

# Yearlong Teacher Resources

## Teacher Guide

GRADE 6

Core Knowledge Language Arts®



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# Yearlong Teacher Resources

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In this section you will find resources you will use throughout the year.

- Individual Code Chart
- Anecdotal Reading Records
- Tens Recording Chart and Tens Conversion Chart
- Using Chunking to Decode Multisyllabic Words
- Sound and Spelling of Schwa



# Individual Code Chart

/p/      p      pp  
 pot      napping

/b/      b      bb  
 bat      rubbing

/t/      t      tt      ed  
 top      sitting      asked

/d/      d      ed      dd  
 dot      filled      add

/k/      c      k      ck      ch      cc  
 cat      kid      black      school      hiccup

/g/      g      gg      gu      gh  
 gift      egg      guess      ghost

/ch/      ch      tch  
 chin      itch

# Individual Code Chart

**/j/**      g      j      ge      dge      dg  
 gem      jump      fringe      judge      judging

**/f/**      f      ff      ph      gh  
 fit      stuff      phone      tough

**/v/**      v      ve  
 vet      twelve

**/s/**      s      c      ss      ce      se  
 sun      cent      dress      prince      rinse

st      sc  
 whistle      scent

**/z/**      s      z      se      zz      ze  
 dogs      zip      pause      buzz      bronze

**/th/**      th  
 thin

# Individual Code Chart

/th/ th  
them

/m/ m mm mb  
mad swimming thumb

/n/ n nn kn gn  
nut running knock sign

/ng/ ng n  
sing pink

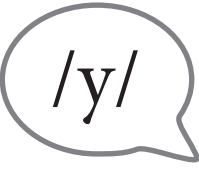
/r/ r rr wr  
red ferret wrist

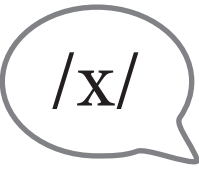
/l/ l ll  
lip bell

/h/ h  
hot

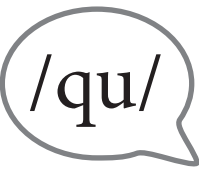
# Individual Code Chart

 **w** **wh**  
wet when

 **y**  
yes

 **x**  
tax

 **sh** **ch**  
shop chef

 **qu**  
quit



# Individual Code Chart

/a/ a  
hat

/i/ i y  
it myth

/e/ e ea  
pet head

/u/ u o o\_e ou  
but son come touch

/o/ o a  
hop lava

/ə/ a e  
about debate

/ə/ + /l/ al le el ul il  
animal apple travel awful pencil

# Individual Code Chart

/ae/

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a                                                                                 | a_e                                                                               | ai                                                                                | ay                                                                                  | ey                                                                                  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| paper                                                                             | cake                                                                              | wait                                                                              | day                                                                                 | hey                                                                                 |
| eigh                                                                              | ea                                                                                |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|  |  |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| weight                                                                            | great                                                                             |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |

/ee/

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| y                                                                                   | e                                                                                   | i                                                                                   | ea                                                                                  | ee                                                                                  |
|    |    |    |  |  |
| funny                                                                               | me                                                                                  | ski                                                                                 | beach                                                                               | bee                                                                                 |
| ie                                                                                  | ey                                                                                  | e_e                                                                                 |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|  |  |  |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| cookie                                                                              | key                                                                                 | Pete                                                                                |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |

/ie/

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i                                                                                   | i_e                                                                                 | y                                                                                   | ie                                                                                    | igh                                                                                   |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| biting                                                                              | bite                                                                                | try                                                                                 | tie                                                                                   | night                                                                                 |

/oe/

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| o                                                                                   | o_e                                                                                 | ow                                                                                  | oa                                                                                    | oe                                                                                    |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| open                                                                                | home                                                                                | snow                                                                                | boat                                                                                  | toe                                                                                   |

