

Words, Words, Words!

Compound Words

Play Snowball! Have pairs come up with a compound word. One of the children writes the first part on his sheet of blank white paper, and the second child writes the second part of the compound on his sheet of paper. Record the compound words on the board and talk about the ones they made. Have all the kids with the first part of the compound words come to the front of the room and all the kids with the second parts of the compound words to go to the back. They make a ball with their papers and proceed to have a snowball battle. Some teachers only let the kids throw once, but you can keep it going for a while. Then the children pick up one snowball each. Have them silently walk around the room to see if they can find a word to go with theirs to make a compound word.



This activity can be done with any type of matching activity.....colour words and colours, upper and lowercase letters, etc."

Have each child make a pair of mittens and print each half of the compound words on one of the two mittens. Decorate the mitten pairs and hang them on a clothesline on the bulletin board.

A good introduction lesson for compound words that is very visual is using a plate of butter and a picture of a fly. They are two separate words with two separate meanings.... put them together and you get something brand new.... butterfly. Brainstorm a list of compound words, then make a compound word book. You can use large 12 x 18 writing paper, folded like a door, with 2 openings on the front. A word is written on each side of the 'door' like FIRE and MAN, Then inside is the word fireman. The children illustrate each word. It's a good visual exercise.

You can make a game to play where you put the two words of compound words on different cards, then the children have to match up the words that go together to make a compound word

e.g. play mail summer snow sun house ground box house man shine boat
They have to have all of the words matched up to complete the game.

If you give each student a card, they can take the cards around and find another child to make a new word.

This is a game for a small group and used after you have done a lesson on compound words. Make up a set of cards with one word of a compound word written on the card. For

instance one card might have 'base_____'. The first child draws from the pile and gets a point if he can say baseball. You might also play a form of Memory. Make up cards with one word of a compound word written on two cards. As an example, on one card write 'base' and on another 'ball'. For Memory, try to have at least 8 matches or 16 cards.

"After we have generated a list of compound words (with some thrown in by me that will work well with the lesson) each child or you could do a pair sign up for a compound word. Then they take an 18 x 12 piece of construction paper that has been folded for them and illustrate their word with cut construction paper.

The way to fold the construction paper: lay it the long way so that 18" side is towards stomach. Take one of the 12" sides and fold towards the middle until it is 4.5" in, or to the middle. Repeat with other 12" side, so that now it looks like doors.

If the word is cupcake, on one door make a cup out of construction paper, on the other door make a cake with construction paper, then inside the doors make a cupcake and write the word underneath."

"We make a three 'body' part snowman out of white construction paper. The top part is the head and we draw on eyes, carrot nose, etc. Then we draw a picture of the first part of a compound word on the middle section. Example: rain. Then, a picture of a bow is drawn on the bottom section. We then make a TALL top hat for our snowman, out of black construction paper, that can be folded down in a forward fold. Under the fold we print in white pencil the word rainbow. Each student chooses a compound word after we have brainstormed together and have put them all on the board. After everyone is finished, I display the snowmen on the wall in our hallway next to the lunch room. I put up a posterboard explaining the 'game'. The whole school gets involved as the idea is to look at the two pictures on the two body parts and guess the compound word that they represent. Once they have guessed they can flip the fold up on the hat to see if they are right. The snowmen look really cute marching down the hallway in a row."



For compound words, use craft sticks. They are nice and wide and store easily in a coffee can. Write words that they can recognize and put together to make different compound words. Then have sturdy clothespins in the can as well and they can clip the words together to make compound words. Some of the children record them on paper and top kids make sentences with them.

"One game we play for compound words is this: put half of the word on one card and

the other half on another card for each compound word. Pass out the cards until you use them all. The kids try to find their partner and if they do, they bring it to you, tell you what it is, and line it up on the floor, then return to their seat. The kids get different words each time you pass them out."

"We have been working on both compound words and contractions. I use the following representation, 'rather like what happens on the playground sometimes when you might just run to meet up with a friend, hold hands and keep running together or really run into someone and fall down...' My kids loved it! This gives a more graphic representation of the similarities and differences between the 2 types of words."



