

# ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Layers of Language:  
Practice Reading and Spelling Long Content Area Words

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## ~ Module 13, Session 12 ~ Lecture Notes

### Reading long, unfamiliar words:

Students need lots of practice reading long words. Provide long lists of content area words for students. They can practice the words in pairs, or small groups. Use the following strategy for unknown words:

1. Students look for the morpheme units: Anglo-Saxon or Latin prefixes, roots, suffixes, Greek combining forms, or single words making up Anglo-Saxon compound words.
2. If readers can't find a morpheme, or if they find the morphemes, but still can't read the word, they should try to divide the word into syllables.
3. If neither morpheme patterns nor syllable division works, sound out letter-by-letter using letter-sound correspondences.

Words such as the following can be written on the board, on a transparency, or on worksheets for students to read.

understandable	preventive
reduction	accumulation
microscope	phonograph
thunderhead	exclusive
surrounded	posture
consideration	desegregation
benediction	tremendous
autobiography	flamboyant
memorandum	incredulous
acquaintance	extraordinary

Students should try to identify the language origin based on letter-sound correspondences and morphemes.

### **Spelling long, unfamiliar words:**

A similar strategy should be used when students try to spell words.

Students should:

1. Repeat the word aloud, and listen for common morphemes.
2. Listen for syllables and count them aloud or silently. Students say the word in syllables as they spell.
3. Use letter-sound correspondences if necessary.

As the teacher dictates each word, be sure the students follow the preceding process. Students may find it useful to say the base word in a long word such as *competition*. By knowing that the base form is *compete*, they will be able to hear the long *e* sound that is schwaed in the noun.

Students should check their spellings before teachers dictate the next word, phrase or sentence.

***NOTE:*** *The accompanying handout lists numerous Latin and Greek based words found in high school literature and content area textbooks. Another handout includes important Latin and Greek number prefixes that may be helpful.*