

Words Their Way

Word Study for
Phonics, Vocabulary,
and Spelling Instruction

Why Word Study?

- Word Study teaches students general concepts of how and why words are spelled the way they are, while giving specific examples of words and their meanings
- Word Study is both hands-on and meaningful
- Word Study is easily differentiated
- *Words Their Way* is extremely teacher friendly

Materials Needed for Word Study

- None – Many teachers already use some form of Word Study, but this can be a daunting and time consuming task
- The easiest and most teacher-friendly approach requires only one *Words Their Way Teacher Edition* and 2-3 supplemental word sort books per grade level (although per teacher is always nice 😊)

Developmental Stages

- Emergent
- Letter Name
- Within Word
- Syllables and Affixes
- Derivational Relations

Getting Started

- Spelling Inventories
 - Primary: K-3 (Emergent-Within Word)
 - Elementary: 1-6 (Letter Name-Derivational Relations)
 - Upper: 5-12 (Within Word-Derivational Relations)
- Grade using the Feature Guide

Sort, Sort, Sort!

- Sound Sorts
 - Picture Sorts
 - Blind Sorts
- Pattern Sorts
 - Word Sorts
- Meaning Sorts
 - Concept Sorts
 - Spelling-Meaning Sorts

Approaches to Sorting

- Teacher Directed Closed Sorts
- Student Directed Open Sorts

Sort Variations

- Guess My Category
- Writing Sort
- Word Hunt
- Brainstorming
- Repeated Individual & Buddy Sorts
- Speed Sort
- Draw & Label / Cut & Paste

Important Principles

- *Most importantly, Word Study should be fun!*
- Look for what students use but confuse
- A step backward is a step forward
- Use words students can read
- Compare words “that do” with words “that don’t”
- Sort by sound and sight

Important Principles continued...

- Begin with obvious contrasts
- Don't hide exceptions
- Avoid rules
- Work for automaticity
- Return to meaningful texts
- And last, but certainly not least, *get parents involved!*

A Week at a Glance

- Monday: Introduction, Cut and Sort
- Tuesday: Re-sort, Additional Activity (Draw and Label)
- Wednesday: Re-sort, Additional Activity (Writing Sort)
- Thursday: Re-sort, Word Hunt
- Friday: Assessment
