

WORDS THEIR WAY

Word Study in Action Parent Overview

word sorting defined

Word sorting is the process of grouping sounds, words, and pictures into specific categories.

- Word sorting includes teacher-directed instruction and independent student learning.
- 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.
- Allows students to manipulate words into different categories.
- The sorting process helps students analyze and examine, compare and contrast, and differentiate the patterns in words.
- The 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.
- In the beginning of the year, students were given a Spelling Inventory that helped determine which spelling stage the students were performing at.

the process

1. Teacher will begin word sorting by demonstrating how to sort word cards by sound or pattern.
2. As students sort word cards on their own, teacher will help them make discoveries and generalizations about the conventions of English, orthography, or spelling.
3. Students will compare and contrast word features such as consonants, and digraphs (ch, wh, sh, etc.) so they can discover similarities and differences within the categories.
4. Students will practice through a two week word study rotation using a variety of activities and games.

helpful hints

1. Each spelling list has headers (features/categories) that show what the sorting pattern is for the week.
2. The sort is written at the top of the word list.
3. The sorting patterns are written in bold along with the first words for each pattern.
4. Students have to HEAR what the words have in common or SEE what they have in common (or both).
5. Words are not meant to be memorized or written in rote fashion. The objective is for students to learn and understand the spelling patterns.

word their way vocabulary

SORTING

Organizing words into groups based on similarities in their patterns or meanings.

CONSONANTS

(represented by a C)
All letters other than the vowels. Consonant sounds are blocked by the lips, tongue, or teeth during articulation.

VOWEL

(represented by V)
One of 6 letters causing the mouth to open when vocalized (a, e, i, o, u, and usually Y). A single vowel sound is heard in every syllable of a word.

SOUND MARKS //

Sound marks around a letter or pattern tell the student to focus only on the sound rather than actual letters. Ex: gem could be grouped into /j/ category because it sounds like a j.

ODDBALL

Words that cannot be grouped into any of the identifying categories of the sort. Students are taught that there are always words that "break the rules" and do not follow the general pattern.