
What is Phonics?

Phonics is the beginning of reading. It is the systematic teaching of sounds. The aim is to teach your child two main skills – blending and segmenting.

Blending is when you put sounds together in order to read simple words e.g. say the following sounds slowly b-e-d, then speed up until you can hear the word. That is blending.

Segmenting is the opposite process – start with the word ‘cat’, say it very slowly emphasizing each sound until you can hear them as separate sounds. Then say them as c-a-t so you know the order in which to write them down.

We use technical terms too!

Phonemes – these are the sounds that the letters make.

Graphemes – these are the symbols e.g. ‘s’ what the letter actually looks like.

How is phonics taught?

Phonics is taught through activities that encourage children to hear sounds, make sounds, write them in the air, find them using magnetic letters, play games that involve identifying sounds and finally writing them down.

The scheme we use is called Letters and Sounds. This scheme is broken up into phases. Phase 1 is generally taught in nursery, phases 2 and 3 and 4 in Reception. Year one carries on phases four and five and Year two completes the programme with phases five and six.

That does not mean that all children will learn at this rate. Some children will pick the sounds up quickly and others more slowly. The important thing to remember is that all children are individuals and learn at their own pace. It is vital that you do not put pressure on children to learn but make it a fun process, something that links you and what they do at school.

Phase 1 involves listening activities, stories, nursery rhymes and learning to hear words that rhyme. Your child should be able to hear different sounds and identify words that start with the same sound in phase 1. For example bat, ball, bed all start with b. At every opportunity you should encourage your child to put sounds together e.g. 'time for b-e-d' 'what shall we 'p-l-ay'. During their time at nursery your child should have been learning these skills. This prepares them for phase 2.

Your child is learning Phase 2 in Reception. This is the phase that introduces all the letter sounds, names and the correct ways to write them. By the end of the phase many children should be able to read some two and three letter words and spell them either by using magnetic letters or by writing the letters on whiteboards. They will also learn to read some 'high frequency' (used most often) words that are readable by blending or are 'tricky' such as 'no' where 'o' make an 'oh' sound.

Sounds are learnt in a particular order. This order is:

| | | | | |
|--------|----|---|------|---------|
| 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 |

Then we move onto phase 3.

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------|-----|----|
| Set 6: | j | v | w | x |
| Set 7: | y | z,zz | qu | |
| Set 8: | ch | sh | th | ng |
| Set 9: | ai | ee | oo | oa |
| Set 10: | ar | or | igh | ur |
| Set 11: | ow | oi | ear | er |
| Set 12: | air | ure | | |

Every letter will be introduced slowly by showing a letter (grapheme) and then showing the children what sound it makes (phoneme). We then have an action to

go with it to help us remember. We also learn its name and what it looks like in capital (upper case) form.

All of these activities are similar to the ones we do in school. If you practise regularly at home and make it fun your child should be more confident at school.

It is not your job to teach your child the sounds. That is not the aim of this pack. When your child comes home and shows you a new action and sound you can use this pack to help you understand what they have been doing and have fun practising it.

Are there any resources I need?

As a basic resource you will need cards with the letters of the alphabet on. If you can get ones which have pictures on the back these would be ideal. It would be a good idea if you could get some magnetic letters and a board (a baking tray is perfect!). Magnetic letters are very good at helping children identify letter shapes. Also a puppet comes in very handy. Give the puppet a name so your child associates it with learning letters and sounds.

On the next pages are activities for you and your children to do using the resources in the pack.

Each activity clearly tells you what you need and what the aim of it is. It gives step by step instructions for you to follow. If you have any problems please feel free to come and ask at school.

A very important tip!

The letter sounds all make noises for example 'n' is sounded 'nnnn' not 'nuh', 's' is 'ssss' not 'suh'. It is common to put the 'uh' sound on to the end but this does make it very difficult to blend words. Other letters that follow this rule are m,n,r,s,l,v,z.

**REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN WITH IT AND
ENJOY YOURSELVES!!!**

Hear it and Say it.

Aim:

To hear a sound and then repeat it from memory.

You will need:

Picture cards with letters on reverse.

List of Jolly Phonics actions.

Activity:

Have a look and find out what the action for 's' is. (wiggle your hand like a snake)

Put the card with the letter 's' behind your back.

As you bring out the card with the letter side showing, wiggle your hand and make a 'ssssss' sound.

Put the card behind your back again.

Ask your child what the sound was and see if they can repeat it.

Give stickers for correct answers.

Repeat for other sounds.

See it and Say it.

Aim:

To see a sound and then say it from memory without having heard it first. Slightly harder than Hear it and Say it.

You will need:

Picture cards with letters on reverse.

List of Jolly Phonics actions.

Activity:

Have a look and find out what the action for 's' is. (wiggle your hand like a snake)

Show your child the card and ask them what the sound is.

Encourage them to do the action too. If they struggle with the sound mime the action to give them a clue but do not make the sound.

Put the card behind your back and ask them again what it was to see if they remembered.

Give stickers and lots of praise if they get it right and plenty of encouragement if they struggle.

Repeat for other sounds.

Say it and Write it.

Aim:

To recognise sounds and form them correctly starting in the right place and retracing lines.

You will need:

Picture cards with letters on reverse.

Puppet (optional)

Box or bag for letter cards.

Letter formation guidance sheet.

Extension – Whiteboards and pens.

Activity:

Ask the puppet to pick a letter card from a box or bag.

Ask your child what the sound is and ask them to make the action.

Tell your child to put the hand they write with in the air. Tell them to bend and flex their pointer finger three times.

With you tracing over the letter starting in the place the formation sheet guides you show your child how to form the letter.

Ask your child to do it with you writing the letter in the air. Repeat.

Extension – when your child is confident at writing in the air, they can begin to write it on their whiteboards.

