



Letters and Sounds



'Letters & Sounds' is the government programme for teaching phonics and high frequency words.

It is split into 6 phases with the different phases being covered in different years in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

- Phase 1– Nursery / Reception
- Phase 2– Reception
- Phase 3– Reception
- Phase 4– Reception / Year 1
- Phase 5– Year 1
- Phase 6– Year 1 / Year 2

Every child in Nursery, Reception, Year One and Year Two has a daily 15 minute letters and sounds lesson.

Please click on each phase to gain a greater understanding of what is taught in each phase.

Phase 1



Phase 1 focuses on the basic skills needed for reading and writing and includes singing lots of nursery rhymes, playing listening games and using musical instruments.

Ways you can support your child at home:

- Play games like 'I spy'
- Sing songs and rhymes together
- Make a 'junk band' with pots & pans
- Share lots of books together
- Play 'What do we have in here?' Put some toys or objects in a bag and pull one out at a time. Emphasise the first sound of the name of the toy or object by repeating it, for example, 'c c c - car', 'b b b b - box', 'ch ch ch ch - chip'.
- Say: 'A **t**all **t**in of **t**omatoes!' 'Tommy, the **t**icklish **t**eddy!' 'A lovely little **l**emon!' This is called alliteration. Use names, for example, 'Gurpreet **g**ets the **g**iggles', 'Milo **m**akes **m**usic', 'Naheema's **n**ose'.

Phase 2



In phase two the children will be taught the phonemes (sounds) for a number of letters (graphemes). One set a week is taught as below:

Set One: s a t p

Set Two: i n m d

Set Three: g o c k

Set Four: ck e u r

Set Five: h b f,ff l,ll ss

Remember to keep pronunciation short: 'd' not 'duh'.

- After set one the children can blend and segment simple words such as:
at sat pat tap sap
- In this phase the children also learn tricky words:
the to go no

Phase 2



The children also practise reading and writing captions altogether (see below). It is important for them to apply their phonic skills in this way and helps them gain confidence and read simple books.

a cat in a hat



Phase 2



Ways you can support your child at home:

Magnetic letters

Buy magnetic letters for your fridge, or for use with a tin tray. Find out which letters have been taught – have fun finding these with your child and place them on the magnetic surface.

Making little words together

Make little words together, for example, *it, up, am, and, top, dig, run, met, pick*. As you select the letters, say them aloud: '*a-m – am*', '*m-e-t – met*'.

Breaking words up

Now do it the other way around: read the word, break the word up and move the letters away, saying: '*met – m-e-t*'.

Both these activities help children to see that reading and spelling are reversible processes.

Don't forget the writing box!

Spelling is harder than reading words – praise, don't criticise. Little whiteboards and pens, and magic boards, are a good way for children to try out spellings and practise their handwriting.

Your child might be trying to use letters from their name to write; this shows that they know that writing needs real alphabet letters.

Make or buy an alphabet poster.

Phase 3



Phase 3 builds on Phase 2 and the children learn another twenty five graphemes. Most of these are digraphs (two letters that make one sound (e.g. ch)

Set 6: j v w x

Set 7: y z,zz qu

The remaining sounds!

ch sh th ng

ai ee igh oa

oo ar or ur

ow oi ear air

ure er

- In phase three the children also practise blending and segmenting CVC words and 2 syllable words.
- Through practical games they also practise reading and spelling simple captions. The children will play games to match the caption to the picture or write a caption for a given picture.

Phase 3



- In phase three to children learn to read the tricky words:
he she we me be was my you
her they all are
- They also learn to spell the tricky words:
the to l no go
- The children play games in this phase to practise blending and segmenting.

Phase 3



Ways you can support your child at home:

- Sing an alphabet song together.
- Play 'I spy', using letter names as well as sounds.
- Continue to play with magnetic letters, using some of the two grapheme (*letter*) combinations:

r-ai-n = rain blending for reading *rain = r-ai-n* – segmenting for spelling

b-oa-t = boat blending for reading *boat = b-oa-t* – segmenting for spelling

h-ur-t = hurt blending for reading *hurt = h-ur-t* – segmenting for spelling

- Praise your child for trying out words.
- Set a timer. Call out one word at a time and get your child to spell it on a magic board or a small whiteboard, against the timer – remember, they can use magnetic letters.
- Play 'Pairs', turning over two words at a time trying to find a matching pair. This is especially helpful with the tricky words: **the the, to to, no no, go go, I I**
- Don't worry if they get some wrong! These are hard to remember – they need plenty of practice.

