

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

Syllable segmentation

**DESCRIPTION**

Children clap and count the syllables in community place names.

**TARGETED SKILL(S):**

Repeat words and count syllables in words with up to two syllables and others with at least three syllables.

**SUITABLE FOR**

Whole class or small group

**PREP-TIME**

10-15 min.

**DURATION OF ACTIVITY**

20-25 min.

**MATERIALS**

- **You find:** Strips of paper or blank cards; Marker

**PREPARATION**

1. On strips of paper or blank cards, create '*Syllable Cards*' by printing the names of ten high-interest place names in your community that the children would be very familiar with and have most likely visited or heard of (e.g., the name of school, library, park, mall, store, restaurant, pool, rink, community centre, lake).  
NOTE: Print the specific names of the places (i.e., print your school's name instead of just the word 'school').
2. Place the '*Syllable Card*' with your school's name where you would like to start the Syllable Adventure in your classroom. Place the remaining '*Syllable Cards*' wherever you would like around your classroom.

**What will we learn?**

"Today, we're going to clap and count out the syllables in the names of some places we know."

**What do we know?**

1. "Can anyone tell me what a syllable is?" Discuss how a syllable is a 'beat' or a part of a word. We can use our hands to help us clap and count out syllables, and we can also use our mouths (i.e., when we say a word, our chin or jaw moves downwards with every syllable we say).
2. If you would like to introduce syllables with jaw movement: "Let's feel our jaws move when we speak! Place your hand flat under your chin. Now let's say the days of the week: Sun-day, Mon-day... Did you feel your chin go up and down?"
3. "Watch my chin when I say the word 'Sunday'. Sun-day. How many times did my chin drop?" (Two times.)
4. "Now let's try clapping out the syllables in 'Sunday'. Sun-day." [Clap twice.] Continue with the remaining days of the week by clapping and counting for each syllable (and also counting jaw movements if you wish).
5. "How do we know how many syllables are in a word?" (The number of times we clap tells how many syllables are in a word.) [OPTIONAL: The number of times our jaw drops also tells us how many syllables are in a word.]
6. "We're going to move or travel around our classroom to find the names of some places in our community. What ways can we travel to get from one place in our town (or city) to another?" Discuss the ways they can travel within their own community (e.g., walk, bike, car, truck, bus, subway) and how it is the same or different from how they can travel to other cities and towns (e.g., ferry, plane, train, boat).

**Watch me first!**

1. "Let's go on a Syllable Adventure in our community! First, let's imagine how we'll go from place to place." Each child can choose their mode of travel.  
NOTE: It is okay if some choose a type of travel that is not typical within their community (e.g., train).
2. Gather the children at the first adventure stop (i.e., your school's '*Syllable Card*'). "We're at our first stop! Let's find out where we are!" Ask the children to help you look for this card, describing what it looks like.
3. Once the '*Syllable Card*' is found, say the school's complete name and explain that each word in the name needs to be clapped out separately. Model clapping out the syllables of the first word in your school's name. Repeat the first

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word, asking the children to help you clap it out and count the syllables.

4. With the children's help, continue to clap out and count the syllables in the remaining words in your school name, one word at a time. Ensure the children repeat the word after you each time.

### Let's try it!

1. Travel around the room as a group to find the next '*Syllable Card*'. Read the place name that is on the card and then briefly discuss what they could do at this place (e.g., library: read books, play games).
2. Say only the first word in the place name and then ask the children to repeat the word as they clap out the syllables. Then, ask them to count the syllables in the word.
3. Repeat until all the words in the place name have been repeated, clapped out, and counted.
4. Continue travelling around the room to find the remaining '*Syllable Cards*' and repeat the above steps to say each word, clap, and count out the syllables.
5. Work towards having individual children clap a word from a place name while the rest of the group counts the number of claps. The rest of the group can then repeat the word and clap out the syllables, too.

### What did we learn?

1. "Today, we learned that words are made up of syllables. What is a syllable?" (A part of a word.)
2. "Some of the words in the place names we visited have one syllable, some have two syllables, and some have three or more syllables. Can you think of a word from a place name that only has one syllable? Can you clap while naming the word?"
3. "Can you think of a place name word that has more than one syllable? Can you clap while you say the word?"

### Let's do more!

Count how many total syllables are in each place name to see which places have the most syllables. You may record this on paper or represent it with objects. For example, you could use nine craft sticks or counters to represent nine total claps in the place name 'Fred-er-ic-ton Pub-lic Li-bra-ry'.

## EXTENDING THE LESSON

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### Less Challenging



- When reading most or all the '*Syllable Cards*', say the place's specific name, but only clap and count the syllables of its general name (i.e., clap and count syllables only for 'library', not 'Fredericton Public Library').
- Provide '*Syllable Cards*' with mostly 1-2 syllable words. As children become comfortable with clapping and counting syllables, introduce words with three or more syllables.
- Provide children with a handheld mirror and ask them to hold a hand under their chin so they can "feel", "see", and hear the syllables. Alternate between words with one syllable and words with two syllables.
- To not overwhelm children who are struggling with syllables or just beginning to learn about syllables, go on Syllable Adventures with fewer cards (e.g., two shorter sessions with five cards each session).

### More Challenging



- Tell the children to listen carefully as you say a word. Then, ask them to take their best guess as to how many syllables are in the word. They can then confirm their guess by clapping and counting out the syllables.
- Make '*Syllable Cards*' with a variety of numbers of syllables (e.g., 1-4 syllables).

### TIPS



- Enhance each '*Syllable Card*' by adding a drawing or photo of the specific community place to help children better relate to, and recognize, the places in their community.
  - To pretend that you are actually visiting each community place, take a tablet on your Syllable Adventure to search online for each place's satellite image. Before the activity, you can place the '*Syllable Cards*' in the order that would make sense so you can follow the online map to travel from one place to the next.
  - Create Syllable Adventures for any theme you are working on! For example, go on an adventure to find and clap out syllables for the words in an insect unit.
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