

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“demonstrate and apply spelling knowledge by: (i) spelling multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

When a syllable is not stressed, the vowel often says a quick uh sound called schwa.

The schwa can be spelled with a, e, i, o, or u.

When I find the unstressed syllable, I can hear the schwa and spell the word.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Schwa

from “Serve”

The schwa is the quick uh sound in an unstressed syllable. In about, the a says schwa. In president, the i says schwa. This week we find schwa sounds in words from “Serve.”

This deck teaches **the schwa sound** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Prepare Cluster • Syllable Types

TEKS 4.2(B) • Syllable Types • Week 4 of 36 • Prepare Cluster • Module 4 • slide 1 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES • SLIDE 1 OF 10 •

Introduce the Week

 ~5 min

“ ” = say word-for-word • ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

“This week we are studying syllable types. Our focus is schwa sound syllables. The schwa is the lazy vowel sound in an unstressed syllable. It sounds like a quick uh and can be spelled with any vowel letter.”

▶ Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.

“The schwa is the quick uh sound in an unstressed syllable. In about, the a says schwa. In president, the i says schwa. This week we find schwa sounds in words from “Serve.””

▶ Point to the five thinking levels. Preview the week: we NOTICE, CHOOSE, SHOW, OWN, and DEFEND the pattern.

PREP & MATERIALS: the Schwa slide deck for Prepare Cluster Module 4 . a class or student copy of “Serve” . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name one schwa sound from the reading and tell how they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student how reading the word would change if the schwa sound pattern were different.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a schwa sound."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"demonstrate and apply spelling knowledge by: (i) spelling multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables"

Notice the schwa sound.

Read this sentence from the passage. Find the bold word and the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

"Grandpa explained that **about serving others was the most important lesson of all."**

I CAN | I can notice a schwa sound and name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

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Grade 4 · Prepare Cluster · Syllable Types · Monday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 ·

Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a schwa sound syllable."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task on the slide.

"Listen as I read the sentence. I am looking for the schwa sound syllable in about."

▶ Read the sentence aloud twice. Give think time, then have students copy the word on the NOTICE row of the tracking sheet.

ANSWER KEY: about. The first syllable a is unstressed and says the schwa sound, a quick uh. The second syllable bout is stressed.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain the schwa sound syllable in their own words.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may not identify the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound. Guide them to the pattern.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I know it is a schwa sound syllable? Look for the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about finding the schwa sound syllable. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what the word would sound like without the schwa sound pattern.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a schwa sound."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"demonstrate and apply spelling knowledge by: (i) spelling multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables"

Choose the schwa sound.

Read the sentence. Which word is a schwa sound? Use the rule.

"President Kennedy wanted Americans to think about something important: serving others."

A Americans • **B** important • **C** others

I CAN | I can choose the schwa sound and explain how I know.

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Grade 4 · Prepare Cluster · Syllable Types · Tuesday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 ·

Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a word with a schwa sound syllable."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task on the slide.

"Read the sentence and all three choices. Only one word has the schwa sound pattern."

▶ Have students choose privately, then share with a partner before you reveal the answer on slide 8.

ANSWER KEY: A. Americans. The second syllable mer is stressed, so the first syllable A says schwa, a quick uh. Important also has a schwa in the last syllable, but Americans has the clearest schwa in its first syllable.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound in the answer.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose by ear. Use the rule to check the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two words seem close. How do I pick? Check for the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting the word the rule fits. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to find another schwa sound syllable in the sentence.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how a schwa sound works."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"demonstrate and apply spelling knowledge by: (i) spelling multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables"

Show the schwa sound.

Read the sentence. In the bold word, name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

"President Kennedy did not want people only asking what they could receive."

I CAN | I can show the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

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Grade 4 · Prepare Cluster · Syllable Types · Wednesday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how a schwa sound syllable works."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task on the slide.

"The bold word is president. Name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound."

▶ Take two or three answers. Push students to name all the parts.

ANSWER KEY: president. Pres is stressed. The i in the second syllable says schwa, a quick uh. The unstressed vowel is not long or short.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound in the word.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may name only part of the pattern. Require all parts.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a word have more than one schwa sound syllable? Yes, a longer word can.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining how the rule works. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what would change if the pattern were different.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can find the schwa to read an unstressed syllable."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"demonstrate and apply spelling knowledge by: (i) spelling multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables"

Own it. Read the longer word.

Split the word into its parts. Name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

inauguration
in / au / gu / ra / tion

I CAN | I can find the schwa to read an unstressed syllable.

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Grade 4 · Prepare Cluster · Syllable Types · Thursday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can find the schwa to read an unstressed syllable."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task on the slide.

"Inauguration is a longer word. Split it and read each syllable."

▶ Model the cover-and-read once, then have students split the word on the OWN row of the tracking sheet.