/ue/

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| u                                                                                   | u_e                                                                                 | ue                                                                                  |
|  |  |  |
| unit                                                                                | cute                                                                                | cue                                                                                 |

# Individual Code Chart

**/oo/**

|      |         |      |     |      |
|------|---------|------|-----|------|
| oo   | u       | u_e  | ew  | ue   |
| soon | student | tune | new | blue |

|      |       |    |      |
|------|-------|----|------|
| ou   | ui    | o  | o_e  |
| soup | fruit | do | move |

**/oo/**

|      |      |
|------|------|
| oo   | u    |
| look | push |

**/ou/**

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| ou    | ow  |
| shout | now |

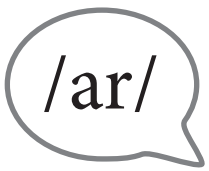
**/oi/**

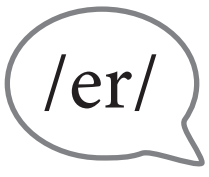
|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| oi  | oy  |
| oil | toy |

**/aw/**

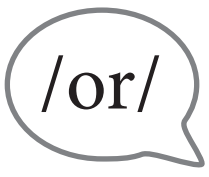
|      |     |      |        |        |
|------|-----|------|--------|--------|
| au   | aw  | al   | ough   | augh   |
| Paul | paw | wall | bought | caught |

# Individual Code Chart

 **ar**  
car

 **er** **or** **ur** **ar** **ir**  
her work hurt dollar bird

**ear**  
earth

 **or** **ore** **ar** **our** **oar**  
for more war four roar

**oor**  
door

# Anecdotal Reading Records

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

This template is for recording anecdotal notes about students' reading abilities. You can record things such as (1) repeated trouble with specific sound-spelling correspondences, (2) difficulty with certain digraphs/letter teams, (3) inability to segment isolated words, and (4) progress with specific skills.

|       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Name: | Name: | Name: | Name: |
|       |       |       |       |
| Name: | Name: | Name: | Name: |
|       |       |       |       |
| Name: | Name: | Name: | Name: |
|       |       |       |       |
| Name: | Name: | Name: | Name: |
|       |       |       |       |
| Name: | Name: | Name: | Name: |
|       |       |       |       |

### *Tens Recording Chart*

| Name |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|      |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Number Correct

|    | 0 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 0 | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 2  | 0 | 5  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 3  | 0 | 3  | 7  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 4  | 0 | 3  | 5  | 8  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 5  | 0 | 2  | 4  | 6  | 8  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 6  | 0 | 2  | 3  | 5  | 7  | 8  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 7  | 0 | 1  | 3  | 4  | 6  | 7  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 8  | 0 | 1  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 8  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 9  | 0 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 10 | 0 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 11 | 0 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 12 | 0 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 13 | 0 | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 14 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 15 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 16 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 17 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 18 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 19 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 20 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 21 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 22 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 23 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 24 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 25 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 26 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |    |
| 27 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |    |
| 28 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |    |
| 29 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |    |
| 30 | 0 | 0  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 8  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 9  | 9  | 10 | 10 |

The Tens Conversion Chart was created to be used with activities that have a defined number of items (such as written assessments, end-of-unit assessments, and activity pages). However, you may use the Tens system to record informal observations, such as an end-of-lesson check-in, as well. You may want to use the following rubric to interpret observational Tens scores.

| <b>Tens Score</b> | <b>Result</b>                                                |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8–10              | Student likely has a strong understanding of content/skills. |
| 5–7               | Student may benefit from additional support.                 |
| 0–4               | Student may benefit from intensive support or remediation.   |

## Using Chunking to Decode Multisyllable Words

Mastering the various letter-sound correspondences taught in CKLA will enable students to read one-syllable words with ease. However, knowing these individual letter-sound correspondences is no guarantee that students will be able to apply this knowledge in reading multisyllable words. To this end, most students will benefit from additional instruction in learning to recognize, chunk, and read parts of words—syllables—as a way to decode longer words.

