

**Supporting children's phonics and
reading**

Bathwick St. Mary Church School

**Early Years Foundation Stage &
Key Stage One**



Reading

In order to read successfully, children need two skills; phonics and language comprehension. They need to be able to decode by blending the sounds in words to read them and they need to be able to understand what the word means and the context within which it appears.

The sooner that children can recognise the sounds (phonemes), the letters (graphemes) that represent them and blend them together in order to read words, the sooner they can read for understanding, purpose and pleasure.

Language Development

Understanding is developed through language. The exploration and explicit teaching of new vocabulary, ideas, information and increasing knowledge and understanding of the world will develop comprehension. If children understand something they hear, they will understand it when they read it. So phonics and language development should go hand-in hand. But for beginner readers, phonics takes the lead as the prime approach to reading.

Talk! Talk! Talk! Talk about people, places, events, stories, information and ideas. Encourage children to question and explore themes, problems and issues. Use books, photographs, paintings, films, role-play and creativity to generate discussion and vocabulary.

What is phonics?

Phonics:

- is a method of teaching children to connect the letters of the alphabet to the sounds that they make and blend them for reading;
- is a method of teaching children the individual sounds (phonemes) within words and segment them for spelling.

Why phonics first?

The ROSE review (review of early reading) confirmed that 'high quality phonic work' should be the prime means for teaching children how to read and spell words. However, many children learn to read by sight. Therefore, the main focus of sessions uses a phonics approach, alongside instant recall.

The sounds

In English speech sounds are represented by the 26 letters of the alphabet. These letters and combinations of these letters make 44 sounds.

There are 144 different ways to spell these sounds.

Speech sounds are called **phonemes**. These are the smallest units of sounds within words. The letters, or groups of letters which represent phonemes, are called **graphemes**.

Phonemes can be represented by **graphemes** of one, two or three letters:

t	sh digraph	igh trigraph
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Consonant digraphs are made up of two consonants that make one sound:

sh	ch	th	ck	ng	ll	ss	ff	wr	wh	kn	gn
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Vowel digraphs are made up of two vowels or a vowel and a consonant that makes one sound:

oo	ee	oa	ow	ou	or	ar	er	ue	oi	ai
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Vowel trigraphs are made up of vowels and consonants that make one sound:

igh	air	ear
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The 44 phonemes

Vowel phonemes	Examples and alternative spellings	Vowels phonemes	Examples and alternative spellings
/a/	cat	/oo/	look would put
/e/	peg bread	/ar/	cart fast (regional)
/i/	pig wanted	/ur/	burn first term heard work
/o/	log want	/or/	torn door warn haul law call
/u/	plug love	/er/	wooden circus sister
/ai/	pain day gate station	/ow/	down shout
/ee/	sweet heat thief these	/oi/	coin boy
/igh/	tried light my shine mind	/air/	stairs bear hare
/oa/	road blow bone cold	/ear/	fear beer here
/ool/	moon blue grew tune		

Consonant phonemes

Consonant phonemes	Examples and alternative spellings	Consonant phonemes	Examples and alternative spellings
/b/	baby	/s/	sun mouse city science
/d/	dog	/t/	tap hat
/f/	field photo telegraph	/v/	van
/g/	game	/w/	was
/h/	hat	/wh/	where (regional)
/j/	judge giant barge	/y/	yes
/k/	cook quick mix Chris	/z/	zebra please is
/l/	lamb	/th/	then weather
/m/	monkey comb	/th/	thin
/n/	nut knife gnat	/ch/	chip watch
/p/	paper	/sh/	ship mission chef
/r/	rabbit wrong	/zh/	treasure
		/ng/	ring sink

Segmenting and blending:

Segmenting and blending are reversible key phonic skills. Segmenting (chopping, robot arms, sound buttons) consists of breaking words down into their separate phonemes to spell; s p e ll.

Blending consists of building words from their separate phonemes s p e ll *spell*. Blending tends to be the neglected part of the process but it is very important that children secure the skill of blending in order to become successful readers. Blending should be modelled and practised in phonics and throughout the day whenever reading or oral blending is undertaken.

Decoding

Decoding is the process of blending each phoneme in a word, in order to read the whole word.



Phoneme combinations in words:

Words are made up of combinations of consonants and vowels. Below is a table showing the most common combinations that children will need to blend for reading by the end of Year 1. It is also important to generate NONESENSE/ALIEN words to check that children have both blending as well as word recognition skills. You might like to generate some ALIEN words in the spaces provided.



<u>cvc</u>	<u>ccvc</u>	<u>cvcc</u>	<u>cyvc</u>	<u>ccvcc</u>	<u>ccvvc</u>	<u>vcc</u>
cat	shop	with	seat	shall	sheep	ask
<u>ccvc</u>	<u>ccvvc</u>	<u>ccvcc</u>	<u>cvcc</u>	<u>cvvcc</u>	<u>ccvcc</u>	<u>cvv</u>
spin	stool	brush	lost	toast	chips	tie
<u>cvvv</u>	<u>ccvvv</u>	<u>cvcv</u>	<u>ccvcv</u>	<u>ccvcv</u>	<u>cccvc</u>	<u>ccvcc</u>
sigh	thigh	cake	shake	prize	thrill	stamp
<u>ccvvc</u>	<u>cccvc</u>	<u>cccv</u>	<u>cccvc</u>	<u>ccvcv</u>	<u>cccvc</u>	
bleeds	shrimp	stray	scrap	stripe	straps	

Common Exception/Tricky words

If the word is decodable that your child is reading, then they should decode it. If not, the word is a tricky word, and should be taught in the same way as any other phonic decoding (using phoneme counting, decoding graphemes etc) with a focus on the tricky element;



said

We know /s/ and we know /d/ but the /ai/ is the tricky bit.

It says /e/

So the word says s e d (orally segment)

However, there are some words which are so tricky, common sense would suggest these have to be learned by sight; e.g. *one*.

Hearing Readers

The hearing of reading is **NOT** the teaching of reading. Children who are good at decoding can often appear to be fluent readers because they sound good. It is only discussion and exploration of the text that will reveal how much, and to what depth, the child has understood what they have read.

When hearing a child read:

- Quickly talk about the book and its subject/characters/plot;
- Ask the reader to predict what it might be about or what might happen next;
- Quickly flick through to look at the pictures and any difficult words;
- With very young readers, show them how to hold the book, turn the pages and read them from left to right and top to bottom; (with exceptions);
- Ask the child to read and check that they are reading each word and not missing any out or adding any in;
- Check that they are not misreading words or not self-correcting for sense;
- If they are stuck, use phonics first to decode the word-helping the reader to blend each phoneme to read the word;
- Teach strategies such as picture clues; context or what would sound right to support the phonics skills;
- Make sure the reader pauses at commas and stops at full stops;
- Encourage an expressive voice where the text lends itself to this;
- Leave time to talk about what has been read and to check comprehension;
- Encourage discussion:
 - About facts and information;
 - About the main character;
 - About the main events;
 - What might happen next;
 - Why something might have happened;
 - How the text is laid out or arranged on the page;
 - The language used and how it affected the reader
 - What the writer is trying to say to the reader;
 - What the reader thought about the text and why.
- Support children in retelling what they have read in the right order;
- Help children to locate information in non-fiction texts using contents, indexes and headings;
- Encourage the reader to talk about what they think about what they have read;
- If several children are being heard then they will be encouraged to tell each other, and to ask each other questions.

“The more you **read**
the more **things** you know.
The more that you **learn**
the more **places** you’ll go.”
-Dr. Seuss