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# Here's an Instant Activity for September 16, 2002



## STRATEGY FOR SPELLING SUCCESS

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For most learners, spelling well doesn't just happen. It is the result of a conscientious spelling curriculum that:

1. provides a menu of skill-building activities that range in sophistication to teach critical concepts at a student's own level,
2. uses assessment to gather information to target word study to the specific words each student has not learned from among all previously introduced words in the program, as well as to identify skills not yet mastered,
3. equips teachers with guidelines for spelling expectations in everyday writing that increase as students develop as writers, making the classroom a rehearsal for real-world writing, and
4. proposes multiple opportunities to engage parents in the acquisition of spelling skills with their child.

This Instant Activity helps teachers achieve item number 1 above—it complements the skill-building component in the SPELLING SOURCEBOOK SERIES, Second Edition, 2002. Further, it could be used as an at-home activity to complement item number 4 above—parent-child partnerships.



## LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

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Approximately Grade 7



## PURPOSE

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Focus: Words that end with unstressed /ər/ spelled *er*, *or*, *ar*

Skills: phonics, extending students' word bank, spelling word patterns, word analysis, suffix practice, word meanings



## SUGGESTED USE

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This Instant Activity can be used to reinforce lessons on words that end with unstressed /ər/ spelled *er*, *or*, *ar*. Specifically, it can be used to extend the activity featured in *Build Skillful Writers*, Level 7, Unit 2, page 12.



## TEACHING DIRECTIONS

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Select students to write on the chalkboard: *dinner*, *weather*, *fresher*, *narrower*, *farmer*, *reporter*. Ask students how these words are alike (end in /ər/ spelled *er*). Ask students what they can tell you about the *er* endings. Conclude that *er* is part of the base word in *dinner* and *weather*, is a suffix that means “more” in *fresher* and *narrower*, and is a suffix that means “one who” in *farmer* and *reporter*. A skillful writer knows that the suffix that means “more” is always spelled *er*. The /ər/ suffix that means “one who” or “one that” is usually spelled *er*, but may be spelled *or*, and far less frequently is spelled *ar*. Note that /ər/ words spelled *ur* are very rare, as in *murmur*. Point out to students that “one who” refers to people and “one that” refers to things.

Print the Instant Activity and distribute a copy to each student. Ask students to read the directions silently. Then select a student to explain aloud what she/he thinks is expected. Next, students complete the activity independently, in pairs or small groups, or as a take-home task.



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#### FOLLOW-UP

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Discuss the categories in which students placed the words. Help students discover that the suffix that means “more” is always spelled *er*.

Use TAKE-HOME TASK 2 BLACKLINE MASTER, page 13, in the Level 7 Spelling Sourcebook to reinforce *er* and *or* suffixes that mean “one who” or “one that.”

Later, have students brainstorm the less frequently-used spelling—the *ar* ending. Have students sort the words by those that mean “one who” or “one that” and words for which the *ar* is not a suffix (e.g., one who: *burglar, beggar, scholar*; one that: *singular, columnar, circular*; not a suffix: *cougar, calendar, caterpillar*).

Answers: no suffix—*alligator, answer, antler, blunder, brother, calendar, diameter, error, flavor, forever, harbor, honor, humor, lavender, linear, lunar, manor, minor, mirror, mortar, motor, number, odor, polar, similar, sugar, thunder, together*; one who/that—*achiever, autobiographer, beggar, bookkeeper, boxer, campaigner, canoer, computer, contractor, designer, elevator, entertainer, flier, governor, indicator, instructor, inventor, laborer, listener, miner, professor, refrigerator, reporter, sculptor, speaker, trailer, visitor*; more—*bluer, bulkier, cozier, finer, grouchier, happier, higher, hotter, number, slower, thirstier, tidier, wetter, wider*. Note: *number* goes in two categories.



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#### FOR MORE

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Build Skillful Writers is a regular feature in Levels 4–8 of the Spelling Sourcebook Series. The lessons highlight the interrelatedness of spelling with all writing conventions. For more activities to teach all the essential skills and concepts, and to develop a total spelling and language-related program, use the Spelling Sourcebook for your grade level.

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# Build Skills and Word Experiences



Name \_\_\_\_\_, Super Speller

Divide a sheet of writing paper into three columns. Label the columns "no suffix," "suffix meaning *one who* or *one that*," and "suffix meaning *more*." Sort the words on the chart into the categories. Then find and write more words for each category.

|                |             |            |              |
|----------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| achiever       | cozier      | humor      | polar        |
| alligator      | designer    | indicator  | professor    |
| answer         | diameter    | instructor | refrigerator |
| antler         | elevator    | inventor   | reporter     |
| autobiographer | entertainer | laborer    | sculptor     |
| beggar         | error       | lavender   | similar      |
| bluer          | finer       | linear     | slower       |
| blunder        | flavor      | listener   | speaker      |
| bookkeeper     | flier       | lunar      | sugar        |
| boxer          | forever     | manor      | thirstier    |
| brother        | governor    | miner      | thunder      |
| bulkier        | grouchier   | minor      | tidier       |
| calendar       | happier     | mirror     | together     |
| campaigner     | harbor      | mortar     | trailer      |
| canoer         | higher      | motor      | visitor      |
| computer       | honor       | number     | wetter       |
| contractor     | hotter      | odor       | wider        |