The Effectiveness of *Words Their Way*™ as an Instructional Intervention Tool for Building Reading Comprehension in English Language Learners through Word Study.

By:

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ABSTRACT

Meeting the ever-changing and diverse needs of students in today’s classroom is essential to a teacher. No Child Left Behind Act has brought to the forefront the large discrepancies amongst the subgroups of today’s students (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002). Knowing this, the best-practice approaches in reading have needed to evolve in order to ensure success for all students. This study addressed the word development needs of early Elementary English Language Learners and the impact on reading comprehension through the use of the Words Their Way™ program. The results of this study revealed positive growth both in reading levels and word development. Results were measured through the Words Their Way™ Primary Spelling Inventory (Helman, Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton & Johnston, 2012) and The Developmental Reading Assessment® - 2nd edition (Pearson Educational Publishing, 2013) administered over three benchmarking periods throughout one school year. Additional research utilizing a larger sample size would further validate the findings of this action research study.
INTRODUCTION

According to the National Center for Education Statistics between 1980 and 2009: “the number of school-age children (ages 5–17) who spoke a language other than English at home rose from 4.7 to 11.2 million, or from 10 to 21 percent of the population in this age range (Aud et al., 2011, p. 30).” This jump of almost seven million children speaking a language other than English in their homes is a significant statistic which educators and policy makers in the United States cannot ignore. This growth by seven million children affects every state in the United States although sixty-one percent of the nation’s English Language Learner (ELL) population is concentrated in six states: Arizona, California, Texas, New York, Florida and Illinois. Twenty-three states and Puerto Rico have seen the ELL student population doubled and in some cases more than quadrupled during the most recent ten-year period (Aud et al., 2012).

Figure 1: Percentage of public school students who are English language learners (ELLs), by state: School year 2009-10 (Aud et al., 2012).
With the growth in the ELL population, the knowledge of how to best address these changing needs and identify the students who speak more than one language has changed as well. Because of this population boom, government attention and educational research regarding the verbiage used when speaking of English Language Learners (ELLs) has changed. Students in the past have been referred to as English as a Second Language students (ESL), as well as Limited English Proficient (LEP). Neither term is necessarily student-friendly, nor inclusion based. English Language Learners has become the nationally accepted term. Interestingly, ELL students in the United States come from over 400 different language backgrounds; many are born in the United States but 80 percent of their parents were born outside of the country (Goldenberg, 2008).

One way the government has attempted to address the change in population is the legislation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). NCLB pushed forward research and focus on best practices for teaching pedagogy and instruction of ELL students and minority subgroups. NCLB brought this issue to the forefront of policies and actions for all fifty states, when it required all states to: identify English learners, measure their English proficiency, and include them in state testing programs that assess academic skills (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002). The new push for data has made statistics more readily available for ELL and minority groups. In addition to the annual assessment of English proficiency, ELL students are expected to participate in state assessments in academic content with all students’ grades 3-8 and once in high school (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002). The data collected shows a wide achievement gap for ELL students. According to the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress, fourth-grade ELLs scored 36 points below non-ELLs in reading and 25 points below
non-ELLs in math. The gaps among eighth-graders were even larger – 42 points in reading and 37 points in math (NAEP, 2007).

Since ELL students come from backgrounds unlike the white majority before them, philosophies are emerging how to best teach ELL students in school; English-Only setting, Bilingual settings, and Split settings are all researched and suggested options that can work to close the achievement gap. Instructional settings vary from area to area due to funding and staffing resources. One thing is certain, “English learners who do not receive language support in school show much less progress in reading and math achievement when compared to similar students who participate in language support programs, such as bilingual education or sheltered English” (Helman, Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton & Johnston, 2012, p. 2).

Vast differences in available resources including funding and staffing lead to the question of what instruction is needed to increase reading comprehension and close the achievement gap for our English Language Learners. Goldenberg (2008) believes effective instruction involves a combination of explicit teaching of syntax, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and social usage as well as opportunities to use English in meaningful and motivating ways. This instruction happens through a variety of teachers and settings based on resources. This paper will examine the effectiveness of one instructional strategy, word study, and determine its role in effective ELL reading comprehension instruction.
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Research in Word Development: Word Study & Vocabulary

