



Hayton C of E Primary School

Parents' Guide

Your 'Phonics' questions answered:

This page should have all the answers you are looking for about how to say each sound, which terminology to use and what is taught when. If you have any questions about anything at all, please speak to your child's class teacher, Mrs. Grant or Mrs. Threlkeld-Brown.

WHAT IS PHONICS?

Phonics consists of teaching the skills of segmenting and blending, the alphabetic code and an understanding of how this is used in reading and spelling. Simply put, it is hearing the sounds in a word and writing them down to spell it correctly. When reading, it is sounding out a word and sticking the sounds back together to read the whole word. We use 'ESSENTIAL LETTERS AND SOUNDS' (ELS) Phonics programme and utilise their phonetically decodable readers to support the children's Phonics journey. For more information regarding ELS please visit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8B072E_LJ8

<https://essentiallettersandsounds.org/>

ISN'T THERE A TEST?

Yes, there is a National Phonics Screening in Year 1 where the children have to read 20 real words and 20 'alien' words. This is conducted in a very child-friendly way by the class teachers. At every 'Parents' Evening' you will be informed of your child's progress in Phonics and at the end of Year 1 the school report will inform you of how well your child has done. If your child does not 'pass' in Year 1, they will be given additional support throughout Year 2 to enable them to pass the next year.

I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THE TERMINOLOGY OF PHONICS.

Phoneme

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word.

Feel/watch how your mouth changes when you say a word, every time your mouth moves/changes shape you are saying a new phoneme, e.g. b-r-i-ck

There are 44 phonemes in the English language

Grapheme

Graphemes represent how a phoneme is spelt. Each grapheme is a unit of sound regardless of how many letters there are.

e.g. The word b-r-igh-t is made up of 4 phonemes; the igh phoneme is represented by 3 letters but only makes one phoneme.

A grapheme can represent more than one phoneme e.g. C = cat and city

Diagraph

Two letters, which makes 1 phoneme. e.g. duck

A consonant diagraph contains two consonants

e.g. sh ck th ll

A vowel diagraph contains at least one vowel

e.g. ai ee ar oy

Split Diagraph

A diagraph in which the two letters are not adjacent e.g. make

a-e is a unit of sound (diagraph)- it is being 'split' by the constant k.

Trigraph

Three letters, which make 1 phoneme. e.g. light

Oral blending

Hearing a series of spoken phonemes and merging them together to make a spoken word without corresponding to any graphemes (no text is needed). e.g. teacher says "b-u-s" children say "bus"

Blending (links to reading)

Recognising the letter sounds in a written word and merging them together in the order they are written to pronounce the word. e.g. c-u-p = cup

Segmenting (links to writing)

Identifying the individual phonemes in a spoken word and writing them down to form a word.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD LEARN THIS YEAR?

Phases 1, 2 and 3 are taught within Year Reception. Phases 4 and 5 are taught in Year 1. All phases are then revisited as part of Year 2, alongside Phase 6 to develop the children's spelling understanding.

What are the 'PHASES'?

PHASE 1

Phase 1 phonics is the first stage of the phonics teaching programme. At this stage, the focus is primarily on developing speaking and listening skills. Speaking and listening are an important set of literacy skills that will create the foundation to a lot of your children's further learning. Listening requires the fundamental skill of focusing attention on the speaker to be able to hear and understand what the speaker is saying. Speaking skills require students to take turns, speak confidently, stay on topic and speak with clarity.

Phase 1 phonics also lays the foundation for further Phase 2 stages.

Phase 1 phonics skills that are developed at this stage include:

- Environmental sounds
- Instrumental sounds
- Body percussion (e.g. clapping and stamping)
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting (e.g. hearing that d-o-g makes 'dog')

PHASE 2

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

PHASE 3

j v w x y z qu ch sh th ng ai ee or igh oa oo oo ar ur er ow oi ear air ure

PHASE 4

In Phase 4 no new phonemes (sounds) are introduced to the children. Instead, they practise combining the graphemes they already know into new, longer combinations. For example, sounding out and spelling words like scrap and stretch. These words use a

combination of vowels (a e i o u) and consonants (all other letters) which can be represented like this:

CVC = Consonant Vowel Consonant (sat)

CVCC = Consonant Vowel Consonant Consonant (taps)

CVCCC = Consonant Vowel Consonant Consonant Consonant (lifts)

PHASE 5

ay ou ie ea oy ir ue ue aw wh wh ph ew ew oe au ey a_e e_e i_e o_e u_e

In Phase 5 some of the digraphs (2 letters that make 1 sound e.g. ew, wh) can make different sounds depending on which word they are in (e.g. clue, venue).

IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO AT HOME TO HELP?

To ensure your child is regularly applying their Phonics skills at home, please ensure that you complete daily reading of your child's phonetically decodable reading book - and please read it MORE THAN ONCE. Your child needs to repeatedly read their book to become automatic in recognising the sounds they have already learned and become skilled at recognising words without them having to s-o-u-n-d out all the time. Remember our school's 'STRIVE FOR FIVE' reading challenge – these books are an integral part of your child's reading at home. As well as this, your child will have learning activities set on the 'Bug Club Active Learn' website – you will have log in details in your children's reading record – information about how to log in is on the 'Phonics and Early Reading' main page of our school website. If your child gets flashcards or word cards sent home in their book-bags, please practice these – little and often – you may well get instructions for how to play different games with these cards – make learning fun! When you are 'out and about', if you spot any signs, posters, advertisements etc. which include the phoneme/grapheme correspondence your child has been learning, point it out – show them – celebrate the fact that they recognise these! They are becoming BRILLIANT READERS!

MY QUESTION HASN'T BEEN ANSWERED – WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Please check out the 'Phonics and Early Reading' page and the 'Bug Club' pages of our website where you will find more information to support you.

If you still have a question, please feel free to speak to your child's class teacher. Mrs. Grant or Mrs. Threlkeld-Brown so we can help you and your child feel confident about Phonics.