

What are Catch-up Morphology Lessons?

2024 sees the introduction of morphology to our resource. Some students in existing Playberry Laser schools won't have received morphology instruction before their point in the Playberry Laser scope and sequence. Classes new to Playberry Laser (entering the program higher than phase two) will also need to be caught up with the morphology instruction they have missed. Morphology catch-up lessons have been developed to get them up to speed.

Morphology Catch-up lessons are comprehensive 45-minute sessions. They include a thorough revision of previously taught morphemes, the introduction of a new morpheme, and engaging activities for practicing the new morpheme, all of which are designed to enhance the students' understanding and application of morphology.

Forty-five Catch-up lessons cover morphology from Phases two to four. These lessons should be used in place of the standard morphology lesson within the class's phase. For example, if a Year Five class is working at Phase Four (but hasn't learned any structured morphology before), they will forgo the standard morphology lesson (Lesson 4) and instead do a catch-up morphology lesson on this day.

See The Teacher's Manual for more information on Catch-Up Morphology.

This is a running log of a lesson with a year 5 class taught by Christie-Lee Hansberry. I've made notes of strategies used that might not be noticed by someone new to teaching this way. I have highlighted strategies that keep the lesson moving quickly and ensure students stick to established routines. Students are always looking where Christie-Lee wants them to look and thinking about what Christie-Lee wants students to think about. This manages cognitive load.

Pay attention to Christie-Lee's consistency and economical use of language. This is key to moving lessons at a good pace and getting through in around 30 minutes.

Settling the Class

"As usual, we'll start with our morphology card drill, so your eyes need to be this way, everybody's voices, everybody doing the gestures. Are you ready?"

Precorrecting reminds students of the expected behaviours before they are expected to use them. Experienced teachers precorrect often, doing more of it when routines are new to students or if students have started to slip in their adherence to routines. Precorrects are far more effective than correcting during teaching time. However, both are necessary. Effective precorrects are straight to the point.

Tip 2: Precorrect behaviour

"If you expect it - precorrect it" (Anita Archer)



Remind students of the behaviour or routine before they have a chance to forget.

"Remember, when we chin it, boards go under chins and nowhere else."

Teaching Tips

LaserT1-2
Literacy Program

Tip 3: Think *economy of language*

Over-talking creates extraneous cognitive load



Ask yourself: "what's the fewest words that will say what I need to say?"

Keep feedback / instructions short and clear. Instead of asking: "Is there a short vowel? How will you spell [k]?" You might point and say: "That's a short vowel so use -ck."

Teaching Tips

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Morphology Card Drill



Morphology Review

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

The class uses multisensory gestures to recall the definitions of morphemes. There are suggested gestures on our morphology card decks; however, you will notice that this group have slightly different gestures. This is fine, as the ones on the cards are merely suggestions. If students come up with their own, or variations on the ones on the cards, this is great! Remember that the gestures may need to change when these students move to their next year level! Remember that the gestures trigger the recall of the worded definitions that should remain the same, so differences in gestures shouldn't give students too much trouble as long as the definitions stay the same.

Notice the responses to the suffixes:

"Suffix 'E...D' ... past tense"

"Suffix L...E...double S ... means without"

Christie and the students name the letters that spell the suffixes instead of reading the suffixes. This is deliberate because the suffix -ed makes three sounds. It is more reliable to spell the suffixes because of this.

The prefixes and roots, however, are read by the students.

"Prefix un ... not or without."

"Root word 'tract' ... means to pull"

As part of the choral response, the roots and affixes are also named 'root words', 'prefixes', or 'suffixes'.

Christie chorally responds with the students for most of the review deck but occasionally doesn't so that she can listen to the students. She also continually scans the class, checking participation and keeping more of an eye on students who are more likely to fall out of routine.

When students stop, the teacher can quickly cue the student:

"Bill, with us, thanks."

Upon completion of the drill, Christie then gives feedback to the group:

"Awesome, well done, guys."

Then.

"Eyes to the board"

Tip 29: Explicitly Direct Student Attention and Action



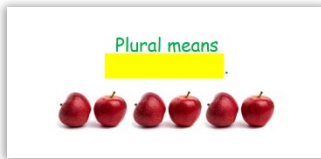
*"What do you want them looking at?
What do you want them thinking about?"*
(Anita Archer)

*"Eyes to the board..."
"Put your finger under the heading on your worksheet..."
"Watch my mouth..."
"Eyes on me, get your phoneme fingers ready..."*

Teaching Tips

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In structured lessons, effective teachers constantly inform students where they should look, what they should do, and even what they need to think about. As long as this is done in a relaxed and calm tone, it doesn't come across as nagging. Many students with attention difficulties or neurodivergent students who don't socially reference well (have trouble following the group) benefit significantly from teachers who do this.



