Doable, Differentiated Word Study in Action

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Scheduling the Rotation of Word Study Groups:

Day 1: Group Lessons
- New concept/skill is introduced to all groups on the same day e.g. Monday
- Rest of class completes high frequency word tasks and vocabulary activities
- Requires 45-60 minutes on Day 1 to meet with groups
- There are no Reading Strategy Groups scheduled on Day 1 to allow for this time

Day 2-4: Independent Practice + Training for Transfer Lessons
- All students complete the same independent task on the same day: e.g. Tuesday - Sort and Write; Wednesday - Show What I Know; Thursday - No-Peeking Buddy Sort
- Training-for-transfer lessons are taught
- Requires 20-30 minutes daily

Day 5: Assessment
- Teacher meets with groups to assess if they can use what they learned to read and spell new words
- May dictate words to each group simultaneously
- Requires 20-30 minutes

Ongoing Assessment
- Determines student ability to transfer learning to reading and spelling new words
- Guides lesson planning

Class Demonstration
- Think-aloud strategy use
- Explore and analyze words from context
- All-student responses within interactive formats

Independent & Collaborative Practice
- Independent Practice
  - Tasks focus on reading & spelling
  - Linked to whole & small group lessons

Small-Group Lessons & Guided Practice
- Groups formed by a common, data-based need
- Incorporates multimodal learning opportunities

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Five-Step Lesson Guided Word Sort

Step 1: Word Walk

Show each word card to students as you read them. Discuss their meanings. Review by reading through them together: Let’s read these words together.

Predict Possible Categories
Prompt students to identify possible categories for these words:
What did you notice about the words? How are some alike? How are they different? Make a prediction about our sort today. Tell your partner what you think the patterns will be.

Step 2: Notice and Name

Introduce the Key Words
Today we are working on reading and spelling ___. Stretch the words with me so we can hear the vowel sounds. What do you notice about the spelling of the words ___ and ___.

Model the Sort
Sort the first few word cards. Read and compare each word to the key word headings as you move it underneath them, comparing the sound and spelling to the key word:
Where does this word belong? I will compare it to both the key words to find out.
Pass out the rest of the word cards so that each student has two or three.
How might you sort your words? Think about what group the y belong to and why.

Step 3: Sort, Check and Correct

Prompt students to take turns reading and placing their word cards under the category headings.
Show me where the rest of the words go. Remember to compare your words with our key words to see where they belong.

Step 4: Compare and Share

When all the cards have been sorted, read the words in each column together and ask:
What might you call this group of words? What is the same about them? How are they different from the words in this column? Turn and tell your partner what you discovered.

Step 5: Two New - Read and Write New Words

Present a new word to read and dictate a word with each pattern.

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Six-Step Guided Word Sort for Low Progress Students

Additional Step 1: Sound and Spell
Students segment and blend key words in order to store the pattern in their phonological and visual memory (from Differentiating Reading Instruction for Success with RtI)

Sound
- Say the word; have students repeat it. (game)
- Stretch out the word; have students do the same. (g-aaa-mmm)
- Count the sounds in the word; students hold up a finger for each sound they hear. (3)

Spell
- Ask students what letter they think represents each sound.
- Stretch the word and record the related letter(s) for each sound on the whiteboard. (g, a, m, e)
- Count the letters and determine if they match the number of sounds; discuss.
- Write the word’s conventional spelling on the board.
- Identify the vowel pattern and underline it. (underline –ame)
- Have students state the vowel pattern: The vowel pattern is –ame.
- Review the sound and spelling of the pattern.

Challenge with ‘Oh, No’ and Multisyllabic Words: Flap Books

(From Ready-to-Go Differentiated Literacy Centers by Margo Southall, Scholastic)

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Independent Practice

Rotation of Core Tasks and Choices:

- Plan must-do's and choices in a weekly menu. All students complete the same tasks on the same day, using their differentiated set of words. The word cards (or photocopied word sort that is cut apart) are stored in a baggie in their pocket folder.

Choice Menu:

- Rather than rotate students through a set of practice tasks, you may prefer to allow students to self-select a required number of tasks from the menu.

