

Overview

'Letters & Sounds' is the government programme for teaching phonics and high frequency words.

It is split into 6 phases:

Phase 1: Children learn rhymes, keep rhythms and start to relate letter sounds to (starting in Nursery) words. E.g. b for bag.

Phase 2: Children learn initial letter sounds and build 3 letter words.

Phase 3: Children learn all 44 phonemes and blend sounds to read and write words

Phase 4: Children blend consonants together to read difficult words e.g. blue, grab.

Phase 5: Children learn how to spell letter sounds in more than one way e.g. rain, day, make.

Phase 6: Children learn how to spell word specific spellings. E.g. turned, beautiful, Shopping.

The aim of this booklet is to give you a clear picture of how we approach the teaching of phonics and word recognition and how, as a parent or carer, you can support and encourage your child at home. Please note there is a glossary which explains some of the terminology.

Glossary

Here's some of the technical vocabulary explained.

Blend(ing) - to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p.

CVC - Consonant - Vowel - Consonant (*cat*)

CCVC - Consonant - Consonant - Vowel - Consonant (*pram*)

Grapheme - Written representation of the sounds

Phoneme - Smallest unit of speech sounds sh/i/p

Segment(ing) - to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it.

Suffix(es) - a unit of letters such as, 'ed' 'ing' that are added to a word to change its meaning e.g. play'ed'

Phase 1

This paves the way for systematic learning of phonics and usually starts in nursery or playgroup.

Teachers plan activities that will help children to listen attentively to sounds around them, such as the sounds of their toys and to sounds in spoken language.

Teachers teach a wide range of nursery rhymes and songs. They read good books to and with the children. This helps to increase the number of words they know - their *vocabulary* - and helps them talk confidently about books.

Things to try at home:-

- Play games like 'I spy'
- Sing songs and rhymes together
- Make a 'junk band' with pots & pans
- Share lots of books together

Phase 2

In Phase 2, they will also be taught the phonemes (*sounds*) for a number of letters (*graphemes*).

Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (*phonemes*) correctly to make blending easier. Try to avoid saying 'buh', 'cuh' encourage your child to say the pure sound.

s a t p i n m d
g o c k ck e u r
h b f ff l ll ss

and be able to read 5 tricky words...

the to I no go

They should be able to **orally blend** (sound talk) cvc words e.g. when you sound out c-a-t, they can tell you the word is cat, and also **orally segment** cvc words e.g. when you say mum, they can pick out the sounds m-u-m.

Spelling is harder than reading. During this phase they will use lots of alternatives to pencil and paper (eg magnetic letters, writing in sand, using paint)

Phase 3

The purpose of this phase is to teach 25 graphemes (letters) most of them comprising of two letters (e.g. oa) so the children can represent each of the 42 phonemes (sounds). Your child will continue to blend and segment for reading and spelling (e.g. pool)

j v w x y z zz qu ch
jug van wig box yes zip buzz quit rich
sh th ng ai igh oa oo oo ar
shop moth king rain high loaf look moon park
or ur ow oi ear air ure er
port burn town boil hear pair pure hotter

and 12 more tricky words to read...

he she we me be was
my you her they all are

They should now, also, be able to spell the 5 tricky words from phase 2.

Phase 4

In Phase 4, children continue to practise previously learned graphemes and phonemes and learn how to read and write:

CVCC words: **tent, damp, toast, chimp**

For example, in the word 'toast',

t = consonant, oa = vowel, s = consonant,

t = consonant.

and **CCVC** words: **swim, plum, sport, cream, spoon**

For example, in the word 'cream', **c = consonant,**

r = consonant, ea = vowel, m = consonant.

and 14 more tricky words are added too...

some come one said do so were
when have there out like little what

The children should now be able to write the Phase 3 tricky words. During Phase 4, sounds with adjacent

consonants or initial & final **blends** are taught e.g. bl, dr, sc, ft, sp. These can be sounded out but recognising them

Phase 5

The purpose of this phase is for children to broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling.

ay ou ie oe ea oy ir ue
play soup tried goes heat boy shirt value/
blue

au aw wh ph ew ey
author lawn when/
who Phillip blew honey

a_e e_e i_e o_e u_e
same these pine bone cube

They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know, where relevant. E.g. the phoneme 'a' can have alternative phonemes: hat/acorn/was

Also, 'y' can have alternative phonemes: yes/by/gym/very

There are many alternatives which the children will investigate during this phase.

Phase 6

In Phase 6, the focus is on learning spelling rules for word endings or **suffixes**.

They learn how words change when you add certain letters. There are 12 different suffixes taught...

The children are also expected to be able to read and write the 'next 200 common words'.

-s	-es	-ing	-ed
-er	-est	-y	-en
-ful	-ly	-ment	-ness