

Vocabulary Enrichment — Word Families and Root Words

Base Sheet

Activity Sheet

The child explores how words are related through word families and root words. They discover that knowing one word can help them understand many related words, building a strategy for encountering unfamiliar vocabulary.

What You Need:

- Word family cards or paper strips
- Root word cards
- Prefix and suffix cards
- Paper and pencil
- Colored pencils for word family trees

Steps:

1. 'Did you know that words have FAMILIES — groups of words that are related? If you know one, you can figure out the others!'
2. Start with a word family: play ! plays, played, playing, player, playful, playground, replay.
3. See how they all have PLAY inside? The root word is PLAY, and we add parts to change the meaning.'
4. Introduce prefix and suffix concepts (without those terms yet): re- means again (replay, reread, redo), -ful means full of (playful, helpful, beautiful), -er means one who does (player, teacher, reader).
5. Practice with other roots: help ! helpful, helpless, helping, helper. Read ! reader, reading, reread, readable.
6. The child builds word families from given root words.
7. 'When you see a new word, look for a root you know inside it!'

Work Space:

