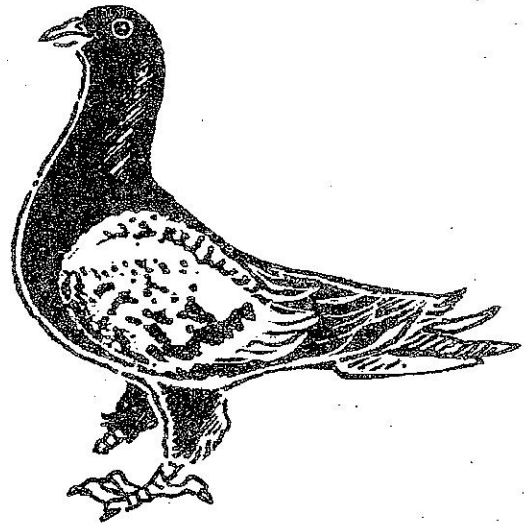


John Silver the Pigeon

LISTEN to
your child read
this story aloud.

When you walk down any city street, you will see birds called pigeons. There are many kinds of pigeons, and one special kind is called the "homing pigeon." Homing pigeons were used before there were radios or telephones. These birds are especially smart. When they are taken to places far from their homes and released, these pigeons actually fly straight back home.

During World War I, the army found these birds to be very useful. A soldier would put a little silver tube on a pigeon's leg and place an important message inside. He would then let the bird go and it would fly home, where another soldier was waiting to receive the note. These birds were a great help to the soldiers.



One homing pigeon was released during a battle at Meuse-Argonne in France in World War I. An explosion near the pigeon tossed him around, but he kept flying. When he finally got back to his home, he was almost dead. Part of his chest was gone and his right leg was missing, but the message tube was still there.

The men named him "John Silver" after the one-legged pirate in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. He was treated kindly and honored as a war hero.

At the Wright Patterson Air Museum in Dayton, Ohio, you can still see John Silver. He is on display with famous airplanes and artifacts from wars. Every year on an army holiday called Organization Day, they call out the names of soldiers who died in wars. When the name "John Silver" is called, a soldier always replies, "Died of wounds received in battle in the service of his country."

Who would have thought that a pigeon could be a war hero? The next time you see pigeons strutting on the sidewalk, think of the homing pigeon, John Silver.

By Mary Rose

Dear Parents,

One way to help children with unfamiliar words is to teach them to "take the word apart" and look for something that they recognize—a root word or an affix, which can be either a prefix or a suffix. A root word is the base word before anything is added. An affix is the part that gets added. Suffixes are groups of letters added to the end of a word. For example, if you start with the word official and add the suffix, -ly, you come up with a new word, officially. When children can identify root words and separate them from the suffixes, it helps them sound out and pronounce the word, and also helps them understand the word's meaning.

Skill

Separating Root Words and Suffixes

We completed this assignment together.

(Child's Signature)

(Parent's Signature)

The Questions



This week's story contains many examples of root words with suffixes. See if you can find the root word and suffix of these words. Then look carefully in the story to add even more to the list.

Word	Root Word	Suffix
kindly	_____	_____
useful	_____	_____
tossed	_____	_____
finally	_____	_____
named	_____	_____
strutting	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____