

Word Study Sort Activities

The activities below explain the procedures of several different sorts your child should do in her/his spelling homework. Word Study is the spelling program from Words Their Way that LCPS uses. Students learn patterns in words, and they do this by using auditory and visual senses. I'm also providing you with Words Their Way Language so you understand what some of the notations are.

Sorting – Organizing words into groups based on similarities in their patterns or meaning.

Oddball – Words that cannot be grouped into any of the identified categories of a sort. Students are taught that there are always words that break the rules of the pattern and do not follow the rule.

Sound Marks / / - Sound marks around a letter or pattern tell the student to focus only on the sound rather than the actual letters.

Vowel – (represented by **V**) – one of 6 letters causing the mouth to open when vocalized (a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y). A single vowel is heard in every syllable of a word.

Consonants – (represented by **C**) - All letters other than vowels. Consonant sounds are blocked by the lips, tongue, or teeth during articulation. So, the letter B does NOT sound like /buuuu/; instead, it is the smallest sound /b/

Introduce the Sort – Students cut out the words and/or pictures and sort the cards by the header cards. For the sake of simplicity and consistency, I will call them all **words**.

Practice the Sort and Write It – Students sort and copy down the words in the correct column under the correct rule. Some sorts do not have words, so this is not done for those sorts.

Draw and Label – Students draw pictures that represent some of their words to show their meanings.

Blind Sort/No-Peeking Sort (same thing) – Students work with a partner. The headers are placed at the top of the page. The partner picks up a word card and reads the word (or names the picture) without showing it to the student. The student listens to the sounds in the word and points to the category in which the word belongs. After EACH word card is named by the partner, the card is revealed to the student to check the category. The student can change their decision and move the card. The emphasis here is on the sound, not the spelling.

Blind Sort Writing – The same procedure as above except this time, the student writes the word in the correct category and checks the spelling after each card is called. Students do this sort after several exposures to the word. If the sort has blends/digraphs and not words, the student just writes the blend and does NOT attempt to spell the word. The emphasis is on the sound of the blend.

Word Hunts – Have students hunt for words in their sorts in other texts, such as books, magazines, newspapers, signs, etc.

Speed Sort – Sort the words as fast as you can. Beat the teacher, or beat the parent!

Onset/Rime – The onset is the beginning consonant or blend sound. The rime is the vowel and everything else. Students identify the onset and rime in word families. They can **brainstorm** more words to fit the word family by changing the onset.

Spelling Stairs spell the word by writing the first letter. Next, on the 2nd line write the first 2 letters, next line first 3 letters, and so on.

Ex: **cake** **c**
 ca
 cak
 cake

Rainbow Spelling Words– Students begin by writing the spelling words in pencil. Next they pick three different colored pencils. Then they take one of the colored pencils and trace each word with that color. The last two colors of pencil are used in the same manner. When the words are done they have written each word 4 times!

Sentences – Students write sentences using words from their sort. They underline the spelling word.