

Phonics

In school, we follow the Twinkl programme which is a phonics resource validated by the Department for Education and Skills which consists of six levels.

The Terminology

Phoneme

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word, for example, the 'c' sound in the word 'cat' or the 'oa' sound in the word 'boat'. It is generally accepted that most varieties of spoken English use about 44 phonemes which include both the sounds of individual letters and of combinations of letters.

Graphemes

A grapheme is a symbol of a phoneme. It is how we write down a letter or group of letters representing a sound.

Segmenting and blending

Segmenting consists of breaking words down into phonemes to spell, for example, 'cat' consists of 'c', 'a' and 't', or 'queen' consists of 'qu', 'ee' 'n'.

Blending consists of building words from phonemes to read, for example, 'c', 'a' and 't' sound out the word 'cat' and 'qu', 'ee' and 'n' sound out the word 'queen'.

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

Abbreviations

V represents a vowel sound and C a consonant sound and are used to describe the order of graphemes in a word. So, VC (eg am or each), CVC (eg Sam or beach), CCVC (eg slam or bleach), CVCC (eg hunt or bench).

Useful websites

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SzkjubQ-Ok> - Twinkl actions and sounds

<https://www.youtube.com/user/breakthruChris/featured> - Mr Thorne Does Phonics/Geraldine the giraffe

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/> - Has lots of information, printable resources for each of the Letters and Sounds phonic phases, it does align in the early phases with Twinkl levels

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/> - Offers a selection of interactive games for all phonic phases. Mostly simple games.

<https://www.ictgames.com/mobilePage/literacy.html> - Has a great selection of games

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ksblMiliA8> - YouTube video guide to pronunciation of all sounds, although not the scheme we use, it gives good guidance on pronunciation.