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

**Characteristics**
- Pretend reading and writing
- No concept of word in reading
- Developing alphabet knowledge
- No sound-symbol correspondence

**Feature Focus**
- Alphabet
- Beginning sounds
- Rhyme
### 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.

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**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 addressed through concept sorts.

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<tr>
<th>K-2</th>
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<td>• Recognizing shades of meaning</td>
<td>• Using the prefixes (in-, mis-, inter-) to determine word meanings</td>
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<td>• Recognizing words with multiple meanings</td>
<td>• Using the suffixes (-er, -est, -able) to determine word meanings</td>
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## 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!