Rationale: Effective word study instruction should include the components described on the sorting checklist.

Directions: As you complete a sort, determine whether you've addressed the components representative of an effective sort.

Sorting Checklist

	Yes	No
Before the Sort:		
1. I introduced the headers (sound, pattern, position).	____	____
2. I modeled the sort with student involvement.	____	____
3. I asked the children to state what was the same about the items in each column (sound, pattern, position).	____	____
4. I made sure that the student packs were shuffled.	____	____
5. I gave the children individual sets to sort.	____	____
6. Headers remained visible.	____	____
During the Sort:		
1. I asked the children to verbalize each item as they sort.	____	____
2. I monitored the sorting of the children in order to intercede when necessary.	____	____
3. I named pictures that the children did not recognize.	____	____
After the sort:		
1. I had the children read down each column to themselves, to a partner, or to me.	____	____
2. I helped the children find and any correct mistakes.	____	____
3. I asked the children to state what was the same about the items in each column (sound, pattern, position).	____	____

Three Teachers' Weekly Word Study Schedules

Teachers	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Teacher # 1: Primary Classroom	Introduce new sort*	Word sorts & Writing sorts (with teacher supervision)	Blind sorts (with a buddy)	Word hunts: group, individual, or pairs	Assessment
Teacher #2: Upper Elementary Classroom	Introduce new sort*	Speed sorts & Writing sorts (with a buddy)	Group word hunts	Speed sorts against the teacher	Assessment
Teacher #3: At-risk readers in cross-grade grouping plan	Introduce new sort* Cut, read, and sort words	Push & Say It/ Make-a-word* Writing sort	Write-a-word; Change-a-letter*	Word study games Word hunts	Assessment

* = teacher-directed activities

Managing A Week Of Word Study

Monday:
- Students receive words to cut out
- Teacher introduces words, demonstrates sort in a small group
- Students explain why words are being sorted that way (or they verbally state the word study principle being demonstrated)
- Students take their own word cards back to their seat and independently replicate the sort and then write it in their word study notebook

Suggestion: Keep the word study activities the same each week in class and at home. Tuesday – Friday contain sample activities students complete each day in class.

Tuesday:
- Students will sort words with a partner, check each other's work, and discuss difficulties

Wednesday:
- Students will perform a word hunt using literature currently being read; students will work in small groups and list words on chart paper, words are also recorded in their word study notebooks
- Students will continue to sort words in pairs seeking to improve speed & accuracy

Thursday:
- Speed sort against the teacher
- Review game or activity with the words of the week

Friday:
- Evaluation: blind written sort
- Students' papers are divided into columns according to feature
- Words are called out
- Students are given one point for having it in the right column and one point for spelling the word correctly

Adapted from Fall 2000 Word Study Handout

General Word Study Information

Ten Principles of Word Study:

1. *Look for what students are using but confusing*: this is where instruction begins
2. *A step backward is a step forward*: laying a strong foundation will ensure success when students encounter new material
3. *Use words students can read*: take words from texts and students writing to sort; always use known words
4. *Compare words that do with words that don't*: help students see the contrasts in word sounds and patterns
5. *Sort by sound and by sight*: use picture cards as well as word cards
6. *Begin with obvious contrasts first*: when beginning, compare words or sounds that are easy to distinguish between, then slowly move to those that are more difficult
7. *Don't hide exceptions*: when sorting make sure to have an oddball category for those words that do not follow the features being compared
8. *Avoid rules*: generalizations will be discovered as students sort
9. *Work for automaticity*: being able to sort the words automatically will help aid students' fluency and comprehension
10. *Return to meaningful text*: always take word study words from books being read; review word study features when you see those words in text; hold students accountable for their word study knowledge in their writing

Reading Stages Compared to Word Study Feature and Approximate Grade

Reading Stage	Word Study Feature	Grade Range
Emergent	Emergent	PreK- middle of 1st
Early Beginning	Early Letter Name	K – middle of 1st
Beginning	Mid to Late Letter Name	1st to middle of 2nd
Transitional	Within Word Pattern	mid 1st – middle of 4th
Intermediate	Syllables & Affixes	3rd – 8th
Advanced	Derivational Relations	5th – adulthood

