

Dear Parents,

The students have started a new word study program that we will be using for spelling. Students were assessed with a baseline pre-test to help determine what type of speller each student was. From there, students were placed in groups that are specific to their spelling development. This will help them become even better spellers in their writing and it will transfer over to their reading. There are multiple spelling groups within our classroom so not all students will have the same list of words each week. The activities for spelling words will be the same for all students; only the words will be different.

Students will have a sheet of paper with their spelling words on it. This sheet is to stay at home; we have an identical one at school to use during the day. Students will cut out the words (just like they do in class) at the beginning of each week for homework. The words should be stored in a safe place (bag, jar, envelope, etc.). Students will then use those words and practice by doing different sorts of activities. Here is a list of activities and instructions on how these activities are performed once the words have been cut out. Just like before, nothing formal needs to be turned in but it is expected that the spelling words are practiced at home nightly. An assessment will be given on Friday based on a **sampling** of words.

ACTIVITIES AND SORTS

As students are practicing the words by performing the activities, make sure they are reading and spelling all of the words to help with understanding and familiarity. When doing the activities and sorts, ask why they placed the words where they did and have them explain their thinking. We are looking for the realization that the words are made up of patterns.

Skill Sort – This sort should be done at the beginning of the week after the words are cut out, each week the spelling list focus on one skill. For example, this skill may be a beginning letter in words, ending sounds, short or long vowels, etc. The skill of the words will be the headers for the sort and the words will be placed under each header. Practice this sort so the students are familiar with the skill of the week and the words for week.

Concept Sort – A concept sort is when you take the spelling words and place them into groups based on the meaning of the words. Multiple headings can be made for the list of words and there can even be an odd ball heading for the words that don't have a fit.

Example: dogs, trees, cats, pencils, cups, flowers

<u>Animals</u>	<u>Other Things</u>	or	<u>Inside</u>	<u>Outside</u>	<u>Both</u>
dogs	trees		cups	flowers	cats
cats	flowers		pencils	trees	dogs
	cups				
	pencils				

Speed Sort – A speed sort is when you sort the words by the skill of the week while being timed. Students are timed and this sort can be done multiple times to see if the time gets shorter as more sorts are done. You can count to see how long it takes, cue a clock, or a stopwatch. (www.online-stopwatch.com is a free stopwatch website.) Make it fun and enjoy the learning taking place!

Writing Sort – This sort is done by writing the spelling words for each category instead of just moving the cards around. Any headers can be used for the sort and the spelling words can be handwritten under each heading.

Word Hunt – Students can use old magazines, newspapers, or letters to find other words that match the skill of the week. They can cut out the word, identify the letter or pattern, and glue them to a piece of paper. For the digital natives, have them visit www.starfall.com and read a story. When they come to a word with the pattern being learned, have them write just that word down. They will be reading and hunting at the same time. Starfall also has a section of games and nursery rhymes that are good for this hunt as well.

Thank you for your support in your child's education! Please let me know if you have any questions.

Mrs. McGraw ☺