

# Parents Guide to Phonics



A guide to how phonics will  
help your child to read and  
spell.

# Jargon buster

- **Phoneme** = the smallest unit of sound.  
c a t                  r ai n                  s l ee p
- **Grapheme** = the way the sound is written.  
ai          ay          eigh          a          a\_e  
rain      day      eight      today      make
- **Digraph** = two letters making one sound.  
ch      sh      ee      ay      ea      oo
- **Trigraph** = three letters making one sound.  
igh   ear   ure
- **Split digraph** = grapheme split between a letter in a word.

## Phase 1

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 1 is divided into seven aspects. Each aspect contains three strands: Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination), Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).

Useful website for phase 1 games:

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/phase-1-games.html>

# Phase 2

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:

**Set 1:** s, a, t, p

**Set 2:** i, n, m, d

**Set 3:** g, o, c, k

**Set 4:** ck, e, u, r

**Set 5:** h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

The children will begin to learn to blend and segment to begin reading and spelling. This will begin with simple words.

## Words using set 1

at	sat	pat	tap	sap
----	-----	-----	-----	-----

## Words using set 1 and 2

(+i)	(+n)	(+m)	(+d)
it	an	am	dad
is	in	man	sad
sit	nip	mat	dim
sat	pan	map	din
pit	pin	Pam	did
pip	tan	Tim	Sid
sip	nap	Sam	and
tip	tin		dip

## Words using sets 1-3

(+g)	(+o)	(+c)	(+k)
tag	got	can	kid
gag	on	cot	kit
gig	not	cop	Kim
gap	pot	cap	Ken
nag	top	cat	
sag	dog	cod	
gas	pop		
pig	God		
dig	Mog		

### Words using set 1-4

(+ck)	(+e)	(+u)	(+r)
kick	get	up	rim
sock	pet	mum	rip
sack	ten	run	ram
dock	net	mug	rat
pick	pen	cup	rag
sick	peg	sun	rug
pack	met	tuck	rot
ticket	men	mud	rocket
pocket	neck	sunset	carrot

### Words using set 1-5

(+h)	(+b)	(+f and ff)	(+l and ll)	(+ss)
had	but	of	lap	ass
him	big	if	let	less
his	back	off	leg	hiss
hot	bet	fit	lot	mass
hut	bad	fin	lit	mess
hop	bag	fun	bell	boss
hum	bed	fig	fill	fuss
hit	bud	fog	doll	hiss
hat	beg	puff	tell	pass
has	bug	huff	sell	kiss
hack	bun	cuff	Bill	Tess
hug	bus	fan	Nell	fusspot
	Ben	fat	dull	
	bat		laptop	
	bit			
	bucket			
	beckon			
	rabbit			

Alongside this children are introduced to tricky words. These are the words that are irregular words. That means that phonics cannot be applied to the reading and spelling of these words.

The tricky words introduced in phase 2 are:

to	the	no	go	I
----	-----	----	----	---

Useful websites for phase 2 onwards:

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/phase-2.html>

<http://www.nessy.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/>

## Phase 3

By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2.

Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

**Set 6:** j, v, w, x

**Set 7:** y, z, zz, qu

**Consonant digraphs:** ch, sh, th, ng

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

**Tricky words:**

we	me	be	was	no	go
my	you	they	her	all	are

## Phase 4

By Phase 4 children will be able to represent each of 42 phonemes with a grapheme. They will blend phonemes to read CVC words and segment CVC words for spelling. They will also be able to read two syllable words that are simple. They will be able to read all the tricky words learnt so far and will be able to spell some of them.

This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases.

### Tricky words:

said	so	she	he	have	like
some	come	were	there	little	one
they	all	are	do	when	out
what	my	her			

By this point children would be expected to be reading CVC words at speed along with the tricky words from the previous phases. It is important that children are taught that blending is only used when a word is unfamiliar.