Literacy Diet for Each of the Reading Stages

	Emergent	Beginning	Instructional
Fluency	40%	40%	20%
Comprehension	20%	20%	40%
Writing	20%	20%	20%
Word Study	20%	20%	20%

Emergent

Characteristics:
- Students do not have concept of word (ability to point accurately while "reading" memorized text)
- Students pretend or memory read
- Students scribble, pretend write with random letters and numbers, write using salient sounds
- Students use but confuse letters and their sounds

Suggested Activities (in order of difficulty):
- Read alphabet books
- Read rhyming books and use picture cards to match rhyming words
- Sort different letters by fonts
- Perform concept sorts on a topic studying using picture cards and grouping pictures together based on a common theme
- Sing songs and read chants involving letter names and their sounds
- Practice pointing while reading familiar simple text
- Match individual word cards to actual word in known story or poem
- Sort pictures by beginning sounds
- Play phonemic awareness games to determine if the specified sound is in the beginning, middle, or end of the word

The Do's and Don'ts of Emergent

Do's	Don'ts
- Do sort using pictures & objects	- Don't contrast letters that appear similar (ex: b, d, & p)
- Do label each column with the key letter when sorting letter sounds	- Don't contrast sounds that are similar or made in similar place in the mouth (ex: t & d or b & p)
- Do start with two columns and build to four	

Letter Name

<u>Characteristics</u> (of students beginning letter name):
- Students have a concept of word
- Students know the letters and their sounds
- Students represent the beginning and/or salient sounds in words they are writing; they often use the letter's name to write the sound
- Students use but confuse the vowel sounds in words
- Students begin to develop known words or a sight word vocabulary

<u>Suggested Progression:</u>
1. Sort picture words by initial sound and include sounds that are similar if they are confusing them.
2. Use a word bank to collect students known words from stories they have read. Use these words for the student's sorts.
3. Sort picture and word cards by consonant blends and diagraphs; compare consonant blend or digraph to individual letter. (Ex: s vs. sh; b vs. bl)
4. Sort picture and word cards by rhyming families (CVC words & CVC words with blends and digraphs);
   - Start by comparing words with common vowels. Ex: _at, _an, _ap.
   - Move quickly through the rhyming families for each vowel.
   - Then compare and contrast vowel sounds.
   - Suggested vowel sequence: A, I, O, E, U
5. Sort and compare blends. (Ex: sn, sl, st)

Examples of l blends are: bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl, pl   Other blends are: *tw, qu*
Examples of r blends are: br, cr, dr, fr, gr, pr, tr   Examples of diagraphs are: *ch, ck, ph, sh, th, wh*
Examples of s blends are: sc, sk, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, spl, str, squ

The Do's and Don'ts of Letter Name

<u>Do's</u>	<u>Don'ts</u>
• Do use pictures first, then words	• Don't begin by contrasting word families similar in appearance (ex: an vs. am)
• Do Add known words to categories	• Don't begin by contrasting similar vowel sounds
• Do use writing sorts	• Don't begin by contrasting similar consonant blends
• Do label the tops of your columns with a key word	• Don't be exhaustive in covering every single word family
• Do start with rhyming families comparing within a vowel and them moving across the vowel families and last comparing between vowels	• Don't contrast a with e or e with i at first. Make sure those vowels are known in opposition to other vowels before comparing them to each other

Within Word Pattern

Characteristics:
- ❖ Single syllable short vowel words, including beginning consonant blends/digraphs and presonsonantal nasals, spelled correctly
- ❖ Many sight words spelled correctly
- ❖ Use, but confuse silent long vowel markers
- ❖ Begin to read silently
- ❖ Begin to read and write in phrases rather than word by word

Suggested Word Study Progression:

