

Words Their Way

Spelling Homework Guide



(Please keep this all year to help with spelling homework!!!)

ABOUT WORDS THEIR WAY

Words Their Way is a new approach to teaching spelling that allows students to learn words at their individual level of instruction and teaches them how words work. Each trimester, students will take a diagnostic spelling assessment (for which they do not study) to determine their spelling level. After looking at what students know about spelling, we have put them into spelling groups at their developmental levels. Each group will have a different spelling word sort.

By studying these word sorts, students will learn to sort, compare and contrast word features in each category, make discoveries, become more fluent readers, and increase their vocabulary through word meanings. Students move through weekly word study patterns by doing in class activities, homework and ending the week with a word sort test on Fridays.

WHAT IS A WORD STUDY?

Word study is a study of words features. Students lists will be on a word study PATTERN (example - the study of the long "u" sound in "u_e", "ew", or "ue" or how adding the suffix "-ful" or "-less" changes a word's meaning). The quiz on Fridays will be on the pattern from that week using some of their words from each student's sort and some additional words that were not on their sort, but fit the pattern they were studying.

WHY A "WORD STUDY" INSTEAD OF A "TRADITIONAL" SPELLING PROGRAM?

Research studies indicate that memorization of lists of "spelling words" does not promote the development of spelling skills. In the past when we've used this traditional approach, many students who received a 100% on their spelling test could not spell most of the words in their writing! Memorizing a list of words and getting 100% on weekly tests does not necessarily mean a child is a good speller. It may just mean they are good at memorizing words for a test. Using the Words Their Way word study program also allows us to work at each student's individual level rather than using a "one size fits all" spelling list.

Weekly Spelling Homework Routine

Monday Night: Word Sort (Use the word sheet that was sent home in your Home Folder)

1. Cut out the words from your spelling word sheet.
2. Sort all of the words into categories.
3. Write each spelling category in a different column on your Monday Night Homework Sheet.
4. Copy your spelling words in the appropriate columns on your Monday Night Homework Sheet.
5. At the bottom of the sheet, explain what you learned about the words during this sort.

Example of a Correct Explanation	Example of an Incorrect Explanation
"I noticed that there are two ways to make the /ow/ sound. It can be spelled "ow" and "ou."	"I noticed that there were a lot of long words on our spelling list."

Making Connections: Spelling Patterns to Look for

(Here are some spelling patterns you can look for when making connections on Tuesday night's homework!)

Pattern	Definition	Example Spelling Patterns	Example in Words
Short Vowels	Short a	a	cat, glass, stand
	Short e	e	bed, then, check
	Short i	i	bit, film, listen
	Short o	o	hop, lost, moth
	Short u	u	nut, lump, brush
Long Vowels	Long a	a, ai, ay	cake, nail, stay
	Long e	ee, ea	sheep, sneak, bleed
	Long i	i, igh, y	lime, right, sky
	Long o	o, oe, oa	hope, toe, coach
	Long u	u, ue, ew	tune, knew, blue
Vowel Digraph	two vowels that make ONE sound together	oa, ee, ea, ai	boat, feet, clean, rail
r-Influenced Vowel	A vowel sound that is influenced when followed by "r" in a syllable	ar, air, er, ear, ire, ier, or, oar, ur, ure	hurt, card, cheer, tire, shore
Diphthong	Two vowels that "glide" together	oi, oy, aw, ou	boil, toy, law, out
Silent "e"	the final "e" in a spelling pattern that usually makes a long vowel sound in the word; the silent "e" does not represent a sound itself	e	tile, came, rope
Schwa	The sound of the middle vowel in an unstressed syllable; the vowel is NOT long or short	a, e, i, o, u, y	about, done, pencil
Double consonants	Two of the same consonant together	ll, nn, bb, dd	tall, cannon, bubble, paddle
Consonant Blend	Two or more consonants that slide together to make a sound	br, dr, thr, squ, bl, tr, nd	brag, drive, throat, land
Consonant Digraph	Two consonants that make ONE new sound together	wh, ch, th, sh, ck	white, child, tooth, shell, rock

Silent Beginning Consonant	A consonant that does not make its own sound	<u>kn</u> , <u>gn</u> , <u>wr</u>	knock, gnat, wrap
Soft c	"c" that makes the /s/ sound	c	nice, circle, ceiling
Soft g	"g" that makes the /j/ sound	g	huge, giant, gentle
Word Families	Group of words with a common pattern; MUST start with a vowel	-and -ook	sand/band/hand/land look/book/crook/shook
Syllables	The smallest unit of sound; always has a vowel sound included	2 syllables	bookcase, iron (book-case, ir-on)
CVC Pattern	Consonant-vowel-consonant	CVC	hat, can, tap
CVCe Pattern	Consonant-vowel-consonant-silent "e"	CVCe	hate, cane, tape
CVVC Pattern	Consonant-vowel-vowel-consonant	CVVC	feel, rain, read
Prefix	A part added to the beginning of a base/root word to change its meaning	pre-, dis-, mis-	preview, disagree, misspell
Suffix	A part added to the end of a base/root word to change its meaning	-ful, -less, -er	hopeful, careless, player

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