AN EARLY LANGUAGE PROGRAMME TO
BUILD THE FOUNDATIONS FOR READING

SEND Foundations for Phonics: Progression and planning overview

About SEND Foundations for Phonics

Foundations for Phonics develops children's phonological and phonemic awareness through fun, engaging games and nursery rhymes. Developing these skills lays the best possible foundations for learning phonics. There are two aspects to Foundations for Phonics: Rhyme time and Tuning into sounds. Rhyme time explores rhyme to build up a bank of shared language, develop children's understanding of the world and familiarity with the sounds in words. Tuning into sounds teaches phonological and phonemic awareness through games.

Rhyme time	Tuning into sounds

• Teach a Rhyme time session every day.
• You will find all the planning and resources in the SEND Foundations for Phonics area of the website..
• Rhyme time sessions can be taught in small groups or as a whole class and should take no more than three to four minutes.
• Teach a different rhyme every one or two weeks. There are 20 rhymes to choose from. You can teach them in any order and repeat them over the year.
• Use the Weekly plan builder to ensure you play the full range of Rhyme time games covering:
  • Listening
  • Syllables
  • Rhyming
  • Alliteration
  • Sound knowledge.
	• Teach the Tuning into sounds sessions at least three times a week – daily sessions will benefit children the most. Timetable the sessions to ensure they always happen.
	• Teach the sessions in small groups. Sessions should be short and engaging and should take no more than five to six minutes. Consider using all of your staff to run these groups at the same time.
	• Below, you will find the Tuning into sounds progression (page 2), session template (page 3), and example words for What's in the box?, Blend from the box and the oral blending games. Use these alongside the Weekly plan builder to plan your teaching.
	• Follow the session template to ensure you include all four aspects of Tuning into sounds:
	  • Learn the sound: What's in the box?
	  • Practise the sound: Sound game
	  • Blend with the sound: Blend from the box
	  • Practise blending: Oral blending games.

LittleWandle
TEACH READING: CHANGE LIVES

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Tuning into sounds: Progression overview

<table>
<tr><th>Progression of sounds</th><th>Sound focus</th><th>Oral blending focus</th></tr>
<tr><td>s a t p i n m</td><td rowspan="5">• Teach the sounds in the order shown. Remember that Foundations for Phonics is about giving children the experience of hearing and playing with a wide range of sounds. The children do not need to master any of the sounds before they move on in the progression. Aim to teach all the sounds across the year.
• In each session, play:
  • What's in the box? (Learn the sound)
  • One of these sound games: Voice sounds, Name play, Bertha the bus, Play with sounds, Follow me (Practise the sound).
• The sound games focus on awareness of sounds in general, and words do not need to include the focus sound from the day's session.</td><td rowspan="5">• In each session, play:
  • Blend from the box (Blend with the sound)
  • One of these oral blending games: Can you do the actions? Can you touch your … ? What's that noise? (Practise blending)
• The oral blending games focus on awareness of sounds in general, and oral blending words do not need to include the focus sound from the day's session.</td></tr>
<tr><td>d g o c k e</td></tr>
<tr><td>u r h b f l</td></tr>
<tr><td>j v w y z qu ch</td></tr>
<tr><td>ck x sh th ng nk</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">• See the Tuning into sounds session template for an overview of the session.
• See the Tuning into sounds prompt cards for details of each game.</td></tr>
</table>

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Tuning into sounds: Session template

- This template provides an overview of the Tuning into sounds session. The prompt cards include detailed guidance for each game, including adaptations for specific SEND needs.
- The sessions should last between five to six minutes and include each of the four activities below. If this is too long for children, you can split the sessions into two parts: Sound focus and Blending focus. Each of the parts should still happen at least three times a week.

Sound focus		**Blending focus**	
Learn the sound	**Sound game**	**Blend with the sound**	**Oral blending game**
1 minute Play What's in the box? every session.	2 minutes Choose one of the games below for each session. Refer to the prompt cards for detailed guidance.	1 minute Play Blend from the box every session.	2 minutes Choose one of the games below for each session.
You will need: a box, objects or images for What's in the box? (see pages 4–6).	You will need: name cards for each child in your group, a bag and objects/pictures.	You will need: a box, objects or images for Blend from the box (see pages 4–6).	You will need: a list of words for oral blending games or your plan from the Weekly plan builder (see page 10).