Contractions

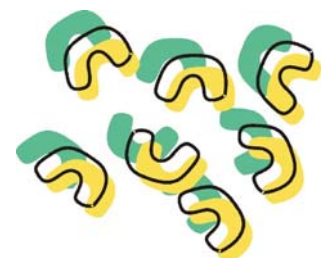
"I teach contractions and compound words at the same time. I explain that sometimes 2 words get joined together. Sometimes, the words get joined together so quickly and fiercely that some of the letters get tossed right out as they crash together. The apostrophe gets put in to mark the place where the missing letters should be. I then explain that at other times, two words come together calmly and slowly and gently 'touch' and no letters get displaced. I do a lot of visuals with the two."

"For contractions, I give the kids big letters making two words (can not). Then we 'squeeze together' pushing an 'n' and the 'o' out and an apostrophe slips in. Kids not playing take turns telling the players what to do."

"To teach contractions, I tell them that all the letters are waiting in line (e.g., can not). Some of the letters went to the bathroom (the n and the o). The apostrophe is holding their place in the line. The kids think it's pretty funny and it seems to stick with them."

"When I teach contractions, I write the words 'is' and 'not' in large letters on the chalkboard and then I blow up a balloon and write the letter 'o' on the balloon. I use the balloon to cover up the 'o'. Last, I pop the balloon and what is left is the apostrophe! The kids get a real 'bang' out of it!"

"For contractions I use this thing called a Contraction Contraption. It's a piece of paper that is slit on the left and right side. I label the left side 'in' and the right side 'out'. Then I cut paper into slips. On the left side of the paper I write the two words that make up the contraction and on the left side the contraction. Then, the kids slide the paper into the Contraction Contraption. What goes in as 'I will' comes out as 'I'll'. The kids really love this and it has worked for me!"



Use elbow macaroni to represent apostrophes.

The Contraction Song

I'm the first word; don't change me!
Don't change me, don't change me.
I'm the first word; don't change me!
Oh, no, just let me be.

When you change the second word,
Second word, second word,
When you change the second word,
A shorter word you'll see.

Certain letters are taken out,
Taken out, taken out.
Certain letters are taken out.
One word will remain.

Apostrophe will fill that space,
Fill that space, fill that space.
Apostrophe will fill that space,
The rest will stay the same.

Can't and couldn't, isn't, too.
Isn't, too, isn't, too,
Won't and I've and let's, it's true,
Contractions every one.

I'm and she's and you're and he'd,
You're and he'd, you're and he'd,
Wouldn't, didn't, we'll and she'd,
Good! And now we're done.

"I make big letters and give one to each child, like c a n n o t. Then I give another child an apostrophe. They have to figure out who goes out and where the apostrophe goes."

"First, we learn that 'to contract' means to get smaller. 'to expand' means to get larger. We contract and expand our arms, legs, mouths, etc. From there, I give each child a piece of paper with the words printed on it, for example, C A N N O T. Draw a dotted vertical line between the two N's and between the O and T. Match the dotted lines, and fold (so the N O don't show - they stick out the back). The students will now have the word CANT. Add a detached glittery apostrophe and you have your contraction. Then we expand and contract and read and have fun."

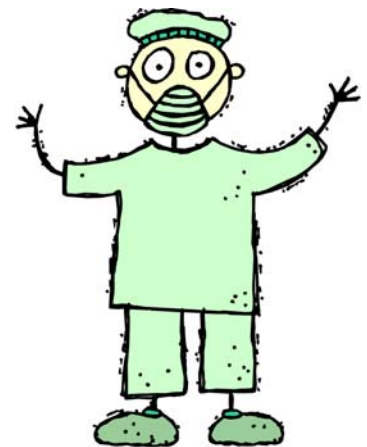
"I always tell my kids that the apostrophe points down to the space where you left out letters. I tell them that it's there to say 'I know, I know! I left out some letters right here!'"

"We talk about 'smooshing' the two words together to make it shorter. They love the word 'smoosh'....."

"We say that we are doctors doing operations! We cut the word apart, take out a part of its body, and then stitch it back together with the apostrophe!"

"I tell my students that they are going to become word surgeons. I even put on rubber gloves like a doctor. Then I cut the words apart and add the scar (apostrophe). They love it!"

Make a book titled *The Contraction Collection*. Make a page for each contraction, print the two original words, and then put the contraction into a sentence and illustrate it.



