

## General Directions for Administering the Words Their Way Inventories

Students should not study the words before a test. Assure students that they will not be graded on this activity, and that they will be helping you plan for their needs. Introduce the assessment to students; for example:

*I am going to ask you to spell some words. Spell them the best you can. Some of the words may be easy to spell; some may be difficult. When you do not know how to spell a word, spell it the best you can.*

Ask students to number their paper (or prepare a numbered paper for kindergarten or early first grade). Call each word aloud and repeat it. Say each word naturally, without emphasizing phonemes or syllables. Use it in a sentence, if necessary, to be sure students know the exact word. Sample sentences are provided along with the words. After administering the inventory, use a Feature Guide, Class Composite Form, and, if desired, a Spelling-by-Stage Classroom Organization Chart to complete your assessment. Error Guide forms for the Primary and Elementary Inventories are available at PDToolkit for *Words Their Way*. The online assessment application helps complete the feature guide and create a class composite automatically.

### Scoring the Inventory Using the Feature Guides

1. To score by hand, make a copy of the appropriate Feature Guide (PSI p. 320, ESI p. 324, USI p. 327) for each student. Draw a line under the last word used if you called fewer than the total number and adjust the possible total points at the bottom of each feature column.
2. Score the words by checking off the features spelled correctly that are listed in the cells to the right of each word. For example, if a student spells *bed* as BAD, he gets a check in the initial *b* cell and the final *d* cell, but not for the short vowel. Write in the vowel used (*a*, in this case), but do not give any points for it. If a student spells *train* as TRANE, she gets a check in the initial *tr* cell and the final *n* cell, but not for the long vowel pattern. Write in the vowel pattern used (*a-e* 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 *bed* is spelled BEDE, the student still gets credit for representing the consonants and short vowel), but do not check “Correct” spelling.
3. Add the number of checks under each feature and across each word, double-checking the total score recorded in the last cell. Modify the ratios in the last row depending on the number of words called aloud.

### Interpreting the Results of the Spelling Inventory

1. Look down each feature column to determine instructional needs. Students who miss only one (or two, if the features sample 8 to 10 words) can go on to other features. Students who miss two or three need some review work; students who miss more than three need careful instruction on this feature. If a student did not get any points for a feature, earlier features need to be studied first.
2. Determine a development stage by noting where students first make two or more errors under the stages listed in the shaded box at the top of the Feature Guide and circle the stage.
3. Use power scores or total number correct as a guide to calling the stage. Refer to the Power Scores and Estimated Stages table in Chapter 2.

## Using the Classroom Composite and Spelling-by-Stage Classroom Organization Chart

1. Staple each Feature Guide to the student's spelling paper and arrange the papers in rank order from highest to lowest total points or use raw scores.
2. List students' names in this rank order in the left column of the appropriate Classroom Composite (PSI p. 320, ESI p. 324, USI p. 327) and transfer each student's total feature scores from the Feature Guide to the Classroom Composite. If you did not call out the total word list, adjust the numbers on the Possible Points row of the Classroom Composite.
3. Highlight cells where students make two or more errors on a particular feature to get a sense of your students' needs and to form groups for instruction.
4. You may find it easier to form groups using the Spelling-by-Stage Classroom Organization Chart (p. 322). List each student under the appropriate spelling stage (the stage circled on the Feature Guide) and determine instructional groups.

The online assessment tool on the website can automate many of these steps for you.

*Note:* See Chapter 2 for more detailed directions on choosing, administering, scoring, and interpreting the inventories, as well as using them to form instructional groups.