In the “Effectiveness of Supplemental Reading Instruction for Second-Grade English Language Learners with Reading Difficulties,” the authors shared that the critical elements for reading instruction for ELL learners with reading difficulties are: reading fluency, phonological awareness, comprehension and vocabulary development and word study (Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Hickman-Davis & Kouzekanani, 2003). Their research study included twenty-six second grade ELL students who were also identified as at-risk for reading difficulties. These students were provided with intensive reading interventions in English that were built upon the major building blocks. One of the goals of intensive intervention was to “catch up” students, meaning they needed to make twice the typical gain in order to be on track with their peers. The interventions were approximately 30 minutes long, and included fluent reading (five minutes), phonological awareness (five minutes), instructional-level reading (ten minutes), word study (five minutes) and writing (two-three minutes). After 13 weeks and 58 sessions of intensive interventions the students’ word attack, passage comprehension, segmentation fluency and fluency scores were all statistically significant from pre-test to post-test. Of the 26 students who participated in the study, only three students made less than six months growth during the three month intervention. It was believed to be due to the students’ limited language proficiency. During the word study portion of the lesson students received explicit instruction in alphabetic principle and word analysis strategies.

The results of a study of fourth and fifth graders in California revealed that students with greater understanding of morphology also had higher reading comprehension scores (Kieffer &
Lesaux, 2007). Morphology involves breaking down words into meaningful parts and is important for both Spanish-speaking ELLs and native English-speaking classmates. The Kieffer and Lesaux study (2007) included 111 students (87 Spanish-speaking and 24 native English speakers); students were given a range of standardized tests to assess reading comprehension, word reading fluency, and vocabulary. The researchers concluded that students’ understanding of morphology was a better predictor of reading comprehension than their vocabulary level. The relationship of reading comprehension and morphology was found to be the same for Spanish-speaking ELLs as for native English speakers in urban settings. The previous mentioned research showed how effective word-learning strategies aid in building vocabularies which is key in reading comprehension.

Kieffer and Lesaux (2007) recommend four principles for teaching morphology to increase vocabulary and reading comprehension:

1. Teach morphology in the context of rich, explicit vocabulary instruction; a wide variety of texts, student-friendly explanations, and meaningful contexts.

2. Teach students to use morphology as a cognitive strategy with explicit steps and to break down a word using these four steps: recognize unknown word, analyze the word for morphemes they recognize, hypothesize the meaning, and check the hypothesis in the context.

3. Teach the underlying morphological knowledge needed in two ways – explicitly and in context (prefixes, suffixes, roots, word forms).

4. For the students with developed knowledge in Spanish, teach morphology in relation to cognate instruction; specifically, words that are similar in both languages.
Another key to improving reading comprehension is increasing vocabulary. In a study of 254 bilingual and monolingual students from nine fifth-grade classrooms in four schools in California, Virginia, and Massachusetts, students were given fifteen weeks of instruction. The categories of assessment were: Mastery, Word Association, Polysemy, and Cloze. All showed the same general pattern of results: the intervention group showed greater gain than the comparison group. The instruction included 10-12 vocabulary words per week that were explicitly taught in 30-45 minutes of instruction per day. The vocabulary instruction included preview in English and Spanish for the ELLs, introduction of text and vocabulary inferring strategies, using words in context, and expanding meaning and tools to develop vocabulary and vocabulary review. The intervention was an overall success in enhancing reading skills and word knowledge, as well as teacher and student satisfaction (Carlo et al., 2004).

A study (Silverman, 2007) of 72 kindergarten students from five classrooms varying in instruction from (1) mainstream English, (2) to structured immersion, and (3) bilingual English-Spanish showed vocabulary development through read alouds with kindergarteners to be a successful intervention tool. The researcher developed an intervention with these components: authentic children’s literature, child-friendly definitions including contexts, opportunities to act out the meaning, visual aids, repetition and reinforcement as well as encouragement and guidance. The intervention curriculum was based on twelve books, one book per week, and three days per week for 30-45 minutes, and 5-10 words per book for instruction. The results for English-Only kindergarteners (EOs) and English Language Learners (ELLs) showed significant improvement in knowledge of target words from pretest to posttest. A small conclusion that emerged from the study was that when explicitly taught, ELLs learned words from instruction as
fast as or faster than EOs. If teaching methods are appropriate for ELLs, they can learn what is explicitly taught as easily as EOs (Silverman, 2007).

There are many components of closing the achievement gap in reading for ELL students. Both word attack strategies as well as vocabulary instruction have been shown to be essential parts of literacy instruction and interventions for struggling ELL students. “Vocabulary and reading comprehension have a reciprocal relationship – as greater vocabulary leads to greater comprehension, better comprehension also leads to learning more vocabulary words – and this relationship has major implications for the teaching of reading” (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007, p. 136).