"Write the two words on a sentence strip. Then you fold the paper so that it makes it turn into the contraction because the extra letters 'disappear' when you fold the strip just so."

"Search for contractions with the see-through highlighter tape. We do a lesson and then I give them the tape and they search through books for contractions. Then they are written on a classroom chart.

I do a little hand movement where I put up one hand (in the 'stop' position) and said 'can' then I put up my other hand and say 'not' then I bring them together and say 'can't!' The hands seem to reinforce the idea that two words turn into one."

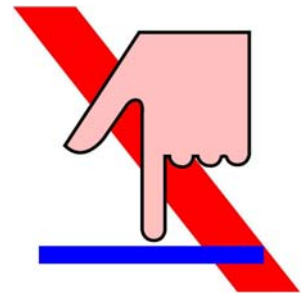
"Write the two words on a sentence strip. Then you fold the paper so that it makes it turn into the contraction because the extra letters 'disappear' when you fold the strip just so. Add a glued on apostrophe."

"The kids love to search for contractions with the see-through highlighter tape. We do a whole lesson and then I give them the tape and they search through books for contractions and we make a master list. I also do a little hand movement where I put up one hand (in the 'stop' position) and said 'can' then I put up my other hand and say 'not' then I bring them together and say 'can't!' The hands seem to reinforce the idea that two words turn into one."

Nouns and Verbs

"You can introduce nouns by having all the children get up and touch something. Have them name the thing they touch. Explain that these are nouns: things you can touch and name. These can be people or animals, places and things.

Verbs can be introduced by having each child do a motion or physical exercise. Make a list of these action words."



"I have two big charts put up, and after teaching nouns and verbs, the students collect pictures from magazines and glue them onto the chart to make a collage."

Noun Town

This would be a great lesson if you are going to be observed! Have a bulletin board ready with green paper. Make roads with adding machine tape, with a dotted line down the centre.

Then.....the town needs PLACES... (houses, stores or mall, school, church, post office, police and fire stations, hospital, banks, etc.

The town needs THINGS... (trees, gardens, signs, park benches, dogs, etc.), etc.)

The town needs PEOPLE... (people in cars, people walking, kids playing in the park, policemen, etc.)

Have the students draw and cut out pictures. Another option would be to have the students cut things from magazines. Put the pictures up, saying for each for example, "The

fireman is a person. The word 'fireman' is a noun!" "This tree is a thing. The word 'tree' is a noun!" Nouns are words that tell about people, places and things.

Put the pictures up as artistically as possible, putting larger pictures at the bottom and smaller ones in the distance at the top. Put things where they might be in a town, like things together.

"We have joined two subjects to make a 'Book of Nouns'. We were studying the school in Social Studies, too, so the children went around the school and took pictures with the digital camera of school people and places and things. We talked about nouns being people and places and things - so the two ideas came together well.

Oh, let's look around
For some naming words
For persons or places or things.
Oh, a noun is a name
Yes, a noun is a name
For a person or a place or a thing.

I 'pasted' the best pictures at the top of computer pages, and made a text box under each picture. Then the children sat by my computer and we decided what to print under each picture, talking about the nouns that we would use. I typed in the words as they told me what to say.... For example, 'This is Ms. Smith. Ms. Smith is the librarian. She works in the library. She helps us find books to read.' Then we talked about the nouns, and made the words 'Ms. Smith' and 'librarian', 'library' and 'books' bold and underlined.

They had pictures of rooms and places like the gym and the bathrooms, and things such as the secretary's desk and gym equipment.

We did this over several days, and they really began to understand what a noun was - and learned about the school, too!"

Verbs

We use verbs like move or hop,
Shake and shimmy, flip and flop.
Clap your hands and stamp your feet,
Snap your fingers to the beat.
Raise your arms and turn around,
Bend your knees and touch the ground.
When you've got a lot to do,
An action verb's the word for you!



Verbs are action words. A verb tells what someone or something does. There are also 'helping verbs': was going, am helping, is running, etc.

We want our students to use verbs that are more expressive of the action. Brainstorm words that we can use other than 'walk', 'said', etc.

Make a bulletin board for verbs. Take your students out to the playground and take digital pictures of each doing some action - run, jump, swing, hang, twirl, sit, stand, etc. Print the picture and have the children write about their action. Or.... they can draw themselves in action....

