

How Children Learn Phonics

A Presentation for
Parents and Carers



Did You Know...?

The English language has:

26 letters



44 sounds

over 100 ways to spell those sounds



It is one of the most complex languages to learn to read and spell.

What Is Phonics?

Phonics is a method for teaching reading and writing.

It develops phonemic awareness – the ability to hear, recognise and use the sounds within words.

Learners are also taught the correspondence between sounds and the graphemes (spelling patterns) that represent them.

Phonics is currently the main way in which children in British primary schools are taught to read in their earliest years.

Children will also be taught other skills, such as whole-word recognition (see ‘tricky words’), book skills and a love and enjoyment of reading.

The Jargon - A Quick Guide

phonics (also known as 'synthetic phonics') - The teaching of reading by developing awareness of the sounds in words and the corresponding letters used to represent those sounds

phoneme - Any one of the 44 sounds which make up words in the English language

grapheme - How a phoneme is written down. There can be more than one way to spell a phoneme. For example, the phoneme 'ay' is spelt differently in each of the words 'way', 'make', 'fail', 'great', 'sleigh' and 'lady'.

blending - Putting together the sounds in a word in order to read it, e.g. 'f - r - o - g, frog'

segmenting - Breaking a word into its constituent sounds in order to spell them, e.g. 'frog, f - r - o - g'

The Jargon - specific to RWInc

Fred talk - saying a word like a 'robot'. Put your hand on your 'l-a-p'.

Fred in your head - Segmenting a word in your head so that you are not saying each individual sound out loud. Helps with fluency.

Red words - A word that cannot be sounded out. These words must just be recognised and learnt by sight. Examples - I, the, me, to, was.

Green word - Words which can be segmented and blended. Examples - cat, shop, night, blow, jumping, scream.

Alien word - A made up word, designed specifically to test a child's phonic skills (Phonics screening test at the end of Year One).

Why Are Children Taught Phonics?

Phonics, taught in a structured way, is generally accepted to be the most effective way to teach reading and writing.

Children learn to hear and recognise sounds in words and spell them correctly.

This assists with their confidence, accuracy and fluency.

Phonics should not be taught in isolation – children also need to learn other reading and comprehension skills alongside phonic knowledge.

Teaching Phonics in School

Children are taught reading and spelling daily throughout the week, and each session will follow a structured format.

The activities used to teach will vary and can be adapted. They are multisensory and appeal to different learning styles. They involve games and individual and group activities as well as teacher-led sessions.

Teachers will assess children's understanding throughout each session and will also assess knowledge of sounds to see whether a child is ready to move on to the next phase.



The Importance of Listening Skills

Phonics learning relies on children being able to hear and distinguish the sounds within words.

Children with poor listening and/or attention skills can struggle with phonics learning.

Listening skills begin at birth and there are lots of things that parents and carers can do to support these skills.

Children are also taught listening and attention skills during their early years education (age 0-5).

The first phase of formal phonics education (Phase 1) also focuses on key listening skills. Without these skills, children may struggle to master the next stage of their phonics learning.

Phase One

Phase 1 has seven aspects, with a focus on listening skills.

- 1: Environmental sounds
- 2: Instrumental sounds
- 3: Body percussion
- 4: Rhythm and rhyme
- 5: Alliteration
- 6: Voice sounds
- 7: Oral blending and segmenting

RWInc

First we teach the children all of the individual letters that make a sound (Set 1 sounds).

We teach them in an order.

We then begin to teach the digraphs (a pair of letters that make one sound) and trigraphs (three letters than make one sound).



The same sound but different grapheme...

Consonant sounds

f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng
ff	ll	mm	nn	rr	ss	ve	zz	ti		nk
ph	le	mb	kn	wr	se		s	ci		
					c		se			
					ce					

b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y	ch
bb	k	dd	gg		g	pp		tt	wh			tch
	ck				ge							
	ch				dge							

Vowel sounds

a	e ea	i	o	u	ay ā-e ai	ee y ea e	igh ī-e ie i y	ow ō-e oa o
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oo ū-e ue ew	oo	ar	or oor ore aw au	air are	ir ur er	ou ow	oy oi	ire	ear	ure
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Teaching sounds

The most important thing to remember is to say the sound as a 'pure' sound.

Avoid putting an 'u' onto the end of a sound. For example - mmm and not muh.