What's in the box?
• **Say:** *Let's play What's in the box?*
• For each object/image:
  • Say – don't ask – what the object is. **Say:** *This is a* [name of object e.g. star].
  • Emphasise the focus sound. **Say:** [Name of object e.g. star] *starts/ends with* [say the sound e.g. s].

  • **Say:** *Copy me.*
  • Say the sound and the name of the object several times, with the children copying.
  • Make up a simple sentence containing the name of the object so that the children understand what it is [e.g. *We can see stars in the sky at night*].
	Voice sounds
	• **Say:** *Let's play Voice sounds.*
	• Model making different voice sounds.
	
	• **Say:** *Copy me.*
	
	Name play
	• **Say:** *Let's play Name play.*
	• Pull the children's name cards out of a bag, one at a time.
	• Show each card and say the name.
	• Make up fun alliterative sentences with each name. (See pages 7-9.)
	
	Bertha the bus
	• **Chant the rhyme:** *Bertha the bus is going to the zoo. Who does she see as she passes through?*
	• Pull models or pictures of the animals she sees out of a bag and say the name of each animal.
	• **Say:** [Name of animal] *starts with the sound* [clearly enunciate the initial sound].
	
	Play with sounds
	• **Say:** *Let's play with sounds.*
	• Use the children's names or objects to make up alliterative phrases.
		Blend from the box
		• **Say:** *Let's play Blend from the box.*
		• For each object:
		  • Sound-talk the word twice [e.g. s-o-ck s-o-ck].
		
		  • **Say:** *Copy me.*
		  • Sound-talk and blend the word.
		
		  • **Say:** *Copy me.*
		  • Show the children the object.
		  • Check that they know what it is.
			Can you do the actions?
			• **Say:** *Let's play Can you do the actions?*
			• For each action:
			  • **Say:** *Can you* [e.g. c-l-a-p your hands]?
			  • Check that the children are doing the correct action.
			  • Sound-talk and blend the word [e.g. c-l-a-p, clap] and then clap.
			
			Can you touch your … ?
			• **Say:** *Let's play Can you touch your … ?*
			• For each body part:
			  • **Say:** *Can you touch your* [e.g. b-a-ck]?
			  • Check that the children are touching the correct part of their body.
			  • Sound-talk and blend the word [e.g. b-a-ck, back].
			
			What's that noise?
			• **Say:** *Let's play What's that noise?*
			• For each animal:
			  • **Say:** *What sound does a* [e.g. f-r-o-g] *make?*
			  • Check that the children say the correct animal.
			  • Sound-talk and blend the word [e.g. f-r-o-g, frog].

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Tuning into sounds: Teaching and blending with sounds

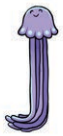
You will need a box and objects or images of the words below for the What's in the box? and Blend from the box activities. Images are available to download from the Phonics area of the Foundations programme content.

Sound	What's in the box? (Words and objects/images)	Blend from the box (Words and objects/images)
	sock sun star snake	s-o-ck s-u-n s-oa-p s-a-ck
	ant apple arrow astronaut	Omit Blend from the box for this sound.
	teddy toast teeth tiger	t-ee-th t-i-n t-a-p t-o-p
	pencil pizza peg penguin	p-e-n p-e-g p-i-n p-a-n
	insect invitation igloo iguana	Omit Blend from the box for this sound.
	nurse nose nest net	n-e-t n-oa-z (nose) n-e-ck n-u-t

Sound	What's in the box? (Words and objects/images)	Blend from the box (Words and objects/images)
	moon marble monkey mouse	m-oo-n m-ou-se m-a-p m-a-n
	dog door dinosaur duck	d-o-g d-u-ck d-o-ll d-e-n
	grapes glue glasses goat	g-oa-t g-ai-t (gate) g-oo-se g-ir-l
	orange otter ostrich octopus	Omit Blend from the box for this sound.
	car cup crown cat	c-a-t c-u-p c-a-p c-oi-n
	kangaroo kettle ketchup kite	k-igh-t (kite) k-i-d k-i-t

