS

- Your school's speech language pathologist is your best ally in articulation and sound walls.
- The mouth positioning in short vowels changes minimally from sound to sound, so it's often more challenging for young children to notice these differences.
- Use articulation cards depicting diverse students, like the examples below, or create your own cards by photographing your students making the sounds.
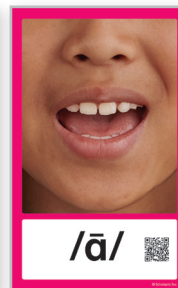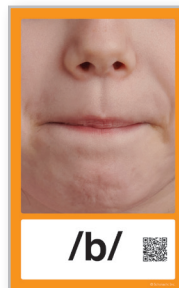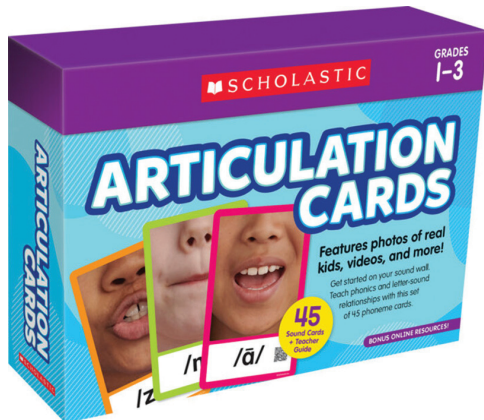
See It, Say It, Jump It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it

WHAT: With this activity, students see and say the word, and jump for each syllable while they say it again, adding kinesthetic movement to the auditory representation of the word.

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

> **T:** Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.
>
> **S:** *bat*
>
> **T:** Remember that a syllable is is a whole word or part of a word that has one vowel sound. Now jump for each syllable you hear in *bat*.
>
> **S:** *bat* (while jumping one time)

TIPS

- This activity can be used for single-syllable and multisyllabic words.
- If jumping is not possible for your students, or if it gets too out of hand for some students, have them squat, raise their arms in the air, etc., to get some movement into the activity.

Step 2: Segment & Spell

These are the menu options for Segment & Spell, the step in the routine in which students analyze the sounds of the word and match the appropriate letters to those sounds. As a result, they make grapheme (letter)-phoneme (sound) connections that help store the word in long-term memory.

Tap It, Spell It

Materials
- Word written so students can see it
- Dry-erase boards and markers

WHAT: Students say the word and then segment the sounds they hear in it by tapping a finger on the table, starting with their thumb. Then they attempt to spell each sound on a dry-erase board. A robust body of research indicates that instruction in phonology—analyzing grapheme-phoneme correspondences—produces positive student outcomes (Foorman et al., 2016).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.

S: *bat*

T: Now segment each sound you hear in the word *bat* by tapping a finger on the table. Watch me. (Models: /b/a/t/.) Your turn.

S: /b/ /a/ /t/ (Students tap a finger on the table for each sound.)

T: Now spell each sound you hear in *bat*. Use your finger taps if you need help identifying the sound you need to spell.

S: (Students use a dry-erase board and marker to spell the word.)

T: Now let's check our work. (Shows board with the word spelled.)

**S:** (Students correct any errors.)

> **TIP**
> Teachers should model what to do when students get stuck with their spelling—tap again and stop at the sound that needs letter(s) representation.

Count It, Map It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- Count and Box Letters (Appendix B)
- Small color chips for counting or any kind of counter

WHAT: We've found that students enjoy this activity a lot, and teachers find it especially effective. Students segment the sounds in a word, move a chip into each box on the Count and Box Letters sheet, and then represent each sound in writing, as explored in a 2000 article by Laurice Joseph. This activity is a modification of Elkonin sound boxes, the instructional legacy of D. B. Elkonin (1973), who used them to link phonemic awareness to letters. In a 2019 literature review, Kelsey Ross and Laurice Joseph indicated the power of word boxes to help preschool through elementary students acquire phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence knowledge, and spelling skills.
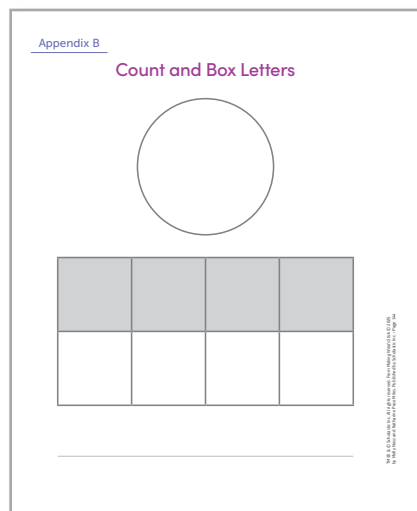
Appendix B

Count and Box Letters

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.