- **Stretchy sounds:**

ffff, llll, mmmm, nnnn, ssss, vvvv, zzzz, sssh, ttth

- **Bouncy sounds:**

c-c-c-c, h-h-h-h, p-p-p-p, t-t-t-t, ch-ch-ch-ch, k-k-k-k

- <http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/resources/sound-pronunciation-guide/>

Sound pronunciation guide

Learn how to pronounce pure sounds from Set 1 Sounds through to Set 3 with 5 year-old Sylvie.



Parent information

Sound Pronunciation Guide

Decoding

- Sounding out letter sounds
- For example, the word 'cat'
c - a - t
- 'Fred Fingers'

Blending

- Putting the sounds back together again

For example, c - a - t becomes **cat**

- Encourage your child to say each sound and then immediately after say the word.
- 'Fred in your head'

- **Red words** – words we use often in the English language such as: my, I, the and you. These are words that children are unable to blend but must be able to recognise.
- High frequency words (HFW) – words which occur most frequently in written material (and, the, as it).

A selection of 'red words' and 'high frequency words' together make up the 45 words that Reception children are expected to be able to read and write by the end of the year.

- Alien words – words such as 'vap' or 'jound'. Children have to use their decoding skills.

Supporting writing with phonics

We model the correct spelling of words and writing for different purposes – making reminders, shopping lists, registers, lists, stories etc.

In the early stages (Reception) NEVER correct a child's spelling or spell it out for them, this only teaches your child that you can do it better than them! As they begin to progress we will remind of red words they should be able to remember but we always promote 'having a go'. At the beginning children may only record the initial sound or a couple of sounds they can hear in a word – elft meaning elephant.

It is important that we teach children to use the sounds they know and apply these in their writing. Therefore, we teach the children to write the word how it sounds.

Early Learning Goals

These make up the statutory requirement for writing and reading which we must assess the children against and report to the Government at the end of Early Years:

Writing - Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Reading – Children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

