



Foundational Principles of English Reading: Applications to Adult English Learners

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Adult Training and Development Network (ATDN)
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Today, we'll cover:

- 01 Simple View of Reading
- 02 Phonological Awareness
- 03 Teaching Vowel Sounds: Minimal Pairs
- 04 Teaching Phonics to Adults



The Simple View of Reading



Ability to apply
sound-symbol
relationships to read
words

Ability to
understand spoken
language

Ability to read and
obtain meaning
from what was read

bread, read (past tense), earth

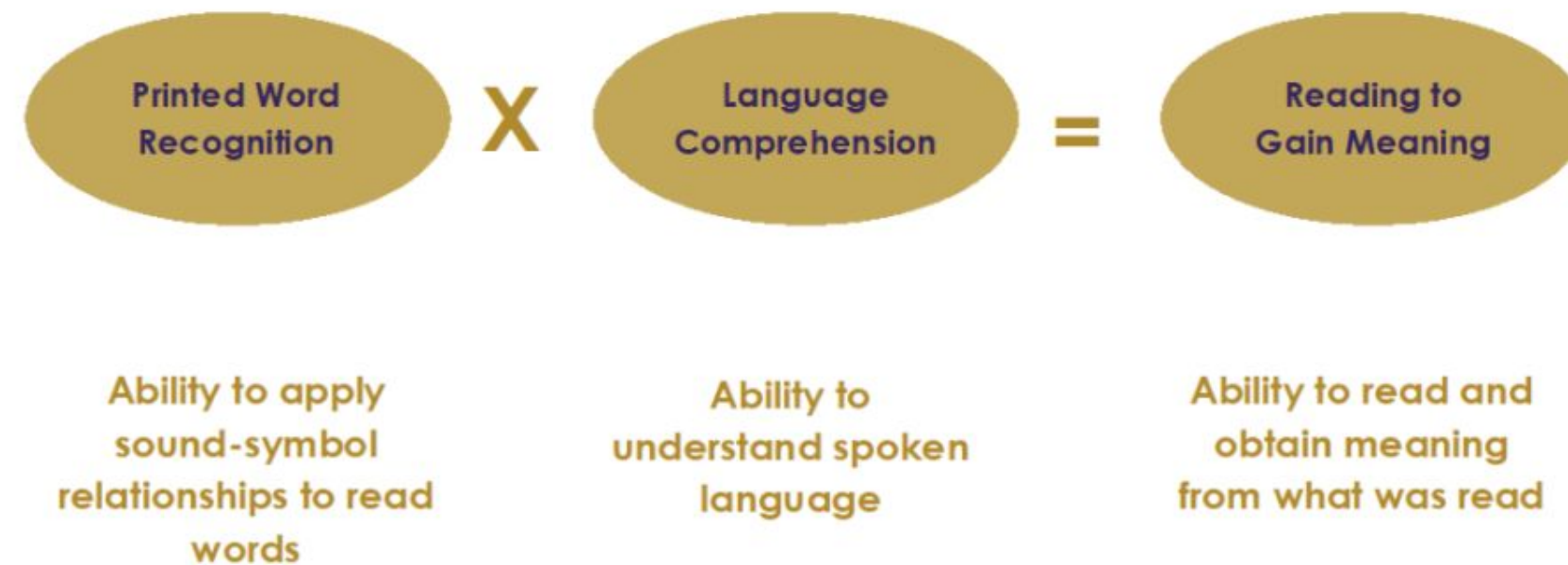
Vowel team “ea”



bread

A proficient English speaker knows that “bread” can’t be read as “breed” or “birth” because they **know** that it doesn’t sound right

The Simple View of Reading



Gough and Tunmer 1986; Hoover and Gough 1990

Анастасия

Printed Word
Recognition

X

Language
Comprehension

=

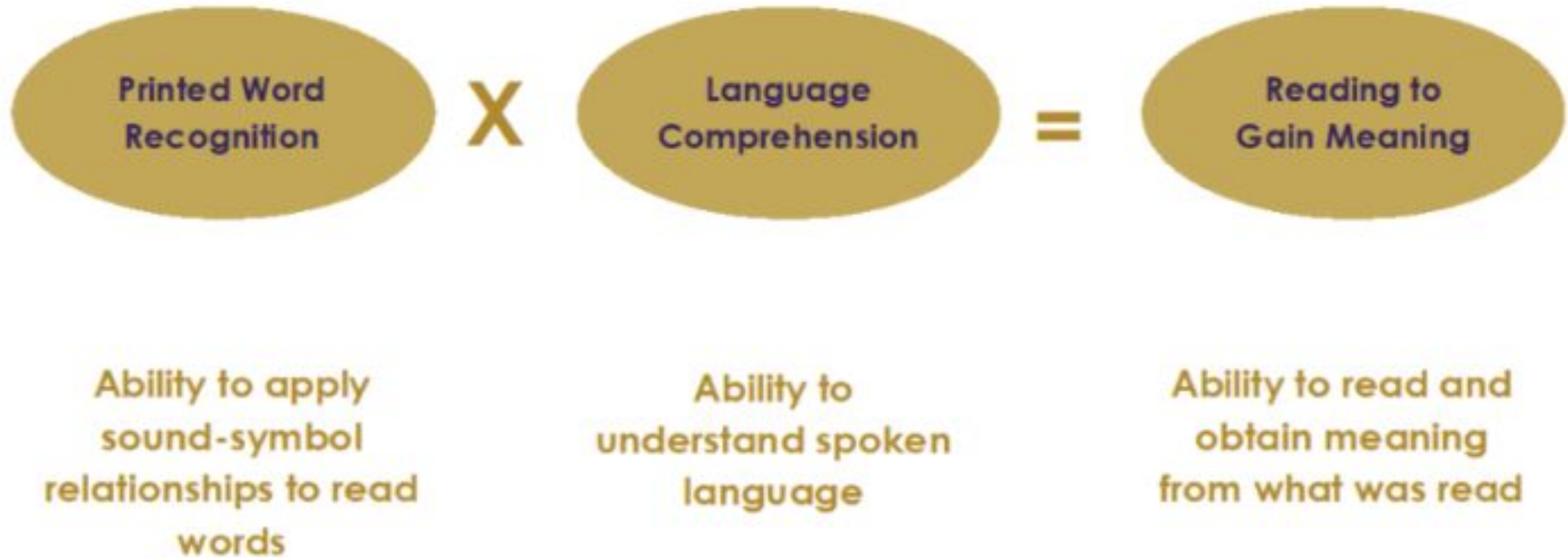
Reading to
Gain Meaning

Ability to apply
sound-symbol
relationships to read
words

Ability to
understand spoken
language

Ability to read and
obtain meaning
from what was read

МОМИЧЕ



SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE (2001)

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
(facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

