

Understanding *Words Their Way*

As a component of English Language Arts, your child will be using *Words Their Way: Word Study in Action* this school year.

Words Their Way was designed by noted researchers Donald Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Francine Johnston, and Shane Templeton. *Words Their Way* was designed to teach students phonics, spelling, and vocabulary through engaging, hands-on activities. This powerful approach to word study teaches students to look closely at words to discover letters, vowel patterns, syllable structure and spelling-meaning connections in the English language.

How does *Words Their Way: Word Study in Action* work?

The heart of word study is sorting. Students will sort words or pictures or both into specific preset categories. Word/picture sorting includes teacher led sorts as well as independent or partner sorts. Students will sort their word cards or picture cards on their own, or with a partner and make discoveries and generalizations about the conventions of the English language. They will compare and contrast word features and discover similarities and differences within the categories. This deep understanding of how letters and sounds work together in English, assists students to strengthen their ability to decode words (read) and encode (spell) with the ultimate goal of strengthening their reading accuracy and generating effective written communication. While there is not one list of words where students will be tested each week, students will demonstrate their knowledge of each pattern through quick checks and its application to their daily writing.

Words Their Way word study is a vital component of the ELA K-5 core curriculum in District 157-C, and will provide the most effective instruction in phonics, spelling, and vocabulary. Teachers are careful to check student's every day writing to make sure it reflects progress with the application of these skills.

We have attached information outlining the *Words their Way* approach to word study, and the how this relates to the Common Core State Standards for you.