S: *bat*

T: Now I'm going to cover the word. (Covers word.) Watch as I move a chip for each sound I say in the word into a sound box. (Models word.) Now you do it.

S: (Students move a chip as they say each sound, /b/ /a/ /t/.)

T: I will say each sound in *bat*, and you will check to see if you have the right number of chips. /b/ /a/ /t/.

S: (Students check to see if they have a chip in three boxes.)

T: Now write the letter that represents each sound in the box below the chip.

S: (Students write the letter that represents each sound: /b/*b*, /a/*a*, /t/*t*.)

T: Now let's check our work. (Shows board with the word spelled.)

S: (Students correct any errors.)

Word Chain It

Materials

- Magnetic letters or letter tiles

WHAT: A word chain builds phonemic awareness, decoding (word reading), and encoding (spelling) skills by encouraging students to change one sound (phoneme) in a word to create a new word. Because students are changing just one sound, they must hold the word's other sounds in memory while they decide how to create the new word. Additionally, with each new word, students must decide the letter (grapheme) that represents the sound necessary to create that word. The 2016 Institute of Education Sciences (IES) report uses the terminology "word-building exercises" to show how word chains "enhance students' awareness of how words are composed and how each letter or phoneme in a word contributes to its spelling and pronunciation" (also see Rashotte et al., 2001).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: Today we are going to be building word chains. (Pulls out the letters for the chosen set of target words and places them on the table above the whiteboard.)

T: What sounds do you hear in the word *bat*?

S: (Students point a finger for each sound while saying, /b/ /a/ /t/.)

T: Now make the word *hat* using the letters. (Provides corrective feedback as needed.)

S: (Students make the word.)

T: Now read the word.

S: (Students read the word.)

T: Now how many sounds do you hear in the word *hat*?

S: (Students point a finger for each sound while saying, /h/ /a/ /t/.)

T: Now make the word *ham* by only taking away, adding, or changing the letters that need to be changed. (Provides corrective feedback as needed.)

S: (Students make the word.)

T: (If students select or take away the wrong letter, asks: "What sound does that letter make? What sound does this new word _____ need?")

T: (Prompts students to read each word when it is built by saying, "Read the word.")

S: (Students read the word.)

T: (Repeats cycle by forming a new word.)

TIP

Differentiate this activity by adding extra letters for students to choose from. Some students do not need any extra letters when they first do this activity— it is enough for them to distinguish between the group of target letters that will all be used to make the words in the chain. Other students may be ready to have a few extra letters to challenge their letter-sound and phonemic awareness discrimination skills.
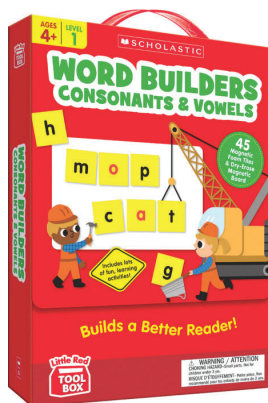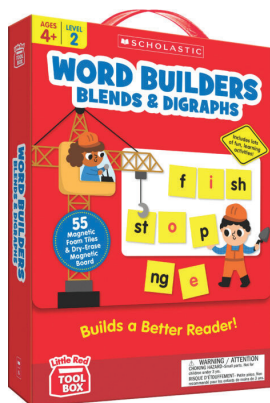
March It, Spell It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- Dry-erase board and marker or paper and pencil

WHAT: Let's get up and move! This kinesthetic activity is meant to increase engagement to accomplish a critical phonemic awareness task—segmenting individual sounds in words (Brady, 2020). Students segment the sounds in the word by marching in place. Then they spell the word.

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

> **T:** Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.
>
> **S:** *bat*
>
> **T:** Now let's stand up and march for each sound we hear in the word. Watch me: /b/ (march), /a/ (march), /t/ (march). Your turn.
>
> **S:** /b/ (march), /a/ (march), /t/ (march).
>
> **T:** Now spell the word on your board, and quietly march under the table if needed.
>
> **S:** (Students spell the word, and quietly march if needed.)
>
> **T:** Now let's check our work. (Shows board with the word spelled.)
>
> **S:** (Students correct any errors.)

TIP

If standing and marching is not possible, stomping feet while remaining seated, or tapping feet on the floor while seated are reasonable alternatives to keep some movement in the activity.

