

Sorter Tips

Care & Storage:

- When sorting, the student should lay the cards above their respective pockets to reduce wear. Shoving each card individually into its pocket will eventually damage the pockets.
- When storing your sorter, put a roughly equal number of cards in each of the three pockets to prevent unnecessary overstretching of the pockets. Remove any rubber bands and place in an upright (standing up) position on a shelf or in some sort of bin. IKEA carries some drawer organizers that work nicely for this purpose if you do not have anything handy. The box this sorter set shipped in will also work well, especially if you cut the top flaps off.
- When transporting, put a medium-sized rubber band vertically (across the long end) around the sorter to prevent cards from slipping out.
- The ink on the sorter labels will run if exposed to moisture or water.

Different Ways To Use Sorters:

- Often, in a one-on-one or small group setting, the instructor uses sorters to review or support an introduced concept. The instructor shuffles the cards, placing them in front of the student. The student reads each card, putting it in the appropriate pocket. The instructor questions the choices the student makes throughout the drill. Whenever possible, diagnostic/prescriptive questioning is used in place of direct correction. In other words, when the student makes a mistake, the teacher asks questions in order to elicit the correct response.
- For younger students, limiting the number of cards used in a single sitting may prove useful. Any cards the child incorrectly sorts can be added to the unused cards to form a second lesson on another day.
- Instructors also often use sorters as homework assignments. First, the instructor shuffles the cards, placing them randomly in the pockets. The student can then complete the sort and “check” her results by counting the number of cards in each pocket. The teacher should check the results the next day.
- Some teachers have purchased a set of several of the same kind of sorter for students to use at a “center” in the classroom when other work has been completed.
- Cards can be removed from the sorter and used for word decoding and spelling dictation.
- If you shuffle the cards from a single sorter in with some “Mine!” cards, you can play a game of sorts. Players take turns flipping over and reading cards. When a player turns over a “Mine!” card, he or she claims all the cards in the stack. The player with the most cards at the end of the game wins. (If you would like to purchase cards to turn your sorter into a game, see the “Game Pack” on the sorter page of our catalog.)

(continued)

Sorter Styles: Several different styles of sorter exist in the current set of 42:

- single word on each card; student sorts by pronunciation: 2 sounds of ow, 2 sounds of g, 2 sounds of c, 2 sounds of oo, 3 sounds of ea, 3 vowel sounds of y, 3 sounds of ch, 3 sounds of ed, open/closed/silent-e - nonsense words, open/closed/silent-e - real words, consonant-le, vowel team, vowel-r nonsense words, 2 sounds of sion
- single word on each card; student sorts by origin: word origins 1, word origins 2
- two spellings provided on each card; student applies the rule to sort by correct spelling: oi/oy, ou/ow, ai/ay, oa/ow, k/ck, ch/tch, ge/dge
- word without ending provided; student chooses correct ending: tion/sion/cian, us/ous, er/or/ar, ive/age/ate
- base and suffix are provided; student applies the spelling rule to sort by correct spelling: cvc doubling, silent-e, y rule
- writing sorters; student sorts by writing element: phrase/clause 1, phrase/clause 2, independent/dependent clause 1, independent/dependent clause 2; simple/compound/complex sentence 1, simple/compound/complex sentence 2, 3 kinds of nouns, 3 verb tenses, 3 questions that adverbs answer, adverbial/adjectival prepositional phrases, direct objects/indirect objectives/predicate nouns & adjectives

Special Sorters:

Most three-sort sorters contain forty-five cards, fifteen for each pocket when the reinforcement drill is completed correctly. Two-sort sorters, on the other hand, contain forty-four cards, twenty-two for each pocket. (For two-sort sorters, the center pocket remains empty when the student is sorting.)

There are a few exceptions:

- sounds of ea: 19 ea = long e and 19 ea = short e cards. 6 ea = long a cards (because it is an extremely rare pronunciation).
- 2 sounds of -ate: 18 -ate = /et/ and 18 -ate = /ate/ cards. Eight additional cards with words that can be pronounced both ways are provided for the advanced student.
- consonant-le/vowel team/vowel-r: best placed side by side with an open/closed/silent-e sorter to form a “six pocket” (6 syllable) sort.