

Modeling a Word Sort Lesson

Begin the lesson with a closed word sort.

Hold up each card for the students to read.

Say: "Let's see if you can tell me what each word is."

Discard any words students don't know.

Stop and discuss some of the words.

Ask: "Who can tell us what *rain* means? Can anyone give us an example of something that is plaid?"

Introduce the word sort by placing the key words (as category headers) in a pocket chart.

Say: "Our key words are *make*, *say*, and *pain*. We will also have another category for words that don't fit any of the patterns. Today, I want you to think about the way a word sounds and the way it looks."

Model the sort.

Say: "I'm going to sort some of the words, but as soon as you can, I want you to show me where they go. Ready? The first word is *space*. *Space—make*; *space—say*; *space—pain*."

Hold the card under each key word as you say it.

Say: "*Space* goes with *make*."

Place the card under the key word.

Say: "The next word is *eight*. *Eight—make*; *eight—say*; *eight—pain*. *Eight* doesn't appear to fit. There are no key words with the long /a/ sound spelled *ei*." "Ei is a different pattern but the same sound ?a? as in the key words.

Place the card in the "Other?" category.

Ask: "Where does *faith* go?"

Place the card under the key word *pain*.

Ask: "The next word is *day*. Where does *day* go?"

Place the card under the key word *say*.

Ask: **“What about *plaid*?”**

Place the card in the “Other?” category.

Throughout the word sort, correct any mistakes. Move incorrectly placed cards to the correct category and explain.

For example: **“*Plain* does have the same long /a/ sound as *lake*, but we are looking at spelling patterns. *Plain* goes with *chain*. They both have the long /a/ sound spelled with the spelling pattern –ain.”**

Discuss the completed categories.

Ask: **“What do all the words in each column have in common that makes them different from words in other columns?”**

This type of question helps students make generalizations about patterns and spellings.

Have students read aloud all the words in each category.

Writing Sort

The second part of the lesson involves a writing sort using the same set of words.

Students need a dry-erase board and a marker (or pencil and paper).

Remove all of the word cards from the pocket chart.

Say: **“On your board, make four columns.”**

Model by drawing four lines across the board.

Say: **“Write the key words at the top of each column. (make, say, pain, other)”**

Write the key words on the board at the top of each column.

Say: **“I will read the words, one at a time. Write each word under the key word that has the same spelling pattern. *Faith. Space. Eight. Day. Plaid.*”**

Allow time for students to write one word before reading the next.

Check answers:

Show a word card.

Say: **"Read the word."**

Ask: **"In which category did you place this word?"**

Hide the word card.

Say: **"Spell the word."**

Write the word on the board under the correct category.

Continue this procedure for checking all words.

Say: **"Let's read the words in each category."**

Begin with the key word and read the words in each category.

Adapted from Ganske, K. (2000). *Word journeys: Assessment-guided phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.