

Helping your child achieve in Phonics Foundation Stage

A booklet for parents



Terminology

Below is some of the terminology your child will learn during their phonics lessons and what they mean.

Phoneme

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. It is generally accepted that most varieties of spoken English use about 42 phonemes.

Grapheme

A grapheme is a symbol of a phoneme. It is a letter or group of letters representing a sound.

Segmenting and blending

Segmenting consists of breaking words down into phonemes to spell. Blending consists of building words from phonemes to read. Both skills are important.

Digraph

This is when two letters come together to make a phoneme. For example, /oa/ makes the sound in 'boat' and is also known as a **vowel digraph**. There are also **consonant digraphs**, for example, /sh/ and /ch/.

Trigraph

This is when three letters come together to make one phoneme, for example /igh/.

Split digraph

A digraph in which the two letters are not adjacent –e.g. **make**

Abbreviations

VC, CVC and CCVC are the respective abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of graphemes in words (e.g. *am* (VC), *Sam* (CVC), *slam* (CCVC), or *each* (VC), *beach* (CVC), *bleach* (CCVC)).

Phase 1

Phase One of 'Letters and Sounds' concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects:

- Environmental sounds
- Instrumental sounds
- Body Percussion
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting

Each aspect contains three strands:

- Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination)
- Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)
- Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)

The majority of Phase 1 work will be completed at your child's pre-school setting.

Phase 2

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:

Set 1: s, a, t, p

Set 2: i, n, m, d

Set 3: g, o, c, k

Set 4: ck, e, u, r

Set 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

The children will begin to learn to blend and segment to help begin reading and spelling. This will begin with simple words e.g. cat, run, miss. Alongside this,

children are introduced to tricky words. These are the words that are irregular. This means that phonics cannot be applied to the reading and spelling of these words.

The tricky words introduced in phase 2 are:

to	the	no	go	I
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Phase 3

By the time children reach Phase 3, they will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2. Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

Set 6: j, v, w, x

Set 7: y, z, zz, qu

Consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng

Vowel digraphs: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

Sounds	Word example	Sounds	Word example	Sounds	Word example
j	jam	sh	shin	or	fork
v	vet	th	thick	ur	fur
w	win	ng	song	ow	now
x	box	ai	train	oi	coil
y	yes	ee	tree	ear	hear
z	zip	igh	sight	air	hair
zz	buzz	oa	boat	ure	pure
qu	quick	oo (long)	moon	er	term
ch	chop	oo (short)	book	ar	star

The tricky words introduced in phase 3 are:

we	me	be	was	go	are
no	my	you	they	her	all

Phase 4

By Phase 4, children will be able to represent each of 42 phonemes with a grapheme. They will blend phonemes to read CVC words and segment CVC words for spelling. They will also be able to read two syllable words that are simple. They will be able to read all the tricky words learnt so far and will be able to spell some of them. The purpose of this phase is to consolidate all the children have learnt in the previous phases and to consolidate the children's knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants (CCVC, CVCC, CCCVC words) and polysyllabic words.

The tricky words introduced in phase 4 are:

said	so	she	he	have	like
some	come	were	there	little	one
say	all	are	do	when	out
what	my	her			

Phonics at home

Tips for teaching your child the sounds:

- It is important for a child to learn lower case or small letters rather than capital letters at first. Most early books and games use lower case letters and your child will learn these first at school. Obviously you should use a capital letter when required, such as at the beginning of the child's name.
- When you talk about letters to your child, remember to use the letter sounds rather than the alphabet names of the letters. The reason for this is that sounding out words is practically impossible if you use the alphabet names. **eg. cat, would sound like: seeaytee**

Useful webpages

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com>

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk>

www.discoveryeducation.co.uk/espresso

How to access Discovery Education **Espresso** from home

- go to www.discoveryeducation.co.uk
- click the 'Login' button in the top right corner
- select 'Espresso'
- username: student4718 password: onetwo

How to access **Purple Mash** from home

- go to <https://www.purplemash.com/sch/purley>

- Username: Year3, Password: Year3 (or whichever year your child is in)

The link below provides a useful video clip showing the correct 'pure' pronunciation of phonemes and graphemes (units of sound)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW_v-1s