



Using Sorts to Help Students Learn to Work with Words

One of the tasks that we use to help students to learn to work with word is sorts. Sorts help students to understand the differences and similarities between words, and features that they can pay attention to in reading words. We can do three different types of sorts – visual, auditory and spelling. Word sorts are one of the activities that can be done to supplement phonics and sight words in the working with words block.

Visual Word Sorts

Step 1: Select two key words the student knows that have a frequently occurring spelling pattern. For example, at and pick.

Step 2: Make sure the student can read the two key words.

Step 3: Show student a word that has the same spelling pattern as one of the key words.

Step 4: Ask the student to indicate which key word has the same spelling pattern as the new word.

Step 5: Sort the new word where it belongs and compare or contrast the two columns.

at	pick
fat	lick
bat	sick
sat	

Auditory Word Sorts

Auditory Word sorts begin to engage the phonological processor when students start to sort words based on the way they sound prior to checking the visual pattern.

Step 1: Select two key words the student knows that have a frequently occurring spelling pattern e.g. day and ball.

Step 2: Make sure student can read the two key words.

Step 3: Say a word that has the same spelling pattern as one of the key words.

Step 4: Ask the student to indicate which key word has the same spelling pattern as the new word.

Step 5: Show the student the new word and compare/contrast it with the selected key word to check.





and the all \ at get very

Using Sorts to Help Students Learn to Work with Words continued

Auditory Word Sorts continued

day

ball

Tell me, which word does "call" rhyme with?

Which word does "bay" rhyme with?

Continue with more words

Student points to the word to respond (or says it)

Spelling Word Sorts

Guiding students to use the selected key word to try to spell the words prior to checking the response visually engages the phonological processor even more deeply.

Step 1: Select two key words the student knows that have a frequently occurring spelling pattern, for example day and pick.

Step 2: Make sure student can read the two key words.

Step 3: Tell the student a word that has the same spelling pattern as one of the key words.

Step 4: Ask the student to indicate which key word has the same spelling pattern as the new word.

Step 5: Ask the student to try to use the key word to spell the new word.

Step 6: Show the student the new word and compare and contrast it with the student's spelling attempt correcting as necessary.

day

ball

Tell me, which word does "call" rhyme with?

Can you spell it?

Provide feedback as necessary

going are out what from see also like