COACHED LESSONS: TEACHING LONG-VOWEL PATTERNS

Long vowels represent a major cognitive leap for many students. No longer can they decode a word letter by letter. Now they must discern final-"e" and digraph (ai, ee, etc.) patterns. In addition, they now face decoding tasks in which the vowel letter(s) might represent a long or a short vowel or another sound. While they were working at the short-vowel level, the vowels, except for some high-frequency words, represented short sounds. To help students make this difficult transition to decoding long-vowel words, include demonstrations, explanations, and exercises that help students see the impact of final "e" or a digraph.

COACHED LESSON: INTRODUCING LONG-"A" PATTERNS

Step 1: Introducing Final-"e" Patterns
To introduce long-"a" words, show students how the final "e" marks the vowel as being long. Holding up a can, tell students that you are going to change the can into a cane (hold up a cane). Ask students to guess how you might do that. Explain that you are not actually going to change the can, but that you are going to change the word can. Write can on the board. Adding "e", explain that the word is now cane. Write the following words on the board and have "e" added so that they become long-vowel words: cap, tap, mad, hat, plan, man.

Lead students to see that short "a" is spelled with an "a" in the middle or beginning of the word as in cap or at, but long "a" has an "e" at the end of the word as a marker as in cape and ate. Explain that long "a" is spelled a__e, with the blank being the space for a consonant letter. Point to a__e and have students read it. Ask students to tell what letter would need to be placed in the a__e blank to make the word ape. Point to a__e as you say /ay/. As you add p, say the word, emphasizing a__e as you say, “aaaape.” Have students tell what letter would need to be added to ape to make cape.

Step 2: Guided Practice
Have students complete exercises similar to the following in which they choose between CVC and CVE words:
1. The (man, mane) sees a lion.
2. The lion has a (man, mane).
3. The (man, mane) is the hair around the lion’s face and on its neck.
4. Lions like to rest in the (shad, shade) of a tree.
5. Lions (can, cane) hunt for food.
Step 3: Application

Having introduced the concept of final $e$ as a long-vowel marker, present specific long-$e$ patterns, such as $-ake$. 
Teaching the -ake Pattern

Step 1: Building Words by Adding the Onset (Consonant)

Explain to students that they will be learning the -ake (cake) pattern. First write a__e on the board and remind students that a__e spells /ay/. As you add k to a__e, say the sound of k and then say “ake.” This builds phonemic awareness and helps students to create a bond between the spelling of -ake and its sounds. Point out that the final e marks the vowel as being long. Tell students that you want to form some words. Ask them to tell what letter needs to be placed in front of -ake to make the word bake. After adding b to -ake, have volunteers read the word. Directly under the word bake write -ake. Pronounce the rime as you write it. Have students tell what sound -ake makes and what letter should be placed in front of -ake to make the word make. Introduce take, wake, lake, cake, and snake in this same way. (When presenting cake, note that c has a /k/ pronunciation in this word. When presenting snake, note that it begins with two sounds and letters. Also elongate the cluster: sssnnnnake.) To stress the separate sounds in this and other clusters, hold up a finger as each sound is pronounced: /s/-/n/-/ay/-/k/. Have students read all the words.

Step 2: Adding the Rime

To make sure that students have a thorough grasp of both key parts of the word, the onset and the rime, write b on the chalkboard and have students say the sound it stands for. Then ask them to tell what you would add to b to make bake. Say the sounds of a-e and k as you add them. After adding -ake to b, say the word sound by sound and then as a whole. Pointing to b, say /b/; pointing to a-e, say /ay/, pointing to k, say /k/. Running your hand under the whole word, say “bake.” (Saying consonant sounds in isolation distorts them, but it helps youngsters, especially those who are having difficulty detecting individual sounds in words, make the necessary connections between letters and sounds.) Present make, lake, cake, take, wake, and snake in the same way. Then have students read all the words.

Step 3: Introducing the Model Word

A model word is an easy, high-frequency word used to provide an example of a particular pattern. In most instances, model words can be pictured so that if a student forgets a pattern the student can use the drawing of the model word as a memory aid. Model words are placed on a Model Words Chart, along with an illustration, for future reference. Have students add cake, the model word for the -ake pattern, to the chart. Draw or paste an illustration of a cake next to the word cake. Explain to students that they will be using the chart to help them figure out hard words. Tell them that if they have trouble with other -ake words, they can go to the chart and see what sound -ake makes by looking at the model word. Later, if
students have difficulty with \textit{-ake} words, encourage them to look for a part of the word they can say \textit{(ake)} or, if that doesn’t work, have them refer to the chart and compare the unknown word to the model word \textit{cake}.

