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The Effects of Word Study in Place of Traditional Spelling

An Action Research Report

By Amy McCarthy

The Effects of Word Study in Place of Traditional Spelling

By Amy McCarthy

Submitted on March 25, 2014
in fulfillment of final requirements for the MAED degree
St. Catherine University
St. Paul, Minnesota

Advisor _____

Date _____

Abstract

The objective of the research was to establish if students improved spelling when they were engaged in hands-on experiences while learning the spelling of words. The research was conducted in a third grade classroom in a public elementary school in the upper Midwest. The four data sources utilized in the study included the *Words Their Way* Elementary Spelling Inventory pre and post assessments, a Student Thoughts Inventory, and teacher observations. The data revealed a substantial increase in overall words spelled correctly over the course of the project.

For years spelling has been taught with a list of words brought home each Monday: usually centered on a word pattern or phonic generalization; workbook pages were assigned and completed throughout the week and a spelling test given on Friday (Wallace, 2006). This is referred to as the traditional paradigm where the teacher presents a list of words from a commercially published program. Wallace (2006) found that nearly all (95%) of teachers adapted spelling words assigned to their students, although the most common modification was typically to give less capable spellers fewer words from the assigned class list.

The teaching of spelling has long been a topic of conversation for many teachers who have administered a weekly list of words on Monday with a test for mastery on Friday. Spelling is not just memory work; it is a process of conceptual development (Templeton, 2002). According to Newlands (2011) spelling has a lot to do with how we feel about our writing. A mistake in letter arrangement can not only make the writer feel foolish, but it can also shake his/her self-esteem. This is true for both adults and children. Students will avoid using words they cannot spell. When this occurs, they lose opportunities to build their vocabulary and reading skills. The goal of many teachers is to teach students how to spell words correctly while building their confidence as readers and writers. Teachers provide the time and targeted instruction that fosters spelling skill development and mastery. Students' perceptions of their skills influence the types of activities they select, how much they challenge themselves, and the persistence they demonstrate when involved in literacy activities such as spelling. Students with positive attitudes are more motivated in class and more likely to value reading and spelling over a lifetime (Alderman & Green, 2011). According to Rosencrans (1998) the goal of

effective spelling instruction is to create fluent writers, not perfect scores on a spelling test. Newinghamon (2010) states the idea is to move past assigned spelling lists that require memorization. The goal is for students to be investigating and understanding the patterns in words and building word knowledge that can be applied to spelling, reading, and writing.

Word study is an approach to spelling instruction that moves away from a focus on memorization. The approach reflects what researchers have discovered about the alphabetic, pattern, and meaning layers of English orthography (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2012). Teachers use a variety of hands-on activities, often called word work, to help students actively explore these layers of information (Williams, Phillips-Birdsong, Hufnagel, Hungler, & Lundstom, 2009). Word study is based on the notion that a student's spelling ability can serve as a guide for instruction (Leipzig, 2000). Vaughn and Linan-Thompson (2004) stated four goals of word study is to teach children that there are systematic relationships between letters and sounds, written words are composed of letter patterns representing the sounds of spoken word, recognizing words quickly and accurately is a way of obtaining meaning from them and, they can blend sounds to read words and segment words into sounds to spell.

At the start of a word study program, teachers use a spelling inventory to determine students' current developmental spelling stages and then group students for instruction accordingly (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2012). Students are asked to sort words by patterns as well as to look for words in their reading and writing that fit the pattern being studied. Students may play games or activities to further their word knowledge. Leipzig explains "Teachers and students alike must become word

detectives, both engaging in an ongoing attempt to make sense of word patterns and their relationships to one another. Spelling ‘rules’ are not dictated by the teacher for students to memorize. Rather, spelling patterns and generalizations are discovered by students. Teachers are encouraged to compare and contrast features in words. One common method used by teachers is to have students sort words (2000, p. 124).”

Words Their Way (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2012) is a developmental approach to phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction. It uses a systematic approach, guided by an informed understanding of spelling errors and other literacy behaviors. This curriculum offers a teacher-directed, child-centered plan for the study of words from kindergarten to high school. This research-based approach involves knowing your students’ literacy progress, organizing for instruction, and implementing word study. The research was developed when the authors began to examine the three layers of the English orthography- alphabet, pattern, and meaning. In their research, they found that each layer builds on a previous layer.

According to Bear et. al. (2012) students need hands-on opportunities to manipulate word features in ways that allow them to generalize beyond isolated, individual examples to entire groups of words that are spelled the same way. *Words Their Way* uses five stages to guide teachers through instructional chapters (see Appendix A). Bear found in his research that when teachers conduct word study with students, they address the learning needs in all areas of literacy, because development in one area relates to development in other areas. This harmony in development is described as the synchrony of reading, writing, and spelling development.

Words Their Way (Bear, et. al., 2012) also gives examples of different types of word sorts for students to complete, such as sound sorts, pattern sorts, meaning sorts, blind sorts, etc. The *Words Their Way* approach is designed to take 15-20 minutes daily to have students engaged in discovering spelling patterns, manipulating word concepts, and applying critical thinking skills.

Williams, et. al. (2009) sum it up best by stating word study is a teacher-directed yet student-centered approach to spelling instruction, and when integrated into a comprehensive literacy program it can support young children's literacy development. Through word study lessons, teachers can explicitly teach students what they need to know about the English spelling system and keep them engaged and motivated through hands-on activities that promote inquiry and critical thinking. With that in mind, my action research question became, "To what extent will having third grade students participate in daily word study show improvement in their weekly spelling tests as well as improve their spelling in daily writing?"

Research was conducted in a city with an approximate population of 65,000. Fifteen third grade students participated in the study. The classroom consisted of six boys and nine girls. Of these fifteen students, two were significantly below grade level, one was in the gifted and talented program, and the rest of the students were at grade level. The classroom was contained in a K-5 school.

The goal of the action research project was to see if students completing various word sorts and other spelling activities could increase their spelling skills and carryover this increase into their daily writing. The ultimate and far-reaching goal was for the

students to achieve effective spelling skills in order to participate fully in academic pursuits and become confident adult writers.

Description of the Research Process

The research process and data collection began January 27th 2014 and continued through March 14th 2014. Data collection sources included the spelling pre- and post-inventory assessment, Student Thoughts Inventory, daily journaling, and teacher observation.

Beginning the week of January 27th 2014, students took the Student Thoughts Inventory (see Appendix B). This was an informal survey of five questions to get a feel for how these third graders viewed themselves as readers, writers, and spellers. I conducted the survey by reading the questions aloud in one session to the entire group.

