

SAMPLE DICTATION WITH A MULTI-SYLLABLE WORD

Teacher: "*Elephant* – We saw the *elephant* in the zoo. -- *elephant*. How many syllables?"

Student: "Three."

Teacher: "Think /el-E-fant/." (Over emphasize the unstressed vowel sound. Student needs to hear /a/ in /fant/.) "Sound it out." (Encourage the student to do this on his own as much as possible. His voice will drive the teacher's fingers.)

Student: (Says first syllable.) "/el/". (Then he says each sound.) "/e-l/".
(This syllable has two sounds and two single letters.)

(Says the second syllable.) "/E/." (The teacher demonstrates the syllable shift in some way. I prefer switching hands. Some teachers, with my blessing, use the same hand the whole time, but bring the fist over to the chest between syllables.)

(Says third syllable.) "/fant/." (When the student says /f/, the teacher holds up 2 fingers stuck together. This helps alert the student to use "two-letter /f/.")

Repeat the word.

Student: "Elephant" (as in normal speech); "/el-E-fant/" (as we think-to-spell.)

The student picks up his pencil and writes, "elephant." He should whisper the sounds softly to himself as he writes. He skips a space between the syllables.

Student: (Reads the word he has written.) "elephant." (Dictates it for the teacher to write on the board. He says each syllable first. Then he gives the sounds that make up the syllable.
"El (e-l), E (E), fant (f-a-n-t)."

The student double-checks to see if he spelled the word correctly. If not, he erases the entire word and rebuilds it correctly, whispering the sounds as he goes.

Teacher: "Markings?" (The markings should be done sequentially in the word.)

Student: "Underline the phonogram that said /E/. E said /E/ at the end of a syllable."

Teacher: (Nods approval. Both mark their word.) Teacher may say, "Prove it to me." The student can recite the full spelling rule. "A, E, O, U usually say /A-E-O-U/ at the end of a syllable."

Review the word together. "Think /el-E-fant/." (The vowel in the unstressed syllable is muffled. Exaggerate it to match the actual spelling.) "Say, *elephant*."