

# Learning together

## Understanding New Words Syllable by Syllable

ACTIVITY #6

SEQUENCE: READING STRATEGIES –  
1<sup>ST</sup> CYCLE – PRIMARY

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### Purpose of the activity

As a beginner reader, your child is learning to recognize new words. This activity aims to help them understand the meaning of a text by using different strategies to read words effectively. They will learn to identify words by separating them into syllables.



### Relevance of the activity

Your child is learning letter-sound correspondence to read words, a fundamental process in learning to read and write. At the same time, your child is beginning to develop a mental lexicon of some of the words they often see. Since your child is just beginning to learn to read, breaking words into syllables is an effective strategy for reading new or more complex words.



### Supplies

- Text *Flamie, the Pink Flamingo* broken down into syllables (see Appendix)

**To carry out this activity, you can also use:**

- the texts your child reads at school;
- a book at your child's reading level.



## LET'S GO!

### What?



Today, we will decode words by separating them into syllables to better understand their meaning.

### Why?



To become an effective reader, it is important to recognize words instantly. To do so, you must first use your strategies to read words in syllables and sounds. This allows you to leave a trace of the word in your memory when you read it for the first time.

After several repetitions, you will manage to memorize the sequence of letters in words that you often encounter to form a mental image of the word. But, it takes some time before it becomes automatic. In the meantime, reading words syllable by syllable can help you decode words that you have never seen or that are longer.

### When?



Separating words into syllables is a great tip to help you read words. This is probably one of the strategies you will use most often to decode new words in a text. It can help you when you do not immediately recognize a word.

### How?



Some words may be difficult to understand. We can look at the words in a sentence or at illustrations to help us understand them. However, pictures are not always enough to understand a story. When this happens, you can separate words into syllables.

We are going to read a passage together and then it will be your turn. You will notice that in this version of the text, some words are written in black: these are high-frequency words. The coloured letters show how certain words can be separated into syllables. You may also notice that words are not separated in the same way when we say them out loud as when they are written.

**Here are a few words from the text *Flamie, the Pink Flamingo*. Listen and look:**

- elegant
- feathers
- pretty
- flamingo

Now, let's try to read this passage together, paying close attention to the syllables in the words.

*Take the time to read the text *Flamie, the Pink Flamingo*! with your child.*

As you can see, separating words into syllables can help us read more difficult words.

Since this strategy requires a lot of concentration, make sure you read the sentence again once you are able to recognize all the words. This will help you check:

- **Is the word I read really the word that is written?**
- **Does the word I read make sense in the sentence?**
- **What do I understand from this sentence?**

*You can now practice this strategy with a book that matches your child's reading level.*



### **Don't forget!**

After separating a word into syllables, invite your child to reread the whole sentence from beginning to end. This helps them return to the meaning, because when they put a lot of effort into decoding a word, they can lose track of what they are reading.



## Flamie, the Pink Flamingo!

Do you know **Flamie**? She is a **beautiful** pink bird, who lives in **marshes** and lakes. **Flamie** is **very elegant** with her **pretty feathers** and long, thin legs.

**Flamie** likes to be with **other** pink **flamingos**. **Sometimes**, they band **together** in big groups to eat and rest.

Do you know why **Flamie** is pink? It's **because** of the food that she eats. She eats small **shellfish** that look like **tiny** shrimp.

**Flamie** moves **around easily** in the **water** thanks to her webbed feet. They stop her from **sinking** into the silt and help her to **balance**.

When you see a pink **flamingo** like **Flamie**, take a **moment** to **admire** their **beauty**. Pink **flamingos** are **extraordinary animals**!



Source: Chat GPT

**Reference sheet for the different syllable structures**

There are different syllable structures. In each syllable, there is at least one vowel or a group of letters formed with a vowel.

|                                                     |                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Simple syllables composed of simple sounds:</b>  | <b>dad / dy, la / ter, an / i / mal, Mon / day</b>    |
| <b>Simple syllables composed of complex sounds:</b> | <b>sis / ter, Sat / ur / day, lit / tle</b>           |
| <b>Complex syllables:</b>                           | <b>fin / ish, sim / ple, rich / est, tree / house</b> |