The first week of the study, the *Words Their Way* Elementary Spelling Inventory (ESI) was administered (see Appendix C). The baseline was conducted in two separate sessions with the students spelling the first fifteen words on one day and the remaining ten words two days later. The teacher was allowed to say the word, state the sentence, and repeat the word. Once the ESI was completed, I then transferred their information to the *Words Their Way* Elementary Spelling Inventory Feature Guide. This guide breaks down each word and shows where the student has made errors in their spelling. I have included an example of a completed form to show how the teacher would use this piece of data (see Appendix D). After I had completed the Inventory Feature Guide for each student, this information was then transferred to the *Words Their Way* Elementary Spelling Inventory Classroom Composite (see Appendix E). I have included the

completed Classroom Composite to show where students have a grasp on the spelling skills and where students start to struggle with the patterns.

From this Classroom Composite, I began to see some formations of groups. I also relied on my own knowledge about each student as a reader and writer to help make spelling groups. Through classroom observations and this composite, I chose to put students 2 and 24 in a group (from now on will be referred to as Group A) working on common short and long vowels patterns such as CVC (cat), CVCe (bake), and CVVC (rain).

I noticed students 12, 16, 18, 26, and 34 scored low in the area of other vowels so this formed Group B. From classroom observations I felt comfortable with their skills of CVCe and CVC patterns and moved these students to working on less common short and long vowel patterns such as CVC (cat), CVCe (bake), CVVC (rain), and CVV (day).

Looking over the data, I found that students 14 and 20 both seemed to have difficulties when it came to inflected endings. From classroom observations I had noted previously that student 4 struggled with inflected endings in her daily journaling so I felt it would be beneficial for her to be part of this group (which will now be referred to as Group C). These students spent the six weeks working on -ing, -ed, -s, -es as with the patterns of doubling (cutting), e-drop (having), and nothing (talked).

The remaining students were formed into Group D which focused on prefixes and suffixes. Group D consisted of students that tend to be above grade level and in this area the students are not only sorting between prefixes and suffixes but also what the words mean when the prefix or suffix has been added to the word.

Once groups had been established I was able to use the *Words Their Way Sorting Books* to pull the correct sorts for each group. Each general skill is in sets of five weeks. Each week focuses on a specific spelling pattern. This timeline (see Appendix F) was my quick reference guide for each group and to see what each group was going to be working on for the week.

It was during this time our district had their Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences. I was able to show parents what spelling skills their child would be focusing on over the next couple weeks and present the parents with the Parent Consent to Opt out Letter (see Appendix G). No parents consented to opt out of the research and many were very interested in their child's spelling. Most parents view spelling as something easy to do at home with their child and many were upset when they were told that their child would no longer have a weekly list of words to memorize. There was also a great deal of curiosity as to how their child would progress at the end of the research time line.

All groups spent the next five weeks working on their sorts for twenty minutes four days a week. Fridays were reserved for the spelling test to see if students could sort the words into the right pattern. Each student kept a weekly packet for them to use when meeting for word study (see Appendix H). This packet was turned in on Fridays so I could view them for connections students were making and to informally assess their spelling as they were completing these activities. Each day all students wrote about what they did for the day. They shared something they learned, something that was difficult, or something that was easy. There was also an area for students to create lists of words that fit the patterns for the week, an area for students to sort and glue the words by patterns, and a place to play the Spelling Game.

Teacher observations were noted throughout the research in a spiral journal. My hope was to record observations while working with students, but this was very difficult. Instead, I found time to record reflections usually over my lunch break.

By the conclusion of my research, I had four data sources of information. They consisted of the *Words Their Way* Elementary Spelling Inventory pre and post assessments, a Student Thoughts Inventory, and teacher observation.

Analysis of Data

Once the data collection phase of the study had concluded, I began to analyze the data. The data sources included the *Words Their Way* pre- and post ESI, a student survey, weekly spelling assessments, and teacher observations. In order to form word study groups appropriately based in spelling skills, I administered the *Words Their Way* ESI (see Appendix C) for a quantitative data point. The student survey (see Appendix B) provided qualitative data with questions focusing on students' self-assessment of reading/writing/spelling skills. Qualitative data was gathered from teacher observations made throughout the study period. Weekly spelling assessments provided additional quantitative data for the research.

My analysis began with the student survey. On the first two questions over 60% of the class surveyed indicated they enjoy reading by themselves and writing as a journal entry or making comic strips. The third question was designed to see if students had an accurate view of themselves as spellers. 87% of the class felt they could write most of the words with some words being tricky.

Figure 1 shows the results for the fourth question on the survey. The results show that many students felt they were using the sound it out and write strategy when they had a tricky word.

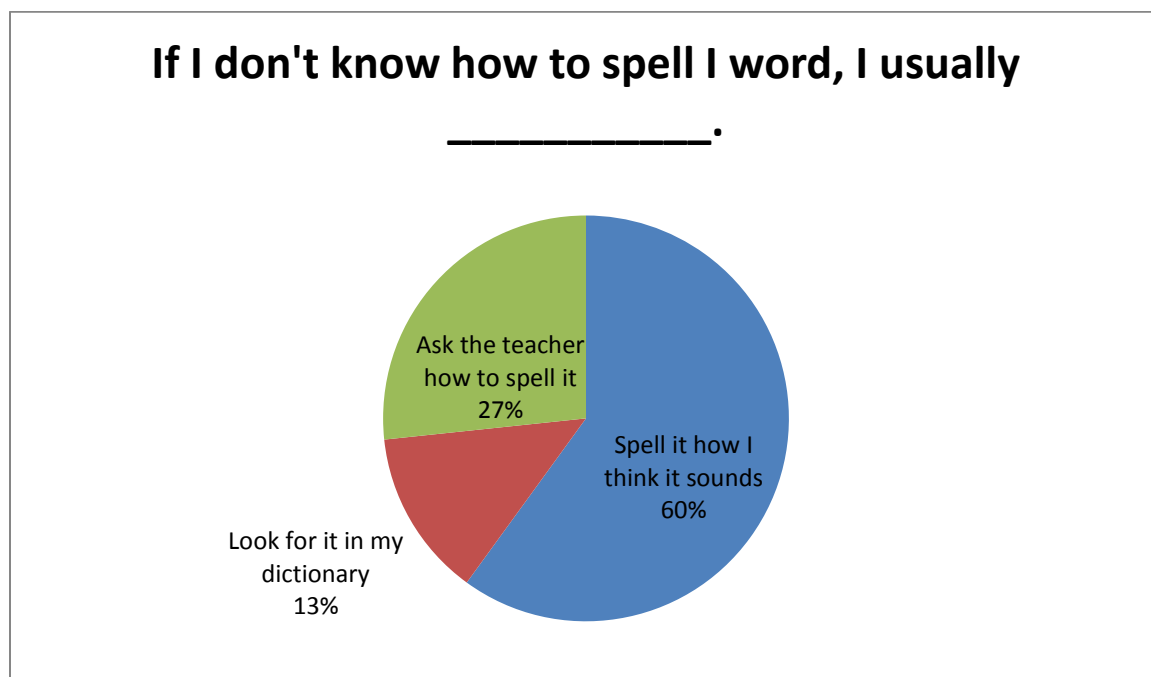


Figure 1. Students' responses to survey question four. This graph represents what students do when they don't know how to spell a word.

