

Learning to read

Phase One

- Phase One of Letters and Sounds concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

Phase One activities include: rhyming, rhythm, alliteration, listening to environmental sounds, matching and distinguishing different sounds, games such as I spy.

Phase Two

- Phase Two is when we introduce the letter names and sounds (however the sounds are more important at this stage than the names of the letters).
- We use Bug Club to introduce each letter, alongside the Jolly Phonics songs and actions for each letter.
- It is also very important to get the Letter formation correct right from the beginning because this is important for joined up writing later on.
- As we teach each new sound we also are teaching the children to blend letters together to read words and to segment the sounds in a word for spelling.
- We also introduce tricky words at each stage, which are words that cannot be sounded out (e.g. The, Was, To, I)

Phase Three

- By Christmas we will have introduced all of the individual letter sounds.
- By the time they reach Phase 3, children will be able to blend and segment words containing the letters taught in Phase 2.
- Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, new graphemes are introduced, including the following:

Consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng

Vowel digraphs: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

Tips for reading with your child

- Start by looking at the pictures and discussing what they can see. Ask questions such as, ‘what do you think is happening? Who do you think that might be in the story?’ Discuss the characters and how they might be feeling. This can also be an opportunity to extend your child’s vocabulary by pointing out any unusual things in the picture they might not know the name of.
- Allow your child to take the lead with holding the book correctly and turning the pages.
- When you start reading, point to the start of the sentence. This will help them to understand that in English, we read from left to right, top to bottom. In time, you can ask your child to point to where you should start reading as well as asking them to point to capital letters and full stops as they become aware of sentences and punctuation.

Tips for reading with your child

- After you have read the text, ask your child to repeat sentences back and encourage them to follow the words with their finger.
- As your child becomes more aware of the text, ask them to count how many words there are in the sentence and how many sentences are on the page.
- Ask your child to pick out any letter sounds they recognise from the text. Encourage them to use the initial sound of words alongside the pictures to decode words.
- Model how to blend sounds together to read simple words and ask your child to have a go at blending too.
- Pick out a few ‘tricky words’ from the text for them to spot on the way.

Tips for reading with your child

- Give them lots of praise and encouragement!
- Make it fun!
- Use the reading record books to let us know how your child is getting on with their reading books. Read regularly but let them go at their own pace. It takes some children longer than others to 'click' with reading. Let us know if you are having problems so we can try to help.

Things you can do at home to help your child learn to read...

- Look at the phonics booklets each week. Revisit and practise the sounds already learnt and spend time on the new sounds we add each week. Once all the sounds have been put in the booklet, keep revisiting it throughout the year.
- Using the phonics booklets, some activities you can try are:

Asking your child to show you the action for each sound, tell you the sound it makes, practice writing that letter (this can be done in lots of ways, not just putting pen to paper, it can be made fun! E.g. writing the letter in the bubbles in the bath etc.)

Things you can do at home to help your child...

Here are some links for songs, videos and games which you can use at home.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Djz82FBYiug>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjKq8s8154s>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/alphablocks>
- <http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/freeIndex.htm>
- <http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/phase-2-games.html>
- <http://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/3-5-years/letters-and-sounds>
- <http://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/5-7-years/letters-and-sounds>
- <http://www.ictgames.com/writingRepeater/index.html>