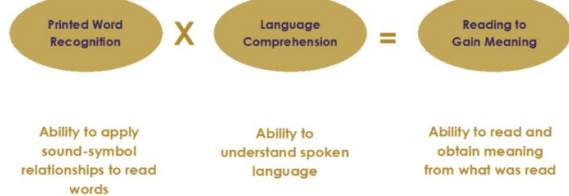
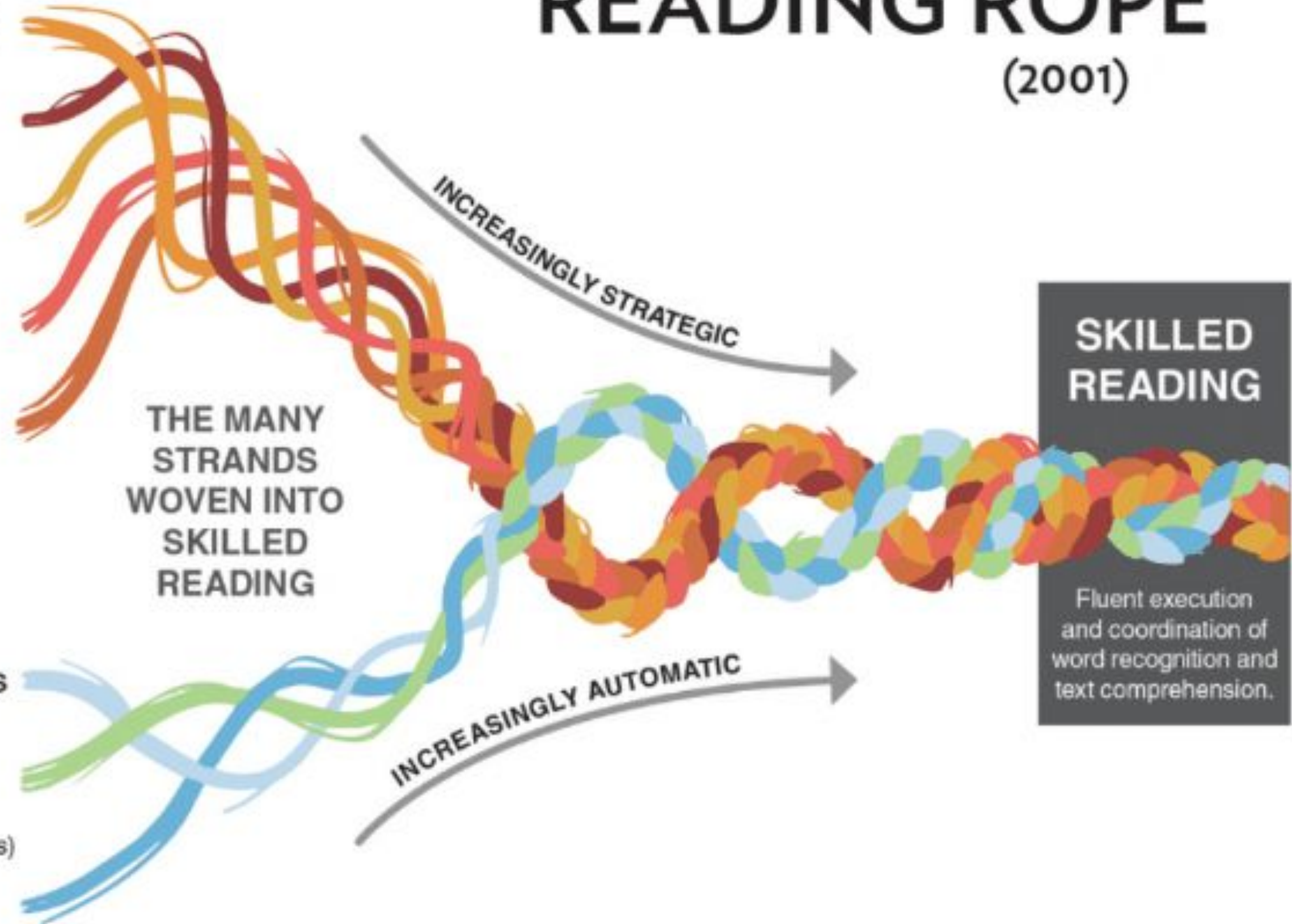
LITERACY KNOWLEDGE
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

DECODING
(alphabetic principle,
spelling–sound correspondences)

SIGHT RECOGNITION
(of familiar words)



What is the main precursor to learn to read?

the ability to understand
SPOKEN
LANGUAGE

Awareness of oral language



How do we get to
understand oral language?

Phonological Awareness

*Prerequisite to phonological awareness is **basic listening skill**; the **acquisition of a several-thousand word vocabulary**; the **ability to imitate and produce basic sentence structures**; and **the use of language to express needs, react to others, comment on experience, and understand what others intend** (Moats & Tolman, 2009)*



Phonological Awareness: Basic Listening Skills

Alliterations

**Rhyme
recognition**

**Syllable
awareness**

**Onset-Rime
awareness**

**Phoneme (or
phonemic)
awareness**

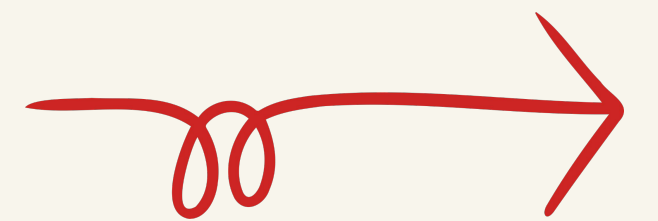


**Remember
this is all
oral
language!**

Alliterations	“practice promotes progress” “healthy habits help happiness” “kindness keeps kindness growing”
Rhyme recognition	What word rhymes with think? drink - bank - town
Syllable awareness	How many syllables in the words “coffee”, “banana”, and “student”? co-ffe ba-na-na stu-dent
Onset-Rime awareness	p-et s-et l-et j-et
Phonemic awareness	Phoneme isolation: What’s the first sound in the word “card” Phoneme blending: Say /b/ /a/ /t/. Put the sounds together (/bat/) Phoneme segmentation: Say “same”. Say each sound in “same” (/s/ /ey/ /m/ Phoneme manipulation: Sound replacement, addition, and deletion Say “same”. Change the sound /ey/ for /ow/. Say “at”. Add /p/ at the beginning. Say “tame”. Take away /t/



Let's use AI to help us build PA lessons!





1

Go to ChatGPT or your preferred AI

Prompt example:

Create a lesson that teaches the following phonological awareness skills in this order: alliterations, rhymes, syllable awareness, onset rime awareness and phoneme deletion

2

Keep prompting the chat bot

Example:

Use words across the exercises that are relevant for when an adult moves to a new country

3

Look for errors or poorly designed examples!

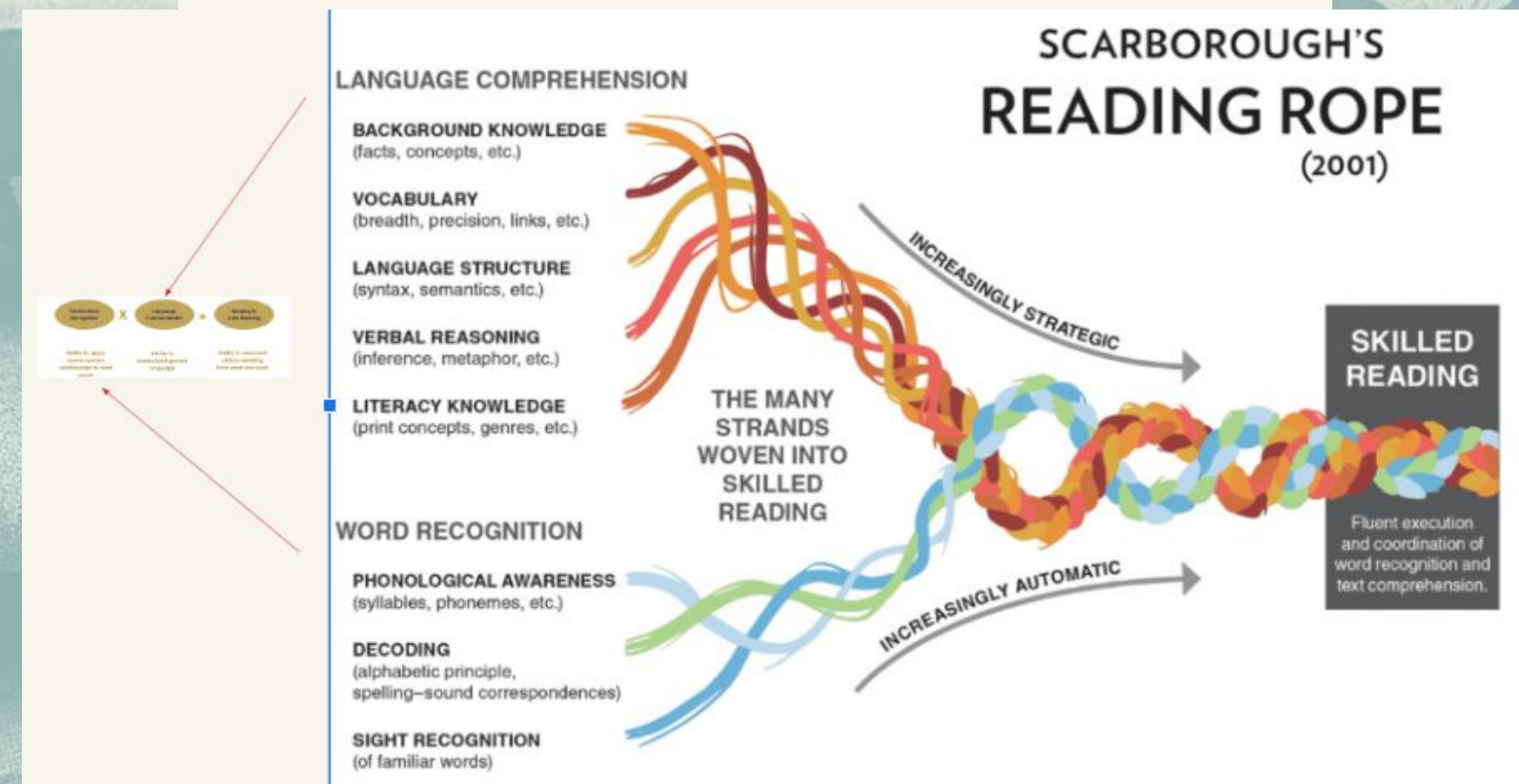
Example:

Alliteration provided by ChatGPT:

"Sam shops for shoes"

PA is great!
But your
students need to
learn a lot
more!

It's critical that
you dedicate time
in each lesson to
develop all the
skills needed to
learn to read.



SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE (2001)

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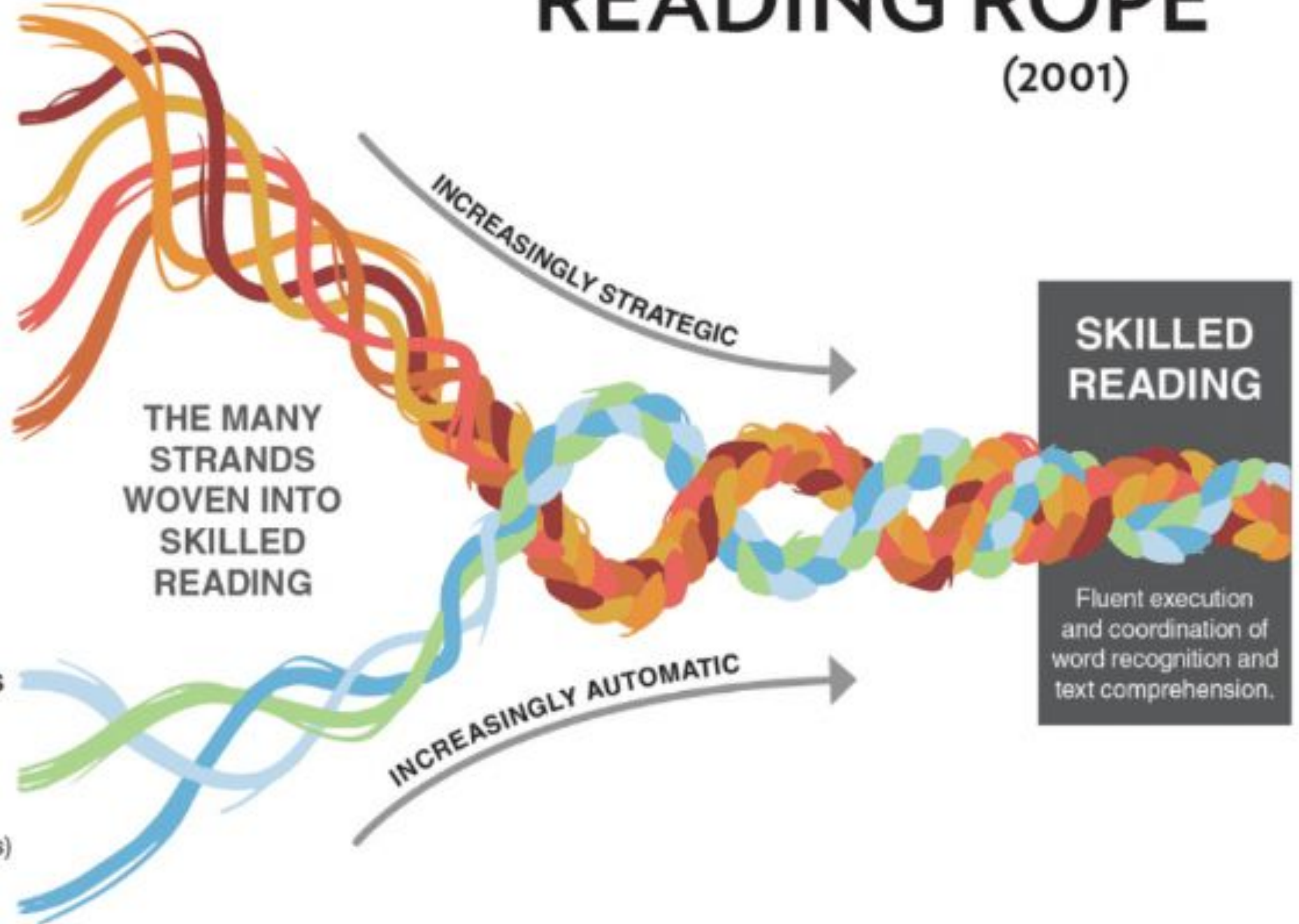
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WORD RECOGNITION

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(alphabetic principle,
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SIGHT RECOGNITION
(of familiar words)



THE MANY
STRANDS
WOVEN INTO
SKILLED
READING

INCREASINGLY STRATEGIC

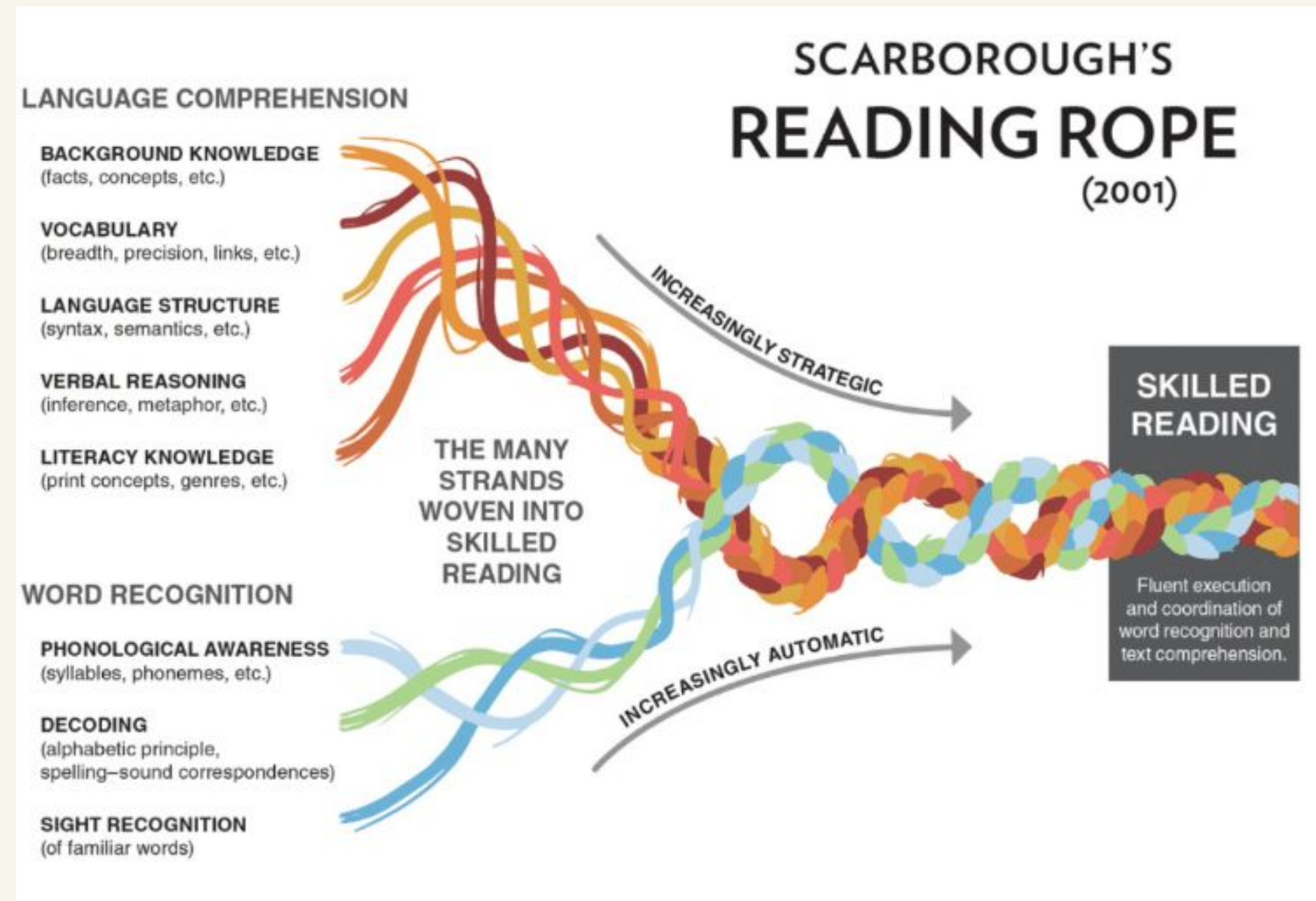
INCREASINGLY AUTOMATIC

**SKILLED
READING**

Fluent execution
and coordination of
word recognition and
text comprehension.



*I got pulled over for having a broken light
and was asked for my license and registration.*



"I got pulled over for having a broken light and was asked for my license and registration."

Word recognition:

Sound words out

Phonics rules and strategies (e.g., past tense -ed (pulled, asked); -tion; -ight)

Sight word recognition (e.g., I, over, was, for, my, and)

Language comprehension:

Background knowledge:

In the US, if you see a police patrol flashing their lights behind you, you MUST pull over. NEVER get out of the car, unless you're asked to. If your lights don't work, you may be causing a safety hazard. You can get a ticket for that.

