



Discover Morph Mastery

About me



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1. What is morphology?



The structure of English orthography (the written word)

Morphology

System of language by which words are structured according to units of meaning called morphemes

Phonology

System of language by which words are structured according to units of sound called phonemes

Etymology

History and origin of the meaning and form of words



Examples of morphemes

PREFIX

re-
un-
dis-
mis-

ROOT

run
fit
mount
take

SUFFIX

-ing
-est
-ed
-s



Examples of morphemes

PREFIX

in-
sub-
auto-
inter-

ROOT

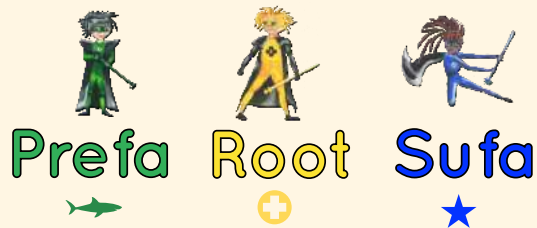
act
divide
mob-
person

SUFFIX

-ive
-ion
-ile
-al



Morph Mastery uses characters, symbols and colours to help learners discriminate between prefixes, suffixes and roots.



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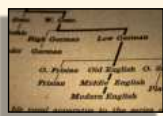
Words can be separated into morphemes...and morphemes can be put together to build words.



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Layers of the English language (etymology)



There are three main layers: Old English, Latin and Greek.

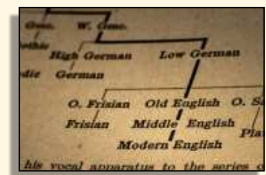
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Old English

The most basic and frequently used words in our language derive from Old English; for example **say**, **when**, **come**, **that**, **play**, **look**, **grow**, **child**.



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Latin

The next layer of language derives from Latin; words we use regularly but words whose origin are less familiar. For example, **cent** comes from the Latin word for hundred and is the root for many words; **centipede**, **century**, **centimetre**. **Rupt** means to tear and leads to **rupture**, **interrupt**, **erupt**, **bankrupt**.



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Greek

The third layer of language is Greek, which involves more sophisticated language, often words at the highest level of vocabulary, linked to education, science, maths, and culture. For example **pneu** means air and leads to words like **pneumatic** and **pneumonia**. **Micr** means small and leads to words like **microscope** and **microphone**.



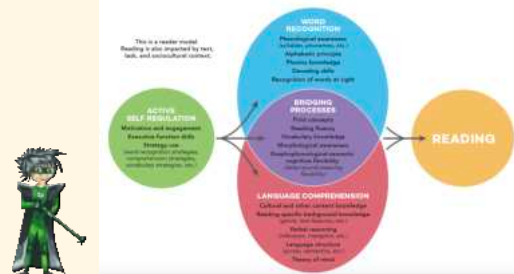
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2. Why does morphology matter?



ACTIVE VIEW OF READING



N. K. Duke and K. B. Cartwright, 2021, Reprinted with permission. Note: Several wordings in this model are adopted from Scarborough (2001).

What do we know from research so far?

1. There is a gap in attainment in UK schools and teaching strategies do not fully meet need.



Around one in four pupils in the UK enter secondary school below the expected reading, and writing standards, a gap that typically widens with age (Department for Education [DfE], 2025; Ricketts, Mok, & Nation, 2020).

Older struggling readers rarely receive targeted support beyond phonics, yet the secondary curriculum demands mastery of morphologically complex vocabulary (Cain & Oakhill, 2014).

What do we know from research so far?

2. Morphological teaching impacts literacy outcomes.

Studies consistently show that morphological awareness predicts word reading, spelling, and comprehension independently of phonological skill and vocabulary (Carlisle, 2000; Deacon & Levesque, 2024).

Meta-analyses by Bowers, Kirby, and Deacon (2010) and Goodwin and Ahn (2013) report medium-sized effects on decoding and spelling. Controlled studies demonstrate that small-group instruction improves multisyllabic word reading, spelling, and motivation (Toste et al., 2019; Filderman & Toste, 2022; Ardanouy, Zesiger, & Delage, 2024).



What do we know from research so far?

3. This impact is especially true for lower attaining readers and it increases through schooling.

Meta-analyses show significant positive effects on literacy, particularly for older and lower-attaining readers (Goodwin & Ahn, 2013; Bowers, Kirby, & Deacon, 2010).