1. **Short and common long vowel words by sound. Begin with short vs. CVCe only.**
   Ex. Sort "back", "trade," "man," "cake," "game," "bag," "rake," "grade," etc. into short vs. a_e (Sort pictures first and then words)

2. **Common long vowel words by pattern. Increase/reduce the number of patterns to meet the individual needs of the student.**
   Ex. Sort "make," "rate," "fame," "gate," "name," "cake," "late," etc. into –ake, -ame, -ate

3. **Short and common long words by sound and pattern. Again, alter the number of patterns to meet the individual needs of the student.**
   Ex. Sort "ate," "same," "fat," "take," "fate," "track," "fame," "late," "rake," "bag," etc. into two columns by sound and then divide long a column into –ame, -ate, and –ake

* Steps #1-#3 should be repeated when adding new patterns or moving to the next vowel. For example, once all a_e patterns are completed, return to step #1 and include –ai and -ay patterns. Then move to CVCe for next vowel and progress in the same manner.

4. **Short, long and r-controlled words by sound. Move from sorting short, long and –ar only to introduce the influence of the r sound to sorting –ar, -are, -air by sound. You should combine (i.e., short vs. –ar only, long vs. all r-controlled) in any way that meets the needs of the student.**
   Ex. Sort "bat," "hay," "car," "track," "main," "cart" etc. into short, long and -ar
   Ex. Sort "stack," "car," "wag," "flat," "far," etc. into short a and –ar
   Ex. Sort "rain," "stair," "care," "game," "dare," "cake," into long (-a_e/-ai) and r-controlled (–are/-air)
   Ex. Sort "tar," "care," "chair," "bark," "rare," "pair," etc. into –ar and –are/-air

5. **R-controlled words by pattern. Reduce the number of patterns if necessary.**
   Ex. Sort "scare," "harm," "hair," "dare," "shark," "stair" into –ar, -are, and –air columns

6. **Short, long, and r-controlled words by sound and pattern. Compare sounds and patterns that meet the specific needs of the child.**
   Ex. Sort "tar," care," stare," "stair," "far," chair," etc. into –ar and –are/-air by sound and them divide –are/-air column by pattern

Ex. Sort "pain," "fame," "pair," "stare," "gain," "stake," "fair," etc. into long a and r-controlled by sound and then divide each column (long – ai, a_e; r-controlled – air, -are) by pattern

7. **Less common long vowel patterns**
   Ex. Sort short and long a words as described above, but include less common patterns such as –ei- and –ey.

8. **Vowel diphthongs (e.g., brown, spoil, toy) and vowel digraphs (e.g., caught, stalk, thought). Sort only after common and r-influenced vowels have been covered. Sort in any combination that meets the needs of the child.**
   Ex. Compare known short/long vowel sounds/patterns with words such as "cloud," "boil," and boy," (diphthongs) by sound and pattern.

❖ We suggest that you move through all common long patterns (starting with CVCe) for the same vowel before moving to the next vowel. Once common patterns are completed for each vowel, move to r-controlled and then to less common patterns in the same fashion. Some students, however, may benefit from comparing patterns that are consistent across vowels in order to generalize the pattern.

❖ Complex consonant clusters (e.g., , scr-, thr-, shr-) and homophones (e.g., stare and stair)/homographs (e.g., read) can be addressed as they appear in the above sorts, or in isolation if necessary.

The Do's and Don'ts of Within Word Pattern

Do's	Don'ts
• Do sort by sound and pattern	• Don't use rules
• Do use words students can read	• Don't hide exceptions
• Do use sorting to help students draw their own conclusions about spelling patterns	• Don't worry about dialect
• Do use word study notebooks to record sorts, word hunts, draw and labels, etc.	
• Do include high frequency words that don't follow common spelling patterns as oddballs	
• Do include open sorts	
• Do compare r-controlled patterns with their corresponding long vowel patterns (i.e., -ore/o_e)	