Vocabulary:

2-word verbs (e.g., pull over)

light, license, registration

Language structure:

Compound sentence structure (two independent clauses joined with "and")

Direct object usage ("me" is tacit and "my license and registration" are direct objects of the verbs "pulled" and "asked")

Ellipsis: Subject ("I") is omitted in second clause

Gerund as object of preposition: "for having a broken light"

WORD RECOGNITION

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(of familiar words)

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VERBAL REASONING
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

LITERACY KNOWLEDGE
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

MINIMAL PAIRS

Bent / Vent
Fan / Van
Vine / Fine
Save / Safe
Thumb / Sum



Teaching

Minimal

Pairs



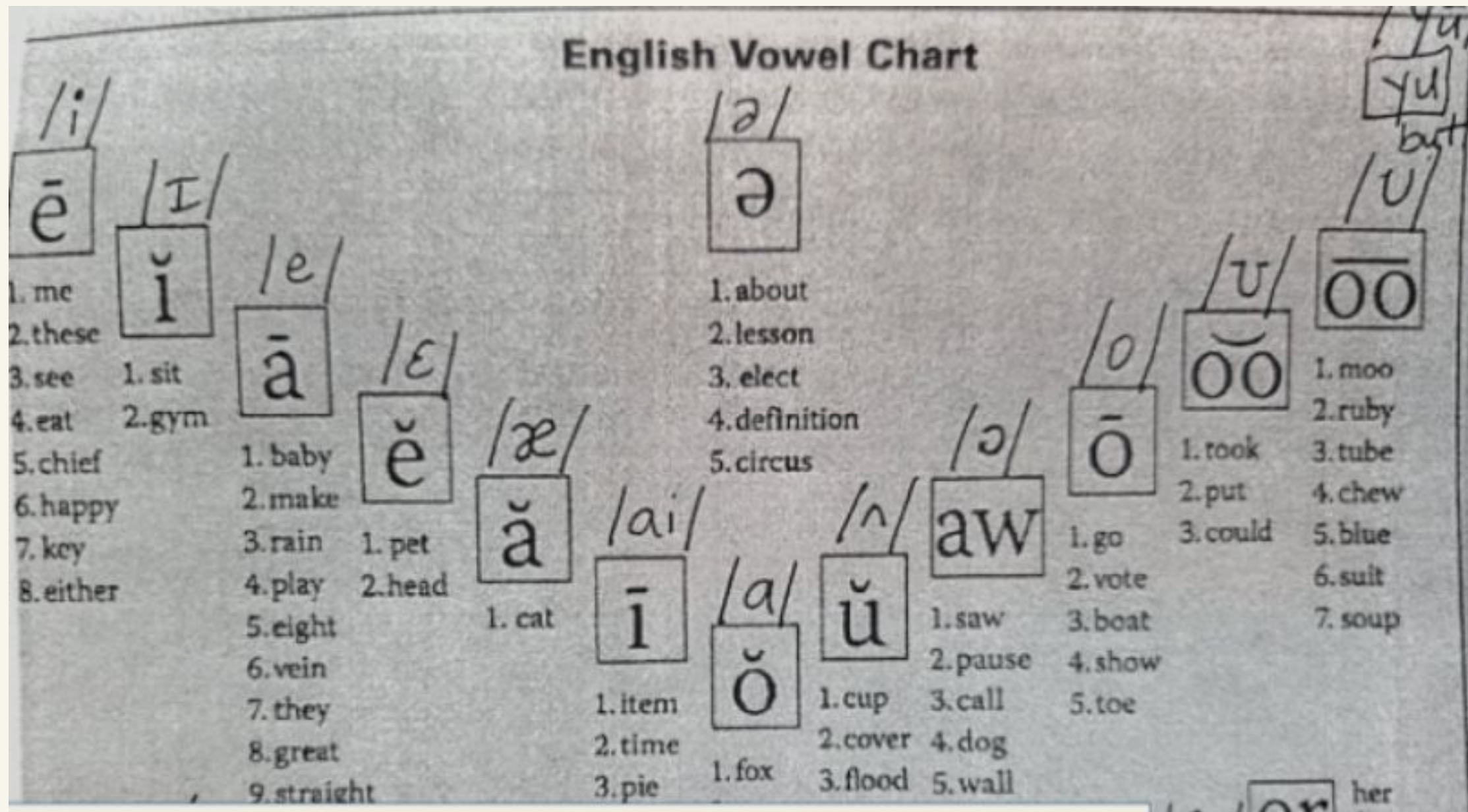
ship

/ɪ/



sheep

/i:/



It's important to teach minimal pairs to your young / adult students because the subtleties in sounds (**especially vowels**) can lead to misunderstandings (and very likely embarrassment!)

There's a bag crawling on
your shoulder! (bug) (/æ/ vs /ʌ/)

70%
Can I take a s*it? (sheet) (/ɪ/ vs /i/)

Exposure

Conscientiam criticam
acquirere et enim ad
informationem evaluare



Teach minimal pairs first through
ear training and then
production

Ear Training Practice



Always first: Explain the how to position the mouth (chin) to produce the vowel sound. Use a visual or better, a video!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aR5yyKFLI64>

Same or Different

Teacher: I'll read two words. You tell me if they're the same or different. See how I do it first. (use and example)

Teacher says: "ad - odd"
Student says: "different"

Teacher says "bag - bag"
Student says: "same"

1-2-3 Which is different?

Teacher: I'll read three words. You tell me which one is different from the other two: word 1, word 2, or word 3. You answer "one", "two" or "three". Watch how I do it first.

(use an example)

Teacher says: "lack - lock - lack"
Student says: "two"

Teacher says "cancellation - cancellation - consolation"
Student says: "three"

Listen and Circle

Circle the number of the word with /æ/

Ear training: Circle the number of the word with /æ/

Instructions: Listen carefully as I read three words. Only ONE word will have the /æ/ vowel. Circle the number of the word with the /æ/ sound.

Example: I say 'knack knock neck'
You circle ①

1.	rack	rock	wreck	①
2.	lake	lock	lack	②
3.	knack	knock	neck	①
4.	add	aid	Ed	
5.	pot	pat	pet	②
6.	top	tape	tap	③

Ear training: Circle the number of the word with /æ/

1.	①	2	3
2.	1	2	③
3.	①	2	3
4.	①	2	3
5.	1	②	3
6.	1	2	③



Production Practice Examples

Repeat After Me (Target Sound Only)

PRODUCTION Repetition /æ/

Directions: Listen and repeat after me.

ax	active	cancel	Halloween
bag	adapt	crackers	racket
cab	anger	labs	splash
can	band	Larry	valley

Guess...

Teacher:

PRODUCTION: Guess the Animal focus /æ/

Directions: I'll say some characteristics of an animal and you will guess the name of it.

- * This animal lives in China. It has been the inspiration of thousands of teddy bears. Panda
- * This animal turns into a butterfly. Caterpillar
- * This animal eats the crops. Grasshopper
- * This animal lives in the tropic. It eats insects. Dragonfly

Student:

PRODUCTION: Guess the animal. focus /æ/

camel panda grasshopper
giraffe kangaroo
dragonfly caterpillar

Finish the Sentence

Teacher:

PRODUCTION Question - answer /æ/ focus (completion)

Directions: I'll say the beginning of some sentences. You'll provide the end.
Example: I say: 'you play tennis with a...'
You say: 'racket'.

It was raining ... cats and dogs
I ask and you ... answer
She is slow and he is ... fast
I want this and he wants ... that
You look worried. What ... happened
You play tennis with a ... racket
Skimos live in ... Alaska
Cats, dogs, and rabbits are ... animals
I don't like rock, but I like ... Jazz

Student:

PRODUCTION Completion focus /æ/

Directions: I'll say the beginning of some sentences. You'll provide the end.

