

**Words Their Way®**



# Words Their Way®

## Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction

S E V E N T H E D I T I O N

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This book is dedicated to  
the memory of our teacher,  
Edmund H. Henderson.

**Donald R. Bear**  
**Marcia Invernizzi**  
**Shane Templeton**  
**Francine Johnston**

# Letter from the Authors

## Dear Educator,

It is an honor for the authors of *Words Their Way*® *Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* to present the seventh edition of this seminal text on word study. Accompanying this edition is a new online resource, *Words Their Way*® *Digital* featuring a student input assessment that automatically scores and suggests word study groups. *WTW Digital* also contains more than 130 interactive digital sorts and printable games across the five stages. Additionally, the enhanced eText version of the book includes more than 40 classroom videos and a wealth of printable resources for the classroom all in one place. These tools will help you to effectively implement word study instruction.

Here the authors highlight a few key ideas presented in *Words Their Way*.

## Donald

*Words Their Way* presents a developmental approach that makes word study more efficient and students more responsive. This approach to word study integrates phonics, spelling, and vocabulary because of the reciprocal nature of literacy: what students learn in spelling transfers to reading, and what they learn in reading transfers to spelling and vocabulary. These are not, therefore, three separate and unrelated areas of instruction. Integrating phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction with a developmental approach contributes, we hope, to deep and rewarding learning and teaching.

## Marcia

*Words Their Way* has gotten teachers to think about phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction from a completely different point of view. Teachers welcome our student-centered, minds-on, active approach that considers word study not only as an integral part of literacy development, but also as an integral vehicle for fostering critical thinking. Effective word study lessons pose questions and involve students in solving problems through careful analysis, reflection, and discussion. The questions teachers pose during words study—such as, “Why do some words end in a silent *e*?”—encourage an investigative mindset and give purpose for engaging in word study activities such as word sorts. The language we use when we talk with students about words has a powerful influence on their self-efficacy as learners. This is in sharp contrast to most phonics and spelling programs that merely ask students to memorize relationships, rules, and words.

## Shane

*Words Their Way* helps teachers provide their students with the breadth and depth of exploration necessary to construct knowledge about words over time—from individual letters to sound, from groups of letters to sound, and from groups of letters to meaning. The awareness and appreciation of how children construct this knowledge empowers and emboldens many teachers to advocate

for developmental instruction—in word study specifically and in literacy more generally. This understanding is now being applied to instruction in vocabulary—in particular, *generative* instruction based on an understanding of how morphology works to generate most of the words in the English language, as well as general academic vocabulary and domain-specific vocabulary.

### **Francine**

Students learn best when they are working with content that is in their “zone of proximal development” or window of opportunity. *Words Their Way* offers an assessment-driven developmental guide for word study that helps teachers differentiate instruction to meet children’s needs and provides the resources to do so.

Bring your colleagues and come join us in the most active edition of *Words Their Way*® yet. We wish you happy sorting with your students!

Sincerely,

**Donald R. Bear   Marcia Invernizzi   Shane Templeton   Francine Johnston**

# About the Authors

**Donald R. Bear** is Professor Emeritus in Literacy Studies at Iowa State University and University of Nevada, Reno where he directed reading centers and taught at all levels. He is a former classroom teacher, and an author and co-author of numerous articles, chapters, and 17 books. He is involved in innovative professional development activities, and his work in assessment and word study is used widely. Donald is involved in studies that examine literacy learning, particularly studies of orthographic development in different and second languages.

**Marcia Invernizzi** is the Henderson Professor Emerita of Reading Education at the University of Virginia. As a founder of *Book Buddies*, a nationally recognized reading tutorial for struggling readers, and *PALS*, a literacy screening and diagnostic tool, Marcia's research interests continue to revolve around evidence-based practices for the prevention of reading and writing difficulties. A former English and reading teacher, Marcia continues to collaborate with school districts and organizations seeking progressive change.

**Shane Templeton** is Foundation Professor Emeritus of Literacy Studies in the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Reno. A former classroom teacher at the primary and secondary levels, his research focuses on the development of orthographic and vocabulary knowledge. He has written several books on the teaching and learning of reading and language arts and is a member of the Usage Panel of the *American Heritage Dictionary*.

**Francine Johnston** is a former first-grade teacher and school reading specialist. She retired from the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she coordinated the reading master's program and directed a reading clinic for struggling readers.