Example of how a child might make a word or sentence phonetically

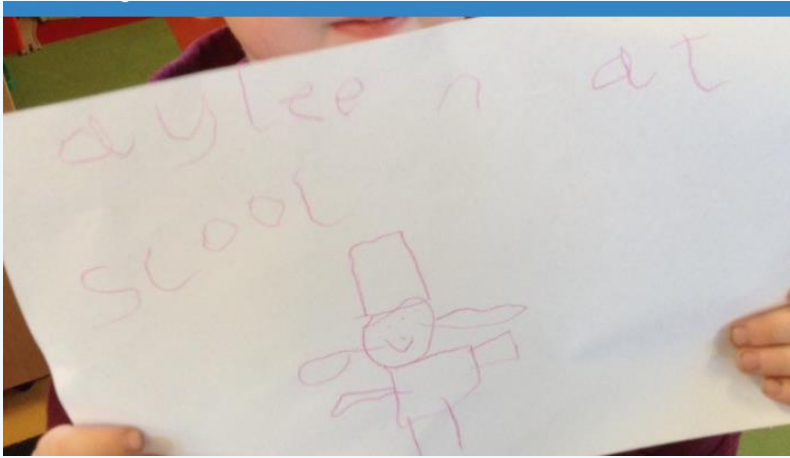
I luv yoo

Migh fowtow iz pritee

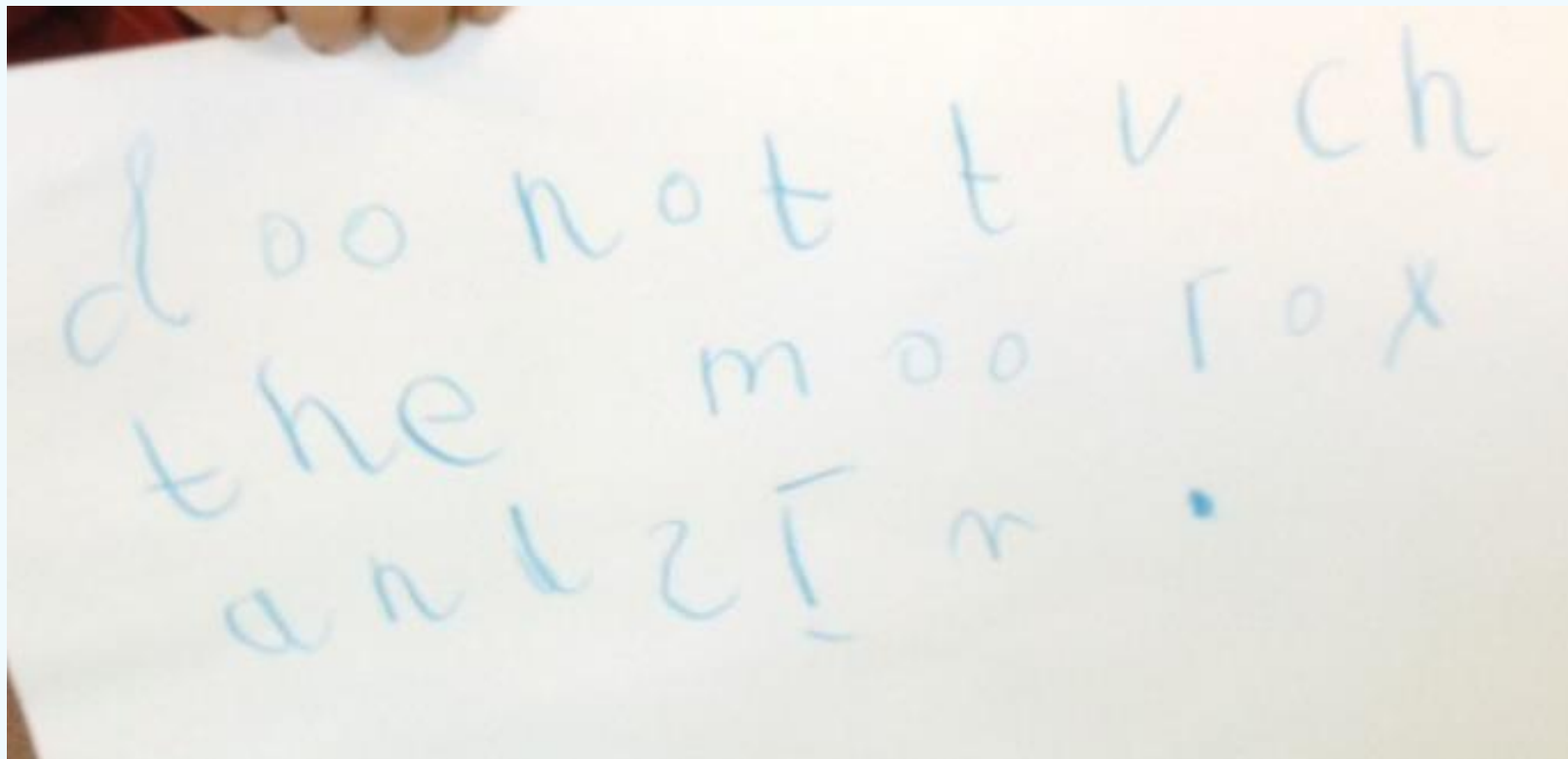
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Wons up on a tighm