... cats and dogs ... racket
... answer ... Alaska
... fast ... animals
... that ... Jazz
... happened



Teaching Phonics to

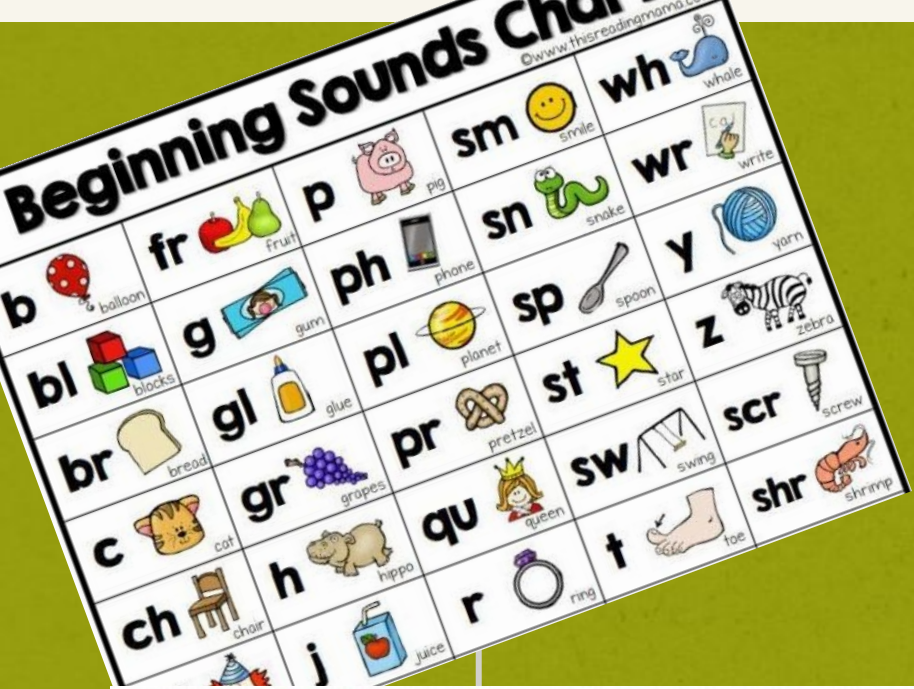
To your adult
ESL learners





What is Phonics?






What is Phonics?

Phonics is a method of instruction to teach the systemic relationship between the letters and letter combinations (graphemes) in written language and the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken language and **how to use these relationships to read and spell words.**" (Honig et al., (2018), p. 170)

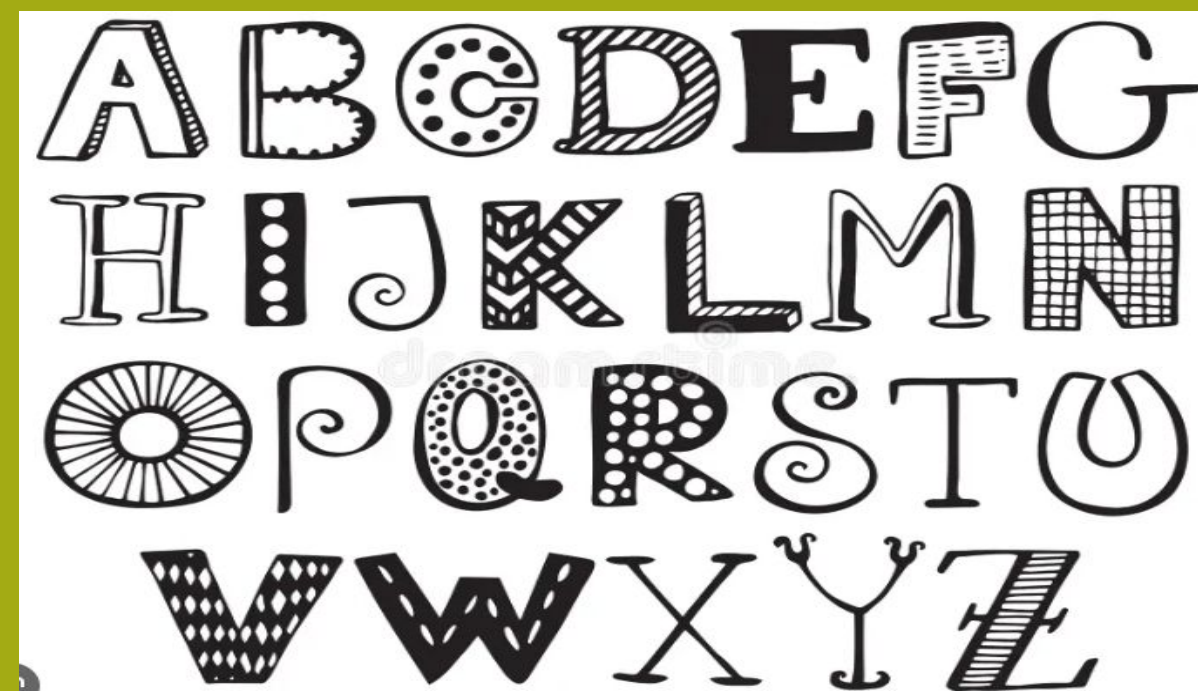
Phonic English words sound in Hindi

A	- ऐ	- APPLE	N	- न	- Nest
B	- ब	- Bat	O	- ओ	- Owl
C	- क	- Cat	P	- प	- Parrot
D	- ड	- Dog	Q	- क्व	- Queen
E	- ए	- Egg	R	- र	- Rat
F	- फ	- Fan	S	- स	- Sun
G	- ग	- Goat	T	- ट	- Tent
H	- ह	- Hen	U	- अ	- Umbrella
I	- इ	- Ice, Ink	V	- व	- Van
J	- ज	- Jug	W	- वाँ	- Web
K	- क	- Kangaroo	X	- क्स	- Box
	- ल	- Lion	Y	- य	- Yak
	- म	- Mango	Z	- ज़	- Zoo



- 
- single consonants and short vowels
 - consonant digraphs
 - long vowels with silent *e* (CVC*e* pattern)
 - long vowels at the end of words or syllables
 - *y* as a vowel
 - *r*-controlled vowels
 - silent consonants
 - vowel digraphs (vowel teams)
 - variant vowel digraphs and diphthongs

Sequence to Teach Phonics



Start with Letter Names

Letter Iconicity

The name of a letter contains
the sound that the letter
represents!

Pronunciation of English and Spanish Letter Names

Letter	English	Spanish
a	/ā/	/o/
b	/b/ /ē/	/b/ /ā/
c	/s/ /ē/	/s/ /ā/
d	/d/ /ē/	/d/ /ā/
e	/ē/	/ā/
f	/e/ /f/	/e/ /f/ • /ā/
g	/j/ /ē/	/h/ /ā/
h	/ā/ /ch/	/o/ • /ch/ /ā/
i	/ī/	/ē/
j	/j/ /ā/	/h/ /ō/ • /t/ /o/
k	/k/ /ā/	/k/ /o/
l	/e/ /l/	/ā/ • /l/ /ā/
m	/e/ /m/	/e/ /m/ • /ā/
n	/e/ /n/	/e/ /n/ • /ā/
o	/ō/	/ō/
p	/p/ /ē/	/p/ /ā/
q	/k/ /yū/	/k/ /ōo/
r	/är/	/e/ /r/ • /ā/
s	/e/ /s/	/e/ /s/ • /ā/
t	/t/ /ē/	/t/ /ā/
u	/yōo/	/ōo/
v	/v/ /ē/	/ōo/ • /b/ /ā/
w	/d/ /ə/ • /b/ /ə/ /l/ • /yōo/	/ōo/ • /b/ /ā/ /d/ /ō/ • /b/ /l/ /ā/
x	/e/ /ks/	/ā/ • /k/ /ē/ /s/
y	/w/ /ī/	/ē/ • /g/ /r/ /ē/ • /ā/ • /g/ /o/
z	/z/ /ē/	/s/ /ā/ • /t/ /o/

Continue phonics training with single consonants


From EASY to DIFFICULT:

Continuous consonants are the easiest:

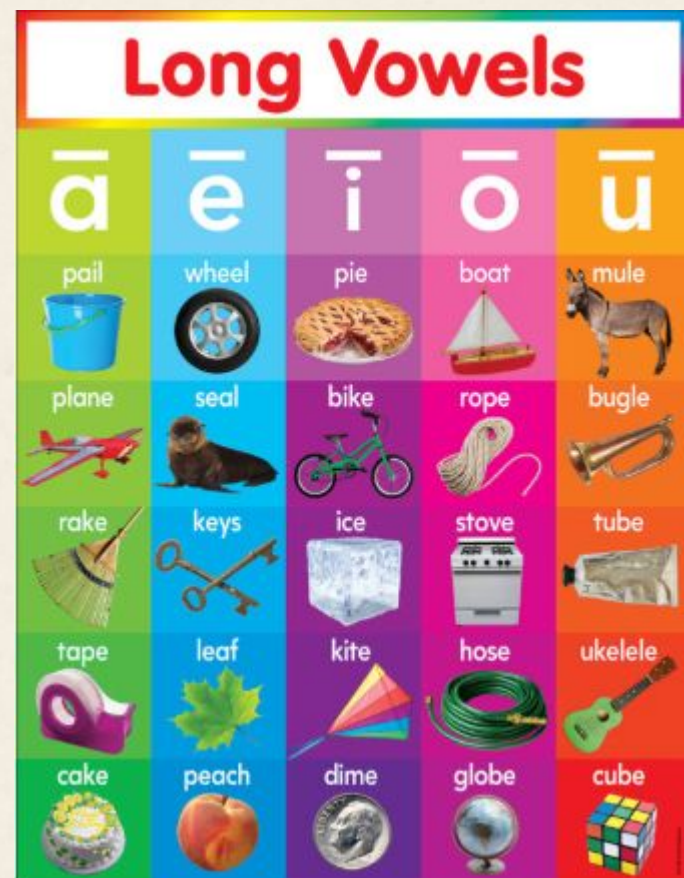
/m/ /n/ /f/ /s/

Stop consonants are harder:

/k/ /g/ /t/ /d/



Next, Vowels!



