

Word Study

Grades K-2

Word Study is a research-based, hands-on approach to phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction. The focus is on learning rather than memorizing. The brain naturally processes new information by comparing, contrasting and connecting. During Word Study students compare and contrast sounds and patterns as they sort pictures and words. Students connect new information to learned information and are more likely to remember it. After explicit instruction, guided practice, and opportunities for independent practice, students are able to apply word study skills to reading and writing.

One of the most challenging aspects of Word Study is differentiating instruction to meet the needs of each student. PALS data is used to group students and develop an instructional plan. Instruction begins at the student's spelling level rather than grade level. Teachers provide developmentally appropriate instruction, monitor progress along the way, and facilitate student growth.



Most often spelling stages and reading levels align and students work in groups building both word study and reading skills. Certain spelling stages are typically associated with particular grade levels. However, students are placed at the level most appropriate for them based on data and may be working in a

spelling stage below, on, or above grade level. Spelling stages, instructional focus, and associated grade levels are outlined below.

Kindergarten

Emergent Speller

Emergent Reader

- ❖ Alphabet knowledge
 - Games, matching activities, sorts
- ❖ Phonological awareness
 - Picture sorts, songs, games
- ❖ Concept sorts
 - Build oral vocabulary

First Grade

Letter Name Speller

Beginning Reader

- ❖ Initial and Final consonant sounds
- ❖ Blends and Digraphs
- ❖ Short vowel word families
 - Same vowel → Mixed vowel → Short vowel (CVC)
- ❖ Picture and word sorts
- ❖ Sight word development

Second Grade

Within Word Speller

Transitional Reader

- ❖ Compare and contrast long and short vowels
- ❖ Examine long vowel patterns using sorts
- ❖ Examine R-controlled vowels
- ❖ Build vocabulary using concept maps and games
- ❖ Conduct word hunts in text
- ❖ Sort by pattern



Research:

Words Their Way by Bear et al
Word Journeys by Kathy Ganske

