

STRATEGY LESSON: SPOT AND DOT

Spot and Dot is a strategy students can use that when they are having difficulty seeing patterns in words and identifying separate syllables. The Spot and Dot Strategy is a scaffold that helps students discover where syllables begin and end and whether the syllable is open--ends with a vowel-- or closed-- ends with a consonant (Cheney & Cohen, 1999).

Spot and Dot

1. Spot the vowels.
2. Dot the vowels.
3. Count the letters between the vowels
4. If there are two letters, split them. One goes to the left. The other one goes to the right. This makes a closed syllable so the vowel is usually short. Example: *up-per*
5. If there is one consonant between two vowels, the consonant usually goes to the right. This makes an open syllable so the vowel is usually long. Example: *o-pen*
6. If this doesn't make a word that you know or a real word, try moving the consonant to the left. This will make it a closed syllable so that the vowel is usually short. Example: *rob-in, wag-on* (Cheney & Cohen, 1999).

Note: Letters in a digraph stay together. They are not split. Example: *pan-ther, broth-er*

Objective

Students will use the spot and dot strategy to help them identify separate syllables.

Teaching Spot and Dot

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 Spot and Dot, start with two-syllable words. Then gradually introduce words that have three or more syllables. Spot and Dot is a scaffold. Ultimately, students should be able to break a word into syllables and reconstruct the word mentally, without physically noting syllables.

Model the process of using Spot and Dot. As feasible, show how you have used Spot and Dot with words that were challenging to you or which you had never seen. With

the class, use Spot and Dot on words such as the following:

napkin

navy

falcon

gallop

amber

Guided Practice

Working alone or in pairs have students Spot and Dot the following words:

raven

attend

baby

babble

magnet

major

mattress

rattlesnake

taken

wander

Application

Have students apply the strategy in their reading. As students encounter difficult multisyllabic words, prompt them to apply the Spot and Dot strategy: Where are the vowels? Dot the vowels. How many letters are between the vowels? How does the first syllable end? Is it open or closed? How do you say the first syllable? How do you say the second syllable? The third syllable?

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.

