

Learning together

R controlled vowels

ACTIVITY #3

SEQUENCE: READING AND SPELLING RULES
5TH AND 6TH GRADES (3RD CYCLE)

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Purpose of the activity

The aim of this activity is to

- 1 Recognize R-controlled vowels when reading.
- 2 Spell words with the most common R-controlled vowel sounds.



Relevance of the activity

When a vowel is followed by the letter "R", it changes sounds. The "R" influences how you position your mouth, and therefore how the vowel that precedes it is pronounced. The R-controlled vowels represent an additional pronunciation for each vowel.



Supplies



- word lists 32 to 38 (see appendix)
- optional: your child's vocabulary word list or words from a book containing R-controlled vowels

LET'S GO!

Explain the activity:



In this activity you will learn the 5 R-controlled pronunciations for single vowels A, E, I, O, U. AR makes the sound /ar/ like *car*, OR makes the sound /or/ like *horse*, and ER, IR and UR make the sound /er/ like *bird*. You will also learn the graphemes that make the sound /air/ like *hair*, when they are followed by the letter R.

Explain why:



The letter R changes the sound of the vowel that precedes it. This will be the 3rd sound for each of the five single vowels, adding one more pronunciation – one more level of complexity – when reading vowel sounds. By knowing the R-controlled pronunciations, you will be able to recognize words much faster. Also, when you hear certain R-controlled syllables, you will have a better which is the most likely grapheme to use in an R-controlled syllable.

Explain when:



You will apply these rules when reading and spelling words with (mostly) closed syllable structures that end with R.

- 1 Closed syllables ending with the letter R (*car*, *for*, *her*, *fir*, *fur*, *fair*, *bear*)
- 2 Closed syllables ending with the letters R + 1 consonant or a digraph (*fork*, *starch*, *verb*, *third*, *church*)
- 3 R-controlled vowel (Vr) + silent E (*more*) or R-controlled vowel (Vr) + Consonant + silent E (*horse*, *curve*).
- 4 Open syllable followed by an R (*military*, *temperature*)

1 /ar/ like car**READING AR:** consistent*, with 1 exceptionWhen you see AR, you pronounce [ar] like car, except syllables with WAR, you pronounce /or/ like *horse* (see /or/ word list)**SPELLING [ar]:** consistent. When you hear [ar] like *car*, you write AR

See spelling list 32

2 /or/ like horse**READING OR:** consistent, with 1 exceptionWhen you see OR, or ORE at the end of words, you pronounce /or/ like horse, except for WOR, pronounce /er/ like *her* (see /er/ word list).**SPELLING [ar]:** inconsistent. When you hear /or/ like *horse*, you generally write OR, except when you hear /wor/, you write WAR (war, warn). When you hear /or/ at the end of words, your first choice is OR but there are also many words, often frequent ones, that are spelled ORE (*more, wore*). There are also some OR words that end in R + Consonant + E (*horse, force*)

See spelling list 33

3 /er/ like her

The grapheme ER is found in the middle and at the end of words (person). It is also a very common suffix added to a root word to make a new one (fast → faster, see Activity 6). /er/ is the most complex R-controlled phoneme to spell.

READING ER, IR and UR: consistent. When you see ER, IR or UR in a closed syllable, you pronounce /er/ like *her, verb, church, bird*.**SPELLING [er]:** inconsistent. When you hear [er] like *mother*, there are at least 7 possible spellings. You will learn the most common spellings first: ER, IR, and UR. You will also have a list of frequent words with other /er/ spellings: *dollar, doctor, earth, word, journey*You hear /er/ like *her*, write **1) her, 2) church, 3) girl, 4) search, 5) doctor, 6) journey, 7) dollar**You hear /wer/ like *work*, write **WOR**

See spelling list 34 to 37

4 /air/ like hair

READING AIR: consistent

When you see AIR, you pronounce [air] like *hair*.

SPELLING [air]: inconsistent. When you hear [air] like *hair*, there are 5 common spellings. The dominant spelling is AIR, except at the end of words, it's A+RE in a Magic E syllable (*care, rare, share*). We will also see some frequent words with the minority spellings like *bear, very, berry, charity, and carrot*.

You hear /air/ like *hair*, write:

1) hair, 2) care, 3) girl, 4) search, 5) journey, 6) doctor, 7) dollar

You hear /wer/ like *work*, write **WOR**

See spelling list 32

*A consistent grapheme has one pronunciation (with or without a few "delinquent" words) and represents only one phoneme. There are very few truly consistent graphemes. The letter V is one such grapheme: you see the letter V, you say [v]; you hear the phoneme [v], you spell V or VE at the end of words. There are no exceptions. Some graphemes are consistent to read while also being inconsistent spellings. Example: ER. It always makes the sound [er] like *her*, but if you must spell the sound [er] like *her*, you have many choices. Some graphemes are inconsistent to read and to spell, like OUR. It can be pronounced /ow/ like *flour*, /or/ like R-controlled *course* or /er/ like R-controlled *journey*, and when you have to write one of those sounds, you have at least 2 choices for each.



Quick tips!

Avoid mixing words with similar sounds but different spellings until each spelling is practiced on its own. Also, teach words with less common R-controlled syllables (list 37) last to prevent confusion



Lists 32 to 34

R-CONTROLLED VOWELS

32 - AR	33 - OR	34 - ER
car	corn	her
arm	fork	germ
art	born	jerk
far	port	term
jar	sport	verb
scar	storm	perch
star	corner	swerve
bark	correct	verse
card	forget	camera
hard	support	certain
park	passport	commerce
yard	platform	concern
charm	organize	insert
shark	more	internal
smart	tore	merchant
spark	wore	midterm
charge	horse	nervous
large	force	prefer
market	score	serpent
harmony	war	government
participate	warm	temperature
apartment	warning	terminology

*homophones

List 35 to 38

R-CONTROLLED VOWELS

35 - UR	36- IR	37 - other /er/	38 - AIR
church	bird	actor	hair
fur*	fir*	doctor	chair
burn	sir	tractor	fair*
burst	stir	director	flair
curb	dirt	inspector	pair
curl	firm	liar	stairs*
hurt	girl	dollar	affair
surf	birth	burglar	repair
turn	first	word	unfair
curve	shirt	work	airport
nurse	skirt	world	care
curtains	squirt	worth	dare
disturb	swirl	worse	glare
further	third	worry	rare
hurry	twirl	early	share
purple	whirl	earth	stare*
turtle	circle	learn	very
surprises	circus	search	inherit
yogurt	confirm	colour	berry
hamburger	thirty	courage	merry
saturday	thirsty	journal	terrible
thursday	virtual	tournament	bear*

*homophones