

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Encoding R-Controlled Vowels *er/ir/ur*

PLAN

**Component:** Encoding

**Instructional Activity:** Encoding Words with *er, ir, ur*

**Materials Needed:** sound-spelling cards, whiteboards, markers



**Approximate Time:**  
7 minutes



**Click here for video  
example**

- ✓ Individual
- ✓ Small Group
- ✓ Large Group

OBJECTIVE

**State the objective(s).**

You're going to learn to spell a new vowel pattern. In this vowel pattern, called an *r-controlled vowel*, the vowel is spelled with a combination of one or two vowels and the consonant *r*. When an *r* follows a vowel, it changes the sound the vowel makes. The vowel and the *r* work together to make a new sound, called an *r-controlled vowel sound*. In this lesson, we're going to spell words with the *r-controlled vowel patterns, er, ir, and ur.*

REVIEW &  
VOCABULARY

**Review prerequisite skills and teach related vocabulary.**

A *syllable* is a chunk of a word that contains one vowel sound. Write *er, ir, and ur* on the board. Point to the letters as you explain: If a syllable includes a *vowel* followed by *r*, the syllable is called an *r-controlled syllable*. When an *r* follows a vowel, it changes the sound the vowel makes. The vowel and the *r* work together to make a new sound.

When *r* follows the vowels *e, i, or u*, the new sound is /ər/. What's the new sound? Students: /ər/

When we hear the sound /ər/ in a word, it is frequently spelled *er, ir, or ur*. What's the spelling? Students: *er, ir, or ur*

The most frequent spelling for /ər/ is *er*, especially if the sound /ər/ is at the end of a word, but *ur* and *ir* are common spellings, too.

Today we will practice spelling words with all three patterns. Sometimes the best way to determine how the sound /ər/ is spelled is to write the word three ways: with *er, ir, and ur*. Then you can compare which word is familiar and looks accurate.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Encoding R-Controlled Vowels *er/ir/ur*

**Demonstrate.** *Teach the new skill, model with clear explanations, verbalize your thinking process.*

Display or hold the sound-spelling card for /ər/. Point to the picture at the top of the card.

- The sound is /ər/. The key word is \_\_\_\_\_. What's the key word? Students: \_\_\_\_\_
- The sound /ər/ cannot be held. Listen: /ər/. What's the sound? Students: /ər/
- Point to the spelling pattern on the card. The sound /ər/ can be spelled *er, ir, or ur*. What are the ways to spell /ər/? Students: *er, ir, or ur*
- *er, ir, and ur* come in the middle or at the end of a word or syllable.

Now, watch and listen as I spell some words containing /ər/ spelled *er, ir, and ur*.

The word is *sister*. First, I count the syllables. I'll hold up one finger for each syllable I hear: *sis-ter*. Two syllables.

I stretch the sounds in the first syllable *sis*: /sss... ïïï...sss/. Three sounds—that means the first syllable has three spelling patterns! I stretch and spell each sound. /sss/ write s; /ïïï/ write i; /sss/ write s.

Now, I ask myself: *What's the second syllable in sister? Sis-ter. It's ter.* I stretch the sounds in the second syllable *ter*: /t...er/ I ask myself: *Where do I hear the vowel sound in the syllable? I hear an r-controlled vowel sound /ər/ at the end of the syllable.*

I think: *How can I spell the sound /ər/?* I know that /ər/ is an r-controlled vowel sound and it is frequently spelled *er, ir, or ur*. I will try spelling *sister* each way to find which one is accurate. I already have the first syllable *sis*. Write *sis* three times. Now I will stretch and spell the second syllable. /t/ write t beside each *sis*. /ər/ write *er* beside the first *sist*; /ər/ write *ir* beside the second *sist*; /ər/ write *ur* beside the third *sist*.

I think: *Which word looks familiar? Sister with er looks familiar, and that makes sense because er is the most frequent spelling for /ər/, especially at the end of a word.*

Now I check my work by sounding out the word, and then reading the whole word. sssïïïsss'tər/ *sister*! The word is *sister*!

I DO IT!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Encoding R-Controlled Vowels *er/ir/ur*

WE DO IT!

### Provide guided practice.

Distribute student whiteboards, markers, and erasers.

Let's spell some words together. Each word contains the r-controlled vowel sound /ər/ spelled with *er, ir* or *ur*.

The first word is *return*. What word? Students and teacher: *return*

Count the syllables in *return*. Prompt: Hold up one finger for each syllable. Students and teacher: *re-turn*. *Two syllables*.

What's the first syllable? Students and teacher: *re-*

Does it contain an r-controlled vowel sound? Students and teacher: *no*

Stretch and spell *re-*. Students and teacher: /rrr/ write *r*; /ēēē/ write *e*. Prompt if needed: I hear the sound /ēēē/ at the end of the syllable. The syllable doesn't have a consonant sound after the sound /ēēē/. That means I can use the spelling *e*.

What's the second syllable in *return*? Students and teacher: *-turn*

Does it contain an r-controlled vowel sound? Students and teacher: *yes*

What's the r-controlled vowel sound in the second syllable? Students and teacher: /ər/

What spelling pattern will you use for the r-controlled vowel sound in *return*? Students and teacher: *er, ir, or ur*

Stretch and spell the second syllable. (Prompt, if needed: How many sounds? How many spelling patterns?)

Students and teacher: /t/ write *t*, /ər/. **On your white board, write *er, ir, or ur*. Write the pattern that you think makes the sound /ər/ in *return*.** Students and teacher: /nnn/ write *n*. On the teacher board, write *return* three ways: *retern, retirn, return*.

Let's look at our work. Which spelling of *return* looks familiar? Students and teacher: *return*

Check your work by pointing under each syllable in the word and reading it, sounding it out if needed, then putting it all together and reading the whole word. Students and teacher: /rrrēēē //tərnnn/ *return*.

Use the routine above to spell the words *perfect* and *survive*.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Encoding R-Controlled Vowels *er/ir/ur*

Provide independent practice.

Now it's your turn to spell words on your own. I will walk through the steps with you, but you will spell the word by yourself. I'll be looking at your whiteboards to see how you're doing.

Follow this routine using words from the Word List.

- **Repeat the word.** The teacher should also say the word "like a robot" if it contains a schwa sound, and students should repeat it.
- **Count the syllables.**
- **Say the first syllable.** If there's an r-controlled vowel sound in it, think: What spelling pattern should I choose?
- **Stretch and spell the first syllable.**
- **Say the next syllable.** If there's an r-controlled vowel sound in it, think: What spelling pattern should I choose?
- **Stretch and spell the next syllable.**
- **Continue until you've spelled all of the syllables in the word.**
- **Check your work.** Point under each syllable and read it, then put the syllables together and read the whole word.

Word List	
burger	firm
super	dirt
swerved	blurled



If students need support with:	Then try this:
Decoding multisyllabic words with <i>er, ir, ur</i>	Model and practice with single syllable words first: skirt, verb, stir, clerk, curl, turn

YOU DO IT!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Encoding R-Controlled Vowels *er/ir/ur*

ASSESS

**Assess students (formally or informally).** *Determine the level of mastery for the stated objective.*

Observe individual students as they respond during guided and independent practice.  
Scaffold or correct all errors. Provide specific feedback for accurate responses.

ENRICH/EXTEND

**Enrichment/Extension.** *Provide enrichment and extension activities for students who need less support.*

To familiarize students with r-controlled vowel spelling patterns, have them look for and list words they find in text that use the pattern.