

WESTFIELD SCHOOL

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Dear Parent/Guardian

As you may be aware, part of my role at Westfield from this September is to lead the school in English. One of the areas we are looking at improving is the teaching of spelling. A key part of this will involve replacing rote learning of spelling lists with word study.

In word study, teachers encourage students to compare and contrast features in words. One common method for doing so is by having students sort words. When sorting, students use their word knowledge to separate examples that go together from those that don't.

In addition to sorting, students may hunt for words in their reading and writing that fit the pattern being studied, may construct a word wall illustrating examples of the different patterns studied, may keep a word study notebook to record the known patterns and their new understandings about words, or may play games and activities to apply their word knowledge.

A week of word study might include the following:

- introduce the spelling pattern by providing words for students to sort
- encourage students to discover the pattern in their reading and writing
- use reinforcement activities to help students relate this pattern to previously acquired word knowledge

Weekly spelling tests will no longer be carried out. However, teachers may test students' pattern knowledge rather than their ability to memorize single words. For example, a teacher might have students work with twenty words during a word study cycle and then randomly test students on a selection few of those words.



Healthy Schools

In due course, your class teacher will be sending out word sort lists for homework, along with an explanatory leaflet. In the meantime, your child may continue to bring home word lists based on particular word patterns, prefixes or suffixes. You can help by talking with your child about the pattern, meanings of the words, similarities and differences between the words, etc.

For further information about word study, check out the link below:

<https://thisreadingmama.com/teaching-spelling-word-study/>

Yours sincerely,

Simon Whincop

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Whincop', written in a cursive style.

Subject Leader for English