Tap It, Unscramble It

Materials
- Word written so students can see it
- Letter tiles or magnetic letters

WHAT: This activity ensures students have fun encoding, or spelling, the word by putting mixed-up letter tiles or magnetic letters in the correct order. Paige Pullen and Holly Lane note the effectiveness of manipulatives—such as letter tiles and magnetic letters—in building early literacy skills (2016).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: Look at this word. It is *bat*. Say it.

S: *bat*

T: Watch as I count (or tap) the sounds in *bat*. (Holds up a finger for each sound in the word: /b/ /a/ /t/.) Now you try.

S: (Students hold up a finger for each sound: /b/ /a/ /t/.)

T: Now watch as I unscramble this set of magnetic letters to spell *bat*. (Slides the *b*, *a*, *t* out of the pile of six letters to spell the word.) Now you try to unscramble the letters.

S: (Students select the letters and slide them to spell *bat*.) (First time)

T: Now scramble the letters back up and spell *bat* again. (Models gently scrambling the letters again.)

S: (Students scramble their pile of letters and then spell *bat* again.) (Second time)

T: Now scramble the letters and spell *bat* one last time.

S: (Students scramble the letters and then spell *bat* again.) (Third time)

TIPS
- Magnetic letters or letter tiles work well, or you can use cut-up squares of paper with the letters written on them (a paper version of letter tiles).
- Allow older students to use digital tile boards available on free apps or websites to eliminate the stigma of the magnetic letters or tiles being for younger students.

Step 3: Study & Suss Out

These are the menu options for Study & Suss Out, the step in the routine in which students activate the meaning of the word. Our goal is for them to understand the definition, possible multiple meanings, and correct usage of the word.

Sketch It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- Simple art supplies (e.g., chart paper, drawing paper, markers, crayons)

WHAT: Visual representations strengthen and clarify understanding of word meanings—and help students retain those meanings, particularly for multilingual learners and/or neurodivergent students. This activity gets you and your students creating those representations, a recommendation made by James Baumann and colleagues (2003).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: The word is *bat*. Watch as I quickly draw a picture of the animal that flies in the night sky. (Sketches a bat.) I've made sure to include wings and fangs, because those are two important characteristics of bats. Now it's your turn to draw a bat. You can make it look like mine, or you can add other details if you'd like. You have one minute. (Sets a timer.)

S: (Students sketch a bat.)

T: Remind me what *bat* means?

S: (Students provide the definition.)

T. There is another kind of bat. It's the long stick-like object that a baseball player holds to hit the ball. Watch as I draw that kind of bat. (Sketches a baseball bat.) I've included a ball next to my bat to remind me that I'm using the bat that goes along with the sport of baseball. Now it's your turn to draw this type of bat.

> **TIPS**
> - Avoid a mini art lesson! A simple pencil sketch is fine.
> - To keep this activity succinct, use a projected timer to count down the remaining time.
> - It's natural for us to dismiss our artistic skills with statements like, "I'm a terrible artist". Try to resist that urge!

You can make it look like mine, or you can add other details if you'd like. You have one minute. (Sets a timer.)

S: (Students sketch a baseball bat.)

T: Remind me what this *bat* means?

S: (Students provide the definition.)

Act It Out

....

Materials

- Word written so students can see it

....

WHAT: Remember Charades? The aim here is to reinforce word meanings by having students act them out, using facial expressions and body movements, rather than words. Nonverbal supports, like gestures, miming, and hand or body movements have been found to increase student vocabulary and language outcomes (Barnes et al., 2023).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: The word is *bat*. I'm going to use a body movement to show what the word means. If I were a baseball player holding a bat, I'd hold that bat in my hands like this (demonstrates holding a bat). I'd swing the bat like this (demonstrates swinging a bat) to try to hit the ball. Now show me how you swing a bat.

S: (Students demonstrate swinging a bat.)

T: Well done. Remind me what *bat* means.

S: (Students provide meaning of the word.)

> **TIPS**
> - It is often easier to act out nouns or verbs, so consider what words you are using.
> - If you're struggling to come up with how to act out or use body movement for a particular word, students may struggle as well. Another activity may be better suited for that word.

Picture It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- Images of your target word, including clip art, digital images, illustrations, photographs, etc.

WHAT:

Students are more likely to grasp a word's meaning(s) when they hear the word, see the word, and see an image representing the word (Perfetti, 2007). Lean into the power of images by showing them as you discuss word meanings with students.