"I did a bulletin board display with verbs. I took pictures of my students doing things - printing, reading, running, climbing, talking, etc. and printed them - one for each child. Then that child wrote a sentence about what he/she was doing in the picture. 'I am Mary. Mary jumps. Jump is a verb.' I am Peggy. Peggy is printing. Print is a verb.' etc. They took the verb and decorated it separately under the sentence. It made a cute BB display, titled 'Grade Two Verbs'."

Nouns and Verbs

"To teach nouns and verbs I divide the children into groups. Each group has a piece of chart paper with 3 columns. One is labelled people, the next is titled places and the third column is things. Each group gets ten minutes to record all their nouns. Then we go over the lists and they cross out the matches. For each one they had that no other team had they get a point. Then they use the lists and write sentences - the more creative the better!"

"We play cumulative alphabet games. Have a topic - animals, food, etc. The first child gives a noun beginning with a, the second child repeats the a word and gives a noun beginning with b, the third child repeats the a and b words and adds a c noun, etc."

"I had the students make a nouns collage. I gave them a piece of construction paper that had three columns: 'Person, Place, Thing' on it. The students had to find pictures or words to put under each. They enjoyed doing it and looks great in the room. I put them on a bulletin board titled: 'Nouns, Nouns, All Around'."

Allot a certain amount of time for each student to write as many common nouns as they can. These nouns must be located in the room somewhere. Divide students into groups. The group will compile the nouns alphabetically. Students take turns naming their 'A' nouns, etc. This could take a while, but the kids begin discussing nouns especially if someone comes up with abstract nouns (love, trust, etc.).

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The winter is a great time to teach nouns and verbs! Make a collection of nouns: snow, snowman, snowflakes, shovel, skates, skis, toboggan, sled, hill, coat, mitts, scarf, boots, ice, etc.

Grade Ones - and even Kindergarten children - can make a book by putting one word on a page and illustrating it. Older children can write one or more sentences using the noun.

Then collect verbs! snowing, slide/sliding, slip/slipping, skate/skating, ski/skiing, shovel/shoveling, etc. Make another book - for early readers this can be a simple sentence..... 'I can skate.' 'I like to ski.' Older students can discuss the difference between nouns and verbs and the way many of the words can be either things or an action.

One teacher made a winter verb book by giving each student a photo of his/her head with a snowy day hat on, and the child glued it on a paper and then drew the rest of the body doing one of the winter verbs. They made a good display.

Adjectives

Collect adjectives! The things we read and the things we write would be very dull and boring without these words. There are many categories of adjectives. You can put up these headings, and the students can collect words and put them into the right category.

Colours: red, orange, yellow, etc.... and then scarlet, puce, indigo

Size: big, small, little, long, tall, short, heavy..... and then huge, tiny, enormous

How things look: pretty, ugly, interesting, gorgeous, short, tall.....

How things feel: rough, smooth, bumpy, wet, hot, cold, cool, soft, hard.....

How things taste: sweet, sour, spicy....

How things sound: loud, soft, whiny, squeaky, noisy, quiet.....

Feelings: happy, sad, angry, funny, kind....

Qualities: good, better, best, worst, kindest, crabby.....

Age: young, old, ancient, babyish.....

And many more!

"I was teaching my class about adjectives and I taught them the word 'adjective' as well. The next day we reviewed..... I asked who remembered the special word that is for a word that describes..... One girl's answer was 'magictives'! The more I thought about it - the more I loved it."



Adjectives are fun! Talk about a dog you saw in the street without any information about the look of the dog. Then ask the students to write a story about this dog, telling more about it - the size and colour, the length of hair, etc. Every student will be imagining a different dog! Have them underline the single words that tell something about the dog. make a list of them on a chart.

To end the lesson, tell about the actual dog you saw.

Parts of Speech Poem

A noun's the name of anything
Like house, or garden, boat or swing.

Instead of nouns you may prefer
The pronouns you, or I, or her.

Adjectives tell the kind of noun
As great or small or black or brown.

Verbs tell something to be done:
To read or count, sing, laugh or run.

How things are done the adverbs tell
As slowly, quickly, ill or well.