In American English:

15-16 distinct vowel sounds (depending on variety of English)



English Vowel Chart

phonics symbol (printed)



international phonetics symbol (handwritten)



^{/i/} e 1. me 2. these 3. see 4. eat 5. chief 6. happy 7. key 8. either	^{/ɪ/} i 1. sit 2. gym	^{/e/} a 1. baby 2. make 3. rain 4. play 5. eight 6. vein 7. they 8. great 9. straight	^{/ɛ/} ē 1. pet 2. head	^{/æ/} ă 1. cat	^{/aɪ/} ī 1. item 2. time 3. pie	^{/ə/} ə 1. about 2. lesson 3. elect 4. definition 5. circus	^{/ʌ/} u 1. saw 2. pause 3. call 4. dog 5. wall	^{/o/} ō 1. go 2. vote 3. boat 4. show 5. toe	^{/ʊ/} oo 1. moo 2. ruby 3. tube 4. chew 5. blue 6. suit 7. soup	^{/u/} oo 1. rook 2. put 3. could	^{/y/} yu 1. her 2. fur 3. sir
--	--	---	---	--------------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	--	---

^{/ɔɪ/} oi	^{/ɔɪ/} oy	oil boy
^{/aʊ/} ou	^{/aʊ/} ow	out cow

^{/ɛr/} er	her fur sir
^{/ɑr/} ar	cart
^{/ɔr/} or	sport

Note: ^{/ɹw/} The order of spelling examples reflects the relative frequency of incidence for that spelling of the phoneme.

Vowel Chart based on Macrae, L.C. (2012). LEERS: Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling, Module 2 (p. 96). Adapted with permission of the author. All rights reserved. Published by Soars West Educational Services.

Syllable types

**WRITTEN syllables! They don't correspond to syllable breaks in spoken language)
help children determine the vowel sound in one- or two-syllable words**

closed

**silent e
"magic e"**

open

**vowel
Teams**

**r-controlled
vowel
"bossy r"**

**consonant
-le**

Spoken vs. Written Syllables

Word	Spoken syllable division	Written syllable division
lemon	le-mon	lem-on
blackout	bla-ckout	black-out
headache	hea-dache	head-ache
bleeding	blee-ding	bleed-ing

Syllable types

are typically taught in following this sequence

1

closed

2

**silent e
"magic e"**

3

open

4

**vowel
Teams**

5

**r-controlled
vowel
"bossy r"**

6

**consonant
-le**

what do you notice?

bit

tap

cut

hop

can

English Vowel Chart

phonics symbol (printed) ←

international phonetics symbol (handwritten) ←

^{/i:/} ē	^{/ɪ/} ī	^{/e/} ā	^{/ɛ/} ĕ	^{/æ/} ă	^{/ai/} ī	^{/a/} ō	^{/ʌ/} ū	^{/ɔ/} aw	^{/u/} oo	^{/yū/} yu
1. me	1. sit	1. baby	1. pet	1. cat	1. item	1. cup	1. saw	1. go	1. moo	1. yu
2. these	2. gym	2. make	2. head	1. fox	2. time	2. cover	2. pause	2. vote	2. ruby	2. yu
3. see		3. rain	3. play	5. right	3. pie	3. call	3. call	3. boat	3. tube	3. yu
4. eat		4. play	5. eight		1. fox	4. dog	4. show	4. show	4. chew	4. yu
5. chief		5. eight	6. vein		3. flood	5. wall	5. toe	5. toe	5. blue	5. yu
6. happy		6. vein	7. they		5. among				6. suit	6. yu
7. key		7. they	8. great						7. soup	7. yu
8. either		8. great	9. straight							8. yu

oi oy oil boy
ou ow out cow

^{/ɛr/}er her fur sir
^{/ɑr/}ar cart
^{/ɔr/}or sport

^{/ɜw/}

Note: The order of spelling examples reflects the relative frequency of incidence for that spelling of the phoneme.
Vowel Chart based on Mack, L.C. (2002). LE:RS: Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling, Module 2 (p. 96). Adapted with permission of the author.
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1. Closed Syllable

- has a CVC pattern
- short vowel sound
- has just 1 vowel and ends in a consonant

examples

pen	hot
pig	him
sun	
run	tip
dog	kin

prerequisites

- differentiate consonants from vowels
- know short vowel sound

Stick to CVC words when you teach this first syllable type! **Don't introduce other patterns of closed syllables yet** (e.g., closed syllable with blends (e.g., desk, left))

Closed Syllables in Multisyllabic Words:

These should be taught later, after students master CVC words.

inhabitant

warthog

detonate

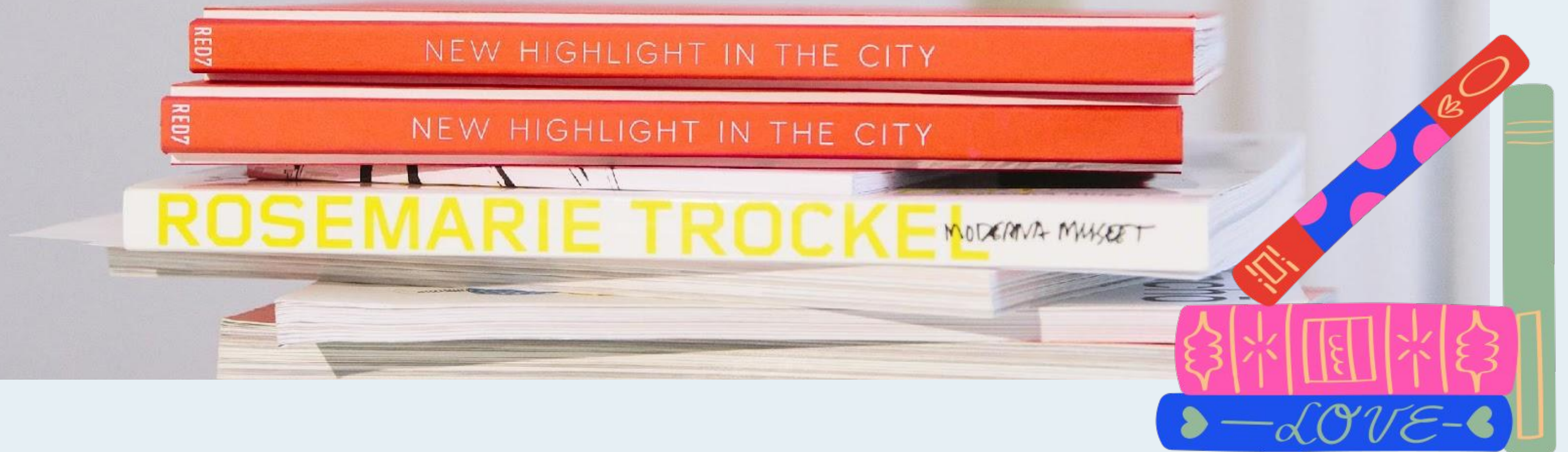
supper

radish



Now you!

Identify the words with a closed syllable.



