



Session 2:
Morphology (Part 1)
*MS/HS Literacy Teacher Professional
Development Series*

Today's Objective

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- ★ understand how morphology impacts fluency, spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.
- ★ determine where morphology-based activities fit into lessons.

Morphology and How it Applies to Middle and High School

- Morphology is defined as a system of units of meaning in words (Sedita, 2020).
- Morphemes consist of a base and affixes (prefixes and suffixes).
- Teachers at the secondary level are not often equipped to remediate reading, but developing knowledge around morphology can help with reading fluency and vocabulary comprehension so that students read and understand their content area texts better.

Morphemes

- Morphemes are the smallest units of meaning. Some words have one morpheme (play, show, build) and others have multiple morphemes (reconstructing, deconstruction).
- Morphemes provide students with numerous strategies for decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) as well as enhancing vocabulary. As children learn the common prefixes, suffixes, and Latin and Greek bases, they gain new understanding of these meaning-based building blocks in English words (Henry, 2017).

SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE

(2001)

Morphemes play a role in both the upper and lower strands of Scarborough's Reading Rope

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
(facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

LITERACY KNOWLEDGE
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

DECODING
(alphabetic principle,
spelling-sound correspondences)

SIGHT RECOGNITION
(of familiar words)

THE MANY
STRANDS
WOVEN INTO
SKILLED
READING

INCREASINGLY STRATEGIC

INCREASINGLY AUTOMATIC

SKILLED
READING

Fluent execution
and coordination of
word recognition and
text comprehension.



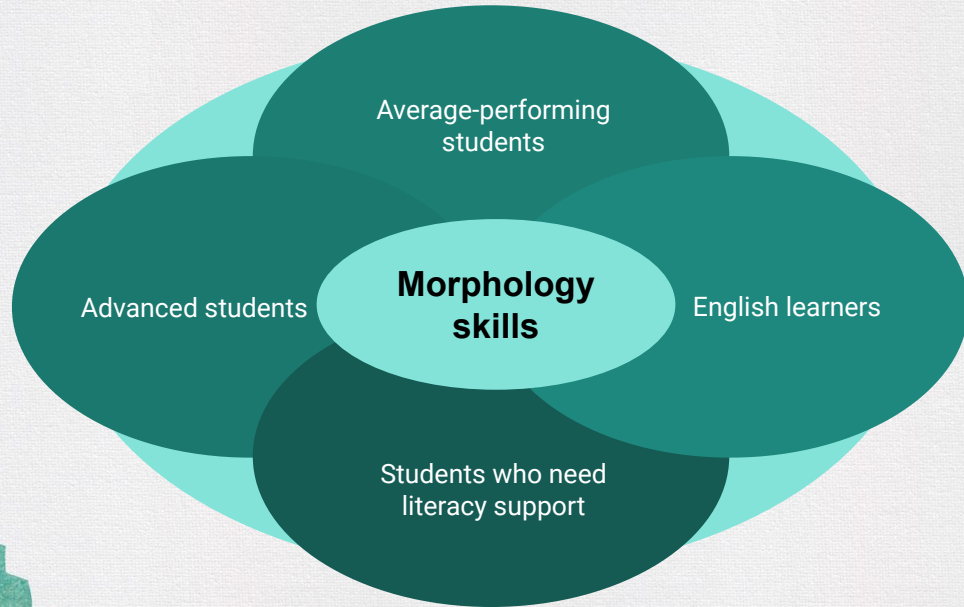
Teaching Morphological Awareness

- The English language consists of over a million words. As students begin to encounter unfamiliar words in text books and literature, they will be required to make inferences about word meaning based on analysis of the word's morphological structure and context (Henry, 2007).
- By age ten, morphological awareness is a better predictor of decoding ability than phonological awareness (Mann & Singson, 2003).
- There are twelve common Latin and Greek base elements that offer semantic clues to the meanings of approximately 100,000 words (Henry, 2007).

The Importance of Teaching Morphological Awareness

- It improves the following areas:
 - vocabulary comprehension
 - reading aloud
 - spelling
 - phonological awareness: builds up awareness of speech sounds
 - reading comprehension

All Students Benefit from Morphology Instruction



How to Teach Morphology

- Determine which morphemes are best for you to teach.
 - Start with a brief introduction on the most popular prefixes and suffixes to ensure students understand the most common meanings and high frequency words. Branch out to Latin and Greek roots for the demands of secondary content area: math, science, social studies.
- Morphology has to be taught explicitly in order for it to be effective:
 - teacher provides a means to help students define the base or affix
 - students have guided practice with the words

Morphemes to Teach

- When introducing morphemes for the first time, start with commonly used morphemes.
- Explain to students why they are studying morphemes and what it will do for their progress in your class.
- Once morphemes are introduced, choose morphemes that are most common to your content area and relevant to your unit of study or chapter. (Be sure to consult your curriculum to determine if there is already morphology embedded.)

18 Common Latin Base Elements

Root Spellings	Meanings
form	to shape
port	to carry
rupt	to break or burst
tract	to draw or pull
scrib, script	to write
spect	to see, watch, or observe
struct	to build
flect, flex	to bend or curve
dict	to say or tell
fer	to bear or yield
mit, miss	to send
duce, duct	to lead
vers, vert	to turn
fact, fect, fict	to make or do
tend, tens, tent	to stretch or strain
ceipt, ceive, cept	to take or catch
tain, ten, tin	to hold
pos, pound	to put in place or set

Source: Henry, 2007

Most Common Greek Base Elements

Form Spellings	Meanings	Form Spellings	Meanings
phon, phono	sound	scope	watch or see
photo	light	metro	city or measure
gram, graph	written or drawn	dem, demo	people
meter, metr	measure	geo	earth
tele	distant	techn	skill or art
bio	life	chron, chrono	time
micro	small	psych	mind or soul
hydra, hydro	water	auto	self
therm, thermo	heat or hot	logy, ology	study of
cracy, crat	rule	sphere	circle

Source: Henry, 2007

Other Morphemes to Teach

- [Most Common Affixes](#)
- [Prefix, Suffix, and Root by Grade Level](#)
- [Common Suffixes, Common Greek and Latin Roots, and Common Numerical Prefixes](#) (Create a free login. Click on Templates and Printables and then Vocabulary.)
- One of the best places to pull from is your unit or chapter and use the morphemes that are currently relevant to your study. Your curriculum may already have morphology embedded. This is a great place to start.

Activities to Integrate with the Morphemes

- provide definitions and examples
- word family maps (word matrix)
- word sums
- find the roots
- fix the affix
- word sort
- building blocks
- syllabifying the “big words”

When to Teach Morphology

- when introducing a unit or chapter as a pre-work activity
- practice of already learned roots and affixes can occur:
 - as a warm-up activity before a lesson
 - as an early finisher
 - for reinforcement

**Initial instruction of the morphemes should be direct teaching.

Final Thoughts

- Morphology instruction can be used to increase fluency, spelling, expand vocabulary, and reading comprehension.
- A few minutes of targeted, direct instruction from teachers can help students become more proficient within the content areas.



Engage



The next session will go into more detail about the kinds of activities that can be done to engage students in morphology.

In the meantime, where do you see this fitting into your instruction?

Question or Suggestions?

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