

# Pedagogy Overview: Word Study

## What is word study?

Word study is the knowledge and recognition of the reliable and recurring patterns in spoken and written language. These patterns include sound-symbol correspondence, syllable types, syllable division patterns, and spelling generalizations and rules, as well as prefixes, roots, combining forms, and suffixes. Words that do not follow reliable patterns (e.g., people, above, once) can be learned and practiced through repeated exposure.

## How do word study skills impact reading proficiency?

Word study skills help students develop accuracy and automaticity so they can focus their cognitive resources on deriving meaning from what they read. By practicing and memorizing recurring letter patterns, students learn to automatically recognize words containing those patterns on the first encounter. This instant word recognition, also called automaticity, leads to fluent reading.

Knowledge of word parts, such as prefixes, roots, combining forms, and suffixes, integrates word study and comprehension. When students are familiar with Latin- and Greek-derived morphemes that are often found in domain-specific vocabulary, they are better able to access information in academic texts.

Perhaps most valuable, word study skills foster the enjoyment of reading. When reading is automatic, students read more, acquire new vocabulary, expand their background and world knowledge, and further develop their comprehension skills, all of which positively impact reading proficiency.

## How does Lexia® PowerUp Literacy® develop word study skills?

Through structured and systematic activities, **Lexia PowerUp Literacy** teaches students to accurately and automatically read multisyllabic words. The goal of word study is to develop accuracy, automaticity, and fluency in reading by focusing on the reliable and recurring patterns in spoken and written words. In the Word Study strand, **Lexia PowerUp Literacy** systematically advances students' knowledge about patterns in English through spiraled instruction.

In the Foundational levels, PowerUp Word Study activities build phonological awareness while also developing sound-symbol knowledge for consonants, digraphs, and short vowels. Students develop an awareness of syllable patterns and apply this knowledge to reading and spelling.

As students progress through the Intermediate and Advanced levels of the Word Study strand, they learn rules for syllable division, spelling generalizations, and Latin- and Greek-derived morphemes. Students practice letter-sound patterns in the context of multisyllabic words similar to the ones they encounter in grade-level texts in multiple content areas.

PowerUp instructional materials, such as Lexia Lessons and Skill Builders, further strengthen newly acquired phonics patterns and word analysis skills. These resources reinforce online learning by providing authentic reading and writing experiences that build decoding skills, promote accurate and automatic word recognition, and boost student motivation and confidence.