Conjunctions join two words together
As men and women or wind and weather.

Prepositions go before a noun
As in or through or under or around.

An interjection shows surprise
As Oh! How pretty, or Ah! How wise.

Prefixes and Suffixes

"I use three lists of words written on blocks. The prefixes **re**, **un**, and **dis** are written on red blocks, The base or root words **wrap**, **kind**, **play**, **taste**, **harm**, **happy**, **like**, **cheer** go on orange blocks. The suffixes are on yellow blocks: **ness**, **est**, **less**, **ful**, **ly**, **able**. I have the kids put the blocks together that make words, write down all the words they can make, and then we compare the lists made by each group. It is possible to make a three part chain of blocks, unkindest, for example."

Possessives

"I begin by writing sentences/phrases using the children's names in the classroom. This is Danny's book. Here is Melody's Journal. Katelyn's snowflake is on the bulletin board. Then the children write sentences about themselves, using macaroni for the apostrophe. They put these sentences on strips and glue the macaroni on. Then they trade sentences and share."



Homonyms

"We write on pear shapes and put them on our 'pair' tree!"

Homonyms are words which have the same spelling and pronunciation as each other but different meanings and origins. Examples: a ball is round and you can bounce it, and a ball is a dance; a band can make music and a band can be a strip that holds something like a hair band or elastic band, fast can be quick or not eating, pine is a tree or feeling sad, you can stamp your feet or put a stamp on a letter, etc.

Homophones are words which have the same pronunciation as each other but different spellings and meanings. Examples: bear - bare, pair - pear, sail - sale, sea - see, etc.

Homographs are words which are spelt the same as each other but which have a different pronunciation and meaning. Examples: bow, lead, produce, live, etc.

Make up a chart of each of these. Show these or other examples and then see if the students can find more in their reading to add to the charts. (There are also many comprehensive lists on the internet - just Google!)

Recognizing homophones is particularly important because computer 'spell check' programs do not recognize them as spelling errors.

POP is how the weasel goes.
POP means 'in you scoot.'
POP is when you smash a bag
Or firecrackers shoot.
POP is how your toast gets up,
POP is what you drink.
POP is someone's father, too,
But best of all, I think,
Is POPcorn, POPpity--POP-POP-POP,
Filling the POPper right to the top!



Synonyms

Discuss a thesaurus. No, it is not a dinosaur! This is, of course, a book or list of synonyms - words that mean the same or close to the same thing. Have the class make their own thesaurus.

Make a chart titled 'Said is Dead!'. Collect synonyms for the word 'said'. Have the students look for them in their reading and make lists, adding these to your chart. The last time I did this I needed two charts, even though the printing was small. Encourage the students to write stories with conversation, putting in more explicit words instead of 'said'.

Antonyms

"I tell lots of stories about my Auntie Nym. She always gets muddled and says the opposite of what she means. I make up lots of stories, and soon the students know that whatever Auntie Nym says, she means just the opposite. If she says it is cloudy, it is really sunny. If she says it is hot, it will be cold. Once the students are comfortable and understand these opposites, we talk about antonyms."



Syllables

"Have the students put their hand under their chin. Then they say the word. Each time their chin drops down that is a new syllable. The kids really catch on quick. We do Hiaku after they learn."

Word Puzzles

"The children love to do those using their weekly spelling words in the word work centre. We usually do that on Mondays. I use: www.puzzlemaker.com This free on-line program will also do crossword puzzles and mazes."

"We make charts of words for each of the holidays and seasons and for special projects and themes. The students use these words in their writing and recognize them when reading. I try to add words that are not so common to increase their vocabulary. Often I will refer to the chart so that the students become familiar with the words."

"We have a word-of-the-day. This comes from the read-aloud. It is printed on the chalkboard for the day and we applaud anyone who can use that word in regular conversation."

Similes

Often we say that one thing reminds us of something else. The snow fell like feathers from the sky.

He swims like a fish. This is as sour as a lemon. Be as quiet as a mouse.

Have the students brainstorm some, and then put one simile into each story that they write.

Use Good Words Well

You will find many of your children with poor grammatical habits. It is already difficult to change speaking habits, but with practice and daily follow-up we can try to make a difference.

Perhaps the worst grammatical error is 'me and my friend!' You will hear this in sharing time and see it written in Journals.

