

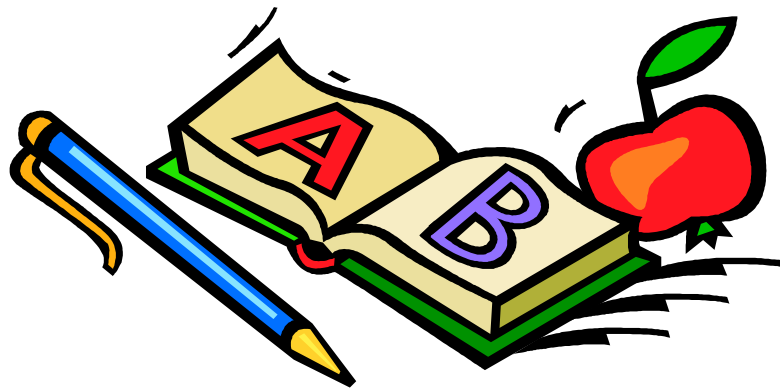
Phonics Workshop

23rd January 2019



What is Phonics?

- Phonics consists of knowledge of the skills of segmenting and blending, knowledge of the alphabet code and an understanding of the principles underpinning the way the code is used in reading and spelling.



The Terminology!!

- **Phonemes**

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound. It is generally accepted that most varieties of spoken English use about 44 phonemes.

- **Graphemes**

A grapheme is a symbol of a phoneme, that is, a letter or group of letters representing a sound. There are 26 letters in the alphabet but we use these to make all the graphemes that represent the phonemes of English.

Blending and Segmenting

- Segmenting and blending are reversible key phonic skills. Segmenting consists of breaking words down into their constituent phonemes to spell. Blending consists of building words from their constituent phonemes to read. Both skills are important.

Oral Blending and Segmenting

- It is really important that children have plenty of experience of listening to adults modelling oral blending before they are introduced to phoneme – grapheme correspondences. Once children can orally blend and segment they are ready to learn phoneme – grapheme correspondences

Grapheme – Phoneme

Correspondences and Phoneme – Grapheme Correspondences

- We convert graphemes to phonemes when we are reading aloud – decoding written words. We convert phonemes to graphemes when we are spelling – encoding words for writing. Therefore, children need to learn which graphemes correspond to which phoneme and vice versa. In order to read an unfamiliar word, a child must recognise (sound out) each grapheme, not each letter. So to read cat they will sound out /c/a/t/, for ship /sh/i/p/.

Reading



- We need to think carefully about how we support children when they are reading. Is the word easy to sound out or does it contain unique or rare correspondences. If it does contain rare graphemes will they have the knowledge to sound it out? Different strategies will be required.

So consider...



- Can the word be sounded out (or is it a tricky word)?
- If it can be then do so. Let your child articulate the phonemes repeat these if they are struggling, once they have heard you say them they will probably say the word. If not tell them the word.
- If the word can not be sounded out think about the context of the story – what is happening?
- Look at the pictures for clues.
- Re-read the sentence together and think about the words that could fit.
- Read the sentence and check for sense. Is the word a sensible option i.e. does it have the same initial sound?
- Tell them the word.

Warning

- Do not let reading become laboured otherwise you will put your child off. Remember we want it to be an engaging learning activity and for this to happen we must be supportive.



So how can we teach the phoneme – grapheme correspondences?

- You will be aware that at school we use the Letters and Sounds system. This uses a multi sensory approach to help children remember the phonemes and graphemes.

So does it really matter how phonemes are pronounced?

- Some children pick up the skill of blending very quickly even if the phonemes are not clearly pronounced. However, for some children the correct pronunciation of phonemes can be difficult. For example, sounding out *cuh a tuh* for *cat* can make blending difficult. The actual sounds are */c/a/t/*— much shorter and precise. It is, therefore, sensible to articulate each phoneme as cleanly as possible.

Activities in school

- We try to make the teaching and learning of phonics as fun as possible for the children. Here is a typical lesson...

So how can you help?

- Continue to sing nursery rhymes and play clapping games together.
- Play sound games such as sound lotto or simply listen to the sounds in the environment.
- Make silly sounds together e.g. chchchchch for the train.
- Play rhyming games – e.g. what rhymes with pan? Can you continue the rhyme and play rhyme tennis?
- Make up alliterative phrases e.g. Suzy sizzles sausages.
- Play sound talk and be robots together.
- Practice the actions for the phoneme – grapheme correspondences.
- Read regularly.
- Play games such as pairs to help learn the tricky words.
- Play write messages together – make it fun! Emphasise the positives – look you wrote jam right in your shopping list, then write how the words should be spelt. Do not make negative comments. We do not want to put our children off writing!
- Use magnetic letters and spell out simple words on the fridge.

Remember!

- Whatever you do with your child it needs to be fun and engaging. If your child is tired or if you are tired many of these activities will become strained. Little and often works best.