Figure 2 shows the results of the fifth question. I did feel I got an accurate rating of how students feel when they come to write a word they don't know. I have seen some that eagerly look it up in a dictionary and then proceed to add it to their own personal dictionary. I have also noticed some that are frustrated as they look up the word, quickly jot it down in their writing, and quickly toss the dictionary on the shelf and resume their writing.

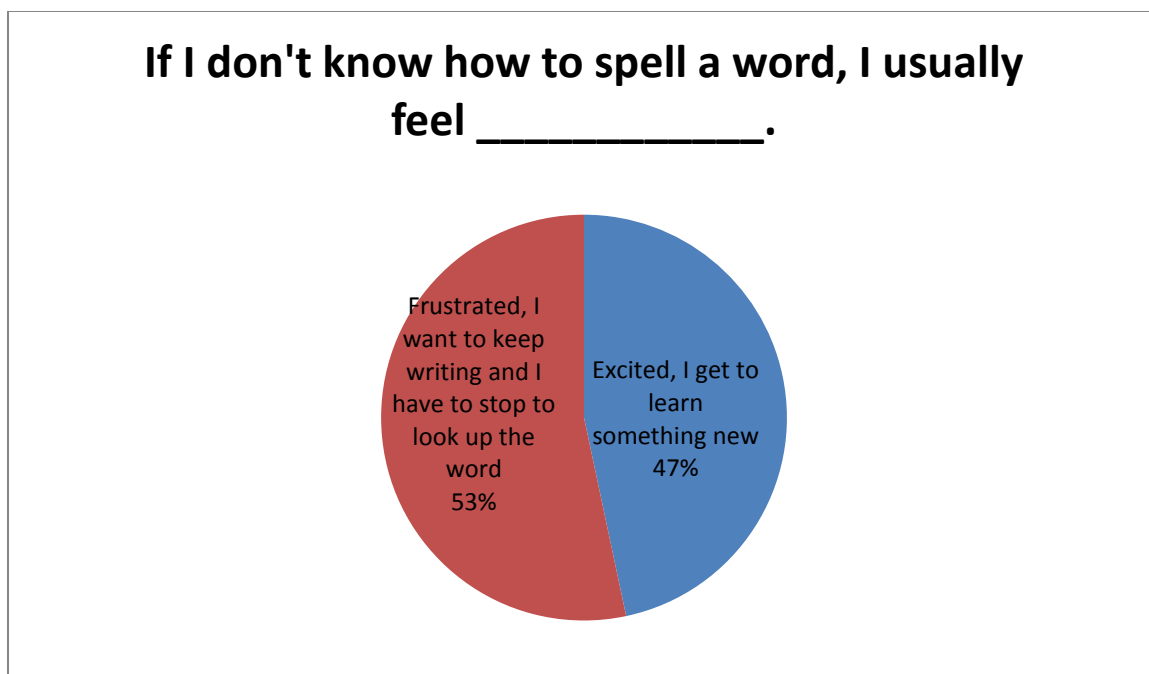


Figure 2. Students' responses to survey question five. This graph represents how students feel when they come to a word they don't know how to spell.

The Student Thoughts Inventory was a great source of information to see how the students view themselves. This information gave more insight into the fact that they are aware of how they perceive themselves when they are writing or reading.

I then began to analyze the *Words Their Way* ESI (see Appendix D). The grouping of students was essential to the study. In order to make the most of the word sorting groups, I needed to make sure each student was working on the correct spelling skills. A wide range of spelling abilities was apparent after filling out the *Words Their Way* Spelling Inventory Classroom Composite (see Appendix E).

In an ideal educational setting, I would have had no more than three students in each word study group with a total of six small groups but due to time and the weekly schedule I decided it wouldn't be feasible to have more than 3-4 groups. From this Classroom Composite, I began to see some formations of groups. I also relied on my

own knowledge about each student as a reader and writer to help make spelling groups. Through classroom observations and this composite, I put two students in Group A working on common short and long vowels patterns. I noticed that five students scored low in the area of other vowels so this formed Group B. Looking over the data; I found that two students seemed to have difficulties when it came to inflected endings. From classroom observations I had noted previously that another student struggled with inflected endings in her daily journaling so I felt it would be beneficial for her to be part of Group C. These students spent the five weeks working on –ing, -ed, -s, -es as with the patterns.

The remaining students were formed into Group D which focused on prefixes and suffixes. Group D consisted of students that tend to be above grade level and in this area the students are not only sorting between prefixes and suffixes but also what the words mean when the prefix or suffix has been added to the word.

Once groups had been established I was able to use the *Words Their Way Sort Books* to pull the correct sorts for each group. Each general skill is in sets of five weeks. Each week focuses on a specific spelling pattern. This timeline (see Appendix F) was my quick reference guide for each group and to see what they group was going to be working on for the week.

The plan was for students to break into word study groups for 20 minutes a day four days a week. During this time, they would look at patterns, complete word sorts, look for the patterns in their daily reading and writing, and play a spelling game. Each Friday students took a spelling assessment of ten words with students focusing on spelling the word correctly under the correct pattern. Students completed a weekly

journal (see Appendix H) where they wrote what they did, added words that fit the rules, glued and sorted, and wrote the words for the spelling game.

Group A students spent much of their time that first week sounding out words, finding rhyming words, and sorting each word individually. These students also had a hard time when it came to reflecting in their weekly journal. Most times I wrote in a journal with them so I could model what the task was they needed to complete. The other groups seemed to be able to manage with less teacher-directed structure. The students in Group C and Group D could easily meet and get their work done with ease. Group B was able to work on their own after a quick teacher-led discussion about spelling skills and related words. At the end of the first week it became clear that my focus was needed with Group A and that I wouldn't be able to write my observations while meeting with groups. My time was needed with groups and so I decided to use some time over my lunch period to reflect on each word study group.

Weekly spelling assessments were given to each group to see if they had a grasp on the patterns they were sorting for the week. Group A's weekly assessment results (Figure 3) showed these students understood the spelling skill for the week and could

correctly sort most of the words.

