

# Words Their Way Parent Information Session

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## Word Study vs. Traditional Spelling

- ☆ Traditional spelling lists assess one thing—memory!
- ☆ Students often do not transfer memorized spelling words into their writing.
- ☆ Research indicates that memorization of lists of “spelling words” does not promote the development of spelling skills.
- ☆ Traditional spelling programs are a “one-size fits all” model and do not allow for differentiation.

## Overview of Word Study

- ☆ Our phonics, spelling, and vocabulary program.
- ☆ Teaches students to notice regularities, patterns, and conventions of the English language.
- ☆ Increases specific knowledge of words– the spelling and meaning of individual words
- ☆ Instruction is individualized and teaches students at their stage of development.
- ☆ Helps students become better readers and writers and allows what they learn in Word Study to transfer over into other content areas.

## Three Layers of Word Study

- ☆ Alphabet :  
relationship between letters and sounds
- ☆ Pattern :  
groupings of letters
- ☆ Meaning :  
spelling based on meaning

## Word Study Developmental Stages

- ☆ Emergent
- ☆ Letter-Name Alphabetic
- ☆ Within Word Pattern
- ☆ Syllables and Affixes
- ☆ Derivational Relations

## Emergent Stage

- | <u>Characteristics</u>           | <u>Feature Focus</u> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Pretend reading and writing    | • Alphabet           |
| • No concept of word in reading  | • Beginning sounds   |
| • Developing alphabet knowledge  | • Rhyme              |
| • No sound-symbol correspondence |                      |

## Letter Name Stage

### Characteristics

- Read at a slow, word-by-word pace
- Finger point and read aloud
- Write short, simple pieces
- Begin to use high frequency words

### Feature Focus

- Beginning/ending consonants
- Blends (sp, st)
- Digraphs (sh, ch, th)
- Short vowels
- Nasals (-mp, -nt)

## Within Word Pattern Stage

### Characteristics

- Read silently
- Read simple chapter books
- Write paragraphs with conventional capitals and punctuation

### Feature Focus

- Long vowels (silent e)
- Other long vowels
- R-controlled vowels (part, chore)
- Abstract vowels (ground, caught)
- Complex consonants (scr, thr, qu, tch/ch)

## Syllables and Affixes Stage

### Characteristics

- Read chapter books fluently and expressively
- Use varied comprehension strategies
- Read and write for a variety of purposes
- Use conventional grammar, usage and mechanics

### Feature Focus

- Inflected endings (ed, ing, s)
- Other doubling (**juggle**, **winner**)
- Patterns in stressed syllables
- Unstressed syllables (troub-**le**, doct-**or**)
- Simple prefixes and suffixes

## Derivational Relations Stage

### Characteristics

- Read and write widely across genres
- Monitor own comprehension and use varied strategies

### Feature Focus

- Impact of meaning on spelling
- More difficult prefixes and suffixes
- Greek and Latin word elements

## Word Patterns and Oddballs

### Word Patterns:

- ☆ Words that share a similar feature or belong to the same “family”.

Examples: digraph, CVC, CVCe, or vowel sound

### Oddballs :

- ☆ Words that cannot be grouped into any of the identified categories of a sort.
- ☆ Students should be taught that there are always words that “break the rules” and do not follow the general pattern

Also referred to as high-frequency or sight words.

## Work in the Classroom

- ☆ Small group instruction differentiated by spelling stages.
- ☆ Each group works with words and patterns that are developmentally appropriate for their spelling stage.
- ☆ Students are taught to sort, or categorize, words to analyze how they are spelled (based on sound, pattern, or meaning).
- ☆ Students conduct different activities with each sort.

## What is Sorting?

- ☆ A word sort is a word study activity where children compare, contrast and sort words according to specific features.
- ☆ It allows children to form hypotheses, explore concepts and make generalizations about the properties of written words.
- ☆ Word sort activities help students link new words to the familiar ones they can already spell. They allow students to practice and reinforce their word work in a very fun and different way.

## Types of Sorts

- ☆ Closed/Open Sort
- ☆ Regular Sort
- ☆ Blind Sort
- ☆ Speed Sort
- ☆ Buddy Sort
- ☆ Memory Sort
- ☆ Sentence Sort
- ☆ Magazine Sort
- ☆ Change Sort
- ☆ Word Hunt
- ☆ Draw and Label

*\* See Sorting Cheat Sheet*

## Vocabulary Instruction

- ☆ Vocabulary instruction occurs during small group instruction and through sorting activities.
- ☆ Grammar is address through concept sorts.

K-2	3-5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing synonyms</li> <li>• Recognizing antonyms</li> <li>• Recognizing shades of meaning</li> <li>• Recognizing words with multiple meanings</li> <li>• Recognizing idioms</li> <li>• Using inflectional endings</li> <li>• Using context to determine word meanings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing synonyms</li> <li>• Recognizing antonyms</li> <li>• Using the prefixes (in-, mis-, inter-) to determine word meanings</li> <li>• Using the suffixes (-er, -est, -able) to determine word meanings</li> <li>• Using context to determine word meanings</li> <li>• Recognizing idioms</li> <li>• Recognizing shades of meaning</li> <li>• Recognizing words with multiple meanings</li> </ul>

## How are Students Assessed?

- ☆ Developmental Spelling Inventory (3x a year)
- ☆ Weekly or bi-weekly assessments
- ☆ Spelling Group "check-ins"
- ☆ Writing across the curriculum

## Homework

- ☆ Reinforces skills and patterns from class
- ☆ Choice Boards
  - Sorting Options
  - Activity Options
- ☆ 3-4 activities per week
- ☆ Varies by class and grade level

## How You Can Help at Home

- ☆ If your child makes a mistake, try to use prompts, or clues to help them make the correction
- Examples:
- "I see a word in this column that does not look right."
  - "Does that word look right?"
  - "Think about the word pattern."
  - "Let's look at all the sounds in this word."
- ☆ Practice letter and pattern sounds
  - ☆ Assist your child with sorting activities
  - ☆ Encourage your child to read their words before beginning their homework
  - ☆ Communicate problems or concerns with your child's teacher

Questions?



**Thank you for being a partner  
in your child's education!**