ANSWER KEY: in / au / gu / ra / tion. The gu and ra syllables have schwa sounds because they are unstressed. The au syllable is stressed.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name each syllable in inauguration and its type.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may read the first syllable with the wrong vowel sound. Guide them to the pattern.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I know where to split the word? Look for the syllable boundary.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about using the rule inside a longer word. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to apply the rule to another longer word.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can prove that a word has a schwa."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"demonstrate and apply spelling knowledge by: (i) spelling multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables"

Defend the rule.

Prove the bold word follows the rule. Name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

"Tell me again about President Kennedy, I said, turning on my recorder."

I CAN | I can prove that a word has a schwa.

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Grade 4 · Prepare Cluster · Syllable Types · Friday

TEKS 4.2(B) · Syllable Types · Week 4 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 4 · slide 6 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can prove that a word has a schwa."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task on the slide.

"For recorder, name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound and prove it."

▶ Have students write a because statement on the DEFEND row, then share two strong answers.

ANSWER KEY: recorder. Re has the schwa sound because it is unstressed. Cord is the stressed syllable. Er is r-controlled.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain how they proved recorder follows the rule.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may name the whole word instead of the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound. Require all parts.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is every word with this pattern schwa sound? Yes, if it has the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about proving the rule. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to defend why another word in the sentence is NOT a schwa sound syllable.

Find a schwa sound on your own.

Go back to the passage. Find one schwa sound. Copy the sentence and name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

**Go back to the reading.
Find one schwa sound.
Copy the exact sentence. Then name the unstressed syllable
and the schwa sound.**

I CAN | I can find a schwa sound and prove it.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 ·

Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

 ~5 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Now it is your turn to find a schwa sound syllable on your own."

▶ Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.

"Copy the exact sentence. Then name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound."

▶ Circulate and note who can name all the parts without help.

ANSWER KEY: difference. The e in the last syllable says schwa because it is unstressed.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for students who name the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound together.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a word without naming all the parts. Require the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if my word has more than one syllable? Pick the syllable that is schwa sound and prove it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the rule. Look for the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to check their word by reading it aloud.

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE about. The first syllable a is unstressed and says the schwa sound, a quick uh. The second syllable bout is stressed.

CHOOSE A. Americans. The second syllable mer is stressed, so the first syllable A says schwa, a quick uh. Important also has a schwa in the last syllable, but Americans has the clearest schwa in its first syllable.

SHOW president. Pres is stressed. The i in the second syllable says schwa, a quick uh. The unstressed vowel is not long or short.

OWN in / au / gu / ra / tion. The gu and ra syllables have schwa sounds because they are unstressed. The au syllable is stressed.

DEFEND recorder. Re has the schwa sound because it is unstressed. Cord is the stressed syllable. Er is r-controlled.

YOUR TURN difference. The e in the last syllable says schwa because it is unstressed.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

 ~4 min

Review the Answers

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▶ Reveal the answer slide one row at a time. Have students check their own tracking sheets.

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the word and find the pattern."

▶ Celebrate students who explained the rule, not only students who named the word.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain the rule, not just name the word.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Naming the word without the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound. Ask how and why for at least two answers.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why not just memorize the list? Because readers meet new words in books and tests, and the rule reads them.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND. Push for the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to explain what would change if the syllable type were different.

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Tell me again about President Kennedy, I said, turning on my recorder. ... President Kennedy wanted Americans to think about something important.”

In which word does the underlined vowel say the schwa sound?

A said (the ai)

B serve (the e)

C about (the a)

D cold (the o)

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 ·

Show What You Know

 ~4 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

“Here is a test-style question, the kind you see on the state assessment.”

▶ Read the excerpt and the question aloud.

“Read all four choices before you decide. The best answer is the one the rule fits.”

▶ Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students choose by the rule, not by which word looks familiar.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing by guess or by a word they like. Check the pattern in each choice.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Check for the unstressed syllable and the schwa sound.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under assessment conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask why each wrong choice is wrong, which leads into the next slide.

The answer is C.

A said (the ai)
Said has a short e sound, not a schwa.

B serve (the e)
Serve has an r-controlled vowel, not a schwa.

C about (the a) Correct.
The first syllable a is unstressed and says the schwa sound, a quick uh.

D cold (the o)
Cold has a long o sound, not a schwa.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"The correct answer is C. The most important part is understanding why."

▶ Reveal each choice's reason. Spend the most time on the wrong answers.

"Each wrong choice is a real word from the reading, but it does not fit the pattern."

▶ Have students write one sentence on the tracking sheet explaining why the correct answer is right.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain why the correct word fits the rule.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why. Insist on the reason.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is the second choice wrong? Because it has a different syllable type.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new sentence using a schwa sound syllable word and prove the rule.