

How to Teach *Pathway to Literacy*

It is necessary for the teacher to understand the phonetic structure of written English, which uses symbols to represent the 42 sounds of the English language. These written symbols do not consist of only single letters — sometimes two or more letters grouped together are used to represent a single sound.

Single letters can represent a sound:

a b c d e

Multiple letters can also represent a sound:

ee ea th sh igh eigh

Any pattern which is regularly used to represent a sound within a word is called a *phonogram*.

Some sounds can be represented by more than one letter combination (phonogram):

a ay ai eigh ei ey and **ea** can all be used to represent the sound 'ay'.

Furthermore, some phonograms can represent more than one sound:

ea says 'ee' in **read**, 'e' in **head** and 'ay' in **great**.

This rather frustrating situation came about because Mr Samuel Johnson, when set the task of writing the first English dictionary with standardised spelling, had two choices. Either he could use a written form in which he chose one letter only to represent each sound, or he could preserve the etymology of each word by using the spelling patterns from the word's original roots. He chose the latter.

This means there are often phonogram choices to be made in English spelling, because in many cases more than one phonogram can represent the same sound. Often the choices can be made on the basis of rules, which explain which phonogram can or cannot be used in a certain position. For example:

c usually says the sound 'k'. But **c** will always say the sound 's' if **e**, **i** or **y** follow it.

city cent cyst cycle circus

From this rule students can deduce that the word **king** cannot be written as **cing**, because **i** would make **c** say 's'. It would also help in spelling the word **necessary**. If a student wrote two **c**'s instead of two **s**'s (**neccesary**) the first **c** would say have to say 'k'. This would sound like 'neck-ses-sary'!

Because some phonograms can say more than one sound, this programme uses a number code to designate which sound that phonogram is saying in a particular word.

For example, **ea** is most frequently sounded as 'ee':

read sea treat grease leaf leak bean feast

The most frequent sound is always the first sound. We do not use the number 1, except in a position where it is unusual for a phonogram to say its first sound.

There are a lesser number of words using **ea** to say the short sound 'e':

head thread dead feather weather heaven

To denote the sound **ea** is saying, the number 2 is placed above **ea** in these words: **e²a**.

Likewise number 3 would be used to denote the sound of **ea** in **great**, **break** and **steak**.

Other markings are used to denote different types of silent e at the end of words, silent letters and syllable breaks. These are explained as the need arises.

Where rules determine which sound a phonogram says in a word, or which phonogram is to be used in a particular position, no number is required. The rule explains the reason for the sound it says. For example, in **necessary** we do not number **c** because **e** next to it determines that it says 'c²' ('s').

Throughout the course, **bold** type is used to denote *written* phonograms and example words, and quotation marks (") are used to denote *sounds*. Generally the first phonogram learned will be used to show the sound. For example:

Silent **e** makes **a** say 'a²' (**mate**).

This Teacher's Manual contains a replica of the Student Workbook on the right side pages. Teacher's notes are listed on the left pages, with T prefixing the student page number.

A teacher who has learnt the sounds of each phonogram well and understands how the rules operate can have excellent success teaching the programme to illiterate or semi-literate people.

Light Educational Ministries offers four-day courses in teaching *Pathway to Literacy*, which are advertised from time to time on our website at www.lem.com.au.

The Learning Strategy

1. The tools for learning to read and spell are taught first. These are the phonograms and the rules, which are introduced gradually at the point where a student has enough prior knowledge to understand and use them.
2. Students begin to use the tools as soon as they have enough of them to begin decoding words (reading) and building words (spelling).
3. One-syllable words are taught first. 'Artificial words' (combinations of phonograms which sound correct but have no meaning) are introduced along with real words, in order to break the 'whole word reflex' (guessing habit).
4. Multi-syllable words are quickly added, to demonstrate how easy it is to read longer words by first breaking them into mono-syllables. The concepts of accented syllables and neutral vowel sounds (the schwa) are also introduced at this stage. The teacher notes explain these concepts and how to deal with them.
5. The programme first focuses on reading skill. But as that skill is being learned a foundation is also being laid for good spelling strategies. Spelling becomes more of a focal point in the latter part of the course.
6. As the course begins to emphasise spelling more heavily, rules are learnt for adding suffixes and prefixes.
7. The Student Workbook exercises and dictation tests provide the opportunity for students to practically apply what they are learning. For students who have little or no reading skills, the reading of the words will start to build their skill and confidence until they are able to read the instructions as well. Those with a higher level of reading skill should be encouraged to practice reading simple material at first, gradually attempting more complex text as confidence and skills grow.

