The *Napkin Rule*: Syllable Division of vccv 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. How many syllables are there in the word *napkin*? [2] How do you know? [We opened our mouth 2 times.] What kind of sounds are open, vowels or consonants? [vowels] If the vowel sounds open our mouth, how many vowel sounds do you think the word *napkin* has? [2]

Today we will learn a new concept to help us read 2 syllable words. [Write napkin on the board.] How many syllables does this word have? [2 because there are two vowels separated by consonants] I will teach you a strategy for dividing a 2 syllable base word so you can decode it.

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]

Find the vowels. Write <u>v</u> above the vowels.

3. Look for syllable division patterns I know.

Find the consonants between the vowels and write <u>c</u> above the consonants.

Divide the word into its syllables. When 2 consonants stand between 2 sounded vowels we most often divide between the consonants.

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.**

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VC | CV
năp' kĭn
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5. Read the word.

Does it sound right?

Does it make sense?

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

This is the *Napkin Rule.* In a vowel, consonant, consonant, vowel pattern we most often divide between the consonants and accent the first syllable. The *Napkin Rule* makes the first vowel short.

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Words that Follow the *Napkin Rule*

pistol	**sandals**	**attics**
impacts	**antics**	**compact**
signal	**contacting**	**contacts**
atlas	**infant**	**limpid**