Common Core Standards and Best Practices

Introduction: The Common Core

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) represent a coherent progression of learning expectations in English language arts and mathematics. They are designed to prepare K-12 students for college and career success.

The English Language Arts (ELA) K-5 standards focus on six strands:

- Three Reading strands – Literature, Informational Text, Foundational Skills
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening, and
- Language.

Because the Reading standards for Literature and for Informational Text place equal emphasis on the sophistication of what students read and the skill with which they read, they speak to the importance of all students having ownership of the Reading: Foundational Skills strand.

Phonics and Word Study skills are fundamental to becoming a proficient reader. Teachers need to understand the connection between and among four processors:

- orthographic (letters),
- phonological (sounds),
- semantic (word meaning), and
- context (reference for the word meaning).

Teachers should refer to Appendix A that accompanies the CC-ELA standards to enhance and guide their work with the Reading: Foundational Skills strand of the Common Core English Language Arts standards. When teachers increase their understanding of phonology and morphology they are better able to build their students’ understanding of the English language.
CCSS-ELA Reading: Foundational Skills – Phonics and Word Recognition

Grade 3
Phonics and Word Recognition
3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
   a. Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and derivational suffixes.
   b. Decode words and common Latin suffixes.
   c. Decode multisyllable words.

Language
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
   b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat)
   c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion)

Why Teach Advanced Word-Analysis Skills?
We often think of Grade 3 as being the year that students move from “learning to read” to “reading to learn”. Advanced word analysis skills support fluency and comprehension. All students benefit from strategy instruction to decode words containing more complex combinations of letters and a growing number of unfamiliar multisyllable words across all content areas. Advanced students need knowledge of such strategies even though they rarely require reteaching or additional practice. Students who have yet to meet “strong” proficient levels of reading at grade level need additional teaching and practice of these strategies:
   1. Identifying known parts within unfamiliar words, and
   2. Applying knowledge of syllable types and syllable division rules.
Direct Instruction

Utilizing Direct Instruction ensures that students will get the support they need to “own” new skills and concepts. The table below outlines the process used in direct instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Explains Task</th>
<th>Discuss How and When the Skill is to be Used – Involve students in a conversation concerning why the skill should be learned and applied in their lives.</th>
<th>Explain and Demonstrate the Skill – Use simple yet accurate academic terms to move students to mastery.</th>
<th>Engage Every Student – Provide students with ongoing opportunities to ask questions. Carefully monitor students’ accurate use of all academic and content specific terms. Focus on higher order questions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Models Task (I do)</td>
<td>The Teacher (I do) - Model the new strategy explicitly (work to see the strategy from your students’ current background) and let your students see you use the strategy throughout the day, with lots of “I do it” on the part of the teacher. Students have to be actively engaged throughout the lesson, even when the teacher is “doing”—make sure they are NOT passive listeners. Engage them verbally and through response cards: yes/no cards, stop/go cards. Keep an ongoing list of how you keep your students actively involved throughout the lesson; this serves as a “reality check” to make sure students are kept actively engaged/involved, and also provides a quick-reference for effective methods you have used with your students.</td>
<td>Explain and Demonstrate the Skill – Use simple yet accurate academic terms to move students to mastery. “Think Aloud” procedures are most helpful. In a “Think Aloud,” the teacher models the thought processes that take place when difficult or unfamiliar material is read aloud. Teachers verbalize their thoughts as they read orally to students. The purpose is to assist students’ comprehension as they gain insight to how the mind can respond to what is known with what is being read. Work to increase the complexity of your examples and student work until the work is at grade-level or beyond. Move students to doing their own “Think Aloud.”</td>
<td>Engage Every Student – Provide students with ongoing opportunities to ask questions. Carefully monitor students’ accurate use of all academic and content specific terms. Focus on higher order questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher and Student Practice Task Together (we do)</td>
<td><strong>Engage Every Student</strong> – Invite volunteers to attempt the strategy on their own. Give corrective feedback as needed, allowing for follow-up questions. All feedback (including praise) needs to be specific. Carefully monitor students’ accurate use of all academic and content specific terms. Provide students with ongoing opportunities to ask questions. Focus on higher order questions.</td>
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</table>
| Student Practice (you do) | **Access Student Ownership** – After many “I do it” and “we do it” examples, ease into “you do it” opportunities under your careful eye. Applying new learning accurately is crucial to future success. Student responses should give you a clear picture of their level of understanding and level of application.  
**Engage Every Student** – Provide students with ongoing opportunities to ask questions. Invite volunteers to attempt the strategy on their own. Give corrective feedback as needed, allowing for follow-up questions. All feedback (including praise) needs to be specific. Carefully monitor students’ accurate use of all academic and content specific terms. Focus on higher order questions.  
**Constructive Feedback** – Remember to begin with less complex examples with the goal of moving to grade level and above examples. Students may work independently, in pairs and or small groups. This is the perfect time for students to verbally state each step of the strategy, while giving their reason for the choices they are making. |
| Scaffolding/Constructive Feedback | **Constructive Feedback** – Remember to begin with less complex examples with the goal of moving to grade level and above examples. Students may work independently, in pairs and or small groups. This is the perfect time for students to verbally state each step of the strategy, while giving their reason for the choices they are making.  
**Scaffolding and Differentiation** – At this time the teacher will need to provide additional opportunities for student practice (with immediate feedback and reteaching—with possible accommodations) to ensure all students have every opportunity to learn.  
**Engage Every Student** – Provide students with ongoing opportunities to ask questions. Give corrective feedback as needed, allowing for follow-up questions. All feedback (including praise) needs to be specific. Carefully monitor students’ accurate use of all academic and content specific terms. Focus on higher order questions. |
Advanced Word Analysis Skills: Identifying Known Parts within Unfamiliar Words

