

## Structural Analysis

Definition: Structural analysis is the process of recognizing unknown words by using knowledge of word structure.

As a result of structural analysis instruction, students learn that **signal** and **signature** share the same base or root word, **sign**.

Components: As students progress through word study instruction, they are introduced to compound words, affixes, and contractions.

- Compound words are words consisting of smaller words.
  - The meanings of the smaller words are retained to contribute to the meaning of the larger word. Dividing compound words, such as **tomcat** and **sunshine** into their component words, can reinforce syllabication.
- Affixes (e.g., prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings) are one or more letters attached to the beginning or ending of a base word.
  - Although affixes may not always add a syllable to the root word, common prefixes and suffixes should be introduced to help students recognize unknown words simply by segmenting the word into its base unit and other word parts.
  - Inflectional endings like **-s**, **-es**, **-ing**, and **-ed** appear at the end of words and are the easiest affixes to learn. Inflectional endings indicate the grammatical form of words, such as verb tense, part of speech, and number. Students learn that some inflections have more than one pronunciation. For example, the inflectional ending <ed> is pronounced differently in words like **helped**, **poured**, and **pleaded**.
- Contractions, like most compounds, are composed of two words. But contractions, unlike compounds, are shortened by replacing a letter or letters with an apostrophe.

(ITRA, 2000; Fry, Kress, & Fountoukidis, 2000; Heilman, 1998)

"The student is expected to use structural clues to recognize words."

TEKS

1.8

2.5

## Guidelines for Teaching Structural Analysis

Guidelines for teaching structural analysis include the following:

- Use the critical features of effective instruction.
- Present initial instruction using regularly spelled words or previously learned irregular words.
  - Students use contractions, affixes, and compound words all the time in speech, so they should be able to understand structural analysis if instruction is tied to those words they use on a regular basis. Select regularly spelled words from those in the students' speaking vocabulary; these words can be taught first, along with irregular words that the children identify at sight.
- Provide sequential instruction that proceeds from simple to complex. Struggling students require explicit, sequential instruction that builds on previously learned concepts. A sample sequence of instruction for compound words, affixes, and contractions is the following:
  - Compound words are taught beginning with easiest, followed by more difficult ones.
    - Words with short vowels (e.g., **catnap**, **bathtub**)
    - Words with vowel/consonant combinations (e.g., **cupcake**, **weekday**) including words the students have already learned or are being taught
    - Multisyllabic words (e.g., **newspaper**, **watermelon**)
  - Affixes are taught beginning with the easiest and most common endings, followed by more difficult ones.
    - Inflectional endings (e.g., **-s**, **-es**, **-ed**, **-ing**) which are the easiest affixes to learn (Spanish inflectional endings are **-mente**, **-ito**, **-s**, and **-es**.)
    - Common prefixes (e.g., **re-**, **un-**) and suffixes (e.g., **-ly**, **-est**, **-er**) (Common Spanish prefixes and suffixes are **re-**, **con-**, **-ivo**, and **-oso**.)
    - Less frequently used affixes (e.g., **dis-**, **non-**, **in-**, **-ness**, **-tion**, **-able**)

- Contractions are generally taught as you would teach irregular words if the words do not follow regular spelling patterns. Otherwise, teach contractions using principles of decoding, with the added feature of the apostrophe in a specific location. Types of contractions include the following:
  - Present tense “to be” (e.g., **am, is, are**) contractions (e.g., **I’m, he’s, they’re**)
  - Common “not” and “will” contractions (e.g., **can’t, she’ll**)
  - “Have,” “had,” and “would” contractions (e.g., **they’ve, she’d**)
- Include a number of activities (e.g., locating compounds, contractions, and affixes in reading passages; sorting words into categories) to generalize skills to connected print in sentences, paragraphs, and passages. Such activities serve two purposes:
  - Structural analysis instruction is reinforced.
  - The readers see the words in the context of connected print, where they will have to apply the clues most often.

Structural Analysis Clues
1. Is the word made up of two words (compound words)?
2. Does the word have an apostrophe?
3. Does the word have a prefix, suffix, or inflectional ending?

- Integrate spelling instruction to support structural analysis instruction.
  - When using a spelling textbook or worksheets, try to match spelling lessons to structural analysis instruction.
- Lead to automatic word recognition through multiple opportunities to read and reread.
  - Students with developed skills find reading more enjoyable and spend more time reading.
- Use knowledge of word order (syntax) and context to support structural analysis and confirm word meaning.
  - Words identified in connected text can be confirmed by examining their place within a sentence.

(Durkin, 1989; Heilman, 1998; Miller, 1993)

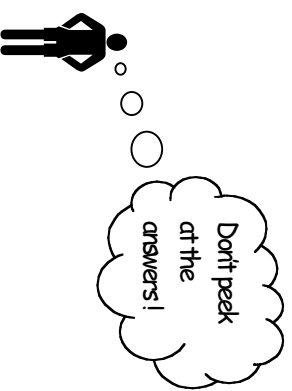
## Activity to Reinforce Structural Analysis Guidelines

Fill in the chart below using words from the word bank. Your choices should reflect a possible sequence of instruction based on the guidelines for teaching structural clues.

Possible sequence of instruction	Earlier	Later
Suffixes (including inflectional endings)	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Prefixes	1. 2.	1. 2. 3. 4.
Contractions	1. 2.	1. 2.
Compound words	1. 2.	1. 2.

### Word Bank

nonsense      catfish      he'd      jumping      distrust  
 dismount      I've      redo      gumdrop      inactive  
 goodness      unlike      smelled      stamps      you're  
 reachable      anything      it's      grandmother      invention



## Activity to Reinforce Structural Analysis Guidelines: Answer Key

Possible sequence of instruction	Earlier	Later
Suffixes (including inflectional endings)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. stamps</li> <li>2. smelled</li> <li>3. jumping</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. goodness</li> <li>2. invention</li> <li>3. reachable</li> </ol>
Prefixes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. unlike</li> <li>2. redo</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. distrust</li> <li>2. nonsense</li> <li>3. dismount</li> <li>4. inactive</li> </ol>
Contractions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. it's</li> <li>2. you're</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I've</li> <li>2. he'd</li> </ol>
Compound words	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. gumdrop</li> <li>2. catfish</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. grandmother</li> <li>2. anything</li> </ol>