Print 'Me and my friend went to school.' on the chalkboard. There are two children. What would you say if your friend didn't come? Erase 'and my friend'. What does the sentence say now? 'Me went to school!' That sounds like baby-talk! Act this out with two children and then one and see how silly it sounds. We would say 'I went to school' and if a friend came with you it would only be polite not to push yourself ahead of your friend - you should let the friend go first - 'My friend and I went to school.' Give all your students a chance to roll play and practice saying it correctly. After this, have the children self correct every time you hear the 'me and.....'

Another frequent error is 'gots'. We don't see this written so often, but many children use this word in speech. You could make a sign with 'gots' and 'have' and a big red X through the one that shouldn't be used.

Practice having your students answer oral and/or written questions in complete sentences. We usually begin complete sentences with a person or a thing (or a pronoun standing for a person or thing).

Teach the words for good manners. Many of our kids say, 'What??' if they don't hear or understand. Stop and have them say, "Excuse me, I didn't hear you" or "Pardon me?"

"Give me....." should always be prefaced by 'Please'. Teach "Please may I?" and 'thank you', of course.

Correct the usage of 'good' and 'well' if you have students who misuse them. 'Good' is an adjective and 'well' describes a verb, of course. I do good printing. I can print well. There is an exception - when well means feeling healthy.



Syllabication

If your students understand syllables, it will improve decoding and spelling. Here are some facts about syllabication:

- Syllables are chunks of sound.
- All words have at least one syllable.
- Every syllable contains a vowel - a, e, i, o, u or y. The number of vowel sounds equals the number of syllables.
- Syllables can be just one letter or a group of letters - it's the sound that matters.

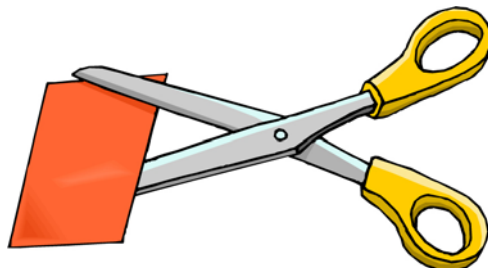
One way to understand what syllables are is to think of a song, like *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. Each syllable is a different beat in the song, Mar - y had a lit - tle lamb.....

In English, one syllable in a word is stressed more than the other syllables:

Tues' - day Sep - tem' - ber

Dividing words into syllables:

1. Consonant blends, diphthongs or digraphs are never separated. tow - el fish - er - man
2. A compound word is divided between the two words. bath - tub
3. When two or more consonants come between two vowel sounds, it is usually divided between the two consonants. but - ter sis - ter
4. If a single consonant is between two vowel sounds, it is usually divided after the consonant if the first vowel has the short sound (a closed syllable). cab - in hab - it
5. If a single consonant is between two vowel sounds, it is usually divided before the consonant if the first vowel is long (an open syllable). ba - con pi - lot
6. When two vowels come together but are sounded separately, the word is divided between these vowels. pat - i - o i - de - a
7. A word with a prefix is divided between the prefix and the root word. un - tie mis - fit
8. A word with a suffix is divided between the root word and the suffix. sad - ly joy - ful
9. When a word ends in consonant 'le' the word is divided before this consonant. bat - tle cud - dle
10. The word ending 'ed' becomes a syllable when preceded by 't' or 'd'. part - ed end - ed
11. 'Tion' and 'ture' are syllables. sta - tion pic - ture



The Schwa Sound

When you are teaching phonics and decoding in *Grade Two* or *Three*, you will meet lots of vowel sounds that do not make the expected sound. To teach the schwa sound, go through these steps:

1. Learn basic syllabication rules and be able to apply them when encoding and decoding.
2. Discuss the stressing of one syllable in a multi-syllable word. Practice on the students' names. Show the stressed syllable with this - ' - placed after the stressed syllable:
Nat' - a - lie Sam - an' - tha
3. Now listen to the vowel sounds in the unstressed syllables. Some will have the accurate sound, but other vowels will have an 'uh' sound. This is called the 'schwa'. It is an indistinct, almost grunting sound!
4. Look in dictionaries to see how it looks in the pronunciation. It is written as an upside down 'e' - ə.