 © 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Sound	What's in the box? (Words and objects/images)	Blend from the box (Words and objects/images)
	egg elbow envelope elephant	Omit Blend from the box for this sound.
	under (something under a table) upset umbrella	Omit Blend from the box for this sound.
	rocket rabbit rice rainbow	r-a-t r-e-d r-oa-d r-i-ng
	hat hammer house helicopter	h-a-t h-ou-se h-or-se h-ea-d
	ball bus bird bear	b-oo-k b-u-s b-ir-d b-a-g
	fish frog flower flamingo	f-i-sh f-a-n f-oo-t f-ar-m
	leaf lips lemon lollipop	l-ea-f l-i-d l-o-ck l-o-g

Sound	What's in the box? (Words and objects/images)	Blend from the box (Words and objects/images)
	jam jug jellyfish	j-a-m j-u-g j-e-t j-ee-p
	volcano van vegetable	v-a-n v-e-t
	wave wig web	w-i-g w-e-b w-ai-v (wave)
	yellow yap (dog) yo-yo	y-a-p
	zebra zip zoo	z-i-p z-oo
	queen quack (duck) quick (action)	qu-ee-n qu-a-ck qu-i-ck
	cheese chick chips	ch-i-ck ch-i-n ch-o-p ch-i-p

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Sound	What's in the box? (Words and objects/images)	Blend from the box (Words and objects/images)
	neck lock tick sock	s-o-ck d-u-ck n-e-ck r-o-ck
	fox box wax (candle)	f-o-x b-o-x w-a-x s-i-x
	ship shoe shark	sh-e-ll sh-ir-t sh-o-p sh-e-d

Sound	What's in the box? (Words and objects/images)	Blend from the box (Words and objects/images)
	thumb three bath	th-u-mb t-ee-th m-o-th th-igh
	ring king wing	r-i-ng w-i-ng k-i-ng
	pink sink bank	p-i-nk t-a-nk w-i-nk s-i-nk

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Tuning into sounds: Oral blending games

When planning oral blending games, choose three or four words from the lists below. Words with a simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) pattern are the easiest to blend, so focus on these words when introducing the games.

Can you do the actions?

CVC words

n-o-d your head
t-a-p your foot
r-u-b your tummy
p-a-t your arm
m-ar-ch like the Grand Old Duke of York
h-o-p
r-o-ll the bobbin up
p-a-t your shoulders
r-ea-ch up high

Other word types

c-l-a-p your hands
s-t-ir the pot
f-l-a-p your arms (like the chicken dance)
s-t-a-n-d on one leg

Can you touch your ... ?

CVC words

h-ea-d
n-oa-z [nose]
ch-i-n
m-ou-th
h-air
ch-ee-k
l-e-g
f-oo-t
sh-i-n
b-a-ck
b-u-m
n-ai-l

Other word types

ar-m
kn-ee
t-oe
h-a-n-d
w-ai-s-t

What's that noise?

CVC words

Animals

What sound does:

- a d-u-ck make?
- a d-o-g make?
- a c-a-t make?
- a h-e-n make?
- a sh-ee-p make?
- a m-ou-se make?

Vehicles

What sound does:

- a b-u-s make?
- a v-a-n make?
- a j-e-t make?
- a sh-i-p make?
- a b-oa-t make?
- a j-ee-p make?

Other word types

Animals

What sound does:

- an ow-l make?
- a c-ow make?
- a b-ear make?
- a b-ee make?
- a s-n-ai-k (snake) make?
- a f-r-o-g make?

Vehicles

What sound does:

- a c-ar make?
- a t-r-ai-n make?
- a p-l-ai-n (plane) make?