This study examined the effectiveness of the Words Their Way™ word development program with first grade students. The central research questions in this study were:

- How does Word Study, specifically the Words Their Way™ curriculum, affect reading comprehension and overall reading level with ELLs?
- What is the effect of the Words Their Way™ curriculum in building vocabulary and improving ELLs reading comprehension and overall reading level?

**METHODODOLOGY**

**Participants**

This study’s participants consisted of nine first grade students from three different homerooms; six males and three females. All of the students attended the same elementary school for the 2012-2013 school year, and received Title One Reading Intervention Services all year. Two students are Caucasian, three students are Somali (Black) and four students are
Hispanic. Seven of the students are English Language Learners; six of these students also received services from an English Language (EL) teacher. This study referred to the students by numbers one through nine to honor anonymity.

Setting

The study took place at a K-6th grade Elementary School in a Midwestern state. It was one of ten elementary schools in the school district. There were 612 students enrolled. In 2012, it was determined to be a Racially Isolated School by the Minnesota Department of Education. This means the enrollment of our protected race students was 20% more than the enrollment of protected race students in the entire school district. It was a very diverse school with 43% of our students qualifying as English Language Learners representing at least 26 different cultures. Seventy-nine percent of our student population were registered for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program and we were appointed a full Title One school in 2012. There were 25 classrooms with an average of 26 students per class. There were six Title One Reading Intervention Teachers and two Minnesota Reading Corps volunteers, who served 162 students in reading. There were also 3.5 FTE math interventionists, as well as 6.5 FTE English Learner teachers serving 263 students. It was in year two of the five year roll-out plan for school-wide PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Plan) and RTI (Response to Intervention). It was also home to a site based ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) program.

The educator conducting the study was a Title One Reading teacher on the Literacy Intervention team. These nine students were in her flexible intervention groups all year, with a four students to one teacher ratio. The intervention groups met for 30 minutes every Monday
through Friday. The *Words Their Way*™ instruction took place Monday through Thursday, as Friday was a day for Progress Monitoring and individualized skill practice through the use of iPads.

These nine first grade students also participated in a shared reading approach to character development through the Zaner-Bloser Voices curriculum (Zaner-Bloser, 2013), shared writing, independent reading time, traditional spelling based on the basal series, as well as guided reading groups in their homeroom with their classroom teacher.

**Materials**

The majority of the word work instruction was based on the book *Words Their Way With English Learners: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling instruction* 2nd edition (Helman, Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton & Johnston 2012). From this book came the spelling inventory, instructional guidance, and word sort activities. Each student received a word study notebook for use created by me. Activities were also utilized from *The Next Step in Guided Reading* written by Jan Richardson (2009). Guided reading books from our school’s shared leveled library were used for instruction as well. The Developmental Reading Assessment® - 2nd edition (DRA2) by Pearson Education Inc, was used in order to determine students’ instructional reading levels based on word accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.
**Procedures**

Before instruction began, a DRA2 was administered as a benchmark reading assessment in order to find the students’ instructional reading level. The DRA2 measured the students’ word accuracy, fluency, and comprehension through the reading of a leveled passage with comprehension questions such as retelling, inferring, and predicting. Each student was also given the *Words Their Way™* (Helman et al., 2012) spelling inventory in order to place them on the spelling continuum to determine word patterns and features, on which I focused my instruction. The spelling inventory consisted of a traditional spelling test of 26 words, which ranged in complexity from consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) to multisyllabic words with vowel combinations, including blends, digraphs and endings.

Figure 2: *Words Their Way™* Primary Spelling Inventory (Helman et al., 2012).
During the year, our group focused on initial and final consonant sounds, short and long vowels and digraphs. These features were chosen based on the students’ needs, which were indicated in the data from the spelling inventories. Each lesson began with a sort from the Words Their Way™ curriculum. The sort was used a warm up, that led into our reading activity. The sorts generally consisted of pictures or words based on the phonemic pattern we were practicing. At the beginning of the school year the sorts were mainly pictures. Much of my instruction time was spent building the background knowledge of the vocabulary in the picture identification this scaffolded the word pattern study. The students independently sorted the pictures, and then read the words to me as a check for understanding lastly they explained the pattern to me. Each sort was differentiated for each student and was individually checked by me. After completing the sort, the students reread a familiar guided reading text two times. The guided reading texts were used to teach the Jan Richardson (2009) reading comprehension strategies: check the picture, chunk the word, and think what would make sense. After reading the texts the students practiced sight words and read “fun” books. This 30 minute intervention time began in the beginning of October and occurred almost every school day, with the exception of days for school-wide school activities and breaks.

