



Word Solving and Building

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Word solving is the analysis of words when reading, in which a young reader pauses to investigate an unfamiliar word and then attempts to problem-solve. Word building involves the construction of words in spelling. Learning by analogy is the most practical way for students to learn to solve and build words. This methodology is effective because the brain has strengths in discovering patterns. For example, when spelling the word "stand", a writer may think of a meaning association and recognize the beginning of the word is like "stay" and then realize the last part has the rime "and". This constant generation of analogies helps students work out words in reading and spelling. Learning word patterns makes sense because students learn these chunks of letter-sound information more readily and can transfer them by analogy to work out new words.

Building Words Lessons — An Active Way to Engage Students

The Building Words lessons can be found in the *Working with Words Guide*. Each lesson stems from a Shared Reading context and incorporates a "key word" or "mystery word" from the Shared Reading selection. The lessons are written in a series of four parts: **Building Words, Word Pattern Sorts, Transfer to Reading and Writing and Adding Words to the Patterns**. Each lesson takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. You may want to include one of the lessons as part of your Shared Reading time or you may schedule a Working with Words session into your literacy block.

The Building Words lessons are written in summary form. They provide the basic information required to complete the activity with word patterns and examples. To become familiar with the lesson format, read the **demonstration lesson** found in the *Working with Words Guide*. It provides step-by-step directions for each activity, a detailed listing of materials required, and teaching tips. Once you and your students try this lesson, you will understand the techniques used in the summary versions. If you are a Kindergarten or Grade 1 teacher, you may want to delay the use of Building Words lessons and focus on phonological and phonemic awareness activities. Young students need to develop awareness of letters and of the rhythm and sounds of the language before they can benefit from instruction using visual-sound patterns to read and spell words.

Materials Required

You will need to create student and teacher letter cards for Building Words lessons. There are BLMs for this purpose in the *Working with Words Guide*. Photocopy the pages back-to-back on card stock, then cut and laminate the copied cards. Vowels (plus "y") should be on coloured card stock and consonants on white. For a class of 25 to 30 students, you will require about 120 of each vowel and about 90 of each consonant. For the teacher's cards, create three or four of each vowel and three of each consonant.

Word cards pertinent to each Building Words lesson can be accessed through the LPEY website (www.lpeyresources.ca). During the lessons, you will display the word cards as students build the words. This enables students to confirm spellings and a visual list of words provides discussion about patterns. You may find a pocket chart helpful in displaying the words.

For the Word Pattern Sorts, you will need to prepare cards of words created during Building Words. You might want to type the words onto a grid and then photocopy the sheets onto card stock. The words can be cut apart and stored in individual baggies. Students manipulate the cards and sort them into their own categories and then specific categories suggested by you.

The Transfer to Reading and Writing lessons involve students in reading sentences and determining the helpful pattern and then using appropriate patterns to spell words. You can write the sentences on chart paper, sentence strips, or on an interactive whiteboard. Identified words can be written on word cards and then added to the lists of words in the pattern sorts. For further information on Building Words lessons, see your *Working with Words Guide*.

If you have a question you would like answered, please email your request to: workshops@scholastic.ca.