

Word Study Parent Information

Words Their Way is a word study program that further individualizes the way students learn to spell words. It is a hands-on approach to practice spelling patterns in words. It allows students to manipulate words and/or pictures into different categories. This sorting process helps students analyze and examine, compare and contrast, and differentiate the patterns in words. This hands-on approach not only motivates students to practice spelling words, but it also helps students internalize the spelling patterns in words for the future. At the beginning of the school year, the students were administered a spelling inventory that helped determine at which spelling stage the students were performing. From there, I was able to place them into small groups of students to which developmentally appropriate lessons and word lists will be administered.

Your child will be bringing home a collection of spelling words bi-weekly that have been introduced in class. During the next two weeks your child is expected to complete different activities to ensure that these words, and the spelling principles they represent, are mastered. These activities have been modeled and practiced in school, so your child can teach you how to do them.

Activity 1: Remind your child to sort the words into categories like the ones we did in school. Your child should read each word aloud during this activity. Ask your child to explain to you why the words are sorted in a particular way---what does the sort reveal about spelling in general? Ask your child to sort them a second time as fast as possible. You may want to time them.

Activity 2: Do a blind sort with your child. Lay down a word from each category as a header, and then read the rest of the words aloud. Your child must indicate where the word goes without seeing it. Lay it down, and let your child move it if he or she is wrong. Repeat if your child makes more than one error.

Activity 3: Assist your child in doing a word hunt, looking for words that have the same sound, pattern, or both in a book they have already read. Try to find two or three words for each category.

Activity 4: Improve fluency by doing a speed sort. Time your child to see how quickly he/she can sort the word cards.

Activity 5: Do a written word sort to prepare for the assessment. As you call out the words in a random order, your child should write them into categories. Call out any words your child misspells a second or even a third time. Repetition improves retention.

Thank you for your support! Together we can help your child make valuable progress.

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Parent Tip Sheet

- Each spelling list has headings that show what the sorting pattern is for the week.
- The word lists are not sorted on the sheet--they are scrambled.
- The sort number and title is written at the top of the word list.
- The sorting patterns are written in bold along with the first words for each pattern.
- Students have to HEAR what the words have in common or SEE what they have in common (or both).
- Words are not meant to be memorized or written in rote fashion. The objective is for students to learn the spelling patterns.

Word Sort Codes

V = vowel

C = consonant

Many sorts will have a combination of vowel and consonants. For example, VC would be words that have vowel-consonant pattern like when--(looking at the end of the word--when -- the e is the vowel and the n is the consonant.)

VCC would be words that have the vowel-consonant-consonant pattern like the word tall- the letter a is a vowel and the 2 l's are consonants.

/ / = letters within these two lines indicate the SOUND created. For example, ce = /s/ means that the letters ce in a word has the "S" sound

Syllables

Many sorts rely on the number of syllables in a word. A syllable is unit of sound in a word. Each syllable has one vowel sound. For example, camper has 2 syllables and is segmented like this: camp/er.

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Words Their Way September NEWSLETTER



HOW CAN I HELP?

One of the best ways that you can help your child is by making word work a part of your regular homework or evening routine. Consistent practice will result in extended learning, compared to memorizing the words the night before the assessment. Devoting 5-10 minutes each day is manageable and not overwhelming. Keep the word work materials in a place that is easily accessible for your child. This encourages your child to take responsibility for his/her learning and homework commitments.

IMPORTANT DATES



SORT IT OUT

Word sorting helps children recognize patterns in spelling and phonics. When students recognize patterns and see them many times, like in a sort, they will be able to apply those patterns to related words. A basic word sort can be completed using word cards, in writing, or orally. Sorting also helps children categorize.



JUST FOR FUN

Do you have the games Scrabble, Boggle, or Bananagrams? All of these are fun word games. Add a twist to the game, and make it a rule to only use words from the word sort list. To make this a bit easier, consider making tricky letters like Q, X, and Z freebies that can be turned into any letter.