The relationship between morphological awareness and comprehension grows stronger across development, as vocabulary becomes increasingly derived and morphologically dense (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2012).



What do we know from research so far?

4. Less is known about the exact mechanisms within morphological teaching that influence literacy.

The developmental mechanisms by which morphological awareness grows and influences reading and spelling are less clear. Recent longitudinal work suggests a bidirectional relationship: growth in MA promotes comprehension, while increased reading experience further strengthens MA (Levesque, Kieffer, & Deacon, 2021).

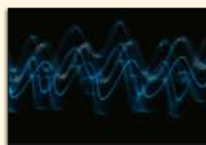


Phonics is not the full story!



There is an explanation for every English spelling and exceptions are very rare. It just depends on what the rules are.

Phonology



r + i + f + l + e + c + t + i + d

Morphology



re- + flect + -ed



English does not always follow phonic rules!

Kicked Strict
Kissed Mist
Hunted Horrid



Roosevelt & Simplified Spelling Board 1906



Morphology explains spelling.

Comftabl?

Comfortable

Excervait?

excavate



Why does really have two ls but dearly has only one?

really

dearly



mist





dis- gust

dis- cuss -ed

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A morphological approach enables dyslexic learners, and those with phonological and/or working memory difficulties, to acquire fluency beyond phonics.



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Nature
The nature and developmental trajectory of dyslexia depends on multiple genetic and environmental influences.

Manifestation
Dyslexia is a set of processing difficulties that affect the acquisition of reading and spelling. The most commonly observed cognitive impairment in dyslexia is a difficulty in phonological processing (i.e. in phonological awareness, phonological processing speed or phonological memory). However, phonological difficulties do not fully explain the variability that is observed. Working memory, processing speed and orthographic skills can contribute to the impact of dyslexia.

The Delphi Definition of Dyslexia, 2025, Carroll, J., Holden, C., Kirby, P., Snowling, M.J., & Thompson, P.A. (2025) Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry

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Impact
In dyslexia, some or all aspects of literacy attainment are weak in relation to age, standard teaching and instruction, and level of other attainments. Across languages and

Variance and co-occurrence
Dyslexic difficulties exist on a continuum and can be experienced to various degrees of severity. Dyslexia can affect the acquisition of other skills, such as mathematics, reading comprehension or learning another language. Dyslexia frequently co-occurs with one or more other developmental difficulties, including developmental language disorder, dyscalculia, ADHD, and developmental coordination disorder.

The Delphi Definition of Dyslexia, 2025, Carroll, J., Holden, C., Kirby, P., Snowling, M.J., & Thompson, P.A. (2025) Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry

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3. Strategies



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Resources are free downloadables with the book or can be purchased ready made from Autopress Education (www.autopresseducation.co.uk)

Use code Morph10 for a site wide discount

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Using tactile resources to teach morphemes

Morpheme cards help with structure

Word structure

Using colour to separate words into their morphemes can be helpful.

Using portals

Here the root is fit with the double consonant rule.

Playing games to support learning

Morph Connect

Use the Affix Cards and Root Cards in your pack. Place both sets of cards face down in the piles.

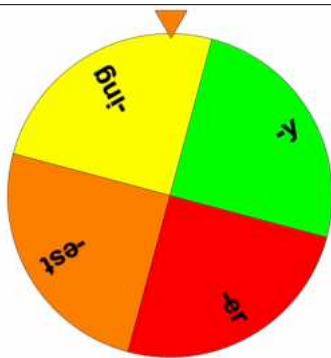
Take turns to pick up one card from each pile. If you can make a word and write it with correct spelling, get a point.

Spinner games

Choose one root:

fit
run
kind
wet

Online spinner base -
www.superteachertools.us
(others are available)



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Spinner games

Choose one root:

merge
flect/flex
ject
para

Online spinner base -
www.superteachertools.us
(others are available)



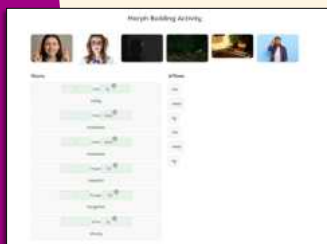
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Morph Building (available on Groups intervention course)



Printed worksheet

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Online activity

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Exploring words through Word Mastery

comfortable

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COMPANION
WEBSITE

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Are there any bits of the word that are not spelled as they sound?

Can you put the word into a sentence?



In which subject or curriculum area(s) might you use this word?



Has the sound of the root changed at all when the prefix or suffix was added?



