Word Sort

Description: Word sorts are "an active process of comparing and contrasting whereby students categorize pictures and words. These sorts are phonics, spelling, and vocabulary activities that use categorization to determine similarities and differences among pictures and words. These key pictures or words indicate the basic categorizations that students are to examine during their sorting. The repetition of these categorization activities allows students to discover the patterns that pictures and words make and learn the sounds associated with those patterns.

Word sorts are useful for students who possess a functional sight word vocabulary, that is to say, students who are in the letter name stage of development or above. Depending on the stage of development, word sorts might have students categorize words into groups that share the same: beginning sounds, vowel patterns, the way vowel sounds are spelled, or syllable structure."

From 'Reading Strategies and Practices' by Robert J. Tierney and John E. Readence

Using the Strategy:

1. Teacher determines prior to instruction whether the sort will be an open or closed sort. In an open sort, students determine the categories based on the words they are sorting. In a closed sort, the teacher presents students with pre-determined categories into which to sort the words.
2. A list of 6 to 20 words are compiled by the classroom teacher, depending on students' grade level, and the skill being targeted (e.g., short vowels, silent e). Words are written on small cards.
3. For open sorts, students identify the words and look for potential categories. For closed sorts, the teacher presents the categories and directs students to sort words into the categories.
4. A permanent record is made by gluing the word cards onto a large sheet of construction paper or poster board.
5. Share the word sort with classmates.

https://youtu.be/nvqwe8C-I8o