

Helping Your Child With Phonics



Pure Sounds

It is really important that when children hear and read sounds they are as 'pure' as possible. This means that they do not have an extra sound – uh – added to them. To help with this Read Write Inc has divided consonants into 'stretchy' and 'bouncy' sounds.

Stretchy sounds – f (ffffff), l (llllll), m (mmmm), n (nnnnn), r (rrrrr), s (sssss), v (vvvvv), z (zzzzz), sh(ssshh), th(ttthh) ng (nnnggg – thing)

Bouncy sounds – c, k, h, p, t, ch, b, d, g, j, w, y

Double consonant sounds – these sounds are two sounds made closely together, although they are counted as one – x (c s), qu (c w), nk (ng k)

Vowel Sounds

The English Language has 5 vowel letters (a, e, i, o u) but nineteen vowel sounds. These vowel sounds vary slightly according to the accent you speak with.

There are 5 short vowel sounds – a (apple), e (egg), i (insect), o (orange), u (umbrella).

There are 14 long vowel sounds – ai (rain), ee (see), igh (high), oa (boat), oo (zoo), oo (book), ar (car), or (for), air (fair), er (corner), ow (cow), oi (join), ear (hear), ure (pure).

However, there is more than one grapheme for each vowel phoneme, and that is what makes English such a tricky language to learn!

Fred Talk

It is important that children can hear and say the sounds in words as well as read them. One of the strategies used in Class One is Fred Talk. This involves saying the individual sounds in words before blending them together to read the word (for example: c – a – t 'cat'). Try to avoid adding "uh" to the end of a sound: c – a- t instead of cuh – a – tuh.

Phoneme Fingers

This game is used to clarify children's understanding of the number of sounds contained in a word.

How to play:

Say the word. Ask your child to put up fingers to show how many sounds they can hear. Check that they are showing the right number of fingers by repeating the word and saying each sound.

The Teaching Sequence

The first letter sound correspondences that children learn are the most common stretchy and bouncy consonants and the bouncy (short) vowels. These are the letter-sound correspondences from Phase 2 of Letters and Sounds and are shown on the next page. After children have learnt these they move onto the less common consonants and the most common long vowel sounds. The first long vowel sounds are taught in Phase 3 and consolidated within longer words in Phase 4, before alternatives are covered in Phase 5. Phase 6 of Letters and Sounds focuses on teaching the correct spelling of the different vowel sounds.

Do's and Don'ts

Do

- Praise constantly
- Follow the “little and often” approach rather than trying to read all the words covered so far in one session
- Use “Fred Talk” throughout the day – “Would you like some ch – i – p – s?”
- Ask the children how many sounds they can hear in different words – practise “Phoneme Fingers”

Don't

- Use letter names until your child starts Phase Three
- Ask children “What can you hear at the beginning of...?” Instead say the sound at the start of the word with them – show rather than ask

What is phonics?

Phonics is the primary strategy for teaching children in the early stages of reading. It involves teaching children the correct sounds for individual letters and letter combinations. At Hyde Primary School we use the Letters and Sounds programme, supported by the good practice in the Ruth Miskin scheme "Read, Write Inc", to ensure that all children cover the sounds that they need to learn.

How is phonics taught?

Phonics is taught in a daily 20 minute lesson. Either one or two new sounds are introduced on most days, although revision days are built into the programme to ensure that the learning is being embedded thoroughly. Each lesson starts with revision of previously taught sounds and words, before progressing to the new sounds. Children are taught to hear, say and read each sound. There are also opportunities to practise writing the different words.

Key Vocabulary

Alongside the different letter sounds, children are also taught the correct vocabulary to describe what they are doing.

Phoneme – the sound a letter (or group of letters) makes. There are 44 phonemes in the English language.

Grapheme – the letter (or group of letters) which make each sound. Graphemes can have 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters

Blending – putting the phonemes together to read a whole word

Alternative Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondences (Phase 5)

/c/	/ch/	/f/	/j/	/m/	/n/	/ng/	/r/	/s/	/sh/	/v/	/w/
k	tch	ph	g	mb	kn	n(k)	wr	c	ch	ve	wh
ck			dge		gn			sc	t(ion)		
qu									ss(ion,ure)		
x									s(ion,ure)		
ch									c(ion, ious, ial)		

/e/	/i/	/o/	/u/	/ai/	/ee/	/igh/	/oa/	/oo/	/oo/
ea	y	(w)a	o	ay	ea	y	ow	ew	u
	ey			a-e	e-e	ie	oe	ue	oul
				eigh	ie	i-e	o-e	ui	o
				ey	y		o	ou	
				ei	ey				
					ei				

/ar/	/or/	/ur/	/ow/	/oi/	/ear/	/air/	/ure/	/er/
a	aw	ir	ou	oy	ere	are	our	our
	au	er			eer	ear		e
	al	ear						u
	our							

/zh/
vision

Phase 2 Teaching Sequence

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

Phase 3 and 4 Teaching Sequence

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