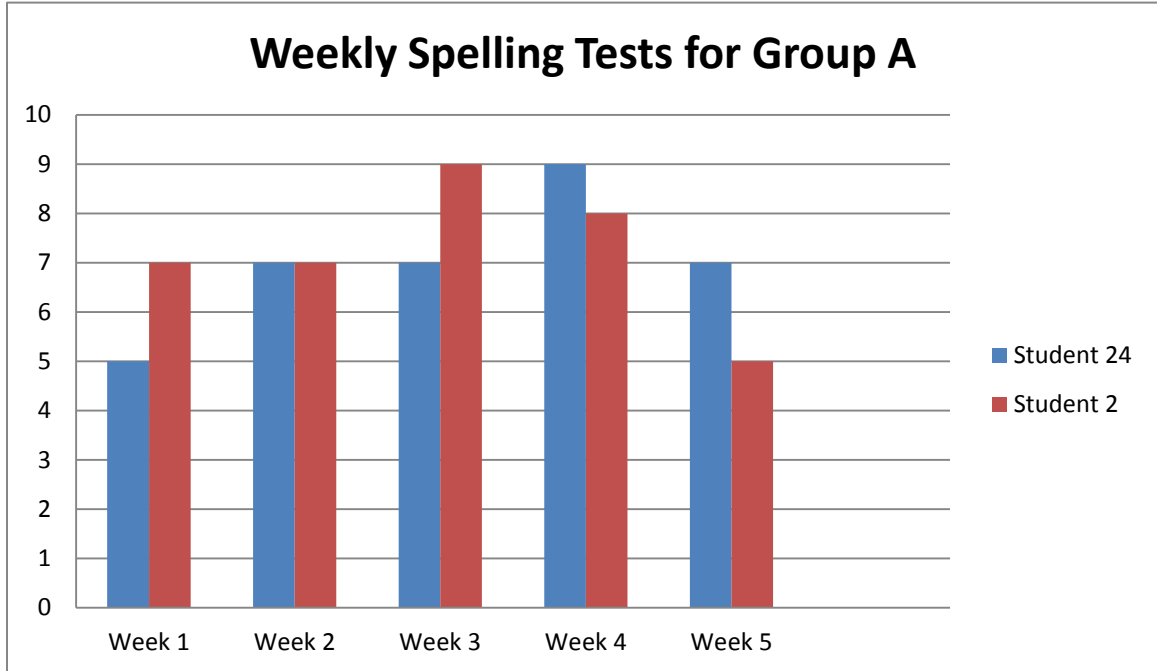


Figure 3. Weekly spelling assessments for Group A. This graph represents the number of correctly spelled words each student had each week.

After analyzing the first couple weeks of Group B's weekly assessments I realized then that I was spending too much time with Group A and that this group still needed

more teacher-directed interaction. See Figure 4 for Group B's weekly results.

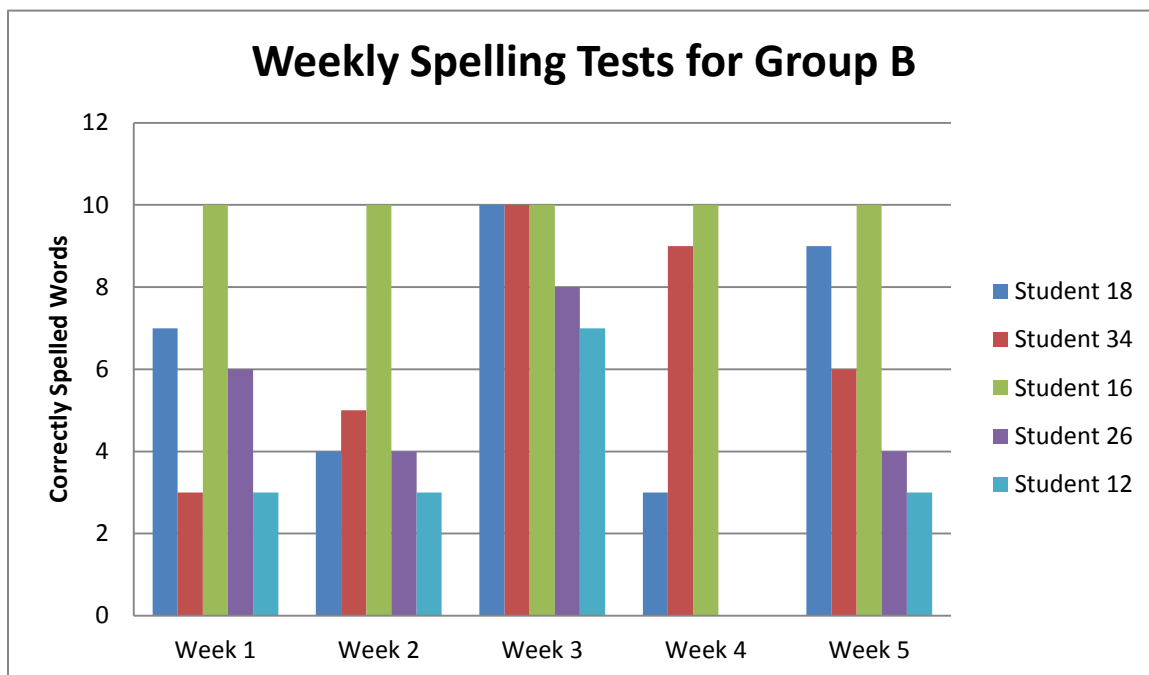


Figure 4. Weekly spelling assessments for Group B. This graph represents the number of correctly spelled words each student had each week.

During week three, I really tried to focus more time with Group B to make sure they understood their spelling patterns. Group C and Group D really did well overall with the whole word study project. The main point I took away from these groups was the activities were too routine for these students and they got bored easily. They could quickly complete their activity for the day and be ready to move onto something new

while I was working with Groups A and B.

