

The *Dragon Rule*: Syllable Division of vcv Words to Make First Vowel Short

Each time our mouth opens to say a word or part of a word we are saying a syllable. A syllable is one opening of the mouth. We have already learned how to divide syllables in a vowel, consonant, vowel pattern to help us to read words that we do not know by dividing before the consonant by using the *Label Rule*. Today we will learn another way to divide words in a vowel, consonant, vowel pattern.

[Write dragon on the board.] **How many syllables does this word have?** [2 because there are two vowels separated by a consonant]

1. Circle prefixes I know at the beginning of the word.

in- dis- mis-

sub- re- pre-

Does this word have any prefixes? [no]

2. Circle suffixes I know at the end of the word.

-s -ing -ed

-less -ness -ly

Does this word have any suffixes? [no]

3. Look for syllable division patterns I know.

Find the vowels. Write y above the vowels.

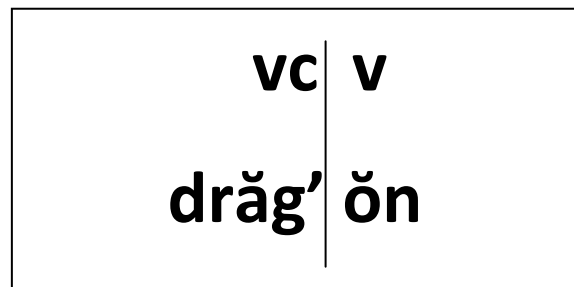
Find the consonant between the vowels and write c above the consonant.

Divide the word into its syllables. When 1 consonant stands between 2 sounded vowels we most often divide before the consonant. After reading it, if the word does not make sense divide the word after the consonant.

Accent the first syllable. In English, we accent the whole syllable. In an accented syllable, the mouth opens wider; the voice is louder, longer and stronger. We do not see the accent marks as we read English words, but every word has one syllable accented and it is usually the first syllable.

4. Code the syllables.

- Code the vowel sound.
- Mark out silent letters.
- Make any other codings necessary.



5. Read the word.

Does it sound right?

Does it make sense?

If not, use a different syllable division pattern and re-read.

In a vowel, consonant, vowel pattern try the *Label Rule* first to make the first vowel long. If the word does not make sense, try the *Dragon Rule* to make the first vowel short.

Words that Follow the *Dragon Rule*

exit

never

cherish

visit

tropic

valid

mimic

chisel

sliver

ever

level

finish

model

epic

herald

spigot

profit

camel

tonic

tropics

pedal

credit

wizard

habit

medal

lavish

talent

limit

finishing

visited