(menu icons and task cards from Differentiating Reading Instruction for Success with RtI by Margo Southall)

Sort and Write Task:

All students write a sentence about each group (pattern) of words describing what they have in common. Sentence starters:
- Some of my words … but the other words
- These words go with ___ because
- I put the words in this group because they
- I noticed that … All the words in this column…

No-Peeking Buddy Sort (Bear et al, 2008)

- Key words are placed in front of the partners. Partner 1 holds all the cards and calls them out one by one. Partner 2, without looking at the cards, points to the correct key word and reads it to partner 1. Partner 1 places the word card under the key word. Partner 2 student tells partner 1 why it belongs there.

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Word Study Center Rotation During Small-Group Reading Lessons

Students work with leveled materials and tasks as part of the small-group rotation during strategy group lessons. Task cards, word and picture cards, flap books and graphic organizers are designed to engage students in working at different levels of complexity on letter-sound relationships, word patterns, high frequency words and vocabulary.

Resources

Differentiating Reading Instruction for Success with RtI by Margo Southall, Scholastic
(Word Study, Comprehension, Fluency & Writing centers for K, 1 and 2)
Differentiated Small Group Reading Lessons by Margo Southall, Scholastic
Ready-to-Go Differentiated Literacy Centers by Margo Southall, Scholastic
Word Journeys: Assessment-Guided phonics, Spelling and Vocabulary Instruction;
Word Sorts and More: Sound, Pattern and Meaning Explorations Grades K-3; Mindful
of Words: Spelling and Vocabulary Explorations Grades 4-8 by Kathy Ganske
Word Sorts for Within Word Pattern Spellers; Word Sorts for Syllables and Affixes Spellers
by M. Invernizzi, F. Johnston & D. Bear

High Frequency Word Lesson Sequence

Step 1

- Present word printed on a flash card.
- Say the word.
- Ask students to look and say, pronouncing the word together.
- Provide positive feedback:
  You are correct!

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Step 2
- Ask students to say the word 5 times looking at the word card, louder each time. Provide positive feedback.

Step 3
- Show and review 3 word cards they have already learned.
- Shuffle the words with the new word card.
- Tell students to say “No” each time they see a word that is not ___ [the target word].
- When they see the target word they are to say the word in a whisper voice.

Step 4
Ask students to:
- Close their eyes and picture the word in their mind’s eye (look up to the right), say it in a whisper.
- Spell the word aloud together – letter by letter.
- Write the word on the table or whiteboard surface with their forefinger while saying each letter aloud.

Step 5:
Ask the students to:
- Describe the word – how it looks and sounds (it may not have a meaning that can be described out of context).
- Locate the word in a sentence or page in the reading material they will read in this lesson.
- Read the word in context. (Adapted from Barbara Schirmer, 2010)

High Frequency Words: Memory Cues

Picture-Story Words:

Resource: www.iseeispellilearn.com

Word Pictures and Spell It with Animals:

Have students create visual cues for each letter in the word and explain their choices.
Vocabulary

Provide a Student-Friendly Definition and Present a Visual Cue


Construct a Word Web

Brainstorm related words, including synonyms and antonyms, on a Word Web. It is like the word …

Role Play Picture Role Cards:

Give out word cards to groups of 4-6 students. Each student has a role:

1. **Word Connector** who brainstorms and lists what the word reminds them or the group of, a related meaningful experience where they heard or used the word;

2. **Word Illustrator** who draws a picture to represent the word;

3. **Word Wildcat** who describes how the word was used in this context and how it could be used in other ways, such as idioms, similes, riddles and jokes where the meaning may vary depending on its usage within differing contexts;

4. **Word Game Show Host** who provides a student-friendly definition and creates questions or statements that do/do not reflect the meaning of the word for their classmates to respond to in a yes/no format (thumbs up/down);

5. **Word Webber** who draws a web and lists synonyms (other familiar words with a similar meaning) and antonyms;

6. **Word Trainer** who exercises our brain muscles with actions that represent the word.

(From Differentiating Reading Instruction for Success with RtI by Margo Southall, Scholastic, 2011)