When students first encounter two-syllable words in Grade 1 materials, a small dot is inserted as a visual prompt or cue between the syllables (e.g., *sun·set*). This is done in both the Workbooks and Readers. The dot is intended to visually break the word into two chunks, each of which can then be sounded out separately. As Grade 1 progresses, the dot is eliminated, and students are expected to begin visually chunking parts of longer words on their own.

Starting in Grade 1, CKLA introduces the decoding of two-syllable words by having students work first with two-syllable compound words (e.g., *cat·fish*, *cup·cake*, *pea·nut*, *drive·way*). For compound words, the dot is placed between the two component words. These are among the easiest two-syllable words to chunk and decode because each syllable of a compound word is already a familiar spelling pattern students have encountered in reading one-syllable words. In addition, each syllable or chunk is also frequently recognizable as a word part that has semantic familiarity.

In addition to learning to decode two-syllable compound words, Grade 1 students also tackle two-syllable words that consist of a root word with a simple suffix (e.g., *yawn·ing*, *hunt·er*, *punt·ed*). Typically, the dot is placed immediately before the suffix. In CKLA, words that contain double-letter spellings for consonants are divided after the double-letter spelling rather than between the two consonants (e.g., *batt·ed*, *bigg·er*, *bunn·y*). Teachers familiar with other ways to chunk or divide syllables may initially find this odd. This is done, however, because the double-letter spellings have been taught as single spelling units in CKLA since Kindergarten (*nn* > /n/, *mm* > /m/, *tt* > /t/, etc.) and it is preferable to be consistent in representing these spellings in the way students have been taught to process them (i.e., as whole entities for a sound). (Ultimately as students become more proficient at decoding and chunking syllables through subsequent grade levels, it really does not matter whether they visually chunk and decode these words as *batt·ed* or *bat·ted*.) Most students find chunking and decoding two-syllable words consisting of root words and suffixes relatively easy.

A greater challenge is encountered when chunking and decoding other types of multisyllable words. To be successful in decoding these longer words, it is helpful if teachers and students recognize certain syllable types. Most reading specialists identify five different syllable types:

**Note:** Syllables exemplifying each type are underlined.

- **Closed Syllables (CVC, VC, CCVCC, etc.)—always associated with a “short” vowel sound** (e.g., /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/: pad, let, tin, rod, pic·nic, fun)
- **Vowel Digraph Syllables**—always associated with two vowel letters that represent a unique vowel sound: joint, speak, proud, play, coun·sel, be·low. [The Magic ‘E’ Syllable (VCE) can be considered a subtype of the Vowel Digraph Syllable. In this case, the letter e at the end of a syllable affects the pronunciation of the vowel letter that precedes it, even though it is separated from the e by a consonant letter; always associated with a “long” vowel sound (/ae/, /ee/, /ie/, /oe/, /ue/): cake, mis·take, Pete, stam·pede, like, home, mule.]
- **R-Controlled Syllables:** art, ar·tist, fe·ver, clerk, girl, fort, curb, tur·nip



- **Open Syllables (V or CV)—always associated with a “long” vowel sound (e.g., /ae/, /ee/, /ie/, /oe/, /ue/:** a·pron, me, com·pre·hend, hi, fi·nal, go, fu·ture)
- **Consonant –LE Syllables (C –LE):** sim·ple, puz·zle, raf·fle, ca·ble, ri·fle

In CKLA, one additional syllable type is designated:

- **Schwa Syllables:** a·bout, hos·pit·al, ben·e·fit, app·e·tite, e·mo·tion
- Note:** The consonant –LE syllable is also a schwa syllable, but in CKLA it is distinguished separately because of the way this spelling is chunked when dividing words into syllables.