The students were benchmarked with the DRA2 and WTW spelling inventories in fall (October), winter (January), and spring (April). The DRA2 was a district mandate for all students receiving targeted reading interventions. The WTW assessment was done specifically for this study in order to show growth or lack of growth from the beginning of the school year.

I examined all three data points to determine whether students’ reading levels had increased as well as their levels on the WTW spelling continuum. I was able to check for
increased knowledge of the words and concepts that we had worked on throughout our word study activities.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Benchmark Assessment

The first assessment used was the Development Reading Assessment® - 2nd edition (DRA2). This test was used to assess the students’ instructional reading level as determined by their fluency, accuracy rating (including number of errors), and comprehension. This assessment was administered to all first grade students receiving Reading Interventions four times a year. The results are displayed in Figure 3.

![Figure 3: Developmental Reading Assessment® – 2nd edition (DRA2) levels](image)

Each student showed an increase in fluency, accuracy and overall instructional level as shown by an increase in his/her DRA2 reading level from the beginning of the year. None of
these nine students made enough growth to meet grade level benchmark requirements and be exited from Title One Intervention services. However, students #5, 6, and 7 made good growth and are near benchmark at DRA2 levels ten and twelve. With six weeks left in the school-year, more growth was very possible. Two students made minimal growth and were still at DRA2 level six. The first grade benchmark goal for the end of the year as set by the district was DRA2 level 18. While none of the students have exited Title One, all students’ reading levels increased, and I have also noticed an increase in their confidence as readers as well. One student during a pre-reading activity recently said to me, “Mrs. Singleton, I can read this, can I just read this?” Previous to this comment, this particular student lacked confidence and would routinely shut down and became defeated when confronted with a challenging word. This shows tremendous growth in his confidence in himself as a reader.

*Spelling Inventory*

When analyzing the students’ spelling inventories, three different components were taken into account: feature points, words spelled correctly, and total points. All of these provided an instructional stage for each student, in order to guide instruction based on his/her needs. Figure 4 is a table displaying the students’ fall, winter and spring WTW feature point scores. Feature points were given when a student used specific parts of a word such as the beginning, middle and ending consonants, vowels, and blends. During the assessments students were instructed to spell the word the best they could, and if they didn’t know how to spell it to write down all the sounds they could hear. By breaking down the words, I was better able to determine which word features my students knew and which they needed further instruction. This information informed my
instruction by showing me which word patterns with which to start. The feature points are used to determine the students’ spelling stages. The spelling stages are determined based on the sounds that the students hear in the spelling words given, and can duplicate, regardless of if they spell the word correctly.

I also included the students’ English Language Learner (ELL) levels; the levels are believed to be indicators of growth. The ELL levels are 1-6. Level one was considered a newcomer, level six was mastery. I included this data into my results graph; many people believe the more English a student has, the easier it will be to acquire the ability to read in English. The two students (#8, #9) who have zero in the ELL column are not ELLs.

![Figure 4: Words Their Way™ Spelling Inventory Feature Points](image-url)

Figure 4: Words Their Way™ Spelling Inventory Feature Points
An analysis of the data shows that all students increased their feature points, some more than others. After looking at the specific tests, I was able to see that the students’ understanding of spelling and word formation has improved even though their scores didn’t drastically improve. They have all passed initial and final consonant sounds as well as short vowels on the continuum and have improved on long vowels as well as digraphs. This has greatly improved the students’ ability to decipher unknown words when reading.

![Figure 4: Words Their Way™ Spelling Inventory Words Spelled Correctly.](image-url)
IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

Strengths

As shown above the strengths of these instructional strategies are that all of the students grew in their independent reading level and in their ability to decode words by using word patterns and morphology as taught through the Words Their Way™ word study curriculum. As demonstrated through observation, all students’ confidence in their ability to read has increased as well, and their willingness to ‘attack’ hard words has increased.