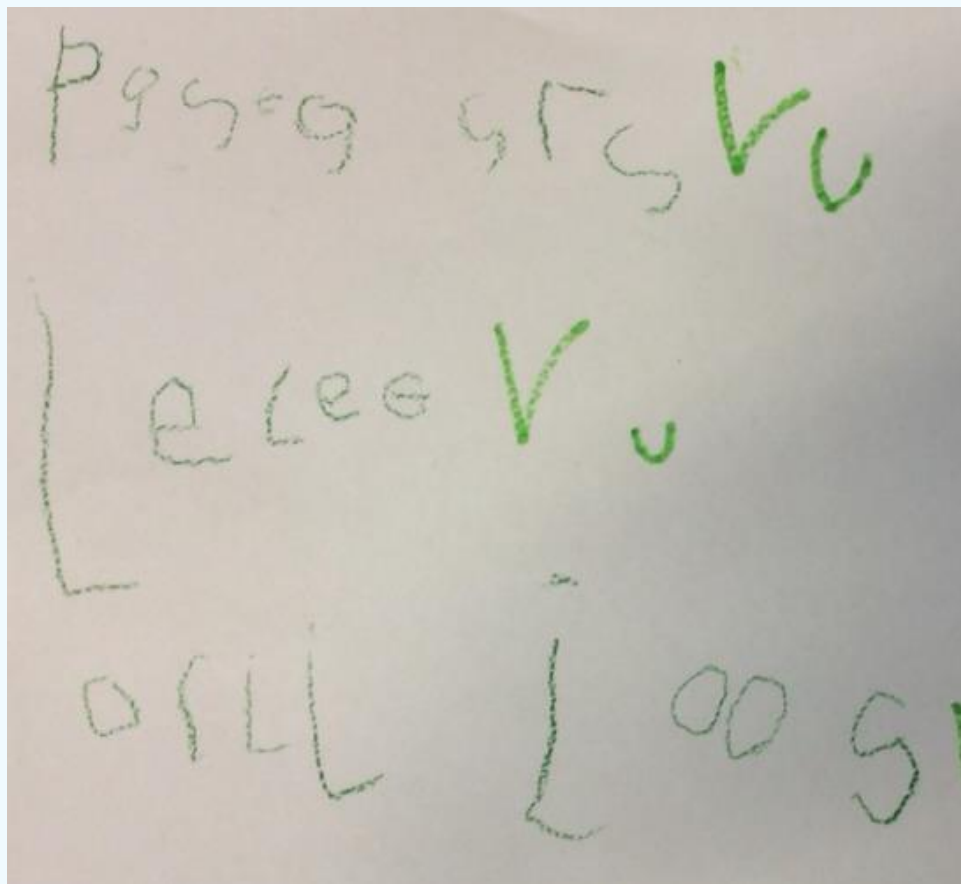
Examples of writing



Examples of writing



Examples of writing



The Year 1 Phonics Check

In June, all year 1 children are expected to complete the year 1 phonics screening check.

The aim is to check that a child is making progress in phonics. They are expected to read a mixture of real words and 'nonsense' words.

If a child has not reached the expected standard, schools must give additional support to help the child to make progress in year 2.

Alien words – these are designed to test how well the children can decode a word by applying their phonics skills.

 zorps	 dirst
 harnd	 gair
 jigh	 thobe
 zale	 scroy
 bluns	 spraw

Helping Your Child at Home

Work on listening skills.

Practise segmenting and blending.

Look for familiar sounds and words in the world around you.

Support your child to complete homework.

Practise new sounds and graphemes.

Read to and with your child every day.

How can you help?

Make it positive – success is the key!

Practise segmenting and blending.

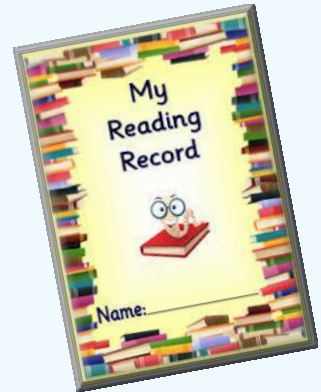
Look for familiar sounds and words in the world around you.

Communicate – please record in your child's reading record when you have read. This shows your child that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading..

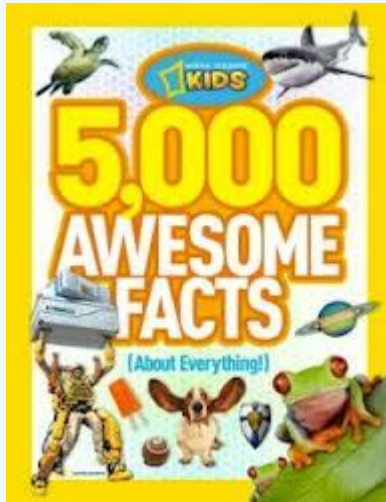
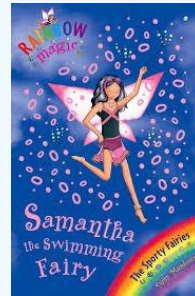
Practise new sounds and graphemes.

Talk about the story – just because they can read the word doesn't mean they understand it!

Ask them what it means, talk about characters, how they might be feeling and make predictions.



Variety is key!



There is no such thing as a child who hates to read; there are only children who have not found the right book.

Frank Serafini

Helpful resources

Websites:

www.phonicsplay.co.uk

www.familylearning.org.uk/phonics

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy/phonics/play/>

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/5-7-years/letters-and-sounds>

Ipad apps:

Hooked on Phonics (free)

Phonics Island (free)

BBC Cbeebies storytime (free)

First words sampler (free)

Phonics fun farm games (free)

Meet the alphablocks (free)

Phonics alien adventure (free)