**To be clear, in order to decode words, students do not need to identify syllables by these names. The names of the syllable types are provided here only to establish a common vocabulary for you as you use the CKLA materials.** It is necessary, however, for students to become fluent readers of longer words in increasingly complex text. If they are able to visually parse certain spelling patterns as syllable chunks, they can quickly and easily decode each syllable.

The first type of two-syllable word pattern to which students are introduced is the closed syllable pattern in two-syllable words. These two-syllable words are also relatively easy for students to chunk and recognize as an example of the familiar CVC, VC, CCVCC, etc. spelling pattern they encountered in one-syllable words in Kindergarten.

Two closed syllables in a word are divided as follows:

- When two different consonants stand between two vowels, we divide the syllables between the consonants, creating one or more closed syllables.

|          |           |            |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| ad · mit | nap · kin | trum · pet |
|----------|-----------|------------|

- For words that contain double-letter spellings for consonants, the divider is typically placed after the double-letter spelling rather than between the consonants. As noted earlier, this is done because the double-letter spellings have been taught as single spelling units in CKLA since Kindergarten (*nn* > /n/, *mm* > /m/, *tt* > /t/, etc.).

|            |           |           |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| traff · ic | muff · in | happ · en |
|------------|-----------|-----------|

- When there are three consonants between two vowels, in general, they are divided so that the first consonant goes with the first vowel and the other two consonants go with the second vowel.

|            |             |            |
|------------|-------------|------------|
| mon · ster | con · tract | pil · grim |
|------------|-------------|------------|

When students have difficulty reading a two-syllable word, you may find it useful to use your finger to cover the second syllable, revealing only the first syllable for them to read. Once students read the first syllable, the second syllable can be uncovered and read. If necessary, you can then model for students how to blend the two syllables aloud:

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| <b>magnet</b> |     |
| mag           |     |
|               | net |
| magnet        |     |

In Grade 1, students encountered other two-syllable words with various combinations of the magic ‘E’ syllable, the vowel digraph syllable, the r-controlled vowel syllable, and the closed syllable.

- Chunking these syllable types follows the same patterns for division as noted above for closed syllables:

|           |           |           |          |              |             |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| tar · get | for · get | es · cape | ig · loo | scoun · drel | char · coal |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|-------------|

- In Grade 2, students were introduced to more challenging multisyllable words.

Two-syllable words with only one consonant between the vowels are especially difficult to chunk because they may be divided either before or after the single consonant. Students are taught to use a flexible approach in chunking syllables with a single consonant between the vowels, trying each possibility when they encounter an unfamiliar word.

- When only one consonant stands between two vowels, first divide the word in front of the consonant, and sound it out as an open syllable:

|          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| pu · pil | vi · rus | mo · ment |
|----------|----------|-----------|

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| <b>unit</b> |     |
| u           |     |
|             | nit |

However, sometimes the word may divide after the consonant, creating a closed syllable. There is no definitive rule for when to divide before or after the consonant. Students will need to be flexible and try dividing and sounding the word each way—before and after the consonant—to determine whether they recognize a familiar word as they sound out each possibility. In order to recognize whether a word is familiar when sounded either way, the word must be one that the student has heard before (i.e., the word must be in the student’s oral vocabulary). Obviously, this will represent an additional challenge for students who have a limited vocabulary and/or for whom English is a second language.

- If the word divides after the consonant, a closed syllable is created:

|       |    |
|-------|----|
| lemon |    |
| lem   |    |
|       | on |

In Grade 2, students were also introduced to consonant –LE syllables. Chunking these words into syllables is fairly straightforward.

- When a word ends in consonant –LE, it is divided in front of the consonant, creating a first syllable that may be open, closed, or even r-controlled, depending on the other spellings in the words:

|           |            |           |           |           |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ban · gle | twin · kle | sta · ble | cra · dle | tur · tle |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|

|        |     |
|--------|-----|
| simple |     |
| sim    |     |
|        | ple |

In the latter part of Grade 2, students were introduced to syllables in which various spellings represent the schwa sound. English words with more than one syllable usually include a combination of stressed and unstressed syllables. When a syllable in a spoken word is unstressed or weakly stressed, its vowel sound is often reduced to a flat, rather nondescript vowel sound that linguists call a schwa. This happens in many English words. Spellings for the schwa sound include *a*, *e*, *al*, *il*, *el*, and *tion*. Chunking and decoding words that include the schwa sound can be quite challenging for many students.

