

**Decoding Strategy**

1. Circle prefixes
2. Circle suffixes
3. Underline vowels
4. Use a line to divide the word parts\*   
   *(Follow these guidelines: Each word part has one vowel sound. Look for recognizable parts.)*
5. Say each word part
6. Blend the word
7. If it doesn’t sound like a real word, try different vowel sounds

**Information for Teachers**

* The purpose of the Decoding Strategy is to teach students to see words as a series of word parts as opposed to single sounds.
* Supporting the systematic use of the Decoding Strategy moves students away from the unproductive approach of guessing at unknown words.
* The goal is for students to implement the strategy on their own whenever they come to a word they need to decode.
  + At first this will require teachers prompting them to refer to the checklist repeatedly, but over time they should implement it with minimal to no teacher prompts.
  + *It can take many weeks (4 – 8) before any given student is ready to implement the strategy without prompting.*
  + They may require prompting for even longer as they generalize the strategy to new materials/settings.
* Avoid using the term “words you don’t know” when referring to words that students have difficulty decoding. Students will be hesitant to say they don’t know a word and will often guess at it. Instead, use the term “words you’re not sure of.”

*See Lesson in the WordBuilder Training Module for a demonstration of the Decoding Strategy* [*https://calireads.org/modules/wordbuilder/decoding-strategy/#/*](https://calireads.org/modules/wordbuilder/decoding-strategy/#/)