

# Word Work Lesson Plan and Activities

Instructional Focus Based on the Words in the Book

**Word Work**  
Oliver Button Is a Sissy  
By: Tomie dePaola  
Grade Level: 2 / Guided Reading Level: J

**Instructional Focus:**  
R-Controlled vowels er, ir, ur

**Background:**  
Learning spelling patterns in a prepared, systematic way enables students to notice these patterns of vowels, e, i, and u are preceded by a consonant "r" follows the vowels sound different.

## Word Work

Examples:

er
he → her
gem → germ
mef → merg
ten → tern

## Materials and Preparation

- A Copy of Oliver Button Is a Sissy
- Chart Paper
- Finish the Word
- Optional - Word Detective
- Optional - Jenga

## Step 1: Introduce the Focus of Word Work

er	ir	ur
whisper	firm	occur
season	stir	dur
her	ur	ur
never	girl	turn

## Step 2: Connect Word Work to Reading

- Extend Engagement**
- Use the list of R-controlled vowels found in the text to prepare reading engagement cards.
- Write an R-controlled vowel word on each sticky note (one per student).
  - Check 3 columns on the board.
  - Label each column with a different R-controlled vowel combination (er, ir, ur).
  - Distribute sticky notes to students.
  - Invite students to come to the board, say their word, spell their word and place it in the correct column.

## Introduce R-Controlled Vowels er, ir, ur

- When a vowel is followed by an r, the r changes the sound the vowel usually makes.
- The vowel is called an r-controlled vowel. Sometimes we refer to the "r" as the "bossy r" because the r "bosses" the vowel to make a new sound.
- The spelling patterns er, ir, and ur all make the /er/ sound.
- The most common spelling is er.
- I'm going to say some words. I want you to tell me if the /er/ sound is in the word or not. For example, if the word is girl, you would give me the thumbs up signal because the word has the /er/ sound. If the word is barn, you would give me the thumbs down signal because it does not have the /er/ sound.

## R-Controlled Vowels er, ir, ur in the Text

- Tell the children that together, you will be reading a book called *Oliver Button Is a Sissy*.
- Explain that there are many /er/ sounding words in the text.
- Tell the students that you are going to read the book once from beginning to end. Remind them to be polite and not to interrupt you while you read.

## Examples of R-Controlled Vowels er, ir, ur Found in the Text:

- |             |                   |         |            |
|-------------|-------------------|---------|------------|
| • Oliver    | • teacher         | • girls | • pictures |
| • paper     | • whispered       | • first | • sun      |
| • person    | • other           |         | • turn     |
| • exercise  | • other           |         |            |
| • sister    | • performed       |         |            |
| • every     | • player          |         |            |
| • teacher   | • balloon-twister |         |            |
| • attention | • dancer          |         |            |
| • mother    | • over            |         |            |
| • father    | • everybody       |         |            |

Step by Step Lesson Plan

List of words in the book that match the instructional focus

Optional Activity to Extend Engagement

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**Step 3: Guided Word Work Practice**

star	clear	storm	stair
farm	fear	floor	fair
alarm	peer	pour	mare
cart	mere	more	fiare
barn	steer	born	hair

**Interactive Exploration**

- Make a chart on chart paper or interactive whiteboard with four columns.
- At the top of each column write er, ir, ur, and other.
- Tell the children, "I'm going to say some words. You to tell me the /er/ sound is in the word or not. For example, if the word is girl, you would give me the thumbs up signal because the word has the /er/ sound. If the word is barn, you would give me the thumbs down signal because it does not have the /er/ sound."
- When the children understand the concept. Use the anchor chart or the words from the text to check for understanding. On the left is another list of words that do not have the /er/ sound, but do utilize the bossy r concept. These words would go under the "other" column on the chart.
- After you say the word aloud and the children give a thumbs up, ask if anyone can spell the word correctly, then add the word under the corresponding column.
- Continue playing this whole class sort game until the children have a fair grasp of the concept.

**Step 4: Independent Word Work Practice**

**Practice Page**

- Give each student a copy of *Finish the Word Practice Page*.
- Read the directions with the class.
- Tell the students to complete the practice page.
- Monitor students while they work.

**Step 5: Reconnect and Reflect on Word Work**

**Group Discussion**

- Bring the students back together.
- Ask students to explain what they learned about words based on the work they completed.
- Invite students to turn and talk with a partner about their word work.
- Invite 2-3 students to share what they learned with the group.

**Step 6: Extend Word Work (optional)**

**Extension Activity**

- Ask students to be on the lookout for r-controlled vowels er, ir, ur in their own reading. Tell them to write their words on a sticky note and add them to the anchor chart (review the added sticky notes with the class later in the day or before moving on to the next word work lesson).
- Alternatively, students can keep track of the words using the *Word Detective worksheet*.

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Interactive Activities

Independent Practice Page

**Finish the Word**  
Word Work Practice Page

**Directions:**  
Fill in the blank with er, ir, or ur to correctly spell the word in each sentence.

- Wash your hands to get rid of the g \_\_\_\_ns.
- Mom told me not to sa \_\_\_\_m in my seat.
- It's important to play games nicely and take t \_\_\_\_ns.
- There are ten boys and eleven g \_\_\_\_ in our class.
- My favorite season is summ \_\_\_\_.
- If you play in the mud, you will get d \_\_\_\_y.
- When Juan fell down, he h \_\_\_\_ his knee.
- You can reach the top shelf if you use the ladd \_\_\_\_.
- The parakeet stood on his p \_\_\_\_ch to eat.
- Please choose the th \_\_\_\_d one in the row.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Independent Word Work Practice | @BookPagez.com

Extension Activity

**Word Detective: Compound Words**  
Extension Activity

**Directions:**  
Be a word detective! Be on the lookout for compound words while you read. Write the word that you find along with the title of the book where you found the word, the page, and the sentence with the word or phrase.

Word	Book Title	Page	Sentence

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Word Work Extension Activity | @BookPagez.com