**Step 4: Guided Practice**

**Sorting**

Because it is active and helps students make discoveries about words and patterns, sorting is a powerful teaching device. Sorting helps students see what is the same about the words and what is different. It helps them to discriminate between short-\textit{a} and long-\textit{a} words. Have students sort short-\textit{a} and long-\textit{a} words. Set up two columns. Use the illustration of a cake and a tack and/or the words \textit{cake} and \textit{tack} as headings for the sorting columns. Mix up \textit{-ake} and \textit{-ack} word cards and have students then place words in the appropriate column. When placing a word, the students should say the column model word and then the word that is being placed to make sure that the word being placed rhymes or has the same sound as the model column word. After placing a word, the student reads all the words in that column. After all the words have been placed, the student explains what is the same about all the words in a column. If a word is misplaced, ask the student to tell why the word was placed in that column. This will help you understand the student’s thinking and clarify misconceptions. Students can sort as a whole class activity, in groups, or in pairs. However, they should only sort known words. Have students sort the following words: \textit{bake, cake, fake, Jake, lake, make, rake, take, wake, flake, snake, and back, Jack, Mack, pack, sack, tack, black, snack, track}.

As an alternative to having students sort word cards, you can write on the board the words to be sorted and have students sort the words on paper divided into columns. Each column would be headed with a column model word. Sorts can be open or closed. In a closed sort, you provide the column model words. In an open sort, students decide on what basis to sort words. Students can sort individually or in pairs.

**Making a Sentence**

In this exercise, students are asked to place in correct order the words in a scrambled sentence that contains at least one of the pattern words. In addition to building word recognition, this activity also fosters awareness of sentence elements and builds sentence comprehension. To introduce the exercise, read the directions and lead students to see that the words in the sentence are in the wrong order. Discuss steps they might take to put the words in the right order: read all the words in the sentence, look for the word that is capitalized because that will be the first word, and change the order of the words until the sentence makes sense. If students find a particular sentence troublesome, have them put each word on a
separate piece of paper or card so they can change the order of the words around more easily. Once students become accustomed to this activity, it might be completed and/or checked with a partner.

Possible scrambled sentence: cake Jake bake a will.

Application
Although the activities provided students with varied practice with the -ake pattern, it is essential that they apply this knowledge. This may take the form of writing original stories, dictating group or individual experience stories, and, most important of all, reading rhymes or appropriate children's books. It would be helpful, too, if patterns were reinforced during social studies, science, music, or art activities. Specific extension and application activities are listed below.

Reading
Reading is the best practice. Select books or rhymes that reinforce the pattern that has been presented. Make sure that the materials selected are on the appropriate level. Don’t select books that present patterns that students haven’t been taught. Go over any words that might be unfamiliar to students and prepare students for the reading by discussing the title and cover illustration and having them make predictions about the book’s content. You might do a text walk as described on p. 378-379 in the text. Possible books for introducing the –ake pattern are listed below.


Shared Reading for Fluency
Traditional as well as contemporary rhymes and songs can be used to reinforce the –ake pattern. Rhymes can be made into transparencies or written on chart paper or on the board and share read with students. In a shared reading, you read an enlarged copy as students follow along. You read the piece a second time and invite students to read along with you (see pages 136-139 in the text). Individual copies can be provided to students so they can practice reading them on their own or with partners and at home with family members. This is an excellent activity for building fluency. The following pieces can be share read and partner read in order to provide added practice with the -ake pattern.

“Rub-Dub-Dub”
“As I Was Walking Down the Lake”

Writing
Have students draw a picture of and write a sentence telling about something that they would like to make. To help students prepare for this assignment, discuss some things that they might like to make. Write their responses on the board.

Spelling
Spelling is especially helpful to students who are struggling to learn patterns. Dictate the *ake* words that appear below. Dictate each word in isolation, in a sentence, and then in isolation once more. Before students write a word, have them say it slowly so they can hear all the sounds and have them say each sound as they write the letter that spells it. Remind students that long *a* is spelled *a__e*.
Spelling words: *cake, make, take*

Assessment
Note how well students are able to sort and spell long-*a* words and especially how well they are able to read long-*a* words when they encounter them in running text.
Rub-a-Dub-Dub

Rub-a-dub-dub,
Three men in a tub,
The butcher, the baker,
And the candlestick maker.