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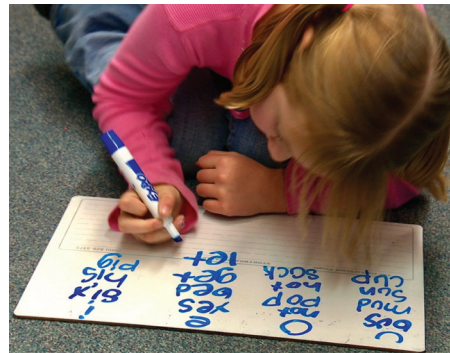
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# Preface

*I see and I forget. I hear and I remember. I do and I understand.*

—Confucius

Word study involves “doing” things with words—examining, manipulating, comparing, and categorizing—and offers students the opportunity to make their own discoveries about how words work. When teachers use this practical, hands-on way to study words with students, they create tasks that focus students’ attention on critical features of words: sound, pattern, and meaning.

*Words Their Way* is a developmental approach to phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction. Guided by an informed interpretation of spelling errors and other literacy behaviors, *Words Their Way* offers a systematic, teacher-directed, child-centered plan for the study of words from kindergarten to high school. Step by step, the chapters explain exactly how to provide effective word study instruction. The keys to this research-based approach are knowing your students’ literacy progress, organizing for instruction, and implementing word study.

## New to This Edition

Two new digital tools accompany *Words Their Way*, seventh edition. Together with the text, these resources provide the tools you need to understand and carry out word study instruction that will motivate and engage your students and help them succeed in literacy learning.

*Words Their Way*<sup>®</sup> *Digital* provides students and teachers the opportunity to engage in interactive word study. Features include:

- **Automatically scored spelling inventories** generate student word study groups based on inventory results. Students can input spellings directly into the website, or the teacher may choose to key in students’ spellings from an assessment administered on paper.
- **130+ interactive online sorts** span all five developmental stages. Sorts are also available in a printable PDF format for in-class or take-home use. Users can also create their own interactive or printable picture and word sorts.
- **40+ word study games and templates** in a printable PDF format are available for all five developmental stages.
- **Data reporting and administrator oversight** allows literacy coaches or specialists to view and track student progress across multiple teachers’ classrooms. Student assessment data can be viewed at the whole class and individual student level.

The **Enhanced Pearson eText** provides online access to the full book and includes the following multimedia features to help teachers implement word study instruction:

- **Video examples** feature real teachers and students using *Words Their Way* in the classroom.
- **Teacher Resources** are links to PDFs that include directions for various assessments and activities to be used as part of word study instruction.

**Note:** Access codes for *WTW Digital* and the Enhanced Pearson eText are included with each new copy of the package ISBN: 9780135174623.

## Key Content Changes

This edition incorporates the following updates:

- Chapter 3 has been revised to focus on the word study lesson, teacher-student interactions, and follow-up activities whereas a new Chapter 9 addresses the larger issues involved in organizing word study in the classroom.
- Sample lesson plans are included in each chapter to demonstrate how teachers guide thoughtful discussions about words. For example, Chapter 5 provides three lesson plans, including one to introduce word families in picture sorts.
- “Ten Indicators of Effective Word Study Classrooms” in Chapter 9 have been added to guide evaluation and professional development.
- Activities have been added, and many have been revised in Chapters 3–8. In Chapter 8, for example, vocabulary activities are categorized according to being *generative* and *word-specific*, and additional activities such as *Operation Examination* and *Word Challenge: Words from Myths and Legends* are provided.
- Progress monitoring and goalsetting materials are available in Appendix B.
- A new term, *focused contrasts*, is introduced to highlight the importance of comparing and contrasting letters and spelling patterns related to speech sounds and meaning units or morphemes.
- References throughout the book with the latest research pertaining to word study have been updated.
- English learner callouts provide more information about comparisons between English and other languages.
- Visually enhanced, full-color design breaks the content into more manageable sections that highlight Teacher Tips and boxed text supplements in the main text. The design facilitates easy interaction between the printed text and the eText.