Concept Revision

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

Christie cues the class to keep their pace up by hand signals, and head nods (to quicken the beat) and, at one point, recites with the students a concept that needs to be said a little faster.

Tip 8: Go from the slides
no fluff required




Our slides have been designed with *economy of language* in mind. You can simply read the directions and explanations on them.


Remember: every unnecessary word creates extraneous cognitive load on students' working memory.

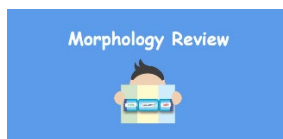
Teaching Tips 

Tip 5: Bring students to your pace, don't drop to theirs



- Be swift in review drills
- Be swift in transitions (don't wait for dawdlers)
- Make 'faster' your ongoing goal
- Be amazed at how quickly students respond

Teaching Tips 



Morphology Review

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

"All right, now you need your whiteboards. Whiteboards in front of you, texta in your hand.

I'd like you all to read with me. Don't write until I tell you to, okay? But I need you to help me read first.

You ready? Go."

Tip 2: Precorrect behaviour
"If you expect it - precorrect it" (Anita Archer)



Remind students of the behaviour or routine before they have a chance to forget.

"Remember, when we chin it, boards go under chins and nowhere else."

Teaching Tips 

Christie and the class chorally read the questions directly from the slides, and then students write their responses on whiteboards and chin their responses. In line with the EDI, non-volunteer protocol, Christie pulls a pop stick and asks a student to share their response.

If the student selected does not have the correct word written on their whiteboard, Christie ensures the correct word has arrived on the slide and non-verbally prompts the student to use the word from the screen. The student then corrects the word on their whiteboard.

"Wipe it, park it, eyes this way ... Read it with me..."

This scripting is used between each new question to cue students about the correct routine.

Masterclass Notes: Christie-Lee Hansberry

Playberry Laser Morphology Catch-Up Lesson with a Year 5 Class

One thing we picked up on in reviewing the footage was Christie occasionally talking as students wrote their responses on their whiteboards. Old habits die hard, and we all do this with the intention of scaffolding students; however, some students have to think hard while they spell the word, and the teacher's voice enters their working memory and disrupts them. With this in mind, we'll all remind ourselves about Tip 20!

Tip 20: Zip it when students are writing or spelling

Don't create extraneous cognitive load with your voice



When your students are spelling a word or holding a dictation sentence in working memory, a teacher's voice may cause cognitive overload and cause them to forget.

Students with phonological processing disorders (like dyslexia) are most impacted by teachers talking while they are trying to write.

Teaching Tips

Tip 30: Prompt students to respond in complete (spoken) sentences

When students are used to responding verbally in full sentences, they are more likely to write in complete sentences (not fragments).

Teacher: "Kiara, what do we need to do to carry things to a different place?"

Student: "Transport it."

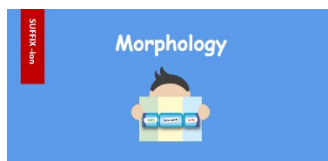
Teacher: "Good! Can you say that in a full sentence please?"

Student: "If you want to move things to a certain place, you transport them."



Teaching Tips

On most occasions, Christie cues students to respond to questions in complete spoken sentences. This is a common practice in schools that teach writing explicitly, as a critical step in learning to write is knowing the difference between a fragment and a complete sentence and progressing students to writing in whole sentences. Because of this, teachers will often require full-sentence responses to questions.



New Teaching Point

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

"Today (everybody), we are learning about suffix I O N. Which suffix are we learning today?"

The class chorally responds.

"Good. Let's say 'we are learning suffix I O N. Go!"

The class chorally responds in a complete sentence.

"Is suffix ION a consonant or a vowel suffix? Talk to the person next to you."

Students pair share, and Christie stirs the pop sticks.

"Bastion can you tell me, is suffix ION a vowel suffix or a consonant suffix?"

The student responds in a complete sentence.

"What do we do when it's a vowel suffix?"

