



Clean Sweep

Tonya Hankerson, Literacy Coach at **Meadowbrook Elementary in Augusta, Georgia**, developed a great small-group activity to help kindergartners practice isolated initial, medial and final phonemes. You will need three containers, such as plastic bins of different colors, and a set of picture cards, like those included with the TreeHouse materials for the Voyager Universal Literacy System®.

Scatter the picture cards on the floor and ask students to find all the cards with a specific initial phoneme and sort them into one of the containers. Next, put all the cards back on the floor and ask them to sort cards with a specific final phoneme into a different container. Finally, mix the cards up again, and have students sort the cards with the middle phoneme into the last container. You can also increase the difficulty by using a timer and giving students only one minute to sort.

— Leslie J. Thompson

INITIAL (blue bin)	MEDIAL (red bin)	FINAL (yellow bin)
Cake	Pan	Cab
Cat	Rat	Cub
Cup	Sack	Web
Coat	Tag	Bib
Cape	Jack	Rib
Cow	Mat	Tub

Pulling Out All The Stops

FMC Elementary in Beeville, Texas, uses Voyager Passport™ as a pull-out reading intervention program for grades 1-4. After the first benchmark at beginning of the year, reading intervention teacher Irene Zimmer noticed that the third-grade students' fluency needed serious attention. She arranged a meeting with the other teachers to develop a plan that would address the problem. They decided to give all third-grade students in Voyager Passport a fluency passage every Monday and ask them to read the text orally for homework every night. On Thursdays and Fridays, Zimmer (pictured below with some of her students) pulls aside each third grader and listens to them read for one minute. She then records the correct words per minute (WPM) for that student and charts each student's success.

The students do not compete against anyone but themselves. Once a student's goal has been met, he or she works to maintain that goal and to add expression to the reading. The students work to "beat" their score, and Zimmer says they are learning from and enjoying the extra reading passage. There has been a steady improvement in fluency and an improvement in comprehension due to this fluency activity. This means a little extra work for Zimmer, but the reward has been worth the effort.

— LJ