Syllables and Affixes

Characteristics:
- Spells most single-syllable words correctly
- Makes errors at syllable juncture and in unaccented syllables
- Reads with good fluency and expression
- Reads faster silently than orally
- Writes responses that are sophisticated and critical

Suggested 12 Sequential Step Progression:
Sort known words following this progression

1. Compound Words

2 syllables	3 syllables	4 syllables
sailboat	weathervane	anchorwoman

2. Singular/Plural Nouns

+ s	+ es	y-i + es
apple	leash	penny
apples	leashes	pennies
badge	bush	ruby
badges	bushes	rubies

3. Double, Drop or Nothing

double	e-drop	nothing
rotting	using	blushing
trimming	moving	munching
quitting	coming	bluffing

4. Open and Closed Syllables

open/long	closed/short
pilot	tender
table	cannon
open	lumber

5. Open & closed Syllables-Inflected

open	closed
naming	blushing
fading	lending
sloping	drilling

6. VCC Same and Different Consonants

VCCV-same	VCCV-different
kitten	number
happy	elbow
sitting	sister
running	harvest

The Do's & Don'ts of Syllables and Affixes

Do

- **Do** sort by equal number of syllables

- **Do** sort 2 syllable words by syllable stress:
  stress in 1st vs. stress on second

- **Do** sort 2 syllable words by syllable structures: VCCV and VCV

- **Do** sort 2 syllable ING words by syllable structure

- **Do** sort less frequent vowel patterns in the accented syllable (turm<u>oi</u>l vs. empl<u>oy</u>ment)

- **Do** sort unaccented final syllable by spelling and by parts of speech (ex. er, ar, or)

- **Do** sort base words with their inflection forms. Look for categories of change (ex. educate-education vs. affect-affection)

- **Do** sort words by prefixes, suffixes & roots

- **Do** use many examples of "drop, double or nothing"

- **Do** sort 2 syllable homophones and homographs by stress, meaning, & parts of speech

Don't

- **Don't** bother with dividing into syllables-just count them

- **Don't** get hung up on 1 word. Read down all the words in the category & get a rhythm going if you get stuck

- **Don't** get hung up on how to divide them. Look at the pattern and vowel sound

- **Don't** get hung up on the rules: Just Do It

- **Don't** use words without an identifiable base

- **Don't** try to be exhaustive

- **Don't** give up

- **Don't** use single words—use pairs

- **Don't** worry about dialect

Derivational Relations

"Words that are related in meaning are often related in spelling as well,
despite changes in sound"
(Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton & Johnston, 2000)

Characteristics:
- Beginning in intermediate schools years and carries throughout adulthood
- Examine spelling-to-meaning relationships
- Have errors on low frequency multisyllabic words
- Use metacognitive writing and reading skills
- Analyze literary works

Suggested Progression:
1. **Vowel alternation** — vowel sound changes (ex. revise/revision)
2. **Consonant alternation** — consonant sound (ex. sign/signal) or letter changes (ex. confident/confidence)
3. **Greek and Latin word roots** (ex. **jud** — prejudice, **judge**, and adjudicate)
4. **Assimilated prefixes** — prefixes that have been absorbed and changed over time (ex. **attract** was originally **adtract** = ad — *to* — **tract** — *to pull*)

The Do's and Don'ts of Derivational Relations

DO	DON'T
Do try to think of a word with a similar meaning if you are unsure of a word's spelling(ex. competition comes from the base word compete)	**Don't** be fooled by the ambiguous schwa sound (ex. competition — the *e* can be easily misspelled because it does not sound familiar)
Do study Greek and Latin word roots as a vocabulary builder	**Don't** spend entire class periods instructing — have ample time for student exploration and discussion
Do teach in meaning "families" to highlight student awareness that patterns do occur (ex. please/pleasant)	**Don't** forget to always have dictionaries readily accessible
Do teach obviously related words before subtly related words (ex. represent/misrepresent before expose/exposition)	**Don't** think even you are too knowledgeable to learn a new pattern-meaning connection