Applications

Throughout the school year I have been able to share my results and findings with my principal as well as the homeroom teachers. My results have impacted all four sections of first grade as well as all three sections of third grade, as all of the teachers have stopped using the basal directed spelling program and have implemented the Word Their Way™ program instead. I was able to create a parent information letter, in English and Spanish, explaining to parents how their child will be tested based on the understanding of word patterns and not on memorization of a prescribed list of unrelated words. This has been a big shift in the spelling paradigm at our school.

Limitations

Throughout this action research study, I was faced with many limitations. Because I am a support teacher, my student groups are constantly changing based on need. During the 2012-
2013 school year I worked with 40 students; ten exited because of growth and five moved. I was unable to find a way to incorporate my students who exited into this study. It is my belief that all ten students who exited did so due to an increase in his/her knowledge of word study. I had four second grade students that began the school year at a DRA2 level 4 and exited in winter at a DRA2 level 24 and on grade level. Because their time was flexible and they all exited in different months, I was unable to find a way to incorporate them into my study. I was disappointed in my small sample size of nine students.

Reflection

As I look back on my research study, I am proud of the impact that my research had on the instruction in first and third grades. I am hopeful that these changes will be maintained and implemented at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year as well. I hope to encourage and aid other grade levels in making the switch to meaningful word study in place of traditional spelling.

I regret that these changes only happened mid-year, and there are still issues to work out in maintaining WTW study at the classroom level. I am proud of the growth my students have made this year, and I know that I will be implementing WTW as a word study intervention tool again next year. I hope to have it mirror what is happening in the classroom as many of the students I see need a more individualized approach, with more teacher support.

I would have preferred to have a larger sample size for my research, and a control group. As I am interested to know what the results would have been without the Words Their Way™ intervention. I am, also, interested in finding a way to anecdotally measure students’ growth or lack of growth in confidence.
Throughout my research and study, I found many other things I am interested in researching, such as how do word study and writing correlate and the effect that has on reading comprehension. I learned a lot about how targeted vocabulary instruction doesn’t necessarily impact reading comprehension in the same way that word study does. I would love to do more research about that in the future.

I am also interested in knowing why word study doesn’t always work for students. Specifically, I wonder if writing might make a bigger difference on my two students who made minimal growth.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

PRIMARY SPELLING INVENTORY (PSI) DIRECTIONS

The Primary Spelling Inventory (PSI) is generally used in kindergarten through third grade. The 26 words are ordered by difficulty to sample features of the letter name-alphabetic to within word pattern stages. Call out enough words so that you have at least five or six misspelled words to analyze. For kindergarten or other emergent readers you may only need to call out the first five words. In late kindergarten and early first-grade classrooms, call out at least 15 words so that you sample digraphs and blends; and use the entire list for late first, second and third grades. If any students spell more than 20 words correctly, use the Elementary Spelling Inventory.

Instructions for Administering the Inventory

Students should not study these words in advance of testing. Assure the students that this is not for a grade but to help you plan for their needs.

Possible script: “I am going to ask you to spell some words. Spell them the best you can. Some of the words will be easy to spell; some may be difficult. When you do not know how to spell a word, spell it the best you can; write down all the sounds you hear.”

Ask students to number their paper (or prepare a numbered paper for Kindergarten or early first grade). Call each word aloud and repeat it. Use it in a sentence, if necessary, to be sure students know the exact word. Sample sentences are listed below along with the words. After administering the inventory use the Feature Guide and Class Composite Forms to complete your assessment. The Assessment Application provides an electronic version of the feature guides to score the results of the inventory and will automatically generate a Class Composite for you.

Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, vocabulary and Spelling Instruction © 2013 by Pearson Education, Inc

Words and Sentences for the Primary Spelling Inventory

1. fan I could use a fan on a hot day. fan
The Effectiveness of Words Their Way™ with Reading Comprehension

2. pet I have a pet cat who likes to play. **pet**
3. dig He will dig a hole in the sand. **dig**
4. rob A raccoon will rob a bird’s nest for eggs. **rob**
5. hope I hope you will do well on this test. **hope**
6. wait You will need to wait for the letter. **wait**
7. gum I stepped on some bubble gum. **gum**
8. sled The dog sled was pulled by huskies. **sled**
9. stick I used a stick to poke in the hole. **stick**
10. shine He rubbed the coin to make it shine. **shine**
11. dream I had a funny dream last night. **dream**
12. blade The blade of the knife was very sharp. **blade**
13. coach The coach called the team off the field. **coach**
14. fright She was a fright in her Halloween costume. **fright**
15. chewed The dog chewed on the bone until it was gone. **chewed**
16. crawl You will get dirty if you crawl under the bed. **crawl**
17. wishes In fairy tales wishes often come true. **wishes**
18. thorn The thorn from the rosebush stuck me. **thorn**
19. shouted They shouted at the barking dog. **shouted**
20. spoil The food will spoil if it sits out too long. **spoil**
21. growl The dog will growl if you bother him. **growl**
22. third I was the third person in line. **third**
23. camped We camped down by the river last weekend. **camped**
24. tries He tries hard every day to finish his work. **tries**
25. clapping The audience was clapping after the program. **clapping**
26. riding They are riding their bikes to the park today. **riding**

Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, vocabulary and Spelling Instruction © 2012 by Pearson Education, Inc

**Scoring the PSI Inventory Using the Feature Guide**

1. Make a copy of the Primary Spelling Inventory Feature Guide for each student or follow the directions to set up a classroom database using the Assessment
Application, can be downloaded to your computer.

2. Analyze the words by checking off the features spelled correctly that are listed in the cells to the left of each word. For example, If a student spells *pet* as *PAT* they get a check in the initial P cell, and the final T cell, but not for the short vowel. Write in the vowel used (A in this case) but do not give any points for it. Put a check in the "correct" column if the word is spelled correctly. Do not count reversed letters as errors but note them in the cells. If unnecessary letters are added, give the speller credit for what is correct (e.g., If *fan* is spelled *FANE*, the student still gets credit for representing the short vowel).

3. Add the number of points under each feature and across each word, allowing you to double-check the total score recorded in the last cell. The Assessment Application will do this for you. Adjust the ratios in the last row, depending on the number of words called aloud.

**Interpreting the Results of the Spelling Inventory**

4. Look down each feature column to determine instructional needs. For example, a student who misses only one short vowel can go on to other features. A student who misses two needs some review work, but students who miss more than three need careful instruction on this feature. If a student did not get any points for a feature, then earlier features need to be studied first.

5. To determine a stage of development note where students first make two or more errors under the stages listed in the shaded box at the top of the Feature Guide. Circle this stage.

**Using the PSI Class Composite and Spelling-By-Stage Form**

6. Staple each feature guide to the student’s spelling paper and arrange the papers in order from highest total points to lowest total points. If you use the Assessment Application you may or may not want to print out the feature guide for each student but keep the original papers for reference.
7. List students’ names in this rank order in the left column of the PSI Class Composite and transfer each student’s feature scores from the bottom row of the individual Feature Guides to the **PSI Classroom Composite Form**. The Assessment Application will do this for you. If you call out less than the total list, _adjust the totals_ on the Classroom Composite.

8. Highlight cells where students make _two or more errors_ on a particular feature to get a sense of your groups’ needs and to form groups for instruction.

9. Many teachers find it easier to form groups using the **Spelling By Stage Classroom Organization Chart**. List each student under the appropriate spelling stage (the stage circled on the feature guide) and look for instructional groups.

**Directions for Using the Error Guide.**

Make a copy of the Error Guide for the PSI. Circle each error or write in the student’s spelling by the error that is most similar. When a word is spelled correctly, check the spelling at the end of the string of errors. After all words have been scored, determine where most circled words lie and look at the top row of the table for the developmental spelling level for this student. Total the words spelled correctly and note where the student is within the stage: _early_ in the stage, _in the middle_ or _late_ in the stage. Use the Spelling by Stage Classroom Organization Chart to organize word study groups.

**NOTE:** See Chapter 2 for more detailed directions for choosing, administering, scoring, interpreting and using the inventories to form instructional groups.
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### The Effectiveness of Words Their Way™ with Reading Comprehension

**Words Spelled Correctly:**

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<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Spelling Stages:

- **Imagery Hints:**
  - Initial Phonograms
  - Final Phonograms
  - Long Vowel Sounds
  - Silent Vowel Sounds
  - Short Vowel Sounds
  - Beginning Final Vowel Sounds

- **Letter Name-Alphabetic:**
  - Early Middle
  - Later Middle
  - Early Without Pattern
  - Early With Pattern
  - Emergent

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**Error Guide for Primary Spelling Inventory**

This guide summarizes the student's development and progress at each level. It focuses on errors characteristic of that stage. Errors in spelling should be noted and addressed in the review session. Determine the spelling stage that best matches the student's current stage. This ensures continued growth and improvement in spelling skills.