

Focus on Phonics

Letters and Sounds Parents Information Leaflet

Letters and Sounds is a six-phase programme designed to help teach children to read and spell with phonics.

Phase One (Nursery / Pre-school)

This phase concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills as preparation for learning to read with phonics.

Parents can play a vital role in helping their children develop these skills, by encouraging their children to listen carefully and talk extensively about what they hear, see and do.

Phase Two – Four (Reception)

Phase Two is when systematic, high quality phonic work begins.

During Phase Two to Four, children learn:

* How to represent each of the 44 sounds by a letter or sequence of letters.

*How to blend sounds together for reading and how to segment (split) words for spelling.

*Letter names e.g. through an alphabet song. There is some debate as to when letter names should be introduced, but it is generally best to leave teaching letter names until children are secure with the alphabet letter sounds, as these are what are important when learning to read with phonics.

*How to read and spell some high frequency 'tricky' words containing sounds not yet learnt (e.g. they, my, her, you).

The Letters and Sounds Programme suggests an order for teaching the letters, and a fast pace of one Set per week. It recognises, however, that children's personal experience of letters varies enormously. Most importantly, it progresses from the simple to the more complex aspects of phonics **at a pace that is suitable for the children who are learning.**

Phase Five (Year 1)

Children learn new ways of representing the sounds and practise blending for reading and segmenting for spelling.

Phase Six (Year 2)

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

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Learning Letter Sounds

Spoken English uses about 44 sounds (phonemes).

These phonemes are represented by letters (graphemes).

The alphabet contains only 26 letters, but we use it to make all the graphemes that represent the phonemes of English. In other words, **a sound can be represented by a letter (e.g. 's') or a group of letters (e.g. 'th' or 'igh')**

Once children begin learning letters, they are used as quickly as possible in reading and spelling words. Children can then see the purpose of learning letters. For this reason, the first six letters taught are 's', 'a', 't', 'p', 'i', 'n'.

These can immediately be used to make a number of words such as 'sat', 'pin', 'pat', 'tap', 'nap'

As a parent, your involvement in supporting your child's learning will be a vital factor in determining their success in learning to read.

Magnetic boards and letters are one of the most effective ways to help children learn letters and develop their reading and spelling skills in a multi-sensory way. Children find using them enjoyable and easy to understand and apply.

Other useful resources include:

- Flash cards
- Wall Frieze or poster
- Alphabet puzzles
- Alphabet games such as 'I-Spy', Phonics Lotto

The charts below show the order for teaching the letter sounds as suggested by the Letters and Sounds Programme Phases 2 –4 (Reception Year). The charts also give an example of a word to indicate how to pronounce each sound.

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Set 1	s sun	a ant	t tap	p pen
Set 2	i in	n net	m map	d dog
Set 3	g go	o on	c cat	k kit
Set 4	ck duck	e egg	u up	r rat
Set 5	h hen	b bat	f,ff fan, puff	
	l,ll leg, bell	ss miss		
Set 6	j jet	v van	w wig	x box
Set 7	y yes	z,zz zip, buzz	qu quiz	

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ch	chip	ar	farm
sh	shop	or	for
th	thin then	ur	hurt
ng	ring	ow	cow
ai	rain	oi	coin
ee	feet	ear	dear
igh	night	air	fair
oa	boat	ure	sure
oo	boot look	er	corner

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High frequency and 'tricky' words

There are 100 high frequency (common) words that recur frequently in much of the written material young children read and that they need when they write.

High frequency words have often been regarded in the past as needing to be taught as sight words – to be learnt as visual wholes. The vast majority of these words are, however, decodable once letter sounds have been taught.

In order to read simple sentences, it is necessary for children to know some words that have unusual or untaught spellings. These are known as 'tricky' words and need to be learned by heart. It should be noted that, when teaching these words, it is important to **always start with sounds already known in the word, then focus on the 'tricky' part.**

High frequency 'tricky' words to be learned during Phases 2 and 3

the	to	I	go
no	he	she	we
me	be	was	my
you	they	her	all
are	into		

High frequency 'tricky' words to be learned during Phase 4

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

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As soon as children know a few letters, they can begin to read and spell words containing those letters.

Words using set1 letters:

s a t p

at
sat
pat
tap
sap

Words using sets 1 and 2 letters:

s a t p i n m d

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

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Words using sets 1 – 3 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k

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

Words using sets 1 – 4 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k c k e u r

(+ 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

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Captions using sets 1 – 4 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k c k e u r

pat a dog	dad and nan
a cat in a hat	a nap in a cot
a sad man	a kid in a cap
a pin on a map	a tin can
pots and pans	cats and dogs

Captions using sets 1 – 4 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k c k e u r
+ *to, the*

a red rug	rats on a sack
get to the top	a pup in the mud
socks on a mat	run to the den
a cap on a peg	mugs and cups
a run in the sun	an egg in an egg cup

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Words using sets 1 – 5 letters:

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

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

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Captions with sets 1 – 5 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r
h b f,ff l,ll ss + to, the, no, go

a hug and a kiss	a cat on a bed
on top of the rock	to the top of the hill
a bag of nuts	get off the bus
to huff and puff	no lid on the pan
go to the log hut	pack a pen in a bag
a hot hob	a doll in a cot
sit back to back	a cat and a big fat rat
a duck and a hen	

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Words using sets 1 - 6 letters:

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

(+ j)	(+ v)	(+ w)	(+ x)
jam	van	will	mix
Jill	vat	win	fix
jet	vet	wag	box
jog	Vic	web	tax
Jack	Ravi	wig	six
Jen	Kevin	wax	taxi
Jet-lag	visit	cobweb	vixen
jacket	velvet	wicked	exit

Yes /no questions with words containing sets 1 - 6 letters:

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

Is the sun wet?	Can men jog to get fit?
Can wax get hot?	Has a pot of jam got a lid?
Has a fox got six legs?	Can a taxi hop?
Can a vet fix a jet?	Can a van go up a hill?
Will a pen fit in a box?	Has a cat got a web?

