

EYFS

Literacy at Home Phonics and spelling



By the end of EYFS, the spelling expectation for children is as follows:

Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

PLEASE NOTE the statements '*ways which match their spoken sounds*' and '*phonetically plausible*.' E.g. 'gos' for 'goes' and 'factree' for 'factory.' At this stage we celebrate a child's efforts and do not mark attempts as 'wrong.' The child, teacher and parent should be able to read what s/he has written, i.e. it is '*phonetically plausible*.'

Phonics is a path to word recognition.

Before beginning to learn letters and their sounds, children need to have experienced a range of listening activities, including songs, stories and rhymes. Encouraging talking, showing your child how to listen well and enjoying and sharing books all help hugely.

Together, listen to sounds in the house and outside, listen to music and pick out the piano or guitar, clap, march, dance to the beat, play with words and make up silly rhymes and songs, play sound lotto. Have fun!

The first letters and sounds your child will have learnt at school are on the table below. You may hear your child referring to 'phonemes' and 'digraphs.' Phoneme means one distinct sound, e.g. the word 'cat' has three distinct phonemes c/a/t.

It is really important that teachers, parents and children pronounce every phoneme correctly so that they blend together easily to build a word. You might like to listen to this clip on Youtube and have a practice!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW v-1s>

A digraph is when two letters 'join together' to make one new, different sound – e.g. ch as in **ch**urch, sh as in **sh**op, th as in **th**en and **th**umb, ng at the end of **ng**, ck at the end of **ck**, ai as in **ai**n, ee as in she**ee**p, ll as in **ll**ill, ss and in **ss** etc.



If you do not have plastic or wooden letters, you could write these letters out onto card or paper.

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



Once they recognise these letters and know the sound they make, many children should be able to read some words (such as *it, on, am, mum, dad, dog, cat, mat, pig, hen, mud*) and to spell them either using plastic, wooden or cut-up letters or by writing the letters on paper/whiteboards. They will also learn to read some 'tricky' words: *I, the, to, go, no*.

The captions below are **not** intended to be worked through like a work scheme. They are just ideas of the words and captions that can be made using the letters your child will have been taught. Little and often is the key – and in a fun way:

Your child could*:

- Read a caption and draw a picture to go with it
- Write a caption to go with a little drawing you have done for them
- Read a caption to a puppet/toy
- Find phonemes/digraphs hidden round the house or garden and bring them to you with a word that begins with that sound
- Play I Spy
- Have a paper plate with all the letters learned written around the edge. An adult should cut between each letter. When your child finds something beginning with that letter in the house/garden, s/he folds that letter down
- Make up 'silly sentences' to read and draw e.g. a cat in a cup.



Caption ideas for reading and writing:

pat a cat	a pot and a mop
dad and nan	a red rug
a rat in a hat	cats on a sack
a nap in a bed	get to the top
a sad dog	a kid in the mud
a man in a cap	socks in a bag
a pin on a map	run to the den
a tin can	a hat on a peg
mugs and cups	on top of the hill
run in the sun	to the top of the rock
a hug and a kiss	get off the bus
a cat in a cot	



This is the set of phonemes and digraphs (and *trigraphs*, that is, three letters which join together to make one new sound – e.g. igh as in **l**ight, ear as in d**ea**r, air as in f**ai**r) that your child is most probably working on at school at the moment:

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



In the same way as described above*, practise little and often, in a fun way.

NB

'oo' can be pronounced as in 'moon' and also as in book.'

The pronunciation of 'ow' above is as in 'cow' at this stage.

Here are just some of the words that can be made using the phonemes, digraphs and trigraphs learned so far...

jam Jill jet jog Jack

van vet

mix fix box six

will win wag web

yap yes yell yet

zip zigzag

quit quick quack

buzz jazz

chop chin

ship shop shed shell fish wish

them then that with

ring rang king sing hang

check shock

rain chain main

sheep deer meet

light might night fight

coat boat goat

Use these words to make up captions/simple sentences for reading, drawing or writing. Encourage your child to say each phoneme/digraph or trigraph out loud and blend them together to say the word.

Remember – little and often and keeping it fun is key.



moon soon too

book hook look

car farm bark cart

for fork sort born

hurt fur burn curl

how now down owl cow

soil boil coin join

hear near dear

hair pair fair

sure pure cure

dinner letter summer

Just work with the phonemes/digraphs/trigraphs that your child has been taught at school so far. Check your school's website for the letter formation taught there.

PhonicsPlay is a website which has many fun and interactive games and activities for your child to enjoy practising what s/he has learnt. Please see the link below. In view of children being at home rather than in school, PhonicsPlay is offering free membership during this period. Log on through the link below:

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