Students respond with *"danger, danger"* and a multisensory gesture they've developed to signal that with vowel suffixes, there is a high likelihood that a spelling rule will apply.

"Why is there 'danger, danger'? Talk to the person next to you; why is there 'danger, danger'?"

Students pair share, and Christie stirs the pop sticks.

Tip 4: Know the purpose of the pop stick!



Pop sticks are used to randomly sample students to check understanding of something you've just taught.

Responses provide instant feedback about the effectiveness of our teaching and an opportunity to re-teach if necessary.

Read "Explicit Direct Instruction" (Hollingsworth & Ybarra)

Teaching Tips

“Valentina, why is there ‘danger, danger’ with a vowel suffix?”

This time, the student responds in a dependent clause, not a complete sentence. The answer is so detailed; however, Christie lets it go and reminds students about the double, drop and change rules.

We highly recommend the [Word Cracking](https://wordcracking.xyz/morphology-training-course/) online self-paced e-learning training if you want some knowledge of morphology. Go to <https://wordcracking.xyz/morphology-training-course/>

“Okay. Suffix ION means ‘act of or state of’. Say that with me...”

The class chorally responds, reading from the screen.

“Hmm, ‘act of or state of’. Let’s read a bit more about it, and then we’ll come up with a gesture suffix ION means...”

At this point, Christie lets the slides guide her teaching of the suffix ION and lets the language on screen help her keep her language use economical.

It’s very tempting to say more than what is in the slides or in a program’s scripting, hoping that more words will improve the explanation. However, the effect is often the opposite. It’s better to repeat the same script than embellish it.

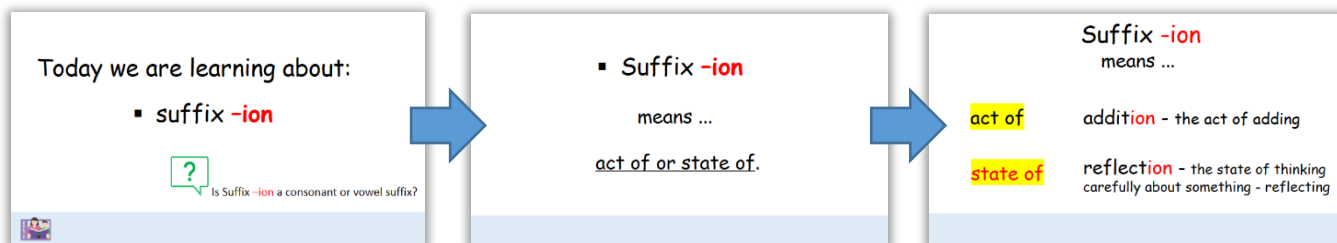
Tip 14: Trust scripted language!

Programs that suggest what teachers should say during instruction aim to maintain an *economy of language*. (refer to tip 3)

Scripting prevents overtalking; overtalking creates extraneous cognitive load.



Teaching Tips 



Words to Build

(Refer to Teachers’ Manual for directions)

After students have set up their pages and written in the suffix and its definition from the screen:

“Everybody, can you read me your title and what it means? Go!”

Christie ensures students say the suffix and its definition as often as possible. These multiple exposures help move information into long-term memory, keeping the student response rate high and making it more difficult for students to disengage with the lesson content.

Masterclass Notes: Christie-Lee Hansberry

Playberry Laser Morphology Catch-Up Lesson with a Year 5 Class

The class moves through the Words to Build tasks, with Christie starting with an “I read” for the task. The students respond chorally and then write the word into their books.

Christie cues the students to give her eye contact when they have completed writing the words so she knows when to move to the next word.

During this task, we want as many students as possible to write the words from their minds, not copying from the screen. We want them to mentally segment the words into their morphemes and consciously think about the morphemes as they spell the words. Some students will need the words on the screen to scaffold them, but we must encourage all students to look only at the board when they encounter difficulty.



Words to Read

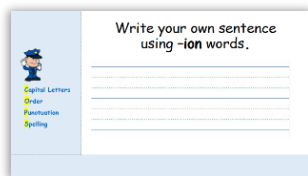
subtraction relaxation
division frustration
multiplication meditation

Words to Read

(Refer to Teachers’ Manual for directions)

“Okay, can you please read off of your book? I will read off of the screen. Let’s go...”