can

prince

sick

bible

pea

picture

tune

item

blow

tin

great

vocab

pop

brown

me

desk

part

but

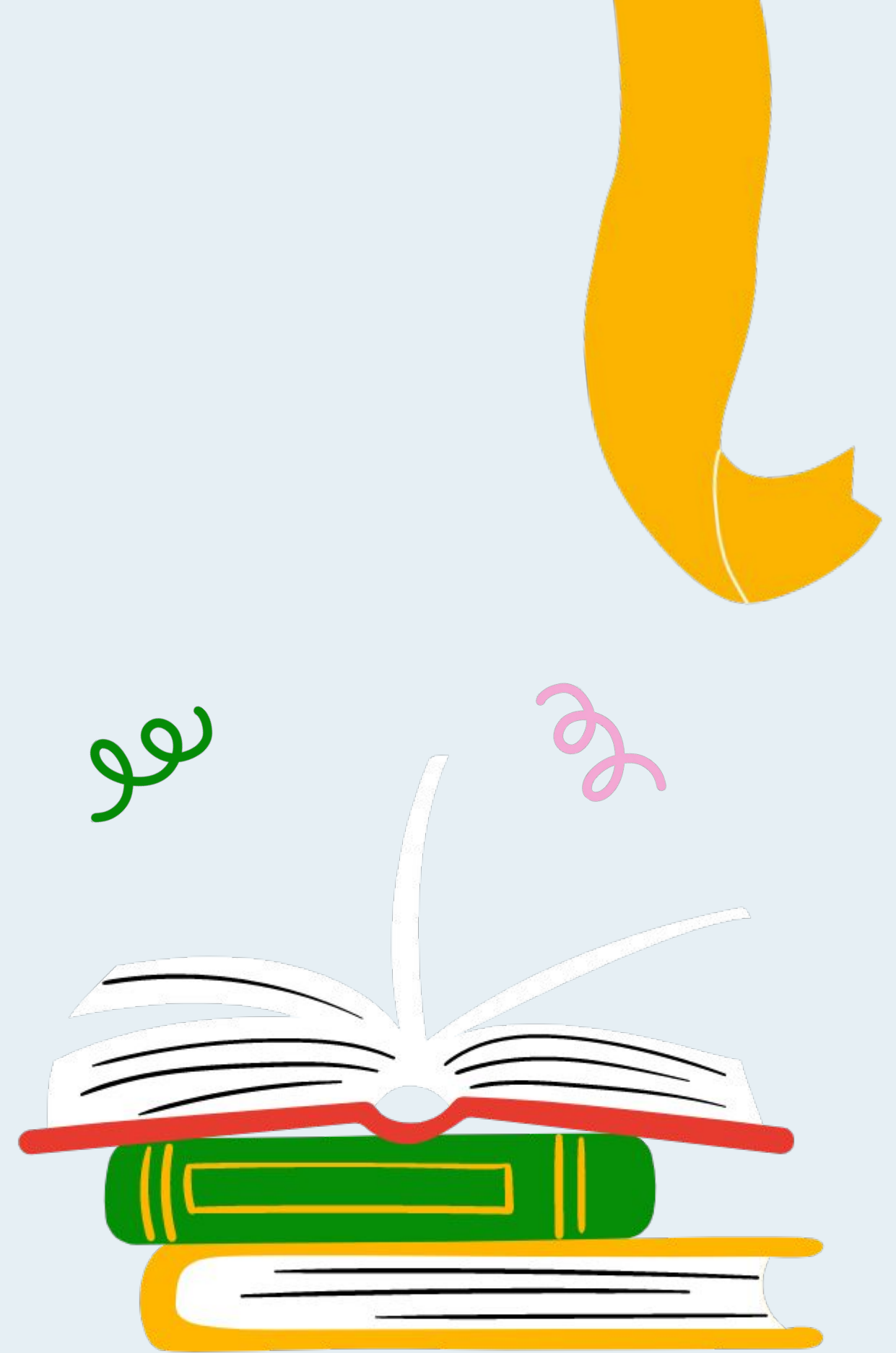
make

count

Use AI to search for CVC words that may be more meaningful or helpful for adult ELs (even if they are multisyllabic).

what pattern do you notice?

bit	bite
tap	tape
cut	cute
hop	hope
can	cane



1. CVCe – (“Magic –e)

- has a CVCe pattern
- long vowel sound
- has just 1 consonant before final e

examples

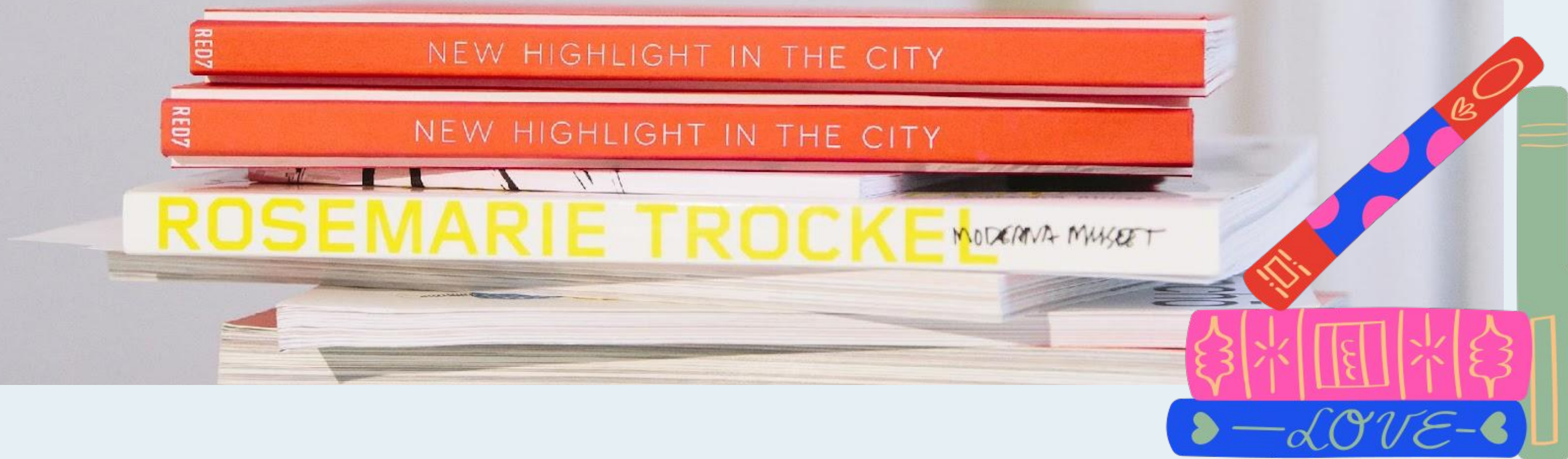
site
page
tone
tune
Pete

prerequisites

- differentiate consonants from vowels
- know long vowel sounds

Now you!

Identify the words with a “magic e” syllable



rage

rat

tone

bible

rime

chart

turn

comb

broke

base

gosh

type

stone

noise

Tom

prance

dance

bridge

Kate

choice

Use AI to search for CVCe words that may be more meaningful or helpful for adult ELs (even if they are multisyllabic).

what pattern do you notice?