Does the spelling of the word give you any clues about its meaning or origins?



Has the spelling of the root changed when the prefix or suffix was added?



Would you use this word formally, informally or both?



Can you think of different meanings for the word?



Which morphological families does the word belong to?



Sentence work

its help that
churches are tidier than
parties.

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Text work:
Word
Espionage
(reading)

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When to England, Mr. Selby, said the...
to Alvin's father.
Alvin... up at the tall office the office...
down at Alvin. "Have a good holiday now."
"Thank you," said Alvin's father. He took Alvin's...
hand and began to hand for the baggage...
Alvin... his father's hand and...
"Where, you're going to school," he said, "to school...
with..."
His father... to him and spoke as if he was...
about going. "What did I tell you? From now...
on, you must try to speak English, you must practise...
your English - all right, young man?"
Alvin... "Yes, father," he said.
His father... was with. "English, I said."
"Yes, Father."
"Now what did you say?"
Alvin... back towards...
"Father, this man who... at the... what...
was wrong with him?"



Word
Espionage
(writing)

I am writing to you to inform you that the Government are aware that 60 of your two of your your prisoners have absconded Camp Green Lake.

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Spelling rules: these start in
Year 2

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-es	If root ends in y change to i	cries	crease	cries
-ed	If root ends in y change to i	dread	dreed	dried
-er	If root ends in y change to i	luckier	luckes	luckier
-est	If root ends in y (see sound) change to i	runniest	runnest	runniest
-ness	If root ends in y change to i	bandiness	✓	bandiness
-ful	If root ends in y change to i	plentiful	✓	plentiful
-less		penniless	✓	penniless
-ly		angrily	✓	angrily

SUFFIXING RULES EXPLAINED

What changes? Why? Examples Exceptions

y - i rule

If the root ends in a consonant + y, change the y to an i

The y is acting as a vowel; this keeps the vowel sound once when the suffix is added.

reply - replied
re- + play + -ed

copy - copied
glory - glorious
defy - defiance

If the suffix begins with i do not change the y. E.g. crying, not string.

If the y in the root follows a vowel, it doesn't change when you add a suffix. E.g. play - ed + played.

double consonant rule

If the vowel sound in the root is short, double the root's final consonant.

This keeps the vowel sound short.

fit - unfitter
un- + fit + -er

run - running
plan - planner
stop - unstoppable

For 2-syllable roots, the first consonant is only doubled if the second syllable is stressed. E.g. be GIN - to GINning VIS - VISing

drop e rule

If the word ends in a consonant + single silent e, drop the e before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel.

When the suffix is added, the final e is no longer needed.

use - misused
mis- + use + -ed

name - naming
manage - manager
complete - competence

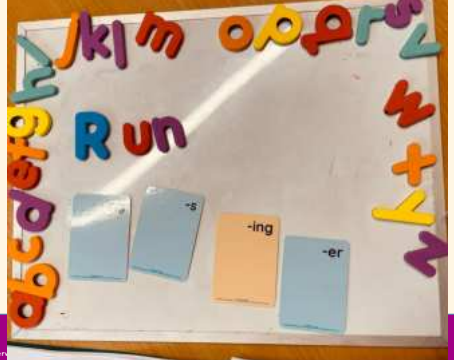
Sometimes the e is kept to protect pronunciation. E.g. age - ageing, notice - noticeable.

If the suffixed word looks like a different word, sometimes the e is kept (e.g. -dying, not dying).

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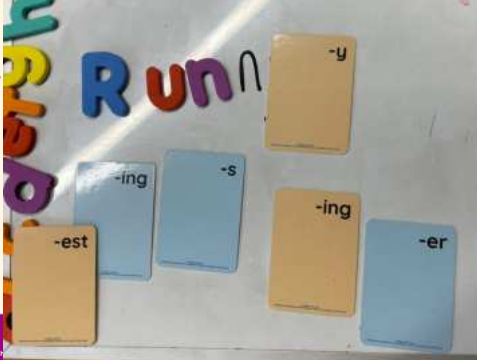
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Morpheme cards help with structure



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Morpheme cards help with structure



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Morpheme cards help with structure

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4. Beyond spelling

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Disciplinary vocabulary
Reflect or refract?