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Words using sets 1 – 7 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r
h b f,ff l,ll ss j v w x y z,zz qu

(+ y)	(+ z / zz)	(+ qu)
yap	zip	quiz
yes	Zak	quit
yet	buzz	quick
yell	jazz	quack
yum-yum	zigzag	liquid

Yes /no questions with words containing sets 1 - 7 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r
h b f,ff l,ll ss j v w x y z,zz qu

Can a duck quack?	Can a rabbit yell at a man?
Is a zebra a pet?	Can a hen peck?
Can dogs yap?	Is a lemon red?
Can a fox get wet?	Is a robin as big as a jet?
Will a box fit in a van?	Can a web buzz?

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Sentences using words containing sets 1 – 7 letters:

s a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r
h b f,ff l,ll ss j v w x y z,zz qu
+ *he, we, she*

She will fill the bucket at the well.
If the dog has a bad leg, the vet can fix it.
Will Azam and Liz win the quiz? Yes!
He did up the zip on Zinat's jacket.
The fox and vixen had cubs in a den.
We can get the big bed into the van.

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Words using the four consonant digraphs:

ch sh th ng

ch	sh	th	ng
chop	ship	<i>them</i>	ring
chin	shop	<i>then</i>	rang
chug	shed	<i>that</i>	hang
check	shell	<i>this</i>	song
such	fish	<i>with</i>	wing
chip	shock	moth	rung
chill	cash	thin	king
much	bash	thick	long
rich	hush	path	sing
chicken	rush	bath	ping-pong

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Sentences with sets 1 – 7 letters plus the four consonant digraphs and some tricky words:

s a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r
h b f,ff l,ll ss j v w x y z,zz qu
ch sh th ng

I am in such a rush to get to the shops.
--

A man is rich if he has lots of cash.

Natasha sang a song to me.

The van will chug up the long hill.

Sasha had a quick chat with Kath and me.
--

A moth can be fat, but its wings are thin.
--

The ship hit the rocks with a thud.

Lots of shops sell chicken as well as fish and chips.

Josh had a shock as he got a bash on the chin.
--

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Words using the vowel graphemes:

ai
wait
Gail
hail
pain
aim
sail
main
tail
rain
bait

ee
see
feel
weep
feet
jeep
seem
meet
week
deep
keep

igh
high
sigh
light
might
night
right
sight
fight
tight
tonight

oa
coat
load
goat
loaf
road
soap
oak
toad
foal
boatman

oo	
too	look
zoo	foot
boot	cook
hoot	good
zoom	book
cool	took
food	wood
root	wool
moon	hook
rooftop	hood

ar
bar
car
bark
card
cart
hard
jar
park
market
farmyard

or
for
fork
cord
cork
sort
born
worn
fort
torn
cornet

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ur
fur
burn
urn
burp
curl
hurt
surf
turn
turnip
curds

ow
now
down
owl
cow
how
bow
pow!
now
town
towel

oi
oil
boil
coin
coil
join
soil
toil
quoit
poison
tinfoil

ear
ear
dear
fear
hear
gear
tear
year
rear
beard

air
air
fair
hair
lair
pair
cairn

ure
sure
lure
assure
insure
pure
cure
secure
manure
mature

er
hammer
letter
rocker
ladder
supper
dinner

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Words with a combination of two Phase Three graphemes:

cheep	sheet	thing	thorn	teeth	coach
tooth	harsh	short	church	singer	shear
chair	waiter	arch	chain	faith	sheep
sharp	poach	shoal	shook	shark	march
torch	orchard	north	farmer	shorter	longer
looking	powder	lightning	porch	thicker	booth

Captions:

tools in the shed	sixteen trees
ships in port	looking at books
boats on the river	the light of a torch
fish and chips on a dish	digging in the soil
a goat and a cow	goats in a farmyard

Sentences:

Mark and Carl got wet in the rain.
Jill has fair hair but Jack has dark hair.
I can hear an owl hoot at night.
Bow down to the king and queen.
I can see a pair of boots on the mat.
The farmer gets up at six in the morning.
Jim has seven silver coins.
Nan is sitting in the rocking chair.
Gurdeep had a chat with his dad.
It has been hot this year.

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Sentences for the end of Phase Three:

On the farm

I will soon visit my nan at her farm.
She will let me feed the hens and chickens.
They peck up corn in the farmyard.
She has goats and cows as well as hens.
She gets the hens into a shed at night – foxes
might get them.

In town

You and I can meet on the corner.
We can get the bus to the fish and chip shop.
Janaki and her sister may join us.
They can get fish and chips too.
Then we can all run to the park.

In a wigwam

Kevin has a wigwam in the garden.
Alex, Jon and Jeevan visit him.
Kevin's dad cooks chicken for them on hot
coals.
Having food in the wigwam is fun.
Then they sing songs.

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At the river

Max and Vikram sail a wooden boat.

Jeff chucks bits of bun in the river for the ducks.

Yasmin sits on the rock and looks for a fish.

Tanya and Yasha see an eel.

Shep the dog sits down in the mud and gets in a mess.

In the woods

Chip the dog runs to the woods.

He is looking for rabbits but sees a fox.

The fox sees him and rushes off to its den.

Chip dashes after it but cannot see it.

He feels sad and runs back to his kennel.

For more information on how schools teach children to read with phonics, visit:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/phonics>