

Word Sorts

What are Word Sorts?

There are two types of word sorts: **open** and **closed**. In closed word sorts the teacher defines the process for categorizing the words; that requires the students to engage in critical thinking as they examine sight vocabulary, corresponding concepts, or word structure. In open word sorts the students determine how to categorize the words, thereby becoming involved in an active manipulation of words.

Word Sort Activities

Alphabetization

Students shuffle and arrange cards alphabetically.

Vowel Sounds

Students group words by the long or short vowel sound they hear:

long i, short i, long a, etc.

Within each group the words can be subdivided into how the same vowel sound is spelled:

long a: a consonant e, ai, ay

Word Endings and Suffixes

Students arrange words by how the ending is spelled:

er: er, ar, or

el: le, el, al

Students sort words into columns according to base word and type of suffix or word ending. Students examine the columns and generalize about the part of speech each column represents based on the suffix. Students can also see spelling-meaning links by tracking the base word across each row.

(base)	(noun)	(adjective)	(verb)
laugh		laughable	
act	action		
plan			planned

Prefixes

Students arrange words by spelling of the prefix:

in: in or im

Students can cut or fold the card to separate the prefix from the base word.



Syllabication

Students arrange words according to the consonant pattern:

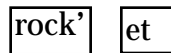
VCV, VCCV, VV, VCCCV

Within each pattern students subdivide the cards by where the word is divided:

before the consonant between the consonants between vowels after the consonant



Photocopy the unit word cards. Students cut or fold individual word cards to separate word parts and syllables. Students can add appropriate stress marks to each divided syllable.



Word cards can be arranged according to where the stressed syllable occurs:
first syllable, second syllable, etc.

Compound words can be broken down into two or more smaller words.



Oral Practice

Students can work in pairs and practice pronunciation and spelling by asking each other to spell the word on their card.

Interactive Games

Students choose a word card and act out or draw clues about the word for others to guess. A point is given to the student who both guesses and spells the word correctly.

For vocabulary enrichment, students can use the dictionary and read out loud several of the definitions or the thesaurus and read the list of synonyms or antonyms. Other students guess and spell the basic list word to which the definitions apply.

For additional game ideas consult your **Teacher's Resource Book**.

Word Building

Have students build their spelling words with the cards provided for word parts and letters. The spelling strategies can be reinforced and extended by having the students build new words based on the understanding of word formation and families. Have them consult a dictionary as a self-check.

For meeting individual needs refer to the *Helpful Hints* on page 2.