



*Divide and Conquer*

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**East Riding SENSS 1998**

# *Divide and Conquer*

*Syllable division and keywords at Key Stages 3 & 4*

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## Foreword

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**This pack was written by experienced teachers and devised for pupils with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) to supplement highly structured literacy programmes eg. Dyslexia Institute Language Plan, Strands, MSL, Alpha to Omega etc. For students who are having continued difficulties in reading and spelling it relates the higher order skills and knowledge found within these programmes to the basic sight vocabulary of core and foundation National Curriculum subjects at key stage 3 & 4.**

***Divide and Conquer* supports proven multisensory techniques. It uses syllabification as a strategy to decode unfamiliar curriculum vocabulary and identify correct spellings. The exercises provide opportunities to develop study skills and establish the meanings of curriculum core vocabulary.**

**Previous knowledge of initial letter sounds, final and initial blends, consonant digraphs, and syllabification is essential. The worksheets may be used individually or with groups using multi-sensory teaching methods.**

**It is intended that *Divide and Conquer* be used as a foundation for further development by teachers and support staff within schools.**

# Introduction

The secondary curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 makes many demands on all pupils. The majority of children in school can learn to read by the use of traditional methods, however some pupils may never really reach their potential. For some pupils the process of reading has become so laboured that they are not sufficiently competent to experience enjoyment from it. Often they guess at or omit words which they cannot recall or build resulting in poor comprehension.

As reading, writing and spelling are closely linked many pupils with special educational needs (SEN) benefit from a structured cumulative approach. The process involves blending letter sounds into syllables, syllables into words, words into phrases and sentences into full prose.

Within the curriculum at Key Stages 3 & 4 syllabification is a strategy that may be used to access subject specific vocabulary. However subject specific vocabulary is "technical language" which cannot be changed. External examining boards recognise this and insist that only the carrier language of questions is altered. It is recognised that considerable restructuring of long sentences may be necessary in some situations eg modification for hearing-impaired pupils. Any changes that interfere with the matching of questions to the mark scheme are unlikely to be acceptable. For the majority of pupils with SEN it remains necessary to provide strategies to facilitate differentiation within individual subjects.

*Divide and Conquer* supports proven multi-sensory techniques and strategies helping pupils with special educational needs, including those with specific learning difficulties. It uses syllabification as a strategy to decode unfamiliar curriculum vocabulary and identify correct spellings. Within the exercises provided there are opportunities to help develop study skills and establish the meanings of curriculum core vocabulary.

It is possible to modify the structure of *Divide and Conquer* to support sight vocabulary of modules in any subject. Any modification should be made by, or under the close supervision of, a teacher with knowledge of syllabification rules. Advice should also be sought from the appropriate subject teacher to ensure that the modified sections carry correct definitions and appropriate sentences.

# Basic rules of syllabification

Unfamiliar multisyllabic words can present great difficulty for the poor reader. Identification of regular patterns of vowels and consonants in words and the way in which the patterns can be divided into separate syllables provides a successful strategy for reading unknown words.

**IMPORTANT:** Ensure that the pupil knows what a syllable is.

**Syllables are the number of beats in a word.**

**Every syllable must have a vowel sound.**

Practice should be given in syllable recognition by beating / clapping out words, identifying the number of syllables within the word and discriminating the syllable sounds.

**IMPORTANT:** The pupil needs to identify the different types of syllable.

It is acknowledged that there are six different kinds of syllable (Kathleen Hickey 1977).

*Divide and Conquer* requires an understanding of the following rules of syllabification.

1. **CLOSED SYLLABLE** eg. **ap** ple, **ig** loo

When a consonant is at the end of the syllable it is a **CLOSED** syllable.

The vowel is a **SHORT** sound:

**a** as in apple;      **e** as in egg;      **i** as in igloo;  
**o** as in orange;      **u** as in umbrella.

2. **OPEN SYLLABLE** eg. **a** pron, **o** pen,

When a syllable ends in a vowel it is an **OPEN** syllable.

The vowel is a **LONG** sound:

**a** as in apron;      **e** as in equal;      **i** as in ivy;  
**o** as in open;      **u** as in uniform.

# Syllable division - patterns for reading

There are patterns which give open and closed syllables.

The patterns are:

(V=Vowel, C=Consonant)

VC / CV	eg. insect	in / sect	VC/CV short i / short e (closed / closed)
V / CV	eg. predict	pre / dict	V / CV long e / short i (open / closed)
V / V	eg. trial	tri / al	V / V long i / short a (open / closed)
VC / V	eg. finish	fin / ish	VC/V short i / short i (closed / closed)

It is essential that the pupil has knowledge of digraphs and consonant blends before attempting syllabification of words containing the pattern **VCCV**.

There are, of course, exceptions to the rules!

## REMEMBER!

By using the rules of syllabification unfamiliar words can be broken into small manageable chunks which can be decoded and read. These syllables can be blended together to make the whole word.

Listen carefully to the spoken word. By taking the 'new' word in smaller pieces (syllables) it is possible to develop a strategy for spelling which at least gives the correct number of syllables in the word, supporting visual memory.

Listening carefully to the spoken word, identifying the number of syllables and discriminating the sounds carefully will aid the spelling of unseen words.

Further information about *Divide and Conquer* is obtainable from the authors at East Yorkshire Special Educational Needs Support Service.

## Reference

Augur Jean & Briggs Suzanne (eds) (1977)  
The Hickey Multisensory Language Course Second Edition

Whurr Publishers









# Words in Maths

v/cv

1. Look for the **v/cv** pattern in the words below.
2. Divide the words into syllables.
3. Write each syllable on the lines and read the word.

Remember every syllable must have a vowel.

eleven	_____	_____	_____
result	_____	_____	
reflection	_____	_____	_____
total	_____	_____	
minus	_____	_____	
ruler	_____	_____	
table	_____	_____	
equal	_____	_____	
protractor	_____	_____	_____
data	_____	_____	
metre	_____	_____	
even	_____	_____	

Can you find the syllables of these words in the grid?

eleven result reflection total minus ruler protractor equal table data

Track each syllable.

e n v l e v k l a e n b s i r e g i c s u l t h a s t r e f e c f l e c p v n t i o  
n d g h t o m e t a l w e r m i m u n n u s l g f r u g n l e p l e r l h j k p  
r o m e t t r a c f k c t o r q g a e s e c q a q u a l d o a m p t a b m  
e b l e d a h y t a e l n v l e v k l a e n b s i r e g i s u l t h a s t r e f e c f l e c p v n t i o n d g h t o m e t a l  
w e r m i m u n n u s l g f r u g n l e p l e r l h j k p r o m e t t r a c f k c t o r q g a e s p e q u a l d o a m p t a b m e b l e  
d a h y t a

