



Learning together

Observing the Structure of Words

ACTIVITY #4

SEQUENCE: STRATEGY WHILE READING —
DECODING NEW WORDS 2ND CYCLE — PRIMARY

By **Marie-Lou Laplante**,
Educational Specialist



Purpose of the activity

In the second cycle of primary school, your child is continuing to develop word identification skills using a broader network of strategies and knowledge. The objective of this activity is to observe the structure of new words to decode them better.



Relevance of the activity

Your child is still a beginning reader. By observing the structure of words and their small units of meaning, your child can learn to adjust the way they must decode a new word.



Supplies



■ you can use the text in the appendix

LET'S GO!

Explain the activity:



Today, we are going to focus on the structure of a word in order to decode it better.

Explain why:



To become an effective reader, you must learn to recognize words immediately. By observing a word and its characteristics, you can easily spot groups of meaningful letters that will help you read new words.

Explain when:



When you encounter new, more difficult words, ask yourself if you recognize small groups of letters that you have already seen in other words.

Try it together:



Some words may be difficult to decode and this can make understanding difficult. To do so, we will ask ourselves questions to find clues that will help us to read what is written and check our understanding. Remember that in reading, you always have to check two things:

- Is the word I read really the one written?
- Does the word I read make sense compared to the rest of the sentence?

Here is a short text entitled *A Voyage Through Forests*. (See appendix)

Quickly, without reading it, you can observe that there are words in different colours and even parts of words in bold. You might be wondering why this is? In fact, these are different markers that give clues about the type of words and their meaning.

The bold parts highlight small units of meaning.

- In the word **adventur**ers, the bold part tells us that we are talking about people who love adventure. We can find this small unit of meaning in other words like police officer, sorcerer, or customer. It can help me read the end of these words, because I recognize them quickly.

The parts of words that are in pale grey show us the words that are plural.

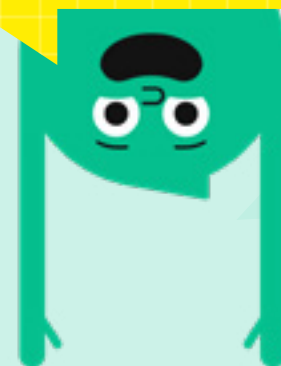
- These clues tell us that they are common nouns. It also tells me how to pronounce the word due to the plural ending of the word.

The parts of words that are in blue show us different conjugation markers.

- These clues tell us that they are conjugated verbs.

Quick tips!

By quickly spotting these small parts of meaning in words, you can decode more effectively since you can focus your energy on the parts of words that are new to you. You will see that, when you are just starting to learn to read, this does not happen automatically. But, now that you are aware of this strategy, you can pay special attention to these clues.



Strategy during reading: Identify new words by looking at the structure of a word**Clues of meaning can take different forms:**

- Groups of letters that are meaningful
- adventurer**er** → as in police officer**er**, sorcerer**er**
- foliage**age** → voy**age**, vill**age**

Markers of plurality (s, ies)

- forests**s**, trees**s**, families**s** → indicates number (plural)

Conjugation markers: Also informs us about the class of words (conjugated verbs)

- **are** walking (2nd person singular), changes **s** (3rd person plural),
live (3rd person plural)

A Voyage Through Forests

Dear Adventurers, come and discover our beautiful forests!
Forests are like large families of trees, each with its own mystery.
Slip on your boots and get ready for an incredible adventure!

Rainforests

Welcome to the rainforest! Imagine you are walking through a jungle where the trees are so high that they block the sun's rays. Here, there is a lot of shiny foliage. Did you know that rainforests are located near the equator, where it is always hot and humid? They are home to exotic animals such as monkeys and colourful parrots. Unfortunately, tropical forests and the animals that live in them are not immune to deforestation.



Boreal forests

Now imagine a forest where the trees are covered with sparkling snow. Also called taiga, the boreal forest is found in countries where it is very cold, such as northern Canada and Russia. In these forests, we find conifers such as firs, spruce and tamaracks. Because of climate change, snow is melting earlier, affecting the growth of trees and shrubs, as well as the way of life of the animals that live there, such as black bears.



Temperate forests

We **end** our voyage in the temperate forests. Here we find conifers, but also hardwoods such as maple and birch. This type of forest is found in Europe and North America. The colour of the trees' leaves changes with the seasons, putting on a spectacular show, especially in autumn. Throughout the year, you **see** different species of bird, squirrel and deer. Temperate forests are increasingly affected by forest fires because the weather is warmer and there is less precipitation.



Lastly, forests **give** us fresh air and are home to a wide variety of animals, both big and small! They're the lungs of the Earth. By taking care of our planet and planting trees, we can help protect these beautiful places for generations to come.



See you soon for another adventure,
Jean Bouleau