

STRATEGY LESSON: TRYING ANOTHER SOUND (ALTERNATE PRONUNCIATION)

Students may provide a pronunciation that is appropriate in some instances but not for a particular word that they are encountering, for example, pronouncing the *ea* in *sweater* with a long-*e* sound instead of a short-*e* sound, saying *sweeter* instead of *sweater*. Digraphs, such as *ea*, *oo*, and *ow*, have more than one pronunciation. Students need to be prepared to try another pronunciation if the first one they try out doesn't work. The digraph *ea* most often has a long-*e* pronunciation, so students should try that one first. If that doesn't work out, they should try the short pronunciation. If necessary, remind them that that *ea* can be pronounced /e/ as in *sweat*. (The digraph *ea* also has a long *a* pronunciation as in *steakhouse*.) Emphasize the importance of meaning. Remind students to try another pronunciation if the word they read is not a real word. This strategy only works if the target word is in the student's listening vocabulary. Patterns with alternate pronunciations include the following:

ea= long *e* (*bean*), short *e* (*bread*), long *a* (*steak*)

ie= long *i* (*tie*), long *e* (*piece*)

oo= long *OO* (*moon*), short *oo* (*book*)

ow= long *o* (*snow*), *ow* sound (*towel*)

ou= *aw* (*bought*), *ow* sound (*shout*), short *oo* (*could*)

Objectives

Students will use vowel spellings and context to determine the pronunciation of words.
Students will learn to use alternate pronunciations of vowel spellings.

Introduction

Discuss with students the importance of the ability to read multisyllabic words. Explain that you will be showing them a strategy that will help them. To introduce the concept of Trying Another Sound, write *heal* on the board and have students read it and note that it has a long sound. Write the words *health* and *healthy* under it and explain that when *heal* is changed to *health* or *healthy*, the *ea* makes a short-*e* sound. Contrast *please* and *pleasant* in the same way. Explain to students that when they come across a word

that has an *ea* spelling, they should try the long-*e* pronunciation first and that if that doesn't result in a real word that makes sense in context, they should try the short-*e* sound. Model how you go about using the strategy. Show how you might misread the following sentence by pronouncing *leather* as *leether*, but then try a short-vowel pronunciation because *leether* is not a real word: *The skins of animals are used to make leather belts and shoes.* Comment that *leather* is a real word and fits the sense of the sentence.

Guided Practice

With your help, have students read the following words. Omit or define any words that they don't know.

weapon

meadow

weaken

heather

beneath

eager

pheasant

meager

weasel

meadow

weaken

sweater

leader

leather

feature

feather

heaven

endear

endeavor

creature

To provide students practice applying the Try Another Sound strategy in context, have students select the correct word in each sentence. Do the first two cooperatively as an example.

1. The sawfish uses its saw as a (weaken, weapon).
2. That bird has a very long tail (feather, feature).
3. It was a sunny, (pheasant, pleasant) day.
4. Cow's hide is used to make (leader, leather).
5. The sheep are in the (meadow, meager).
6. Sheep's wool is used to make warm (sweaters, sweeters).
7. Sharks are frightening (cleansers, creatures).
8. The (wealth, weasel) caught a rat.
9. I will (eager, endeavor) to do my best.
10. Their pay was so (meager, meadow) that they did not have enough money for shoes.

Write sentences, such as the ones below on the board. Deliberately misread the boldfaced words and have students correct you.

1. The sheep are in the **meadow** (mee-dow--dow as in *cow*).
2. Polar bears are huge **creatures** (creh-churz).
3. The **beavers** (bev-ers) cut down the tree.
4. A sparrow flew **overhead** (over-head).
5. The boys and girls were **eager** (eg-ger) to see the new class pet.

Applying the Try Another Sound Strategy

Review the following steps with students for applying the Try Another Sound strategy.

- Sound out the word syllable by syllable and combine the syllables.
- After sounding out the word, ask, "Is this a real word? Does it make sense in the sentence?" If not, try another sound for the syllable that doesn't sound right.
- Again, see if the word sounds right and makes sense in the sentence. If not try another sound.
- If you still cannot sound out the words so that it sounds like a real and makes sense in the sentence, try context, skip it, use a dictionary or glossary, or ask the teacher.

Post the steps and review them periodically. Also prompt the strategy when a

need arises.

Assessment and Review

Note students' ability to complete guided and independent practice activities.

Note, in particular, students ability to apply the strategy. Provide review lessons.