

Phonics at home

Tips for teaching your child the sounds:

It is important for a child to learn lower case 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, eg. **Paul**.

When you talk about letters to your child, remember to use the letter sounds: **a buh cuh duh e ...** rather than the alphabet names of the letters: **ay bee see dee ee**. The reason for this is that sounding out words is practically impossible if you use the alphabet names. eg. **cat**, would sound like: **see ay tee**

When saying the sounds of **b, d, g, j** and **w** you will notice the 'uh' sound which follows each, for example buh, duh... You cannot say the sound without it, however, try to emphasise the main letter sound.

Useful Websites

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/>

<http://phonicsplay.co.uk/freeIndex.htm>

http://www.familylearning.org.uk/phonics_games.html

www.bugclub.co.uk

www.ictgames.co.uk

<http://www.nelsonthornes.com/yearbyyear/phonics/games.htm>

Phonics

In school, we follow the Letters and Sounds programme which consists of six phases.



The Terminology

Phoneme

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. There are 44 phonemes.

Graphemes

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**

Phase 1

Phase One of 'Letters and Sounds' concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills. 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 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 use these sounds to blend and segment to help begin reading and spelling.

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

Phase 3 Tricky words:

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

Phase 4

This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases. The children will learn to blend and segment words with adjacent consonants such as twig, string.

Tricky words:

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

Phase 5

Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes, as well as graphemes they already know. They will begin to learn to choose the appropriate grapheme when spelling.

oh	their	people
called	asked	water
thought	through	work
because	different	any
please	friends	once
Mr	Mrs	looked
where	who	again
mouse	many	laughed
eyes		

Tricky words:

Phase 6

In phase 6, the focus is on learning spelling rules for word endings (these are known as suffixes). The children will learn how words change when you add certain letters. There are 12 different suffixes taught.