

Writing Sorts:

Students create columns in their word study notebooks and write their weekly words in the appropriate column. At the bottom of the page, students explain what this sort is teaching.

Blind Sorts:

One student holds all the words except for the key words that make up the column headings. The student with the cards reads the first word. The second student points to where the word goes. The first student lays down the word to check. If the word correctly belongs in the column, it remains there. If not, it goes back into the pile.

Word Hunts:

Students look through selected literature, or whatever texts they are reading at the time for examples of their word study concepts in context. For example, a student studying the dis- prefix would note down words encountered with the dis- prefix and write the sentence in which it was contained in his/her word study notebook.

Speed Sorts:

Students time themselves as they do the sorts. The goal is to complete the sort in less time with each go around. This can be done individually, or as friendly competition.

Creative Stories:

Students write creative stories using words from their sort. The goal is to see how many words you can use and have the story still make sense. A fun twist is to make a silly story. Dialogue can be a creative way to get more sort words into a story.

Sentences and/or Illustrations:

Sometimes students find it helpful to make up sentences for each word to better understand its usage in everyday language. Illustrating words is also a great way to conceptualize ones understanding of a word.

Concentration or Memory:

This is played just like any memory game, but is more doable with some sorts than others. Each sort will have to be looked at to determine if a concentration or memory game would work. Rules for what constitutes an acceptable match need to be agreed upon before the game is played.

Definition Match:

One partner gives a definition or explanation of a sort word. The other partner tries to determine which word is being defined or described. For example, the clue for the word 'college' might be 'a place of higher learning, sometimes called

a university'. The word 'illegible' might be described as 'a word that means your writing is quite difficult to read'. Be creative, but not impossible.

Dictionary Look-up:

Students look up the meanings of words in dictionaries. Classroom or home dictionaries may be utilized. Online sources such as www.yourdictionary.com and www.onelook.com may also be used. This activity is particularly useful for students in the derivational relations spelling stage (blue sorts) but can also be used with students in other spelling stages.