Deflect, reflex, flex, flexible
Fracture, fraction, fractious

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de- fine
from finish
Finish from, put an end to, make a boundary

an-note-ate
to (from ad-)
make a note, note down

dis- cuss
apart shake
Shake apart (cuss as in percussion, concuss)

sum- arise
Gist, total, bring together
make a note, note down

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5. Evidence

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Hertfordshire pilot: % of pupils who made accelerated progress

100%
Reading comprehension

83%
Oral reading fluency

83%
Spelling

67%
Reading accuracy

50%
Single word reading

50%
Writing

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Research project with Glasgow University

Group intervention with 84 students (21 schools) age 10 - 12 in spring and summer term of 2026 with pre and post intervention assessments in January and April. Control group has done DfE approved synthetic phonics intervention.



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“This course has been very beneficial to our secondary setting, bridging the gap between phonics and fluent reading. It's been great to have spelling form part of the intervention, as this is an area that many of our pupils really struggle with. I was questioning if the content and approach might be too primary for us but actually, having completed three lessons, it works very well.”

- Simon Lowe, The Sele School -

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DfE | EALF | C.A. Ed

MORPH MASTERY FEEDBACK

Jane, Teaching Assistant, St Lawrence Primary

“We've had fantastic feedback from teachers about the practice SATs for 10 - teachers are really impressed with children having a go at all the spelling.”

“I love it! A genuine feedback we've seen a growth in confidence, motivation and interest in words.”

www.loouisebygladys.com

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Morph Mastery Intervention Training

Students are really enjoying the activities and variety in learning. I'm very satisfied that I finally have a tool that can help me support my students who have phonics but are still struggling. Thank you, Louise, for always being so responsive and supportive!

Stephanie G., Learning Support Teacher, International Christian School Hong Kong

Morph Mastery Intervention Training

“I found the training really useful and the game ideas are brilliant. I used aspects of it with a small group of two year 6 boys alongside reading practice and their reading ages increased (one by about 5 years in 9 months).”

- Sammie, SENCO & Specialist Teacher -

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MORPH MASTERY FEEDBACK

Sue, Teacher, St Lawrence Primary, Lincs

“When I walk past the groups in session, it's joyful. All the children look forward to their Morph sessions, no one drops their heels.”

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MORPH MASTERY FEEDBACK

Learning support teacher

“The approach of the intervention was so encouraging, there was never a sign of a lack of motivation (even on Friday afternoon)!”

“I love it! A genuine feedback we've seen a growth in confidence, motivation and interest in words.”

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“I have absolutely loved learning a new approach to spelling and reading and I know the boys really enjoyed their time too; they were gutted that it had to finish. They have particularly loved learning without a screen and through so many different games and hands-on activities.”



Morph Mastery Intervention Training

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Morph Mastery Intervention Training

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5. The interventions



Intervention training: 1:1 or groups



Cost = £175 per person
25% discount will be offered to all who signed up for this webinar before June 8th 2026.



Intervention training: 1:1 or groups?



	Who for?	Duration & frequency of lessons	Structure of training course	Differences?
1:1 intervention	Learners with persistent literacy difficulties & specific needs Individuals who are working well below their peers	3 x weekly 30 minutes	6 sessions lasting 1 hour each	Extended focus on morphological awareness (useful for language development)
Group intervention	Groups of learners with literacy difficulties needing tailored support	2 x weekly 45 minutes	5 sessions lasting 125 hours each	Extended focus on vocabulary Online Morph Builder activity



Both interventions...

- ...are multi-sensory, structured, tailored to the learners and incorporate over-learning
- ...are designed for learners with a basic knowledge of phonics (minimum cvc words and some ability to blend phonemes)
- ...are suitable for learners with dyslexia and/or literacy difficulties
- ...are designed for ages 8 - 14 but can be adapted
- ...are informed by assessment and based on the English National Curriculum for spelling
- ...can be delivered by a well qualified TA with oversight from a teacher



Both courses...

- ...are step by step, working through how to assess and plan for a group.
- ...require trainees to work with learners for tasks in between sessions.
- ...are designed to set you up so you have delivered your first lessons by the end of the course.
- ...require no prior knowledge of morphology but a good grasp of English language is essential.



Practical considerations

- Not an off the shelf intervention! Planning time is required but this reduces over time.
- Most resources can be downloaded and made (or purchased from Autopress education). In addition you'll need tactile letters, spinner bases and voice recorders (optional).
- Morph Mastery works best when it impacts classroom practice.





View film footage of Day 1, 2 and 3 lessons for free on my blog.



Phonics Day 1 Lesson



Phonics Day 2 Lesson



Phonics Day 3 Lesson

Thank you for listening!

Please keep in touch.



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