

September 5, 2018

Dear parents,

Our spelling curriculum is switched up this year! We're using a program called *Words Their Way* which does things a little different than the old method.

Students can work through the word lists (called sorts) at their own pace. Fridays will still feature a spelling test, but students will sort the words into categories as they take the test in addition to spelling them correctly. Class time at school will give students the chance to practice both spelling these words and sorting them in the correct categories.

Each week your child will be bringing home a collection of spelling words that have been introduced in class (his or her sort for the week). Your child should work with these words at home to ensure that the words and the spelling principles they represent are mastered. These activities have been modeled and practiced in school, so your child can teach you how to do them. 😊

Here are some ways to study for the weekly spelling tests at home:

- Remind your child to *sort the words* into categories like the ones we did in school. Your child should read each word aloud during this activity. Ask your child to explain to you why the words are sorted in a particular way—what does the sort reveal about spelling in general? Ask your child to sort the words a second time as fast as possible. You may want to time him or her.
- Do a *blind sort* with your child. Lay down a word from each category as a header and then read the rest of the words aloud. Your child must indicate where the word goes without seeing it. Lay it down and let your child move it if he or she is wrong. Repeat if your child makes more than one error.
- Assist your child in doing a *word hunt*, looking in a book he or she has already read, for words that have the same sound, same pattern, or both. Try to find two or three for each category.
- Do a *writing sort*. As you call out the words in random order, your child should write them in categories. Call out any words your child misspells a second or even a third time. (This is similar to the way we'll do spelling tests at the week's end.)

Thank you for your support. Together we can help your child make valuable progress! As always, let me know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

~ Miss Heintz