Unit 3: Syllables and Multiple Consonants

Syllables

Understanding the concept of syllables in words is vitally important. It takes the fear out of thinking 'I can't read or spell these long words'. Each phonogram is a unit of sound, and these units of sound can be linked together to make a *syllable*. A syllable is simply a larger unit of sound. Breaking one-syllable words into small units of sound is a foundational principle of deciphering simple words. Following on from this, breaking longer words into syllables is fundamental to the reading and spelling process.

The students may read the syllables in a stilted manner at first. This is good for learning to spell. But in speech, one syllable of a word is usually emphasised. A syllable with the emphasis is the *stressed* or *accented* syllable. The marking for a stressed syllable is shown on the student's page. Help students 'hear' which syllable is stressed as they read the first few words and have them mark the stress as shown. Then let them try to mark the other words by themselves. Go through the words again and help them to read them fluently.

At this stage students should first read a word exactly as it sounds. Then read it again as the word is spoken in rhythm of speech. The first activity is extremely important in the stage where students are phonetically analysing words. It ensures they say the correct sound of every vowel and it helps with spelling. It will also help in the process of reading.

Reading again in the 'rhythm of speech' will help develop fluency.

The vowel in the unstressed syllable will often sound as 'uh', regardless what vowel it is. This neutral vowel sound is called the *schwa*, a German word, but a concept borrowed from the Hebrew language. Our marking for a schwa sound is the number zero (0) above the neutral vowel. For example:

sum-m⁰on gos-s⁰ip

Every syllable must contain a vowel sound, and this vowel sound manifests itself by a drop in the jaw. This can be extremely helpful in analysing syllables, because a clearly spoken word will have one drop of the jaw for each syllable.

Teaching syllables

Say the word **hel-i-cop-ter**, breaking it into syllables. Have students tell you what the word is (saying it normally). Then ask 'What is the first syllable? What is the second?' etc.

Say the word **animal** as normally spoken and ask a student to divide it into syllables (**an-i-mal**). Have all students say it putting their hand under their jaws to feel the downward movement for each syllable. Ask them to tell you how many syllables there are in **animal**.

Do the same for other words such as

continent daffodil help pastel intelligent basket flea certify wallaby pesticide anchor group syllable

Play at saying each other's names in syllables. Have practice at determining on which syllable the stress falls.

1. Have students read the real words and help them to understand where the stress falls.
2.
 - a. Have the students read the artificial words putting equal stress on each syllable and sounding each vowel exactly as it sounds.
 - b. Have the students read the words again, putting the stress on the first syllable.
 - c. Have the students read the words again, putting the stress on the last syllable.

Unit 3

Syllables and Multiple Consonant Phonograms

Syllables

1. Read the normal words below for spelling first. This means you say each syllable with the same strength.

cam-el	med-al	bod-y	hap-py	diz-zy	mel-on
lem-on	av-id	ac-tiv-i-ty	ped-al	bot-tom	ban-quet
lim-it	ben-e-fit	cab-in-et	ed-it	sal-ad	ax-is
ten-nis	at-las	sum-mon	gos-sip	com-mon	but-ton
fam-i-ly	an-i-mal	trum-pet	pel-i-can	sys-tem	pump-kin
jav-e-lin	con-so-nant	gal-ax-y	prob-lem	hos-pi-tal	plan-et
in-fest	con-sent	ex-press	in-tend	con-sist	ex-tend

When we speak normally we say one syllable stronger than the other. The stronger syllable has the stress. Read the words again normally, taking note of which syllable has the stress. Mark the stress on the stronger syllable of each word like this:

`cam-el in-`fest

Usually the vowel in the unstressed syllable cannot be heard clearly. We call this sound the *schwa*. When we hear the schwa sound, we number it with a zero, like this:

cam-⁰el

2. a. The words in this group have no meaning, therefore there is no definite place where the stress must fall. Read the words for spelling first. That means you must emphasise both syllables.

pon-tel	ad-e-lip	fot-tom	rus-trel	fint-a-lic	sym-let
pym-pa-bel	gus-tin	fav-i-lop	pot-a-del	dom-in-ist	pus-ty
kin-da-pal	ran-i-lop	fan-i-ty			

- b. Read the words again, this time putting the stress on the first syllable.
- c. Read the words a third time, putting the stress on the last syllable.

Unit 15: Adding Suffixes

In this lesson we begin learning rules for adding suffixes to words. A suffix may be added to a word to change the tense, part of speech, number or gender, without changing the essential meaning of the word.

