

Astro Blast

Week of November 7 - 10



Thank you for supporting the prefix initiative. I know that our students are aware of prefixes and know that prefixes will help them to understand meanings of words more easily. Prefixes are a great first step in our focus on literacy. The broader category that prefixes are a part of is Multisyllabic Word Reading. At times, students who can read single-syllable words cannot read multisyllabic words, and this is a skill that is essential to students at the middle school level. With the introduction of prefixes, we are giving students the idea of breaking apart parts of words and determining pronunciation and meaning of words from this. Unfortunately, there are no formulas or procedures that we can present to the students to help them to pronounce multisyllabic words. While we can provide strategies to support students, what students need the most, in this case, is practice.

There are three ways that we can teach students to break apart multisyllabic words – 1) using **syllable types** and division principles, 2) identifying **affixes** or word parts, and 3) using **flexible syllabication** strategies. In the first way of breaking apart multisyllabic words, **syllable types**, students learn six common types of syllables found within English words. To read more about these and to learn how to help students who don't

understand how to pronounce a syllable, look at p. 262 of the handout or within the Sourcebook.

In looking at **affixes**, students use root words, prefixes and suffixes to decode multisyllabic words. Lastly, in the method for **flexible syllabication**, students use a blend of the previous two methods. First, students identify the prefixes and suffixes. Then, students segment the words using vowel sounds to determine syllable parts. Read the section starting on page 272 to see how you can help your students that are having the most trouble with reading even short multisyllabic words.

As we know, we have a large number of students who have low Lexile levels. Last Thursday, thirteen of our staff members met with Hermine Bender to learn about the CORE Phonics Survey. We hope to use this one on one assessment to understand if some of our students read at a higher level than their tests show or to gather detailed information about at what point in decoding our students' reading skills drop. The results from the CORE Phonics Survey will guide us in our classrooms and to provide homogeneous groupings for our students in the coming months.