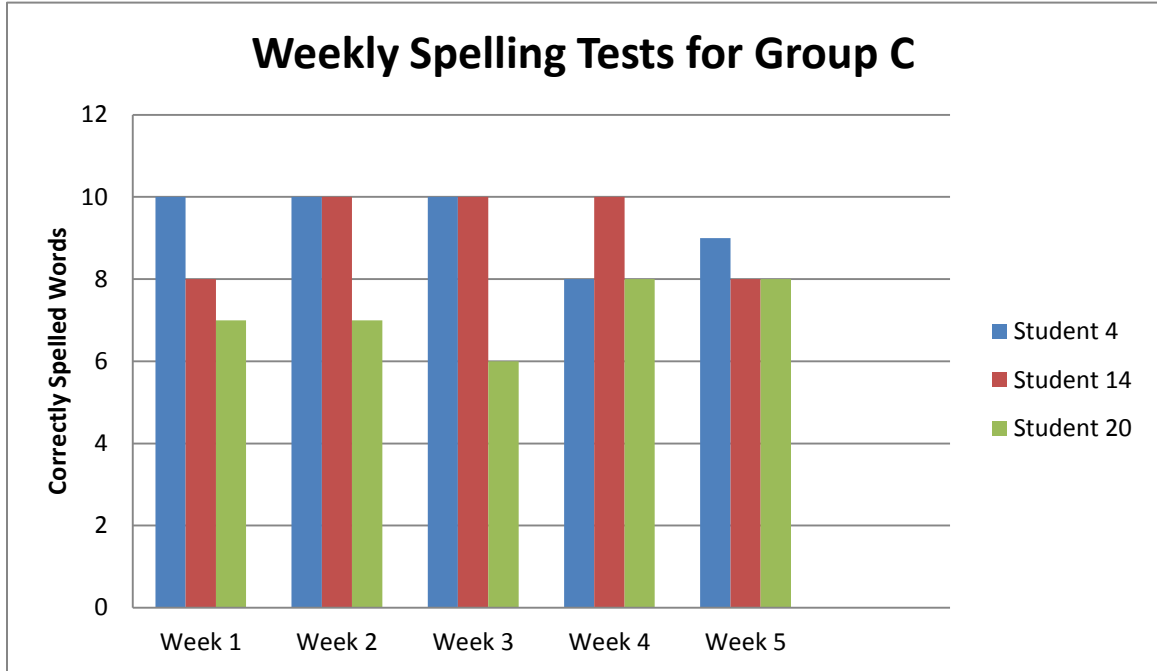


Figure 5. Weekly spelling assessments for Group C. This graph represents the number of correctly spelled words each student had each week.

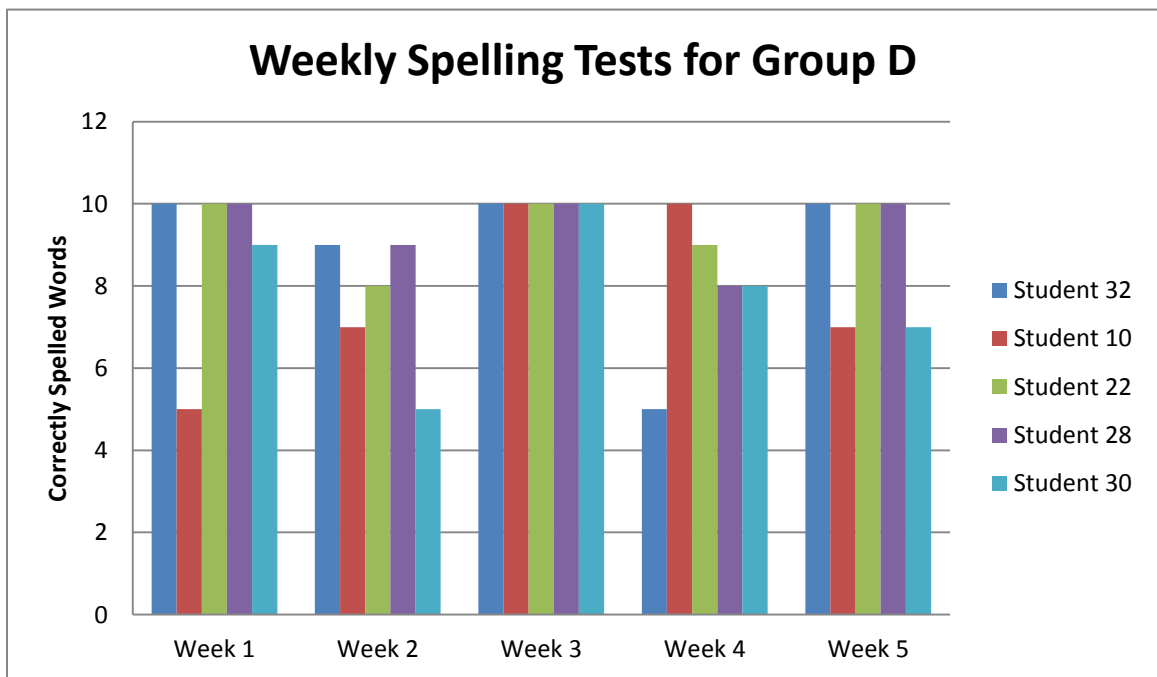


Figure 6. Weekly spelling assessments for Group D. This graph represents the number of correctly spelled words each student had each week.

I was very curious to see how each student grew as spellers during the course of the project. I chose to focus on the number of words each student spelled correctly on the *Words Their Way* ESI. I wanted to have a chart to show the growth each child made but the data would have been so small; as a result, I made two separate charts for the whole class (Figure 7 & 8).