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: The word is *bat*. I'm going to show you what a bat looks like. (Shows a digital image of a bat from a simple internet search). When I look at this picture, I see that the bat has wings and fangs. What else do you notice about this picture?

S: (Students comment on what they observe about the picture.)

T: Let's look at another image of the same word. What do you see here? (Shows a picture of a baseball bat.)

S: (Students comment on what they observe about the picture.)

T: So what are the two definitions of *bat*?

S: (Students respond without the pictures.)

> **TIP**
> When possible, bringing in a physical object improves students' understanding of the word. For instance, when working with the word *shell*, you might pass around a seashell for students to touch and hold, as well as the pasta shape that are also called *shells*!

Check Its Use

....

Materials

- Word written so students can see it

....

WHAT: In addition to knowing a word's meanings, students must understand when it is used appropriately or inappropriately. We encourage students to apply words through oral wordplay, where they identify if a word is being used correctly, or not. We've modified this activity from Isabel Beck and her colleagues (2013).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: Let's play some riddles with our target word *bat*. I'm going to give you some clues. If the clues match our target word *bat*, say the word aloud. If the clues don't match, don't say anything at all.

- An animal that walks on the ground (S: Students don't say anything.)
- An animal that flies at night (S: *bat*)
- Something you use to hit a ball (S: *bat*)
- Something that you throw with (S: Students don't say anything.)

S: (Students correctly respond to prompts. See above.)

T: Remind me what the word *bat* means?

> **TIPS**
> - Brainstorm clues in advance. It's hard to think of them on the spot!
> - Spice up the ways in which your students respond: Clapping, shouting, or stomping for the correct use of the word are just a few possibilities.

Know Its Many Meanings

Materials

- Word written so students can see it

WHAT: Being able to use a word appropriately in a sentence is the ultimate goal of vocabulary learning! Here, students are given a word with multiple meanings; they write sentences that demonstrate their understanding of each meaning, an instructional recommendation provided in an article examining the complexities of vocabulary application of multiple-meaning words (Booton et al., 2022).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

> **T:** The word is *bat*. Turn to your partner. The person sitting closest to the door will come up with a sentence for the *bat* that flies, and the other partner will come up with a sentence for the *bat* that hits. Take a minute to think of a juicy sentence with details. Okay, Partner 1, closest to the door, share your sentence.

> **S:** (Partner 1 shares a sentence referring to the animal.)

> **T:** Okay, now Partner 2, take a minute to think of a sentence with juicy details. Okay, Partner 2, share your sentence.

> **S:** (Partner 2 shares a sentence referring to the sports equipment.)

> **T:** Who would like to nominate their partner to share their sentence because it had so many juicy details?

TIP

We've seen teachers come up with clever ways to pair up students by, for example, giving them stickers of cookies and milk (or any other common pairings—burgers and fries, beans and rice, Bert and Ernie) on the floor. The teacher simply says, "Cookies, you create a sentence for the first definition of *bat*, and Milk, you create a sentence for the other definition of *bat*."

Word Parts

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- Word Part Organizer on a piece of chart paper (Appendix C)

WHAT: Students determine the meaning of a word by identifying the meanings of its parts. Here we are building students' early word-analysis skills, or their ability to study morphemes as units of meaning (Bowers et al., 2010).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

Morpheme Example

T: We have been working with the word *bat*. Now I'm going to change the word to *batty* and *batting*. Say these words as I point to them.

S: *batty*, *batting*

T: The first definition of *bat* we learned was a flying animal with fangs that comes out at night. Let's underline the word *bat* in *batty* and write *bat* in the first box. (Underlines *bat* and writes it in the first box on the chart paper.)

T: When the *-y* is added to the end of the word, it changes *bat* into an adjective that describes a person, place, or thing. I'm going to double the *t* in *bat* and put the *-y* into the second box. The *-y* attached to *bat* means someone who is acting like a flying bat. Now this doesn't mean they are biting people. Instead, it means someone who is acting wild. When bats fly around they are a bit wild; they swoop all over the place. So if someone is described as *batty*, they are being crazy or wild.

T: Stand up and act batty.

S: (Students act out *batty*.)

T: Now let's look at the two parts of *batty* again and say it together.

S: *batty*

T: Okay, the next word is *batting*. Watch as I underline *bat*. (Underlines *bat* and writes it in the first box on the chart paper.) I'm going to double the *t* in *bat* and put the *-ing* into the second box. When *-ing* is added to the word *bat* it means using the bat to hit the ball or hitting something so it goes away. The *-ing* turns the word into a verb, or action word.

