

Rebecca Sitton's APPLESEED



PLANT THE SEEDS TO GROW SPELLING AND WORD SKILL LITERACY.

Sort It—A Powerful Word-Skill and Cognitive Activity!

Sort It is one activity that awaits you in each unit's Exercise Express. It is optional, as are all the activities in this section, but very popular to help students learn to analyze the properties and characteristics of words. If you haven't discovered Sort It, the Exercise Express Teaching Notes models the first unit's Sort It teaching format for you. Use this explanation to begin Sort It at any time.

At first, students may need possible Sort It word categories provided. Yet, soon discontinue this aid, and let students' thinking potential prevail.

After students have sorted their words, ask them to turn to a partner to pair and share their work. In your Sourcebook, there are sorting suggestions, but there are several additional ways the words might be categorized.

When you notice a student has sorted the words appropriately using an excitingly innovative method, showcase the student's work for the class. The goal is to learn to look at all possibilities of the words' attributes. It's an immensely thought-provoking conundrum!

Your most capable students can soon be making their own sets of words for more Sort It activities. They write their Sort It on a transparency, on the chalkboard, or on a chart. Then other students submit a written sorting option. Ask the Sort It author, or creator, to review the submissions and report to the class what possibilities for categories emerged.

Sort It is great for homework. Use the generic Blackline Master, or put the activity on a transparency, a chart, or on the chalkboard for students to copy and take home. Transparencies are easy to file away for next year.

You can use the generic Blackline Master (there's a generic Blackline Master for each Exercise Express activity in your Sourcebook) or write the Sort It on the chalkboard for a quick activity to begin each school day. Students enter the classroom anticipating their first task. Then, throughout the day in extra time, they can ponder and create word sorts with the words. How many ways can they sort them?

Sort It is ideal for a Literacy Center activity. Use the generic Blackline Master for each Literacy Center Sort It, or write the task on a 3x5 index card. Keep students' sorted results in the Literacy Center for other students to explore.

Some teachers love Sort It in cooperative groups. Often they time the sessions for quick-thinking results! Then each group presents their product to the class. You'll see that when students know they'll be sharing their work with the class, the time spent on its creation is far more productive. Further, using this venue, groups attempt to sort the words in a way no other group will think to!