Guide students to identify known prefixes, suffixes, and/or base words.

- Students should cover up any known prefixes or suffixes and focus on what they think is a base word.
- Pronounce known parts and then apply decoding skills to unfamiliar parts of the word.
- Reread the sentence in which the word is used. Reread the sentence before and after.

Advanced Word Analysis Skills: Affixes

Prefixes

- A prefix is a group of letters added to the beginning (front) of a word, which affects the meaning of the base word.
- Many prefixes have multiple meanings. “Un” may mean “not” as in the word uncooked—meaning not cooked. It can also mean “do the opposite of” as in unlock.
- If you think a word has a prefix, you can always remove what looks like a prefix and check to see if what remains is a real word. Example: remove “un” from the word “uncle” and you do not have a recognizable base word—“cle”.

Prefixes to teach formally in the primary grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>prefix</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>un-</td>
<td>opposite of, not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il-, im-, in-, ir-</td>
<td>not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>em-, en-</td>
<td>cause to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>im-, in-</td>
<td>in or into</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mis-</td>
<td>wrongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre-</td>
<td>before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fore-</td>
<td>before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans-</td>
<td>across</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semi-</td>
<td>half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid-</td>
<td>middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>re-</td>
<td>again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dis-</td>
<td>opposite of, not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-</td>
<td>not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over-</td>
<td>too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sub-</td>
<td>under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter-</td>
<td>among, between</td>
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<tr>
<td>de-</td>
<td>opposite of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>super-</td>
<td>above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-</td>
<td>against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under-</td>
<td>too little</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To add a prefix to a base word:

- Join a prefix and a word without changing the spelling of the prefix or the word.
  Examples:
  - dis + appear = disappear
  - mis + spell = misspell
  - re + turn = return

Suffixes

- A suffix is a letter or group of letters placed at the end of a word to make a new word.
  There are two types of suffixes:
  - Inflectional (grammatical): for example, changing a singular plural (girl to girls), or changing present tense to past tense (jump to jumped). The basic meaning of the word does not change.
  - Derivational (the new word takes on a new meaning), “derived” from the original word: for example, learn to learner, joy to joyful.

Suffixes to teach formally in the primary grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>suffix</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-s, -es</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ing</td>
<td>verb form/present participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er, -or</td>
<td>person connected with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ible, -able</td>
<td>can be done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y</td>
<td>characterized by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ity, -ty</td>
<td>state of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ic</td>
<td>having characteristics of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-en</td>
<td>made of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ive, -ative, -itive</td>
<td>adjective form of a noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-less</td>
<td>without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ed</td>
<td>past-tense verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ly</td>
<td>characteristic of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition</td>
<td>act, process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-al, -ial</td>
<td>having characteristics of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ness</td>
<td>state of, condition of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ment</td>
<td>action or process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ous, -eous, -ious</td>
<td>possessing the qualities of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er</td>
<td>comparative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ful</td>
<td>full of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-est</td>
<td>comparative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To add a suffix to a base word:

- Usually join a word and a suffix without changing the spelling of the word or the suffix.
  