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Name play

Use the words in the grid to make a fun sentence for each child's name.
Use this simple format: Name + has + adjectives + noun. For example: *Tom has ten tickly toes, Sumaira has a slippery snake.*

Names beginning with simple letter sounds

Initial sound	Example names	Adjectives	Nouns
/a/ A	Abdul Alfie Alice Amelia	adorable amazing angry	ant apple astronaut
/b/ B	Bella Ben Bobby Bonnie	beautiful bold brave bright	baby balloon brain brother
/c/ C or K	Caleb Chloe Khadija Kody	clever crazy cute kind	castle cousin crown koala
/d/ D	Daisy Daniel Darcie Dylan	dangerous delicious delightful dirty	digger dinosaur doughnut dress
/e/ E	Ed Elijah Emma Evie	excellent exciting extra	egg envelope elephant
/f/ F or Ph	Faheem Fatima Freddie Phoebe	fantastic fizzy funny furry	feet football friend frog
/g/ G	Gabriel Geeta Grace Grayson	golden gorgeous green grumpy	garden gift gorilla grape
/h/ H	Hadiza Harper Harrison Henry	happy helpful hundred hungry	hands hat horse house
/i/ I	Ibrahim Imogen Imran Isabella	important impossible invisible	insect invitation itch
/j/ G or J	Gemma George Jameela Jordan	giant jolly juicy jumbo	jacket jelly jewel jungle
See /c/ for names beginning with K.			
/l/ L	Leila Leo Luca Lucy	lazy lonely lovely lucky	ladybird leaf letter lunch
/m/ M	Maryam Max Maya Muhammad	magic marvellous massive merry	mermaid milkshake monster moon
/n/ N	Nadeem Nancy Niamh Nur	nasty naughty noisy	neighbour newspaper nose
/o/ O	Olga Olivia Ollie Oscar	odd orange	octopus otter

 © 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Initial sound	Example names	Adjectives	Nouns
/p/ P	Paolo Peyton Pippa Poppy	perfect playful prickly proud	party penguin potato puppy
See next table for names beginning with Qu.			
/r/ R	Reuben Rosie Ruby Ryan	red rich round rude	rainbow reindeer ring rocket
/s/ S	Samuel Seb Sienna Sumaira	seven silly silver spicy	samosa sister sunflower sword
/t/ T	Taletha Tareq Thomas Tilly	tasty terrifying ticklish tiny	teacher tiger torch toy

Initial sound	Example names	Adjectives	Nouns
/u/ U	Udella Ulrich Usman	unhappy unusual	umbrella uncle
/v/ V	Victor Victoria Vikram Violet	vast velvety vivid	vegetable violin volcano
/w/ W	Weng Will Willow Winnie	wicked wild wise wonderful	wand wave whale wheel
/y/ Y	Yara Yasmin Yiannis Yusuf	yellow young yummy	yak yoghurt yo-yo
/z/ X or Z	Xiang Zachary Zainab Zoe	zany zappy (a) zillion	zebra zip zoo

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

Names beginning with consonant digraphs

Initial sound	Example names	Adjectives	Nouns
/qu/	Quentin Quinn	quick quiet quirky	quad bike question quiz
/ch/	Charlie Chase Chelsea	charming chatty cheerful cheesy	cherry chicken chimp chips
/sh/ Sh or Ch	Shannon Shiloh Charlotte Sean*	shaggy shaky sharp shiny	sheep ship shoes shop
/th/	Thea Theo	thick thin thirsty	thing throat thumb

*s for /sh/ is used in many names of Welsh and Irish origin.

Names beginning with long vowel sounds

Names beginning with Phase 3 long vowel sounds are trickier to make silly sentences for, but we don't want to leave any child out! Here are example sentences for some common names.

Initial sound	Example names and sentences
/ai/	Aiden/Ava has eight apes.
/ee/	Evie/Ethan has an eager eel.
/igh/	Ivan/Iris has an icy island.
/oa/	Otis has his own oak tree.
/oo/	Uma has oodles of noodles.
/ar/	Arjun's aunt* has an ark.
/or/	Orson has an awesome orca.
/ur/	Ursula earthworm is early.
/air/	Ariel has an aeroplane at the airport.

*Depending on accent. Use 'artist' if you don't pronounce 'aunt' with the /ar/ sound.

 © 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.