

Notes Before Lesson 57

This lesson is for you, the tutor, not for the student! Here's why: As you move forward into multisyllable words, you will need to be more aware of the schwa and how accented and unaccented syllables are pronounced. In unaccented syllables, the vowels will not be pronounced as expected. These "schwa syllables" often make a soft "uh" or "ih" sound. Before (or during) tutoring, I often want to look up words when I am not sure how the word is pronounced, how many syllables there are, and which syllable gets the accent. Dictionary.com makes this easy to do. It provides an audio recording pronouncing the word and it transcribes the word to indicate how the syllables are pronounced.

Here are some examples from Dictionary.com. The accented syllables appear in bold:

banana *buh-nan-uh*
resentment ri-**zent**-muhnt
patio **pat**-ee-oh
enrichment en-**rich**-muhnt
violin vahy-*uh*-**lin**
radio **rey**-dee-oh
Ohio oh-**hahy**-oh

Accented syllables can be sounded out easily. The nan in banana rhymes with can. The lin in violin rhymes with pin. The zent in resentment rhymes with bent. The hahy in Ohio rhymes with I. As in the early lessons, students can spell these syllables by "using their ears."

Unaccented syllables are different. They are swallowed when we speak, and they are often not spelled the way we would expect by listening to the word; instead they most often make an "uh" or "ih" sound.

The letter **i** is particularly weird. In unaccented syllables, it sometimes has the short “i” sound, the “uh” sound, or even the long “e” sound as in “radio” and “patio.” Right now, we are excluding words where **i** makes a long “e” sound, but they will be taught later in Lesson 93.

When working on spelling long words, you can recognize the sophisticated choices students are having to make. You can sympathize with them about the fact that in English, spelling errors are inevitable because in English there are different spellings for the same sounds and because we “swallow” many sounds in words. A student who has misspelled “experiment” may like to hear something like, “Yeah, I hear it like ‘mint’ too! But, in this case, it is spelled ‘ment’ like all those other words we have seen with ‘ment.’” The message to the student is: I’m not frightened by these weird and annoying unaccented syllables, and you don’t need to be either.

I like to remember, too, that my goal is not coaching the student to become a champion speller (though good spelling is great). My main goal is making reading more effortless. All the reading, spelling, and writing from dictation we are doing together is helping to achieve this goal.

LESSON 57

Review the material from the previous lessons using the sound-letter deck, the high-frequency word deck, and the whiteboards.

New material: Words with vowels next to each other acting independently

Explain to the student that in future lessons we will learn about vowel teams where two vowels stand next to each other and make one sound. But in this lesson we are reading and writing words where an open vowel is followed by a syllable that begins with a vowel. The syllables act on their own and have their own “beats.” [These syllables are called “split vowel teams” if you want to look up discussions of them on the internet.]

Words to read and write:

video cameo neon quiet Ohio violins poems fluid riots bionic create actual (has a “chu” sound) trial vial client eons

Use the whiteboards to divide some of the above words into syllables. Remind the student to say the word first, count the syllable beats, and then draw the number of lines needed for the word.

vid e o

Introduce the new high-frequency words you have written onto flashcards. Have the student write the high-frequency words three times while pronouncing the words:

done, gone, none¹

Have the student read:

Drinking lots of fluids before you go on a run is supposed to be a good thing.

I think Stan has gone to Cleveland, Ohio, for a quick hello to his mom and to pick up his video equipment.

When you are done making that racket, could we have some quiet, so I can finish my math?

Lois's dad is French and her mom is from Mexico. Lois is fluent in French, Spanish, and English!

"You all have had half of the cupcakes, and I have had none, and now you are grabbing more? This is creating a problem for me," Alex said.

Have the student write from your dictation:

There was a note on the door that said "Gone Fishing," so I think none of the people are there. I do not know if actual fishing is happening.

Zack loves the violin, Frank loves the flute, and Zeke likes to sing.

That man is on trial for theft. He is the client of Mr. Sanchez who is defending him.

¹ **done** and **none**: **d** and **n** are decodable; **o-consonant-e** making the short "u" sound is irregular
gone: **g** and **n** are decodable; **o-consonant-e** making the short "o" sound (as in "pond") is irregular

What have you done with all the plastic lions and zebras I put on that shelf?

Choose any of the stories in [Group 2 \(Silent-E Stories\)](#) or [Group 1 \(Short-Syllable Stories\)](#) for a “triple read.”

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