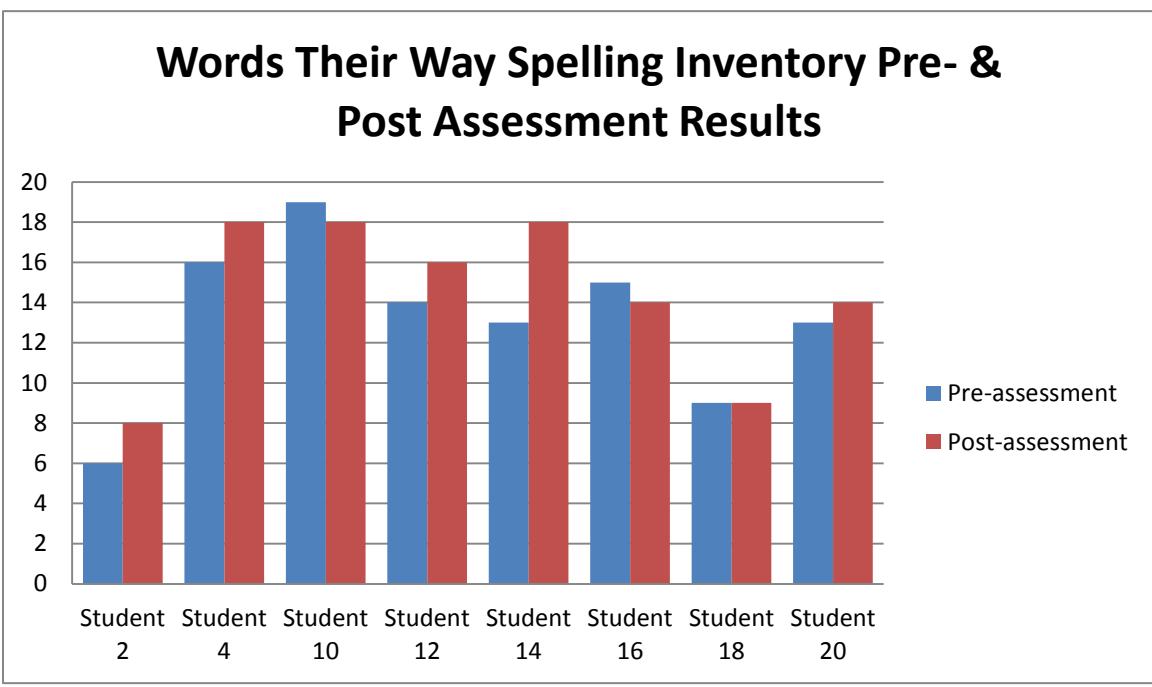


Figure 7. Words Their Way Spelling Inventory Pre- and Post-Assessment Results.

This figure reflects each student's growth of spelling words correctly.

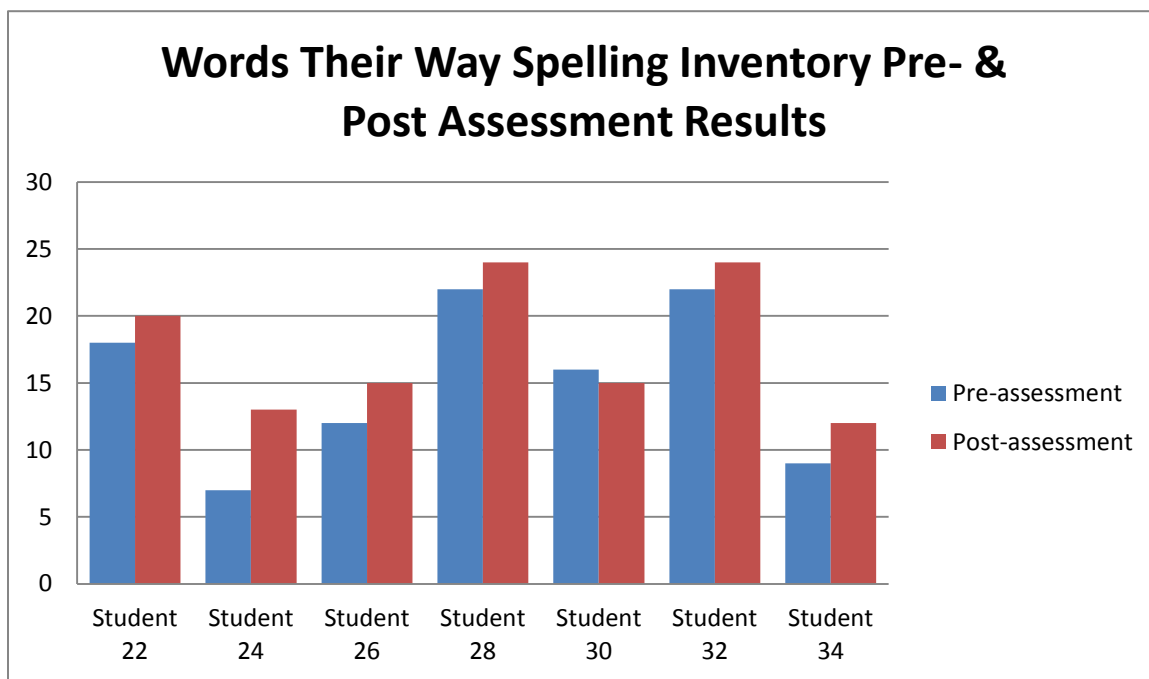


Figure 8. Words Their Way Spelling Inventory Pre- and Post-Assessment Results.

This figure reflects each student's growth of spelling words correctly.

Looking over the charts, I found that 73% of students grew in correctly spelled words over the course of the five week project. These results were convincing and the

students enjoyed seeing the growth they made from the start of the project to the end.

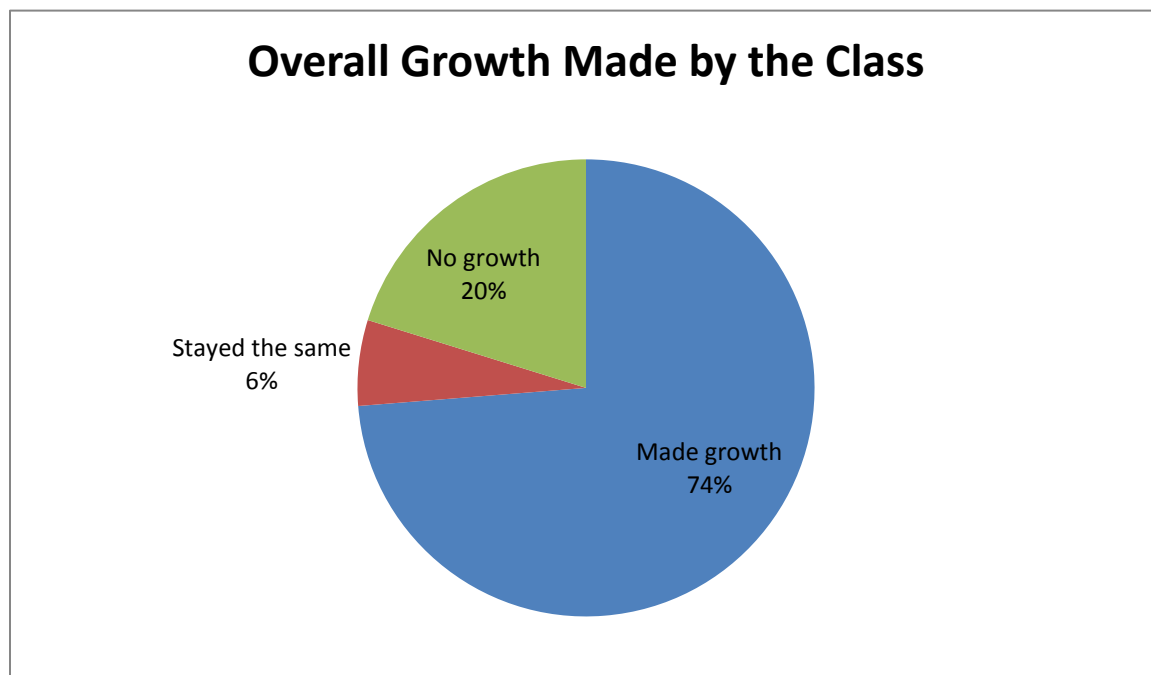


Figure 9. Overall growth made by class during the study. This figure reflects the growth the class made from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment.