  **Examples:**
  - cheer + ful = cheerful
  - usual + ly = usually

- When a word ends with a short vowel sound and a single consonant, double the final consonant.
  
  **Examples:**
  - shop + p + ed = shopped
  - swim + m + ing = swimming

- When a word ends in silent –e, drop the –e if . . . the suffix begins with a vowel.
  
  **Examples:**
  - skate – e + ing = skating
  - hope – e + ing = hoping

- When a word ends in silent –e, keep the –e if . . . the suffix begins with a consonant.
  
  **Examples:**
  - love + able = lovable
  - love + less = loveless
  - hope + ful = hopeful

- When a word ends in ‘ce’ or ‘ge’, keep the –e if . . . the suffix begins with ‘a’ or ‘o’.
  
  **Examples:**
  - notice + able = noticeable
  - change + able = changeable

- When a word ends with ‘y’ change the ‘y’ to ‘i’ except when the suffix is ‘ing’.
  
  **Examples:**
  - baby = babies
  - easy = easiest
  - dry = drying

- When a word ends with a vowel before the ‘y’ . . . keep the ‘y’.
  
  **Examples:**
  - play = plays
  - play = playing
  - enjoy = enjoyed

**Practice Activity for Prefixes and Suffixes**

Prefix and Suffix Detective:

Students can search for words with prefixes and suffixes in all content area texts. Working in small groups, students can discuss changes in spelling to the base word and changes in meaning. Building word consciousness should always be a focus.
Basic Syllable Patterns

- **Closed** – Most common spelling unit in the English language; it accounts for approximately 50 percent of the syllables in connected text. Closed syllables have one vowel closed in by one or more consonants—the vowel is “short.”
  
  Examples: hat, shop, sad, mag-net bed, fish, at

- **Vowel-Consonant-e** – The final e in a vowel-consonant-e (VCe) syllable makes the vowel “long.”
  
  Examples: lake, complete, time, same, invite

- **Open** – Contains a vowel at the end of the syllable. The vowel is usually “long.”
  
  Examples: he, she, me, hi, va-ca-tion, so ba-by

- **Vowel Pair** – Also known as a vowel team or vowel digraph—vowel pair syllables have two adjacent vowels. Diphthongs ou/ow and oi/oy are included in this syllable pattern.
  
  Examples: rain, meat, sail-boat, pause

- **Consonant-le** – Also known as the stable final syllable—syllable ending in –le is usually preceded by a consonant that is part of that syllable. This final syllable is unaccented—contains a consonant before the /l/, followed by a silent e.
  
  Examples: can-dle, tum-ble, strug-gle

- **-r Controlled**—A vowel-r syllable is a vowel followed by r (or, ar, er, ir, ur)
  
  Examples: far, part, fern, per-form, mir-ror, purse

- **Odd and Schwa Syllables**—Are usually described as final, unaccented syllables with “odd” spellings.
  
  Examples: man-age, sta-tion
Rules for Dividing Syllables

- **Each syllable contains a vowel sound.** All English syllables have a vowel sound with the exception of “thm” as in rhythm and algorithm. When dividing a word into syllables, vowel teams stay together.
  Examples: ai, ay, ea, ee, oa, ow, oo, oi, oy, ou, ie, ei

- **Divide between two middle consonants.**
  Examples: hap/pen, bas/ket, bet/ter, des/sert, sup/per.
  Note: NEVER split up consonant digraphs, because they represent one sound; /th/, /sh/, /ph/, /ch/, /wh/

- **Usually divide before a single middle consonant.**
  Examples: ‘o/pen”, “i/tem”, ‘e/vil”, “re/port”.
  Exceptions are those times when the first syllable has an obvious short sound, as in “cab/in”.

- **Divide before the consonant before the “-le” syllable**
  Examples: ble, gle, ple, as in ta/ble, bu/gle, pur/ple. The only exception is “ckle” words like tick/le

- **Three-letter blends stay together.**
  Example: con/struct

- **Prefixes and suffixes are separate syllables.**
  Examples: un/hap/py, hope/less, farm/er, re/turn
References