Explain what a base word is. Begin with a base word like **help** and ask, 'Are we able to extend the word **help** and still keep the general meaning of 'help' within the word?'

helper helping helped helpless helpful

What is the base word of **action**? Ask students if there is a shorter word which still contains the general meaning of 'action' and solicit the word **act**.

What is the base word of **kitten**? It cannot be **kit**, or **cat** as some students may say. The word **kitten** is the base word, because **kit** has nothing to do with the meaning of **kitten**. Although the word **cat** does have some relationship with the word **kitten**, it has none of the spelling of **kitten** at all so cannot be the base word. Enlarge the Unit 15 wall chart from the back of this book and use it to discuss the possible suffixes which can be added to words. As more suffixes are met in the students' work, record them using the extra spaces.

Suffixes which begin with a Vowel

Suffixes which begin with a consonant

ing		s	
ed		ly	
er		ness	
est		less	
ist		ful	
y		ment	
ous		ship	
ant		some	
ent		graph	

1. Teach students the rule for adding suffixes to words ending in silent **e**:

When adding a suffix to a word ending with silent **e**,
do not use the silent **e**
if the suffix begins with a vowel.

If the suffix begins with a consonant, **e** remains.

Have students add **s** to the words in the first set where it is applicable. These words do not sound correct with **s** added:

have active nice entire sure loose

2. **ly** may be added to these words:

live (explain that **live** can also say 'live', as in **lively**)

love active like nice entire sure loose

The base word will not change because **ly** begins with a consonant.

3. Have students rewrite the words with silent **e** removed, because **ing** begins with a vowel:

having living giving loving serving carving curving coming

riding reserving leaving heaving weaving proving liking

Unit 15

Adding Suffixes

Adding Suffixes to Words Ending in Silent e

1. In the words below, add the suffix **s** where it fits the word. The base word does not change if the ending begins with a consonant.

have___ live___ give___ love___ serve___ carve___
curve___ come___ act-ive___ nerve___ leave___ twinkle___
sleeve___ prove___ grieve___ groove___ like___ nice___
en-tire___ sure___ loose___

2. Pick out the words from above which may have **ly** added and write them on the lines below.

Will the base word change? Give a reason for your answer.

3. Write the words below again, adding the suffix **ing**. Silent **e** must be removed because the ending begins with a vowel.

have	_____	live	_____
give	_____	love	_____
serve	_____	carve	_____
curve	_____	come	_____
ride	_____	reserve	_____
leave	_____	heave	_____
weave	_____	prove	_____
like	_____		

c. The suffix **es**, rather than **s**, is *always* used after **v**.

d. Learn the rule: Note that 'a single **f** means it does not apply to words ending in **ff**.

There are some words in which **f** does not change to **v**. **reefs**, **chiefs** and **gulfs** retain the sound 'f', but the word **roofs** may be pronounced as **roofs** or **rooves** even though the spelling remains as **roofs**. Some words may be written with **f** or **v** for the plural. Have students find the two given words in the dictionary to check which spelling is more commonly used.

e. In the light of the rule and the exceptions given, have students circle the words in which **f** is changed to **v** and **es** added:

cliff **knife** **calf** **roof** **muff** **wolf** **puff**

f. Sometimes the rule is used when changing a noun to a verb form. The verb form will have **v** for other suffixes besides **s**. Have students fill in the spaces: Explain that when changing **proof** to its derivatives one **o** is dropped.

grief	grieve	grieves	grieving	grieved
belief	believe	believes	believing	believed
proof	prove	proves	proving	proved
relief	relieve	relieves	relieving	relieved

d. Learn the rule and its exceptions:

In words ending in a single **f** or **fe**, **f** will often change to **v** if the suffix **es** is added.
Exceptions: roofs reefs chiefs gulfs

Some words may be written with **f** or **v** for the plural.

hoofs — hooves dwarfs — dwarves

e. Circle the words where **f** will change to **v** when we add **es**.

cliff knife calf roof muff wolf puff

f. When the following nouns change to verbs, the same rule applies. Study the changes to the first word, and then fill in the spaces for the other words using the same pattern.

grief	grieve	grieves	grieving	grieved
belief	_____	_____	_____	_____
proof	_____	_____	_____	_____
relief	_____	_____	_____	_____

Unit 26: Rules of Position

1. Review the 'sh' phonograms **ti**, **ci** and **si**.

- a. Read as instructed. **grace** is the base word of **gracious**. **e** is dropped and **c** of the base word joins with **i** and creates the phonogram **ci**.