- Syllables with a schwa sound are divided in different ways, recognizing that the syllable with the schwa sound has a particular spelling:

|          |               |          |         |           |           |
|----------|---------------|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| a · bout | de · pos · it | med · al | e · vil | nick · el | lo · tion |
|----------|---------------|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|

As noted earlier, the consonant –LE syllable is actually a schwa syllable, but it is identified separately because of the way this spelling is chunked when dividing words into syllables.

- Finally, while students encountered some simple root words and affixes in Grade 1, throughout the entire year of Grade 3 instruction they study prefixes, suffixes, and root words in much greater depth and are taught to chunk syllables accordingly.

|            |             |                |           |            |            |             |
|------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| pre · tend | non · sense | tri · cy · cle | re · peat | self · ish | sad · ness | help · less |
|------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|

By combining the specific code knowledge of letter-sound spellings taught in Kindergarten–Grade 3, with the ability to chunk multisyllable words into smaller decodable parts, students will have the tools they need to independently decode just about any word they encounter.

## Sound and Spelling of Schwa

In order to teach the concept of /ə/ well, you will need to first understand it yourself.

English words with more than one syllable usually include a combination of stressed and unstressed syllables. When a syllable in a spoken word is unstressed or weakly stressed, its vowel sound is often reduced to a flat, rather nondescript vowel sound linguists call schwa (/ə/). This happens in many English words. More than 3,000 of the 25,000 words in the CKLA database (about 13%) have at least one syllable in which the vowel sound is reduced to /ə/.

The exact pronunciation of /ə/ varies somewhat from word to word and also from region to region. In many words, and in many parts of the United States, /ə/ sounds very much like the sound /u/. For example, in the word *about*, the unstressed /ə/ sound in the first syllable sounds a great deal like /u/. In the word *America*, both the first and the last vowel sounds are unstressed, and both sound a great deal like /u/. In some regions of the United States, many speakers use an /u/-like /ə/ sound in words such as *along*, *balloon*, *debate*, *benefit*, and *telephone*.

However, for certain words and/or for speakers in certain parts of the country, /ə/ may sound a little more like /i/. How do people in your region pronounce the word *benefit*? Do they pronounce the second vowel sound more like /u/ or /i/? What about *telephone*? Do people where you live say /t/ /e/ /l/ /u/ /f/ /oe/ /n/? Or does the spoken word sound more like /t/ /e/ /l/ /i/ /f/ /oe/ /n/? What about *debate*? Does the local pronunciation sound more like /d/ /u/ /b/ /ae/ /t/ or /d/ /i/ /b/ /ae/ /t/? Neither pronunciation is more correct than the other. These are all examples of natural variation or dialect. All of these examples contain a reduction to /ə/.

### Spelling the Schwa Sound

Words that contain the schwa sound represent a significant spelling challenge since there are so many possible spellings for this sound. Some of the most frequent spellings are listed below with sample words:

|            |                                                    |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <i>a</i>   | <i>about, China, around, aloud, acquire</i>        |
| <i>e</i>   | <i>benefit, decay, appetite, severe, Tennessee</i> |
| <i>al</i>  | <i>final, normal, hospital</i>                     |
| <i>le</i>  | <i>apple, fable, crackle</i>                       |
| <i>el</i>  | <i>angel, chapel, nickel</i>                       |
| <i>ul</i>  | <i>awful, consul</i>                               |
| <i>il</i>  | <i>pencil, stencil, evil</i>                       |
| <i>ion</i> | <i>emotion, determination, tension, revision</i>   |