

Focus Lesson

Use Word Parts to Determine the Meaning

Text: *My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother* by: Patricia Polacco

CAFE Goal	Vocabulary
CAFE Strategy	Use word parts to determine the meaning (prefixes, suffixes, origins, abbreviations, etc.)
Observe/Relate	<p>Have you ever looked closely at the endings of words as you read? Writers choose their words carefully. Sometimes they add suffixes to base words and root words (<i>You may want to remind students that a base word can stand on its own, but a root word cannot</i>). Adding a suffix changes the meaning of a word. For example, adding <i>-er</i> or <i>-est</i> changes the meaning of the word <i>fast</i>. There is a difference between the words “fast” and “faster” and “fastest.” Being a <i>fast</i> runner is good, but being a <i>faster</i> runner is even better! And, of course, being the <i>fastest</i> runner is a big accomplishment. So, when I read, I pay attention to the words I am reading and look closely at the endings of those words, too.</p>
Teach and Reinforce	<p>Establish purpose – Today we are going to learn the Expanding Vocabulary strategy use word parts to determine the meaning (prefixes, suffixes, origins, abbreviations, etc.). We will look at the suffixes <i>-er</i> and <i>-est</i> and see how they change the meanings of base words.</p> <p>Create urgency – We know that it is important to read a lot. It’s just as important to understand what we read. There is no way that we can know the meaning of every word in every book we will ever read. But knowing the meaning of word parts, including suffixes like <i>-er</i> and <i>-est</i>, can help us to understand the writer’s meaning better.</p> <p>Explicit Teacher Modeling – This book is titled <i>My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother</i>, and it is written by Patricia Polacco. As I read a part from this story, I am going to study words that end in <i>-er</i> and <i>-est</i>. Studying these words will help me to understand why the writer chose to add these suffixes to the words. This is called using word parts to determine meaning (prefixes, suffixes, origins, abbreviations, etc.).</p> <p><i>Please note: the pages in the book My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother are unnumbered. You might want to take a pencil and write the page numbers, marking the title page as page 1. Read pages 6-7 beginning with “We both picked berries for most of the afternoon.”</i></p> <p>I am going to stop here and practice the Expanding Vocabulary strategy of Use word parts to determine meaning.</p>

Please listen as I read:

“We both picked berries for most of the afternoon.

Well, he upped and did it! He not only picked more berries than I, he set a record that wasn’t even challenged for the next ten years.

‘You make me sick, Richard Barber!’ I yelled at him.

Then he smiled that smile that only a rotten redheaded older brother could smile.”

Create a chart as displayed. **Optional:** Write the final sentence from the excerpt above on the board.

Example	Base Word	Suffix	Reason to use the Suffix
Older	Old	-er	To compare two things or people

Let’s look at the chart and think about the meaning of the word *older*.

Listen to the sentence again: “Then he smiled that smile that only a rotten redheaded older brother could smile.”

What is the base word in *older*? To find the base word, just remove the suffix *-er*. The base word is *old*, isn’t it?

Writers use the suffix *-er* when they compare **TWO** things. In the sentence I just wrote, the writer wants to show that the brother was born before his sister, who is the narrator of the story, and is therefore older.

Listen carefully as I continue reading.

“I guess I would have to face it. He could run the fastest, climb the highest, throw the farthest, sit the longest, get the dirtiest, burp the loudest, and spit the farthest. He had no equal, certainly not me!”

	<p><i>(Write the sentence on the chart if needed).</i> There are several words that end with the suffix <i>-est</i> in the sentences that I just read! The words <i>fastest, highest, farthest, longest, dirtiest, and loudest</i> end with the suffix <i>-est</i>. <i>Write the words on the chart as you say each one.</i></p> <p><i>Fast</i> is the base word of <i>fastest</i>. Let's write it in the base word column on the chart. The suffix is <i>-est</i>. Why does the writer use <i>-est</i> at the end of these words? Is the writer comparing her older brother to just one person (herself) or to more than one? Her meaning is that the older brother is the <i>best</i> at all of these things—she is comparing him to <i>everyone!</i> She even says “he had no equal!” Remember that writers use the suffix <i>-est</i> to compare MORE THAN TWO things or people. That's the reason the author added <i>-est</i> to the base words.</p> <p><i>Follow the same procedure with the next -est word, “highest” as well as the other words that end with the -est suffix. Point out that the word “farthest” is irregular because the base word is “far”. When students are finished, ask for a volunteer to explain why the word “dirtiest” has a base word “dirty” that ends in -y.</i></p>
<p>Practice</p>	<p>I am going to continue reading and have you try the strategy Use word parts to determine meaning.</p> <p>I'll ask you to complete the chart on your own. Remember that the suffix <i>-er</i> is used to compare two things or people; the suffix <i>-est</i> compares more than two things or people.</p> <p><i>After completing the chart, ask students how they used word parts to determine meaning.</i></p>
<p>Encourage and Plan</p>	<p>We just practiced Use word parts to determine meaning. You can see how using word parts to determine meaning can help you to understand the author's meaning. As you read today, look for words that end with <i>-er</i> or <i>-est</i>. Write the word on a sticky note and explain how the suffix changes the meaning of the word. During our sharing time, I will ask you to tell a partner about your word.</p>
<p>Common Core Alignment</p>	<p>Ask questions throughout the reading process meets the Common Core State Standard for many grade levels. This lesson could be revised to match your grade-level expectations. Find the standard that aligns with your grade-level on our CAFE Menu/ CCSS Grade Level Matrix.</p>