Vowel Alternations
Long, Short, and Schwa

Long to Short
When a long vowel changes to a short vowel, the stress remains on the same syllable.

vol/cā/no ——> vol/cǎn/ic
de/cīde ——> de/cǐ/sion

Long to Schwa
When a long vowel changes to a schwa sound, the schwa syllable is NOT accented.

pre/sīde ——> pres/ə/dent
man/dāte ——> man/də/to/ry

Short to Schwa
When a short vowel changes to a schwa sound, the schwa syllable is NOT accented.

em/phā/tic ——> em/phə/sis
ex/cēl ——> ex/cə/lent

Hint: Thinking of a related word can help you spell another word, for example, narrate/narrative, compose/composition, serene/serenity, etc.