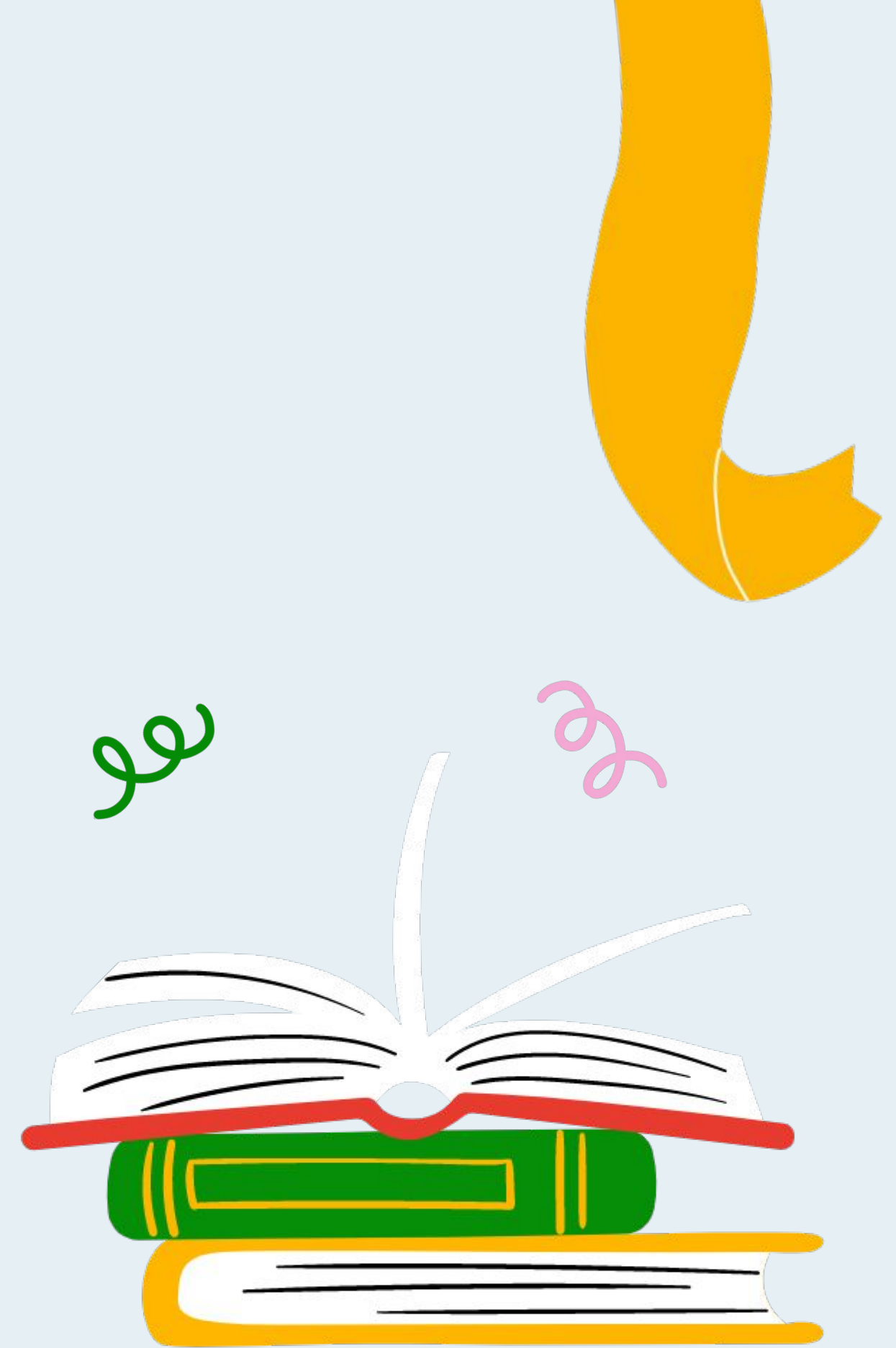
no

me

she

spider

over



3. Open Syllable



examples

no baby

she raven

try

so began

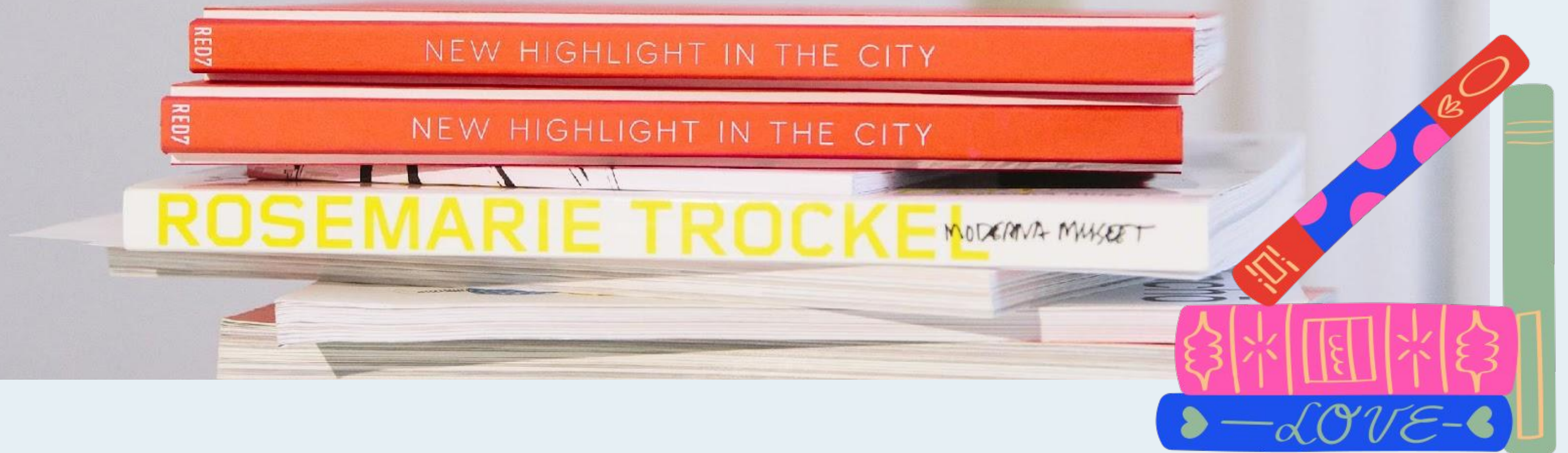
- LONG vowel sound
- has just 1 vowel - last letter of syllable

- many one-syllable word with open syllable are common sight words

Start with **monosyllabic words first** with open syllable. Introduce **two-syllable words with open syllable later.**

Now you!

Identify the words with an open syllable.



paid

try

shirt

bible

say

call

bugle

we

flu

piece

bomb

nope

drone

cow

bone

repeat

lamp

fire

tired

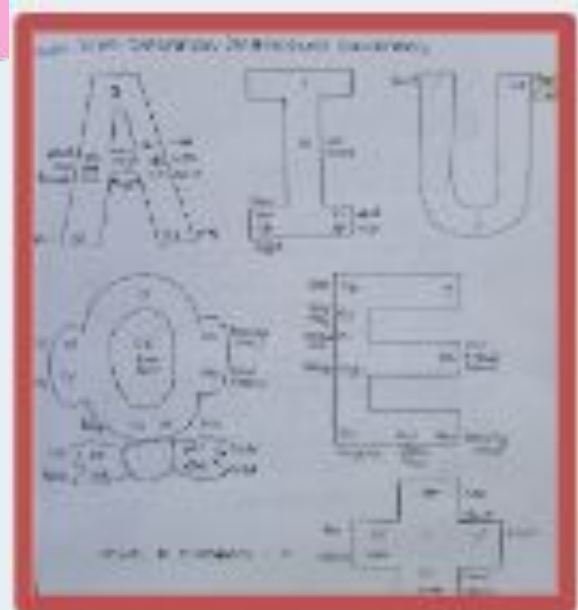
pupil

Use AI to search for open syllable-words that may be more meaningful or helpful for adult ELs (even if they are multisyllabic).

4. Vowel Team Combinations



- AKA: “vowel pair”
- Sound varies depending on vowel pattern
- Has a VT pattern (e.g., **ay**, **ai**, **aw**, **ie**, **igh**, **old**, etc.)
- Learned through **word sorting** and **systematic practice**
- Schmerler Diagrams help!



steak head
beach count
young you
boulder foot
hoot house
August pool
coin show

- VT can also consist of V+Cs with a consistent sound (e.g., **all**, **igh**)
- Some VT patterns can have more than 1 sound (e.g., **ow** as in “grow” and as in “cow”)
- These have to be tried out and determine by “does it sound right?”

Now you!

Have your Schmerler Diagrams at hand

Identify the words with vowel team combinations

Example:

thread, ea as in bread

joint, oi as in coin



trident

cow

pause

potatoes

ouch

tip

boom

we

spice

their

pine

nope

call

fire

order

repeat

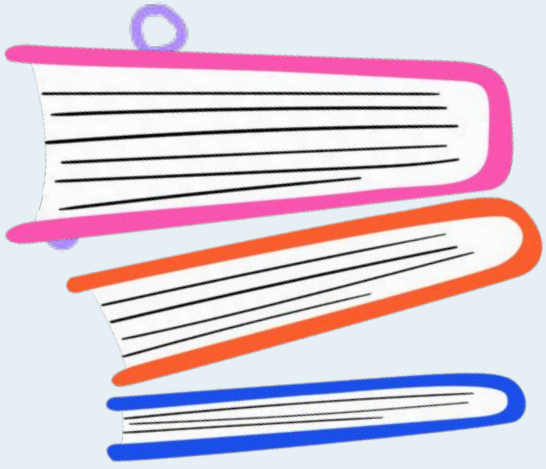
light

bugle

tired

pupil

Use AI to search for vowel team words that may be more meaningful or helpful for adult ELs (even if they are multisyllabic).



5. R-controlled vowel

AKA: “bossy -r”; “vowel r”

Three Types:

- Vr-CL (Closed Syllable)
- Vr-ME (Magic e)
- Vr-VT (Vowel Team)

Only teach the type -Vr-CL

examples

—Vr-CL: Varies per pattern
(see Schmerler Diagrams)

Just 1 vowel followed by r

herd, smart, hurt, dart,
shark, shirt, her, word,
stern, for, dirt

**DON'T NEED TO TEACH
Vowel r-ME & Vowel r-VT**

**They don't change too much the sound
of the vowel in ME and VT**

fire, stare, cure, here

fear, chair, pair, oar,
board, steer

Now you!

Have your Schmerler Diagrams at hand

Identify the words with r-controlled vowel combinations

Example:

chart, Vr-CL as in car

figure, Vr-ME as in cure

steer, Vr-VT as in cheer

Challenge!

**Say the syllable type
other than bossy r**

spore

so

thermal

pair

meet

turn

shrine

spire

here

sign

roast

stern

fry

earn

slave

stay

smart

slush

horn

pupil

Use AI to search for r-controlled vowel words that may be more meaningful or helpful for adult ELs (even if they are multisyllabic).

6. Consonant -le



- Makes a schwa sound
- A syllable with a **-Cle** pattern: A consonant followed by LE which ends the syllable

examples

gargle noble
waffle dazzle
candle turtle

- It never stands alone
- -Cle syllables are never accented



Now you!

Identify the words with a -Cle syllable.

Challenge!

**Say the syllable type
other than -Cle**



Google

can

country

relaxed

gargle

ogle

crime

inspire

bargain

sign

cluster

coteach

try

earn

work

dribble

truth

gargle

miserable

pupil

Use AI to search for C-le words that may be more meaningful or helpful for adult ELs (even if they are multisyllabic).



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