T: Stand up and act out *batting*.

S: (Students act out *batting*.)

T: Now let's look at the two parts of *batting* again and say it together.

S: *batting*

Word Part Organizer

Target Word	+ Ending =	

Target Word	+ Ending =	

Target Word	+ Ending =	

Target Word	+ Ending =	

Compound Word Example

T: In the word *baseball* there are two small words—*base* and *ball*. Let's use this Word Part Organizer to figure out the meaning of the word. (Draw the Word Part Organizer onto the chart paper.) What is the first small word you see in *baseball*?

S: *base*

75

T: I'm going to write *base* in the first box. Bases are small white square pads that are placed in a diamond shape to play this game. (Shows or draws a picture.)

T: What is the second small word you see in *baseball*?

S: *ball*

T: I'm going to write *ball* in the second box. A particular type of ball is used in this game. It is white with red stitching. (Shows or draws a picture.)

T: Now turn to your neighbor. Partner 2 defines the word *baseball* using what we know about what the small words mean.

S: (Partner 1 provides a definition to Partner 2. Partner 2 defines the next word.)

TIP

This activity can be used with any compound word or any word with more than one morpheme. Remember, simple endings of *-s*, *-y*, *-ly*, and *-ed* add meaning to a word.

Study & Suss Out: Function Words

There are many words that can't be defined or depicted—you need to use them to understand their meanings (Miles & Ehri, 2017; Miles et al., 2018). Function words such as *there*, *were*, and *its* are among them. Because function words are tricky to define, they need a specific type of activity for Study & Suss Out. In other words, use Steps 1, 2, and 4 for function words but the following substitutions for Step 3.

Hear It, Use It

Materials

- Word written so students can see it
- A set of word cards in small plastic bags that form a sentence and a question for each student (see guidelines below)

WHAT: Remember that function words have little meaning, but they signal grammatical relationships, hold semantic importance, and are the connective tissue of sentences (Miles et al., 2018). In this activity, students listen for the word in a sentence read to them, and then they create their own sentences containing the word (Ehri & Wilce, 1985). Thus, the activity provides exposure to the function words, in addition to application.

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

> **Watch Molly carry out the routine for a function word.**

T: Look at this word. It is *to*. Say it.

S: *to*.

T: Now listen to how the word *to* is used in this sentence, "I like to read books."

T: In this baggie, you have words that create a sentence. Please put them in order to create a sentence. There may be some words that you don't use. Just put those over to the side.

will	go	Tom	the	.	baseball	Kim	Will

?	and	to	park
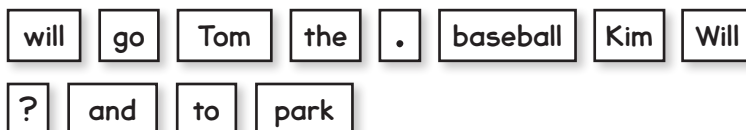
S: (Students empty their baggies and arrange the words in a sentence, including the punctuation card with a period on it.)

T: Read your sentence to a neighbor.

Kim	and	Tom	will	go

to	the	baseball	park	.

S: (Students read their sentence and make any corrections.)

T: Now find the punctuation card with a question mark on it. Create a question using the words. You may have different words that are left out this time.

S: (Students rearrange the words to create a question, including the punctuation card with a question mark on it.)

Will	Kim	and	Tom	go

to	the	baseball	park	?

T: Read your question to a neighbor.

TIP
Students can make longer or shorter sentences depending on their sentence-generation abilities.

Choose It, Use It

Materials

- A paragraph with function words omitted or redacted

WHAT: In a 2018 article, Katie, Karen McFadden, and Linnea Ehri wrote that function words "rely on surrounding words for their meaning" and that they are particularly difficult to learn in isolation—when no information is available about the meaning or usage of the word. Logically, our function word instruction should focus more on usage and application. For this activity, students read a text with function words redacted. From there, they must think about possible words and incorporate them in a way that makes sense in the text.

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: We are going to complete a paragraph that is missing some words! Read this to yourself and circle the word that makes the most sense when you come to the blank. Watch and listen as I do the first one. (Does the first line.) Now you try.

S: (Students begin reading the paragraph silently and circling the appropriate missing word.)

T: Now whisper-read your paragraph and see if you need to make any adjustments.

