

Learning together

Magic E Rule: Saying the Name of the Vowel

ACTIVITY #5

SEQUENCE: SPELLING AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE
1ST CYCLE – PRIMARY

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Purpose of the activity

The aim of this activity is to teach your child to read and spell vowels by recognizing a second syllable structure: CVCe.



Relevance of the activity

This activity is called the *Magic E Rule*. In English, each vowel (a, e, i, o, u) has 2 pronunciations. To read a word correctly, we must recognize which vowel pronunciations apply to which syllable type. By knowing this the magic E rule, you will be able to instantly recognize which of the two vowel pronunciations to apply.



Supplies

- The word lists 4 and 5 (see appendix)
- The Blending Memory Aid and Vowel Sound Memory Aid (see appendix)
- Your child's vocabulary list
- Words from a text or book your child has read



Blending Memory Aid
Listen to the sounds
Blend the sounds together
Say the Word

LET'S GO!

What?



We are going to learn about the Magic E Rule and see how it can change the vowel sound in a word.

Why?



This reading strategy is one of the most important strategies when you first learn to read because each vowel makes two sounds, and it is the syllable structure that will tell you which vowel sound to pronounce. When you understand the *Magic E rule*, you know how to pronounce the vowel in the words *mat* and *mate*, and why you spell the word *mat* without a final E and *mate* with it.

When?



At first, you will use this strategy to read and spell words with one syllable, where one letter = one sound. These syllables will be made up of four or five letters, and one of the middle letters is *a*, *e*, *i*, *o* or *u*. There are many such words in English so this strategy will come in very handy. Later, once you can apply the strategy to read and spell four and five letter words, you'll be able to apply it to longer multi-syllable words.

How?



Now that you can read and write words with short vowel sounds, you must learn to read words with **long vowel sounds**.

The first rule for pronouncing long vowel sounds is the *Magic E rule* (or silent-E rule).

This rule says “when you add an E at the end of a word, the E is silent but it makes the vowel say its name”

By adding the silent E, the syllable type changes from CVC to CVCe and that makes the vowel change from a short sound to a long one. You will learn three Magic-E syllable structures: CVCe, CCVCe and CVCe, where C is a consonant and V is a vowel. These are called *Magic E syllables*.

- When you are reading and see an **E** at the end of the word, you will pronounce the name of the vowel like in the words *cake*, *eve*, *kite*, *home* and *cute*. The name of the vowel is called a *long vowel sound*.
- When you are spelling, you must identify the vowel sound in the word. If the vowel says its name, you have to add an E after the final consonant sound.

These 5 long vowel sounds are easiest to isolate. When you use a keyword to confirm the sound you hear. We suggest all keywords start with the targeted vowel sound.

The 5 long vowel sounds and keywords

- /A/as in *ace*
- /E/as in *equals*
- /I/as in *ice*
- /O/as in *open*
- /U/as in *unicorn*.

(See the vowel sound memory aid)



Ask your child to first practise reading 4-letter Magic E words with the CVCe pattern. Once your child can read these words with the correct vowel sound, move on to 5-letter words with the CCVCe pattern, such as *prize*. Finally, when your child is comfortable reading CCVCe words, introduce 5-letter words with the CVCe pattern, such as *paste*.

Here are some examples of questions you could ask your child:

- What do you call a syllable that ends with a consonant + E? → Silent E syllable or Magic E syllable
- What do you call the sound of the vowel in a Silent E syllable? → Long vowel sound
- If you see the letters R-O-B-E, what sound will the letter O make? (O like open) What word does it spell?
- Let's try reading this 4-letter CVCe word. What is the sound of the vowel? Can you repeat the sounds of each letter and blend them together into a word?
- Let's try spelling this 5-letter CCVCe word. What is the sound of the vowel? Can you repeat the sounds of each letter and blend them together into a word?
- Let's try spelling a 5-letter CVCCE word. What is the sound of the vowel? Can you repeat the sounds of each letter and blend together into a word?

Note

- *Start with one vowel at a time, and introduce them in this order: a, i, o, e, u.*
- *If your child confuses the short /i/ sound as in insect and the long /E/ sound as in equals, practise these two sounds by contrasting them orally. You can use pictures or say words aloud and ask your child to identify the vowel sound. For example, you can use pairs or groups of words such as beet/bit, rid/reed, or fill//feel. When working orally, do not worry about spelling—focus only on the sounds.*
- *When reading consonant blends in CCVCe and CVCCE words, some patterns may be harder than others. Pay attention to the word structures that are most difficult for your child and practise those more often.*



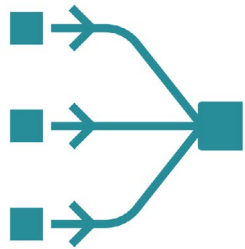
Don't forget!

If your child is confusing two vowel sounds, practise them by comparing simple word pairs aloud. You can use real words such as bit/beet or made-up words such as tif/teef when needed.



Blending Sounds into Words

Listen to the sounds

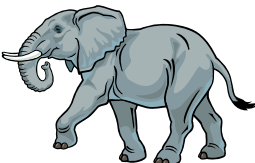


Blend the sounds together



Say the Word

Vowel Sounds

Vowel	Short Sound Keyword	Long Sound Keyword
a	 apple	 ace
e	 elephant	 equal
i	 insect	 ice
o	 octopus	 open
u	 up	 unicorn

Lexie's lessons - Magic E syllables

Lists 4 and 5

LIST 4 (CVCe)		LIST 5 (CCVCe/CVCce)	
/a/ like ace			
made	rake	paste	
same	lame	blame	
fade	safe	waste	
base	tape	crave	
cave	shave	trade	
/e/ like equals			
here	mere	Steve	
eve	theme	complete	
meme	these	concrete	

/i/ like ice

fine	hive	bride
bike	ice	drive
ride	wife	pride
size	side	spike
time	five	twine

/o/ like open

bone	rose	clone
code	home	drove
hole	nose	slope
pose	joke	stone
zone	pole	strobe

/u/ like unicorn

cube	rude	brute
mute	June	fluke
pure	tube	plume
use	dude	flute
cute	rule	prune