I found the teacher observations to be the most compelling source of data. I made my observations in a binder divided into four areas for each small group having its own spot. The style of the entries and log itself were very informal but most practical and extremely beneficial.

I noticed several key findings during my reflections over my notes in the binder. The first was how Groups C & D were so engaged in their own learning without me prodding them. This was a great reminder that I as the teacher am there to guide and let the students take on the challenge of their own learning.

I also noted how Group B and Group A needed much more teacher-led interactions. I noticed I had the most notes for Group A but after reflecting I realized that is where I had spent a significant part of each word study time. Structure was necessary

for this group to learn the sort skill, where to sort each word, and guide the discussion for student reflection. Group B also needed more teacher interaction but once they had a grasp on their sorts this group was able to discuss their thoughts on their own without much teacher probing.

The *Words Their Way* skill sorts were a great resource providing structure to each group's weekly tasks. The skill sorts gave me direction on where each group needed to work on improvement and also provided additional teaching materials for ways to engage students when learning the skills. Using this knowledge, I will describe how I will continue to use word study activities and *Words Their Way* skill sorts in the years to come. Any changes required will also be discussed in the next section.

Action Plan

My research indicated the usefulness of students completing word study activities. As seen in the data analysis portion, most students made growth in their overall spelling skills over the course of the project. Students expressed their interest in the activities because they were learning at their instructional level and not spelling at their frustration level. This ease of learning spurred attainment of increased spelling skills. There was a prominent "I can" attitude present when meeting with each group. This may have been due in part to the small group setting in place of a whole group setting. The size of the learning group impacted the accountability for each student. The students didn't have the choice to be passive participants, they were required to be actively involved in their learning and participate in the discussion or activity.

Because children come to our classrooms with different levels of experience with writing, educators need to meet their individual needs. A differentiated spelling program

like *Words Their Way* and giving students the opportunity to engage in word sort activities can supply the tools to achieve growth. I will continue to use the *Words Their Way* skill sorts in word study activities with small groups in my classroom. My study confirmed that students need to be engaged in hands on activities when learning why and how words are spelled.

Although I considered the research successful, there are some changes that I would make upon continuing the use of word study in my classroom. After conducting this action research project, I decided to change the following items:

- After using the skill sorts in the classroom, I would like a way to get parents involved in helping at home. I would consider using a part of my weekly newsletter to let parents know what their students are focusing on during word study. I would also send home a set of sorts each week for students to practice sorting at home with parents.
- Another addition would be to have a designated “Word Detective” area for each group where students can write down words they find in books that fit that skill for the week. This would make the skill sorting a part of our whole day instead of just 20 minutes each morning.
- I would also incorporate class celebrations after each assessment period. I am expecting students to be engaged and active in their learning so I feel they should also be active in celebrating their successes.
- I would also like to find a way to not have all the groups meeting at the same time. I am not sure right now how to make this work at this point in the school year. In the future, I would like to meet with the highest group

for ten minutes instead of twenty as they are the ones that seem to complete the activities faster and with more precision than the other groups. That would allow ten minutes to meet with another group. If I had four groups in future years, that would mean I would need an extra half hour in my day to meet with these groups. Finding the time to meet separately with the groups is something that is going to require much thought and give and take in my daily schedule to make it work.

- The last change is my plan for over the summer, I would like to find various, new activities for the word sorts. At the end of the five weeks, the days were pretty predictable and many students lost interest within the first ten minutes. I feel there is a need to find new and engaging hands-on activities to keep word study interesting and fun.

Due to this research, I see that using one leveled spelling program doesn't meet the needs of each of my students. I found that all my students are at various levels when it comes to spelling. They need time to spend time working on the correct skills to become better spellers. The power of word study doesn't end within my classroom. With this research in mind, any teacher can create a word study where students are engaged in finding out why and how words are spelled. Students don't necessarily need a provided word sort curriculum like *Words Their Way* to be successful. Students need to look at the similarities and differences of a group of words.

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Appendix A

Table 1 The Five Stages of Spelling and Reading according to *Words Their Way*

Appendix B

Thoughts on spelling

Please circle the one that best fits you

1. I enjoy reading by myself
 - a. Yes, I like reading by myself
 - b. Sometimes I enjoy it
 - c. No, I don't like to read by myself

2. I enjoy writing by myself
 - a. Yes, I like to write
 - b. Sometimes I enjoy writing
 - c. No, I don't like to write

3. When I am writing, I can usually spell _____ words correctly.
 - a. All of the words
 - b. Most- some can be tricky
 - c. Some- I get confused on how to spell them

4. If I don't know how to spell a word, I usually _____.
 - a. Spell it how I think it sounds
 - b. Look for it in my dictionary
 - c. Ask the teacher how to spell it
 - d. Completely stop writing

5. If I don't know how to spell a word, I usually feel _____.
 - a. Excited, I get to learn something new
 - b. Frustrated, I want to keep writing and I have to stop
look up the word
 - c. Upset- I get mad that I don't know how to spell the
word

Appendix C

Words Their Way Elementary Spelling Inventory (ESI)

The Elementary Spelling Inventory (ESI) covers more stages than the PSI. It can be used as early as first grade, particularly if a school system wants to use the same inventory across the elementary grades. The 25 words are ordered by difficulty to sample features of the letter name- alphabetic to derivational relations stages. If any students spell more than 20 words correctly, use the Upper Level Spelling Inventory.

1. bed	I hopped out of bed this morning.
2. ship	The ship sailed around the island.
3. when	When will you come back?
4. lump	He had a lump on his head after he fell.
5. float	I can float on the water with my new raft.
6. train	I rode the train to the next town.
7. place	I found a new place to put my books.
8. drive	I learned to drive a car.
9. bright	The light is very bright.
10. shopping	She went shopping for new shoes.
11. spoil	The food will spoil if not kept cool.
12. serving	The restaurant is serving dinner tonight.
13. chewed	The dog chewed up my favorite sweater yesterday.
14. carries	She carries apples in her basket.
15. marched	We marched in the parade.
16. shower	The shower in the bathroom was very hot.
17. bottle	The bottle broke into pieces on the tile floor.
18. favor	He did his brother a favor by taking out the trash.
19. ripen	The fruit will ripen over the next couple days.
20. cellar	I went down to the cellar for the can of paint.
21. pleasure	It was a pleasure to listen to the choir sing.
22. fortunate	It was fortunate that the driver had snow tires.
23. confident	I am confident that we can win the game.
24. civilize	They wanted to civilize the forest people.
25. opposition	The coach said the opposition would be tough.