Word Bank	
where	the
in	or
so	what
like	how
from	and

A trip to the zoo is ▮ much fun! You can see animals ▮ big cats, bears, and fish. Some animals live ▮ big cages, and others live in ponds. You'll learn ▮ they live, ▮ they eat, ▮ they play. Watch them eat ▮ sleep!

S: (Students whisper-read their paragraphs.)

T: Now read your paragraph to a partner. Take turns and make any corrections.

S: (Students take turns reading their paragraphs to their partners.)

T: Now let's read our paragraphs together and make any adjustments.

TIPS

- Provide students with a bank of function words to focus their attention on the best option for the paragraph's semantic structures.

- This is loosely related to the beloved game of Mad Libs, so students might appreciate making a connection between this activity and that game. But instead of being silly, as students typically would be when playing Mad Libs, they should focus on accurate usage/application of words.

Step 4: Search & Stick

These are the menu options for Search & Stick, the final step in the routine designed to help students automatically recognize the word. Our aim is immediate retrieval, efficiency, and connection to the word's use in text.

Sort It

Materials

- Small plastic bags
- Sets of 5–10 words with the new spelling pattern (e.g., -*at*)
  and 5–10 review words with a different spelling pattern (e.g., -*it*)

WHAT: Steacy and colleagues (2020) found that the characteristics of the word and the student's skills impacted the number of exposures needed to learn a new word. To increase the number of exposures to the target word and similarly spelled words, students should read the target word multiple times. For this activity, students quickly sort words into two categories: words with the new spelling pattern (-*at*) and a review spelling pattern (-*it*).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: We have been working on the word *bat*. Now sort this baggie of words into two columns: words that end in -*at* and words that we learned last week that end in -*it*.

S: (Students dump the baggie onto the table, find the colorful heading strips, and sort the words into the two piles.)

T: Now quietly read down both columns.

S: (Students quietly read the words in the columns.)

T: Now read these words to your partner. Partner 1 reads column 1, and Partner 2 reads column 2. Then switch columns.

S: (Students take turns reading aloud down each column.)

> **TIP**
>
> Consider using the word sort as a morpheme reinforcer. One column could have all the variations of the word (e.g., *bat*, *bats*, *batty*, *batting*, *batted*, *batter*). The other column could have the other target features (e.g., -*it* words) or a different word from the -*it* family with morphemic variations.

Swat It

Materials

- Fly swatter
- Five small squares of paper with a target word, 5–10 small squares with other words with a similar spelling pattern written on it

WHAT: To increase the number of exposures to the target word and similarly spelled words, provide students with opportunities to read the target word multiple times. One of the best, most entertaining ways to do that is to have students identify, read, and swat the word using a fly swatter! Just as we want to smack a fly with accuracy and speed, so too do we want students to recognize words!

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

T: We have been working on the word *bat*. Now it's time to see how quickly you can find *bat* and other similar words with your swatter. Get ready!

S: (Students lift up their swatters.)

T: When I call out a word, you read the cards as you swat them. First, find all the *bat* cards.

S: (Students swat and read aloud all five *bat* cards.)

T: Now swat and read *hat*.

S: (Students swat and read *hat*.)

T: Now swat and read *cat*.

S: (Students swat and read *cat*.)

TIP

Students love this activity! You can cover a small table with word cards with the target word (*bat*) and the similarly spelled words. Then have students take turns, or have them play in pairs or small groups. You can also give each student a baggie of cards to swat at their desk as you call out the words.

Hunt for It

Materials

- Text
- Small sticky notes
- Decodable texts
- Magnifying glass (optional—just for fun!)

WHAT: It's not enough for students to recognize words in isolation; we must help them transfer—or extend what they've learned in word study instruction to connected text (Bransford et al., 1999).

HOW: The script below serves to jumpstart your directions and conversation. The **T** is teacher-directed language, and the **S** indicates what students do.

> **T:** We have been working with the word *bat*. Now we are going to read a book with the word *bat*. When you read the word *bat*, place one of these small sticky notes underneath it.

> **S:** (Students begin reading the book, and at the end of reading a sentence, they go back to underline the word *bat* with the sticky note.)

> **T:** Nice job reading the book. Now flip through the book and remove all the sticky notes while you read each underlined word.

> **S:** (Students read all the *bat* words as they remove the sticky notes.)

TIP

You may want to have more skilled students locate not only the target word, but also words that are phonetically similar. For instance, some students might be ready to hunt for CVC words with a short /a/ sound like in *bat*. This offers a differentiation opportunity for readers with more advanced phonetic skills.