As I Was Walking Down the Lake

As I was walking down the lake,
I met a little rattlesnake.
I gave him so much jelly-cake,
It made his little belly ache.
COACHED LESSON: -ALE, -AIL PATTERNS

Teaching the Pattern
Review -ake pattern. Using the procedure outlined in the -ake lesson, introduce the -ale pattern. Explain to students that they will be learning the ale (whale) pattern. Present the following -ale words: whale, tale. First write a__e on the board and remind students that a__e spells /ay/. As you add l to a__e, say the sound of l and then say “ale.” Point out that the final e marks the vowel as being long. Ask students to tell what two letters need to be placed in front of ale to make the word whale. Have several students read the word. Introduce tale and male by having onsets added to -ale. Then have students read the words: whale, tale, male. Discuss the meaning of tale and show students titles of books or stories that use the word tale so they can see the ale spelling of the word. Also discuss the meaning of male, if this is unknown.

Writing the onsets on the board, have students say the sounds that the onsets stand for and add the rimes to form the pattern words. Writing wh on the board, have students say the sound it stands for. Then ask them to tell what you would need to add to wh to make whale. Say the sounds of a-e and l as you add them. Have the other ale words formed in this way: tale, male. Have students read the words.

After -ale words have been taught, present the following -ail words: nail, mail, sail, tail, trail. Explain to students that they will be learning the ail (nail) pattern. Introduce the concept of the vowel digraph spelling of long-vowel words. Write the words tale and tail on the board. Explain that both are pronounced the same way. Point out that e at the end of a word is often used to mark the vowel as being long. Explain that another way of marking a vowel as being long is to place two vowel letters side by side as in tail. Discuss the different meanings of the two words. Place the following homophone pairs on the board and discuss them with students: male-mail, pale-pail, sale-sail.

Write the digraph ai on the board and remind students that it makes the sound /ay/. Pointing to ai, ask students what letter would need to be added to /ai/ to make the rime ail. As you write l say /l/ and then, running your hand under the rime, say /ayl/. Point out that the two letters ai standing together mark the vowel as being long. Ask students to tell what letter needs to be placed in front of ail to make the word nail. Have the words mail and sail formed by having onsets added to -ail. For trail, ask what letter needs to be added at the beginning of tail to make the word trail. Emphasize the beginning sounds of trail as you say it. Have several students read all the ail words: nail, mail, sail, tail, trail.

Present -ail, -ale, -age, and -ace words in a mixed list so students process all the letters in the words: whale, page, tail, face, mail, race, sail. Pointing out that whale is the model word for the -ale pattern and nail the model word for the -ail pattern, have students place them on the Model Words Chart. Later, if students have difficulty with -ale or -ail words, encourage them to look for a part of the word they can say (ale, ail) or, if that doesn’t work, have them refer to the Model Words Chart and compare the unknown
word to the model words whale or nail.

**Step 4: Guided Practice**

(See the -ake lesson for suggestions for conducting the following activities.)

**Sorting**

Have students sort -ake, -ale, and -ail words: bake, cake, make, take, and wake and whale, tale and nail, mail, sail, tail, trail. When sorting -ail and -ale words, they would sort them by both sound and spelling so that they would be placed in separate columns.

**Making a Sentence**

Place the following on the board or on cards and have students reassemble them into a sentence:

big tail The whale has big a .

**Application**

**Reading**


**Shared Reading for Fluency**

The following piece can be share read and partner read in order to provide added practice with the -ale and -ail patterns:

“If You Ever Meet a Whale”

**Writing**

Have students draw a picture of and write a sentence telling about a place that they would like to sail to. To help students prepare for this assignment, discuss some places that they might like to sail to. Write their responses on the board.

**Spelling**

mail, male, tail, tale
Assessment

Note how well students are able to sort and spell long-a words and especially how well they are able to read long-a words when they encounter them in running text.
If You Ever Meet a Whale

If you ever ever ever ever ever,
If you ever ever ever ever meet a whale,
You must never never never never never,
You must never never never never never touch its tail. For if you ever ever ever ever ever ever,
For if you ever ever ever ever ever ever
touch its tail,
You will never never never never never,
You will never never never never meet another whale.