In the word **electric** **c** says 'c¹', but in **electrician** **c** joins with **i** to create **ci**. Have students isolate the base words from words where it is possible:

grace space face electric music physic(s) politic(s) magic

ci is most often used when the base word ends with **c** or **ce**. Have students underline **ci** in each word, and circle the words with the ending **cian**. Ask students these questions:

What do you notice about words with the ending **cian**? *The words mean 'a person who does what the base word indicates'.*

Do you remember another suffix which means the same? **ist**.

- b. Have students read the words. They may stumble over the syllable in which **ti** or **ci** stand alone. Have them mark the phonograms which stand alone in a syllable. Ask, 'What always follows these words?' *A vowel.*

Explain the rule clearly so they know when to pronounce **ti** or **ci** as 'shi'.

- c. Explain that sometimes **ti** and **ci** are alone in a syllable but a consonant follows. In these cases **ti** and **ci** sound as separate letters. Have students read the words.

2. Review briefly what was taught in Unit 21 regarding **ā**³ and then explain that there are specific places for **a** to say 'ā'³ before two consonants. The chart in the student book for this lesson shows these specific patterns in which **a** usually says 'ā'³ before two consonants. Have students read the words going down each column of the chart.

Notes

- This knowledge is extremely useful to the ESL student for pronunciation, because there are other words where **a** says 'ā'³ when two consonants follow:

snack bank smash ant scalp camp tact hand

Mother tongue English students should be able to tell where **a** says 'ā'³ through context for reading. But the *spelling* rule is most helpful for them:

To spell a word which contains the sound 'ā'³, use **a** (not **ar**) to represent 'ā'³ if you hear two consonants following it.

- All of the words for the patterns **alm**, **aff**, and **alf** are recorded in the chart because there could be confusion in spelling due to other patterns being able to say the same sound. Write on the board **arm**, **charm**, **farm** and **harm**, which rhyme with **palm** and **calm**, but the spelling is not the same in the rhyming part. The group with the lesser number of words must be memorized so the students will spell the remainder of the words with the other pattern.

The same applies to the two sets of words which sound like 'arf'. Two words have **alf**, two have **aff**, plus the words **laugh** and **scarf**. These spellings must be learned.

3. Dictate the following words which give the students practice in applying the above rule. Where students hear the two consonants following, they must write **ar**.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. mark | 2. blast | 3. market | 4. pardon | 5. starve |
| 6. plaster | 7. draft | 8. farmer | 9. pass | 10. part |
| 11. harsh | 12. partner | 13. rasp | 14. glass | 15. barn |
| 16. march | | | | |

Discuss why **a** is used to say 'ā'³ in these words:

blast plaster draft pass past rasp glass

Because we hear two consonants following the sound 'ā'³, we use **a** to represent the sound.

We use **ar** in **march** and **harsh**. Two consonants follow the 'ā'³ sound, but *because they are phonograms* they sound as one sound. The exception to this principle is the phonogram **th**. The words **bath** and **path** use **a** instead of **ar**. In all of the other words **ar** is used to say 'ā'³, because only one consonant follows.

Unit 26

Rules of Position

1. a. Read the following words aloud.

gra-cious vi-cious fer-o-cious spa-cious fa-cial
e-lec-tri-cian mu-si-cian phys-i-cian pol-i-ti-cian ma-gi-cian

- b. Try to read these words.

ne-go-ti-ate ap-pre-ci-ate of-fi-ci-ate as-so-ci-ate

Because **ti** or **ci** is in a syllable on its own, the syllable cannot say just 'sh'. The syllable has a written vowel but it needs to have a sounded vowel too. In the above words we say the sound **i** with the **sh** sound so it sounds like **ne-go-shi-ate**.

Notice that in the above words the first letter in the next syllable is a vowel.

If the first letter in the next syllable is a consonant, **ti** or **ci** are not phonograms. They sound as single letters.

cer-ti-çi-cate ac-ti-çyate par-ti-çi-çate (the small c below stands for consonant)

2. The chart below tells you the patterns where **a** says **ă**. It will be a help to you in learning how to spell words like **palm** and **almond**. Read the words below the line.

ast	ask	aft	alm	ass	asp	aff	alf	ath
cast	ask	craft	alm	brass	clasp	chaff	calf	bath
fast	bask	daft	almond	class		staff	half	path
last	basket	graft	balm	grass				
mast	cask	raft	calm					
master	flask	after	palm					
	mask		psalm					

3. Write down the words your teacher dictates.

1. _____
3. _____
5. _____
7. _____
9. _____
11. _____
13. _____
15. _____

2. _____
4. _____
6. _____
8. _____
10. _____
12. _____
14. _____
16. _____