Flashcards

Aim:

To recognise sounds from picture cues and say what sound a word begins with.

You will need:

Picture cards with letters on reverse.

Puppet (optional)

Box or bag for letter cards.

Activity:

Tell your child that the puppet cannot remember what letters words begin with, he has forgotten. Can they help?

Pick a card out of the bag/box. Show your child the card 'orange' and say 'I don't know what it is, do you?'

Hopefully your child will say, 'it is an orange!'

Say the word slowly emphasizing the first letter. 'ooooorange, what does it begin with?'

Ask your child to either: write it in the air, find it in a set of magnetic letters or write it on a whiteboard.

Repeat for other sounds.

Mood Sounds

Aim:

To practice quick recognition of sounds.

You will need:

Picture cards with letters on reverse.

Jolly Phonics actions sheet.

Activity:

Pick a card and show it to your child, ask them what it is.

Encourage them to show you the action too.

Can they say the sound in a happy voice?

Can they say the sound in a sad voice?

Can they say the sound in a cross voice?

Can they say the sound in a quiet voice?

Can they say the sound in a loud voice?

Think of your own ways to make the sound e.g. jumping up and down, hopping on one leg etc.

Letter Frieze

Aim

To recognise sounds and their shapes quickly.

You will need:

Magnetic letters and a board or letter formation sheet.
Something to use as a pointer (a wand or something similar)

Activity:

If you are using magnetic letters get out the letters your child has already learnt or the letter formation sheet.

To practice tell your child that they are going to be teacher first! They will point to the sound and you will tell them the letter sound and name as quickly as you can.

Then swap places and you point and your child tells you. Remember to note which letters have been learnt in school and which have not yet.

Reward with stickers and lots of praise!

Georgie's Gym

Aim:

To understand and use sound talk

You will need:

A puppet

Activity:

This game is a bit like Simon Says except the instructions are given in sound talk e.g. sounds said separately in words.

Whatever you have named your puppet is fine for this game, so if he is called Fred it would be Fred's Gym etc.

Using the puppet say 'Georgie says stand u-p' and your child follows the instruction.

This is great for bedtime! 'Georgie says go to b-e-d, brush your t-ee-th' etc.

'Georgie says Put your hands on your f-ee-t'

'Georgie says put your finger on your n- o-se'

Think of your own instructions!!

Sound Buttons

Aim:

To read simple words using the system of pressing sound buttons. The aim is to say a sound every time you press a button then put the sounds together quickly to hear the word.

You will need:

Word cards which you can draw sound buttons on.

Activity:

Ask your child to pick a word from the pack.

Explain that they are going to press sound buttons to read the words.

As they press the button ask them to make the sound quickly, if they make the sound slowly, it won't work. For example n-o-t then repeat faster and faster until they can hear and say the word.

Repeating this regularly with the words in your pack will really improve your child's ability to read.

IMPORTANT!

One dot means one sound. If you see a line under a sound this means that more than one letter makes one sound e.g.

S ll

*

—

High Frequency Words

Aim:

To sight read and write the most common words used in reading and writing.

You will need:

High Frequency words order of teaching list.

High frequency words.

Whiteboards and pens.

Magnetic boards and letters.

Activity:

You can do this in a number of ways.

1. Flash up the cards and ask your child to pretend there are sound buttons underneath and blend the word together. Eventually they need to see it and know what it is without blending it.

2. Look, Cover, Write, Check.

Ask your child to pick a word and read it, then turn it over or hide it in a box so they can't see it anymore. Ask them to write it on the whiteboard or make it with magnetic letters, thinking about the spellings. Then get the word back and check to see if they are right, if they are give it a tick and if not start again reading then covering the word.

Keep practising with words but do not put pressure on your child if they find it hard, it is a skill for them to learn and they will get there eventually!

High Frequency Word Order

| | | | |
|------|-------|----------|-----------|
| A | big | little | many |
| An | put | one | laughed |
| As | but | children | because |
| Is | see | do | different |
| It | was | when | |
| In | will | out | |
| At | with | what | |
| I | my | it's | |
| And | for | help | |
| On | too | oh | |
| Not | you | their | |
| To | this | people | |
| Get | that | Mr | |
| Got | they | Mrs | |
| The | then | looked | |
| No | them | called | |
| Go | her | asked | |
| Him | now | old | |
| His | all | house | |
| Of | look | about | |
| Dad | are | don't | |
| Mum | down | by | |
| Up | said | time | |
| Off | so | your | |
| Can | went | water | |
| Had | from | where | |
| Back | have | who | |
| We | like | again | |
| Me | some | thought | |
| Be | come | through | |
| He | were | work | |
| She | there | mouse | |

Phoneme Frames

Aim:

To be able to segment words and write them using a phoneme frame.

You will need:

Phoneme frame

Pen and rubber / magnetic letters / letter and picture cards.

Lots of three letter (CVC = consonant vowel consonant) words in your head! E.g. hut, pen, dog, mum, dad, win, man, hen, sun, tan etc

Activity:

Tell your child you are going to practise segmenting words so that it is easier to write them down. In the beginning use magnetic letters if you have them or use the individual letter cards so that you focus on recognising the letters and putting them in the right order. As your child's writing improves they can then use whiteboard pens.

Demonstrate by saying the word 'cat' very slowly emphasising each sound so that your child can hear it clearly. Then ask them what it begins with and then ask them to find that letter and put it in the first box on the phoneme frame.

What sound is in the middle? Encourage your child to say the word with you as this is a skill they will use a lot at school. Put the letter on the phoneme frame.

What is at the end? Place the letter on the board.

In order to check the answer, in the small boxes at the bottom ask your child to draw sound buttons and then press them as they say the word.

Reward with stickers!!