

Teacher Guide for Word Detective

A Playful Activity for Exploring Word Parts

Word Detective is a brief, teacher-led activity for the last day of the Article-A-Day routine to help students develop deeper vocabulary understanding. Here are the five easy steps:



Step 1: Set the purpose (1 minute)

Tell students, “Exploring words and word parts will help you become master detectives who can figure out the meaning of any word!”

Click the + to define the word part!



Step 2: Introduce and explore the word part (2 minutes)

Explore the word part by asking students to think about it: “Have you seen this word part before? What are some words you have seen use it? What do you think it might mean or do?” Have students put the word part definition in the center of their maps.

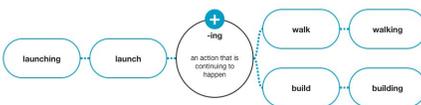
ReadWorks Supports

- Digital/printable maps customized for each supported Article-A-Day set
- Word parts selected and defined for each supported Article-A-Day set that (1) are key to building vocabulary and (2) appear in two or more articles in the set
- A teacher word bank with words with the word part that are used in multiple articles in the Article-A-Day set -- use these to help students brainstorm where they have seen the word part!



Step 3: Model using the word part (2 minutes)

Model adding the word part with a word students brainstormed in Step 2 (or a word from the teacher word bank) by putting the base word in the first circle then adding the word part to the word in the second circle.

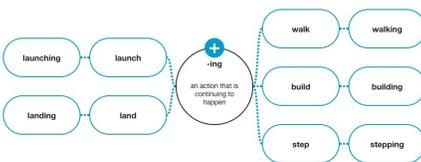


Step 4: Play with the word part! (7 minutes)

Tell students, “You will now be word detectives! Look through articles you read this week for words you can add this word part to. Put these words in the first bubble then add the word part onto the words in the second bubble!” The most important thing is to encourage **having fun** by adding word parts to create real or imaginary words!

ReadWorks Support

- Words from the Article-A-Day set that can take the word part to help students play with creating words



Step 5: Share findings (3 minutes)

Ask a few students to share words they detected and create a class map. Depending on your students’ mastery of the word part, have them share how it changes the word’s meaning or discuss this change in meaning as a class.

Hints and Tips

How can I differentiate to support all of the students in my classroom?

Step 4 is the one step that is not teacher-led, so this is likely where your students' differing abilities will have the most impact. Here are ways to differentiate for your students in Step 4:

- The digital maps are interactive so students can add additional branches (see below for how to add new branches). Encourage students who are detecting faster to dig deeper and add as many words as they can, which also gives time for students moving more slowly.
- If your students are not able to read the articles independently, Word Detective can be done as a read-aloud by projecting different articles for the class to word detect in together. We have found that students have more success in finding words to add to their maps when they are able to look at the article.
- If your students struggle with finding words to add the word part to, here are two ways to provide extra support:
 - Have students do their detecting in pairs. This provides support if some or all students are unfamiliar with working with word parts, as well as fluency opportunities for students to practice saying the words aloud.
 - An easier detecting activity is exploring the articles for words that have the word part and then removing the word part on the map.

I want students to have fun playing with words, but I also want them to know if a word they create isn't real. How can I support their sense of play when they create imaginary words?

You are right — giving students room to play with words is critical to helping them find some enjoyment in words (and maybe even a love of words!). This, in turn, can lead to deeper engagement in working with and understanding words.

So, let students know that imaginary words are cool too. Don't say a word is wrong. Instead tell them, "Famous authors make up words (Shakespeare did it the most!). No author has yet thought of your word before! What might it mean if it were real? You know what the word part means. Do you know what the word you added it to means? Now put them together — what might *your* word creation mean?"

How do I fit Word Detective in if I only have 15 minutes for both the Article-A-Day routine and this activity?

Word Detective is designed to be done in addition to the Friday Article-A-Day routine, for a total of 20-25 minutes. However, Word Detective can also take the place of students doing a Book of Knowledge or even of students reading a new article. If you do the Article-A-Day routine Monday-Thursday, the Word Detective activity is a great activity for both deepening vocabulary knowledge and reviewing the background knowledge students learned through the week.

How do students create new branches on the map?

The digital maps are interactive so students can add as many connections as they want. They just click the blue plus sign!