Phase 4



In phase four children continue to practise previously learned graphemes and phonemes and learn how to read and write:

- CVCC words: tent, damp, toast, chimp

For example, in the word 'toast',

t = consonant, oa = vowel, s = consonant, t = consonant.

- CCVC words: swim, plum, sport, cream, spoon

For example, in the word 'cream',

c = consonant, r = consonant, ea = vowel, m = consonant.

- They will be learning more tricky words and continuing to read and write sentences together.

- Tricky words

said, so, do, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, when, out, what

Phase 4



Ways you can support your child at home:

- Practise reading and spelling some CVCC and CCVC words but continue to play around with CVC words. Children like reading and spelling words that they have previously worked with, as this makes them feel successful.
- Make up captions and phrases for your child to read and write, for example, *a silver star, clear the pond, crunch crisps*. Write some simple sentences and leave them around the house for your child to find and read. After they have found and read three, give them a treat!
- Look out for words in the environment, such as on food packaging, which your child will find easy to read, for example, *lunch, fresh milk, drink, fish and chips, jam*.
- Work on reading words together, for example, a street name such as *Park Road*, captions on buses and lorries, street signs such as *bus stop*.

Phase 5



In Phase 5 children will learn new graphemes. Four new graphemes are introduced each week:

- ay, ou, ie, ea
- oy, ir, ue, aw
- wh, ph, ew, oe, au
- a_e, e_e, i_e, o_e, u_e

- During this phase the children also focus upon the different pronunciation of graphemes.

Eg 'ow' can be 'cow' or 'bow'

'ea' can be 'eat' or 'bread'

'g' can be 'got' or 'giant'

- In phase 5 the children concentrate on the different graphemes with the same sound.

E.g. ay, ai, a, a_e and eigh all have the long 'a' sound.

ea, e_e, y, ey and ie all have the long 'ee' sound

- Through practical games and phoneme frames the children practise blending and reading words with the new Grapheme-Phoneme correspondence and then practise segmenting and spelling words with the new Grapheme-Phoneme correspondence.

- At the end of phase five children be able to automatically read and accurately spell the 'first 100 high frequency words' (shown on next page)...

First 100 High Frequency Words



the	and	a	to
said	in	he	I
of	it	was	you
they	on	she	is
for	at	his	but
that	with	all	we
can	are	up	had
my	her	what	there
out	this	have	went
be	like	some	so
not	then	were	go
little	as	no	mum
one	them	do	me

First 100 High Frequency Words



down	dad	big	when
it's	see	looked	very
look	don't	come	will
into	back	from	children
him	Mr	get	just
now	came	oh	about
got	their	people	your
put	could	house	old
too	by	day	made
time	I'm	if	help
Mrs	called	here	off
asked	saw	make	an

Phase 6



During this phase, children become fluent readers and increasingly accurate spellers.

In phase 6 children will:

- Be introduced to and taught the past tense.
- Investigate and learn how to add suffixes. There are twelve different suffixes taught:

-s	-es	-ing	-ed
-er	-est	-y	-en
-ful	-ly	-ment	-ness

- Be taught how to spell long words.
- Be taught how to find and learn the difficult bits in words.
- Learn and practice spellings.
- The children are also expected to be able to read and write the 'next 200 common words'.

Next 200 Common Words



water	away	good	want
over	how	did	man
going	where	would	or
took	school	think	home
who	didn't	ran	know
bear	can't	again	cat
long	things	new	after
wanted	eat	everyone	our
two	has	yes	play
take	thought	dog	well
find	more	I'll	round
tree	magic	shouted	us
other	food	fox	through
way	been	stop	must

Next 200 Common Words cont...



red	door	right	sea
these	began	boy	animals
never	next	first	work
lots	need	that's	baby
fish	gave	mouse	something
bed	may	still	found
live	say	soon	night
narrator	small	car	couldn't
three	head	king	town
I've	around	every	garden
fast	only	many	laughed
let's	much	suddenly	told
another	great	why	cried
keep	room	last	jumped

Next 200 Common Words cont...



because	even	am	before
gran	clothes	tell	key
fun	place	mother	sat
boat	window	sleep	feet
morning	queen	each	book
its	green	different	let
girl	which	inside	run
any	under	hat	snow
air	trees	bad	tea
top	eyes	fell	friends
box	dark	grandad	there's
looking	end	than	best
better	hot	sun	across
gone	hard	floppy	really
wind	wish	eggs	once
please	thing	stopped	ever