## Knowing Your Students

Chapter 1 provides foundational information on word study and the research in orthography and literacy development that led to this word study approach. Chapter 2 presents assessment and evaluation tools, walking you step by step through the process of determining your students' instructional level and focusing your word study instruction appropriately. After you administer one of the spelling inventories, you will be able to compile a feature guide for each of your students that will help you identify the stage and the word study features they are ready to master. The classroom composite will identify which students have similar instructional needs, allowing you to plan wisely and effectively for word study grouping.

## Organizing for Instruction

Chapter 3 describes key activities for small groups, partners, and individuals that can be incorporated into weekly routines. We also describe a continuum of support that will help you plan and implement lessons to maximize classroom time. Tips are provided to help guide discussions about words. Chapter 9 will help you establish a word study routine and manage leveled groups at all grade levels. It also introduces ten indicators of effective word study classrooms as a guide to professional development.

## Implementing Word Study

After you have assessed your students, created leveled groups, and developed routines for word study, the information and materials in Chapters 4 through 8 and the Appendices will guide your instruction. Chapters 4 through 8 explore the characteristics of each particular stage, from the emergent learner through to the advanced reader and writer in the derivational relations stage of spelling development. Each of these chapters covers the research and teaching principles that drive instruction and details an appropriate scope and sequence of word study skills. Suggestions are offered for differentiated instructional pacing.

Activities described in each chapter include concept sorts, word sorts, games, and activities that will help you focus instruction where it is needed to move students into the next stage of development. These word study activities promise to engage your students, motivate them, and improve their literacy skills. The activities sections have shaded tabs for your convenience, creating a handy classroom resource. This edition extends our emphasis on vocabulary strategies and activities for each developmental level.

Importantly, as you work to address the English Language Arts standards for which you are responsible, you will see how *Words Their Way* supports the reading foundational skills and language standards across all the grades. The depth and breadth of word knowledge developed through *Words Their Way* also supports most standards' emphasis on students reading and exploring more complex literary and informational texts.

The Appendices at the back of the book contain most of the assessment instruments described in Chapter 2, as well as sound boards, word sorts, word lists, and game templates you will need to get your own word study instruction under way.

## Companion Volumes

Since the last edition of this book, the stage-specific companion volumes have been revised and updated with expanded step-by-step directions for each lesson. These supplements provide you with a complete curriculum of reproducible sorts:

- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Letter and Picture Sorts for Emergent Spellers* (3rd ed.), by Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Francine Johnston, and Shane Templeton
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Word Sorts for Letter Name–Alphabetic Spellers* (3rd ed.), by Francine Johnston, Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, and Shane Templeton
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Word Sorts for Within Word Pattern Spellers* (3rd ed.), by Marcia Invernizzi, Francine Johnston, Donald R. Bear, and Shane Templeton
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Word Sorts for Syllables and Affixes Spellers* (3rd ed.), by Francine Johnston, Marcia Invernizzi, Donald R. Bear, and Shane Templeton
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Word Sorts for Derivational Relations Spellers* (3rd ed.), by Shane Templeton, Francine Johnston, Donald R. Bear, and Marcia Invernizzi

Other related volumes are designed to meet the needs of English learners and students across all grade levels:

- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *for PreK–K*, by Francine Johnston, Marcia Invernizzi, Lori Helman, Donald R. Bear, and Shane Templeton
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *with English Learners: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling* (2nd ed.), by Lori Helman, Donald R. Bear, Shane Templeton, Marcia Invernizzi, and Francine Johnston
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Emergent Sorts for Spanish–Speaking English Learners*, by Lori Helman, Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Shane Templeton, and Francine Johnston
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Letter Name–Alphabetic Sorts for Spanish–Speaking English Learners*, by Lori Helman, Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Shane Templeton, and Francine Johnston
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *Within Word Pattern Sorts for Spanish–Speaking English Learners*, by Lori Helman, Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Shane Templeton, and Francine Johnston
- *Words Their Way: Vocabulary for Middle and Secondary Students* (2nd ed.), by Shane Templeton, Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Francine Johnston, Kevin Flanigan, Dianna Townsend, Lori Helman, and Tisha Hayes
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *with Struggling Readers: Word Study for Reading, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction, Grades 4–12*, by Kevin Flanigan, Latisha Hayes, Shane Templeton, Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, and Francine Johnston
- *Words Their Way*:<sup>®</sup> *for Parents, Tutors, and School Volunteers*, by Michele Picard, Alison Meadows, Marcia Invernizzi, Francine Johnston and Donald Bear.

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