Christie reads with the class, but on other occasions, she would listen to the students and watch to see who might be struggling with the reading. Some students will have orthographically mapped these words and, therefore, will read them quickly, and others will need to concentrate hard on the words and put some effort into decoding them. These students will drop slightly off the pace or will mouth words and use other students’ voices as a cue as they decode.



Sentence Creation

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

“Okay, I'm going to give you a moment to think about those words and use them in a sentence using maybe one of the ION words, maybe two, maybe three, thinking about COPSing as you go. Off you go.”

Christie moves around the room silently as the students create sentences using words containing the new morpheme. When she sees a student needing help, she is mindful to speak quietly to that student, not disturbing the others. Christie is wearing a lapel microphone, so what she says is audible to you and not the class.

When she notices that most students have completed their sentences, Christie stirs the pop sticks to cue those still writing to complete their sentences.

Christie doesn't formally conclude sentence writing, as she knows a couple of extended sentence writers are still on the job and doesn't want to stop them. She does, however, begin asking students to read out their sentences. This is a powerful cue to those still writing to decide not to add another clause to their sentence!

Tip 9: Keep feedback private and quiet



Keep your voice down when correcting a student's work during spelling or dictation tasks.

Your voice will compete with information other students are trying to hold in their working memory and cause cognitive overload.

Teaching Tips

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Literacy Program



Word Sums

mans + ion = re + ject + ion =
sub + tract + ion = fract + ion =
re + flect + ion = pre + script + ion =

Word Sums and Words to Read

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

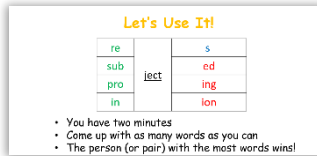
EXTENSION IDEAS:

Ask students to find and annotate any words where a spelling rule has been applied. Has an 'e' been dropped, or is a final consonant on the root doubled?

Can they label definitions of the morphemes in any of the words?

Can students think of other words with the target morpheme and add them to their list?

Christie chooses 'prescription' to do a morphemic analysis with students. This incorporates a pair share. Be careful which words you do this with because not all words lend themselves this easily to this kind of analysis. It's a good idea to see whether you can do an easy morpheme analysis yourself on a word before selecting it to ask the class.



Let's Use It!

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

This range of engaging activities gets students working individually or in pairs to apply their knowledge. Activities can be completed on student whiteboards or in lexicon student workbooks. Teachers can check for understanding during the lesson or collect workbooks for marking.

Although this class has played this particular "Let's Use It" game many times, Christie still goes through the routine of setting up and explaining the task.

"Okay today we are going to use it in this way, so you need to close your book.

You need to (with a partner), get your whiteboard out.

Only one of you needs your whiteboard. Decide who.

you need a texta.

you need to work together.

you've got two minutes.

I like that ... we've got some rock paper scissors over there to see who's going to go in first."

Like always, some students want to get started before the timer, but permitting this is corrosive to the norm of all students beginning on the timer, so Christie (in a relaxed voice) reasserts the norm that everyone waits for the start signal. No need for heavy moralising!

"Some people are already ... shh don't do that yet!

Okay, when we start the timer, you've got 2 minutes to write as many words as you can."

Christie circulates the class, quickly correcting a pair in which both students are recording the words and giving feedback and encouragement to pairs.

"Just one from your pair."

Then Christie counts the last few seconds down with the on-screen timer.

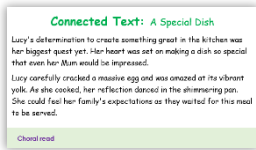
"3 -2 -1, okay, stop.

Pens down. You've got 30 seconds to have a look at your words (make sure you rub off any that are not real words).

Decide together if you think they're all real.

Count your words."

After the time is up, Christie checks the number of words pairs have come up with.



Connected Text

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

The text includes words from Phonology lessons (Phases 2-4) and the new morpheme.

Each new morpheme has a connected text. It can be found on the downloadable Connected Text document for the corresponding Phase and Week. This is in the Resources section of the platform. You can search using the name of the morpheme. The Connected Texts can be used for fluency reading pairs, homework, and Tier 2 reading groups to support students' reading.

"3 - 2 - 1 one and eyes to the board. The very last thing today, we are going to read the connected text, and ... surprise, surprise ... what sort of words are going to be in this text?"

Words that have suffix I...O...N!

What does suffix I...O...N mean again?"

The class chorally say the definition of suffix ION and make the gesture.

After the choral read is completed, Christie pulls some pop sticks and asks students to find words with the suffix ION in the connected text.