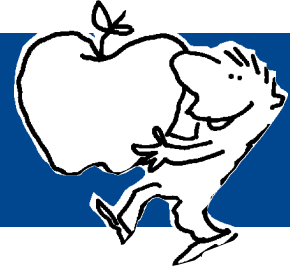


Here's an Instant Activity for April 19, 2004



STRATEGY FOR SPELLING SUCCESS

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 develop item number 1 above—and item number 4, if the activity is assigned as homework.



LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Approximately Grade 5



PURPOSE

Concept: Frequent spelling patterns for the soft-syllable ending /ər/ are *er*, *or*, and *ar*.

Skills: phonics, spelling word patterns, word analysis, sorting words

This Instant Activity develops a concept that is a significant contributing factor to many spelling errors—/ər/. This unstressed syllable at the end of a word sounds the same regardless of its spelling—*er*, *or*, and *ar* are the most frequent spelling patterns. Sometimes /ər/ is a suffix (e.g., longer, beggar, visitor), and sometimes it is simply part of the base word (e.g., finger, cedar, color).

The purpose of this lesson is to work with words in which /ər/ is part of the base word, and to help students discover that /ər/ is most often spelled *er* (e.g., finger), is sometimes spelled *or* (e.g., color), and is sometimes spelled *ar* (e.g., cougar). Students may also discover the very infrequently used patterns *ur* (e.g., murmur) and *ure* (e.g., future).

First, students need to *hear* and identify the sound. Then as they collect words, they will see that different letters spell the sound.



SUGGESTED USE

This Instant Activity can be used to fortify students' understanding of /ər/ as part of the base word, rather than as a suffix to the base word. For example, the Instant Activity could be used in Unit 8 in Level 5 of the Spelling Sourcebook Series, Second Edition, when the Core Word *color* is introduced. In Unit 28, words with the /ər/ suffix are featured, so a review of words in which /ər/ is not a suffix would also be appropriate.

The activity sheet for this Instant Activity can be completed at home to engage parents with their child, or it can be completed at school.



TEACHING DIRECTIONS

Write *col__r* on the chalkboard. Ask students to supply the missing letter to spell the word *color*. Repeat the activity with *visit__r*. Note that with *color*, the /ər/ spelled *or* is not a suffix, but is part of the base word—if you remove *or*, there isn't a base word that remains. Point out that with *visitor*, the /ər/ spelled *or* is a suffix—if you remove *or*, the base word *visit* remains. Ask students to brainstorm more words that end in /ər/, but /ər/ is not a suffix. This requires students to carefully examine their words. Is /ər/ a suffix or not a suffix?

You may wish to have students work in cooperative groups to complete the Instant Activity. Then a spokesperson for each group can present to the class the group's words and conclusions they made regarding the spelling patterns for this sound.

Print the Instant Activity and distribute a copy to each student, or if students are working in cooperative groups, give each group a copy. Ask students to silently read the directions, look at the activity, and determine what is expected. Then discuss the directions before students begin completion of the exercise.



FOLLOW-UP

Conclude that /ər/ is most often spelled with the letters *er*. The sound can also be spelled with *or* and *ar*. Far less frequently, the sound is spelled *ur* or *ure*.

Repeat the activity with words for which /ər/ is a suffix.



FOR MORE

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. Further extend the skills and concepts of the Spelling Sourcebook Series with Word-Wise Sourcebook Three for use with fifth and sixth graders.

To learn about the revised Series:

Request our free, on-loan Overview Video by calling 888-WE-SPELL (888-937-7355). The video can also be ordered through our web site: www.sittonspelling.com.

To learn how to use the Spelling Sourcebook Series:

1. Attend a seminar that explains and demonstrates lessons that reflect the Spelling Sourcebook methodology. For more information, visit www.sittonspelling.com. Click on the Training tab at the top of the page, then click on Seminar Schedule.
2. Use the **NEW TUTOR ME** Training Video/CD-ROM for your grade level either on your own or in a small group. Rebecca Sitton guides you through a complete unit, tells you exactly what to do, and why. Set aside about two hours to acquire complete expertise, or learn about each part of a unit as you need it. Invite parents to discover how their child will be learning to spell with the Parent Introduction. Visit www.sittonspelling.com for more information.

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Build Skills and Word Experiences



Name _____, Super Speller

Spelling Patterns in an Unstressed Syllable

Say *color* and *visitor*. Listen to the sound at the end of the words. Did you notice that the sound is the same? This sound in a dictionary is indicated by /ər/. In both *color* and *visitor*, the /ər/ is spelled with the letters *or*.

- The *or* in *color* is not a suffix—when the *or* in *color* is removed, there is no base word that remains.
- The *or* in *visitor* is a suffix—when the *or* in *visitor* is removed, the base word *visit* remains.

Find and write more words in which you hear the same sound that you hear at the end of *color* and *visitor*, but the sound does not spell a suffix—it is part of the base word. Note the different letters that spell the sound.

Here are base words that end in /ər/:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

The letters that can spell /ər/ are: _____.

The spelling pattern that is most frequent is: _____.