## Phase 5

Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes and graphemes they already know. They will begin to learn to choose the appropriate grapheme when spelling. The children will be automatically decoding a large number of words for reading by this point.

### Tricky words:

oh	their	people	Mr	Mrs	looked
called	asked				
water	where	who	again	thought	through
work	mouse	many	laughed	because	different
any	eyes	friends	once	please	

### New graphemes for reading:

ay day	oy boy	wh when	a-e make
--------	--------	---------	----------

<b>ou</b> out	<b>ir</b> girl	<b>ph</b> photo	<b>e-e</b> these
<b>ie</b> tie	<b>ue</b> blue	<b>ew</b> new	<b>i-e</b> like
<b>ea</b> eat	<b>aw</b> saw	<b>oe</b> toe	<b>o-e</b> home
		<b>au</b> Paul	<b>u-e</b> rule

By this phase children should be reading words fluently and no longer be blending and segmenting familiar words.

The real focus throughout the phase is to not only learn the new graphemes for reading but also to learn to read words with alternative pronunciations. Children also will need to learn alternative spellings for each phoneme.

Alternative pronunciations for graphemes:

a				e		i		o		u		
hat	acorn	fast**	was	bed	he	tin	mind	hot	no	but	unit	put**
	bacon	path**	what		me		find		so		union	pull**
	apron	pass**	wash		she		wild		go		unicorn	push**
	angel	father**	wasp		we		pint		old		music	full**
	apricot	bath**	squad		be		blind		don't		tuba	bush**
	bagel	last**	squash		the*		child		gold		future	bull**
	station	grass**	want		recent		kind		cold		human	cushion**
	nation	after**	watch		frequent		grind		told		stupid	awful**
	Amy	branch**	wallet		region		behind		both		duty	playful**
	lady	afternoon**	wander		decent		remind		hold		humour	pudding**

ow		ie		ea		er		ou			
down	low	pie	chief	sea	head	farmer	her	out	you	could	mould
	grow		brief		dead		fern		soup	would	shoulder
	snow		field		deaf		stern		group	should	boulder
	glow		shield		ready		Gerda				
	bowl		priest		bread		herbs				
	tow		yield		heaven		jerky				
	show		shriek		feather		perky				
	slow		thief		pleasant		Bernard				
	window		relief		instead		servant				
	rowing-boat		belief		breakfast		permanent				

y				ch		c		g		
yes	by	gym	very	chin	school	chef	cat	cell	got	gent
	my	crystal	happy		Christmas	Charlene		central		gym
	try	mystery	funny		chemist	Chandry		acid		gem
	why	crystal	carry		chord	Charlotte		cycle		Gill
	dry	pyramid	hairly		chorus	machine		icy		gentle
	fry	Egypt	smelly		Chris	brochure		cent		ginger
	sky	bicycle	penny		chronic	chalet		Cynthia		Egypt
	spy	Lynne	crunchy		chemical			success		magic
	fry	cygnet	lolly		headache			December		danger
	reply	rhythm	merrily		technical			accent		energy

# Phase 6

In phase 6 children will be reading longer and less familiar texts independently and fluently. It is crucial that at this point children are now reading to learn and reading for pleasure.

Children should be able to read the 300 high frequency words. At this point it is important that comprehension strategies are developed so that children clarify meaning, ask and answer questions about the texts they are reading, construct mental images during reading and summarise what they have read.

In spelling children are introduced to the adding of prefixes, suffixes and how to spell longer words. Throughout the phase children are encouraged to develop strategies for learning spellings.

Strategy	Explanation
Syllables	To learn a word by listening to how many syllables there are so it can be broken into smaller bits. (e.g. Sep-tem-ber)
Base Words	To learn a word by finding its base word. (e.g. jumping- base word jump +ing)
Analogy	To learn a word use a word that is already learnt. (e.g. could, would, should)
Mnemonics	To learn a word by making up a sentence to help remember them. (e.g. could - OU Lucky Duck; people eat orange peel like elephants)