Appendix D

Words Their Way Elementary Spelling Inventory Feature Guide
Student Name 34 **Teacher** McCarthy **Grade** 3rd **Date** January 28th, 2014
Words Spelled Correctly: 9/25 **Featured Points:** _/62 **Total:** _/87
Spelling Stage: _____

Spelling AFFIXES	EMERGENT		LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC			WITHIN WORD PATTERN			SYLLABLES AND	
	DERIVATIONAL RELATIONS		EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE
Stage	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	
LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE								

Features	Consonants Initial Final	Short Vowels	Diagrams	Blends	Long Vowels	Other Vowels	Inflected Endings	Syllable Junctures	Unaccented Final Syllables	Hard Suffixes	Basal or Roots	Feature Points	Words Spelled Correctly
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1. bed	b	d	e									3	X
2. ship		p	i	sh								3	X
3. when			e	wh								2	X
4. lump	l		u		mp							3	X
5. float		t			fl	oa						3	X
6. train		n			tr	ai						3	X
7. place					pl	a-e						2	
8. drive		v			dr	i-e						2	
9. bright					br	igh						1	
10. shopping			o	sh			pping					3	X
11. spoil					sp	oi						2	X
12. serving						er	ving						
13. chewed				ch		ew	ed					2	
14. carries						ar	ies	rr				1	
15. marched				ch		ar	ed					2	
16. shower				sh		ow			er			3	X
17. bottle								tt	le				
18. favor								v	or			1	
19. ripen								p	en			1	
20. cellar								ll	ar				

21. pleasure											ure	pleas		
22. fortunate							or				ate	fortun		
23. confident											ent	confid		
24. civilize											ize	civil		
25. opposition											tion	pos		
Totals		6/7	5/5	6/6	7/7	4/5	2/7	3/5	3/5	2/5	0/5	0/5	37/62	9/25

***Highlighted denotes correct

Appendix E

Words Their Way Elementary Spelling Inventory Classroom Composite
 Teacher McCarthy School Murphy Grade 3rd Date January 28th, 2014

Spelling AFFIXES	EMERGENT	LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC DERIVATIONAL RELATIONS				WITHIN WORD PATTERN			SYLLABLES AND	
Stage	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	
LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE								

Students' Names	Consonants	Short Vowels	Diagraphs	Blends	Long Vowels	Other Vowels	Inflected Endings	Syllable Junctures	Unaccented Final Syllables	Harder Suffixes	Bases or Roots	Correct Spellings	Total Rank Order
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Possible Points	7	5	6	7	5	7	5	5	5	5	5	25	87
1. 2	7	5	4	5	1	3	2	3	2	0	0	6	38
2. 4	7	5	6	7	5	6	4	5	3	2	0	16	67
3. 10	7	5	6	7	5	6	5	5	4	2	0	19	71
4. 12	7	5	6	7	5	5	5	4	3	2	0	14	63
5. 14	7	5	6	7	5	6	3	5	4	3	1	13	64
6. 16	7	5	6	7	4	3	3	4	4	2	0	15	60
7. 18	7	5	5	4	4	5	1	3	3	1	0	9	47
8. 20	7	5	6	7	5	6	2	3	3	1	0	13	58
9. 22	7	5	6	7	5	7	5	5	4	2	1	18	72
10. 24	7	5	5	7	3	4	1	2	2	0	1	7	44
11. 26	7	5	5	7	5	5	2	4	4	2	0	12	58
12. 28	7	5	6	7	5	7	4	5	4	5	4	22	81
13. 30	7	5	6	7	5	6	4	4	4	1	0	16	65
14. 32	7	5	6	7	5	7	4	5	4	5	5	22	82
15. 34	6	5	6	7	4	2	3	3	2	0	0	9	48
16.													
17.													
18.													
19.													
20.													

Note; * Highlight students who miss more than 1 on a particular feature they will benefit from more instruction in that area.

Appendix F

Groups	February 3-7	February 10-14	February 17-21	February 24-28	March 3-7	March 10-14	
Group A	Short a and Long a (CVCe & CVVC)	Short o and Long o (CVCe & CVVC)	Short u and Long u (CVCe & CVVC)	Short e and Long e (CVCe & CVVC)	“The Devil Sort” Short e (CVC & CVVC) and Long e (CVVC)	Words Their Way Spelling Inventory	
Group B	Short a and Long a (CVCe, CVVC ai, and open syllable ay)	Short o and Long o (CVCe, CVVC oa, and open syllable ow)	Short u and Long u (open syllable ew & ue)	Short i and Long i (CVCe, CVCC igh, and CV open syllable y)	Short i and Long i (VCC) with Short o and Long o (VCC)	Words Their Way Spelling Inventory	
Group C	Review of Double , e drop, and nothing	Adding ed to words	Unusual past tense words	Plural endings, adding es	Unusual plurals	Words Their Way Spelling Inventory	
Group D	Prefixes pre-, re-, in-, de-	Prefixes in-, un-, dis-, mis-	Suffixes – er, -est, -ier, -iest	Suffixes – ment, -less, -ness	Suffixes – ly, -or, -ist, -ful	Words Their Way Spelling Inventory	

Appendix G

Dear Parents,

Your child's spelling instruction this year will be part of a word study approach that moves away from a focus on just memorization. The primary goal of word study is to support students' development of how words work in our language system. We will use a variety of activities to implement word study in the classroom.

Through word study, children learn and practice not only to decode and encode text (read and write) but also to make connections, look for patterns, and discover information among words that will help them to make meaning from what they read, write, and spell. Word study skills teach students to be more independent and strategic spellers, readers, and writers.

As some of you may know I am attending Saint Catherine's University as a Master's of Curriculum and Instruction student. As part of my graduate studies I am engaging in an action research project. I chose to research the use of word study rotations; and will be writing about the results that I gather. However, none of the writing that I do will include the name of this school, the names of any students, or any references that would make it possible to identify outcomes connected to a particular student.

When I have completed my research, the report will be available online at the Saint Catherine's library system. This system holds published reports written by students and faculty. My goal for the outcome of this project is to see an increase in correctly spelled words.

If you are willing to allow your child to be a part of this action research, you do not need to take any further action at this point.

If you are not willing to allow your child to be a part of this research, please sign the bottom portion of this document.

If you have any questions about the research that will be taking place in your child's classroom please feel to contact me at 323-4190. Mrs. McCarthy

I do NOT want my child's data to be included in this study. Please respond by February 7.

Name of Child Date

Signature of Parent Date

Signature of Researcher Date

Appendix H

Weekly Record Keeper

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Does it fit the rule?

Spelling Game

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

My Spelling Packet

Name _____

Date _____