

An Introduction to

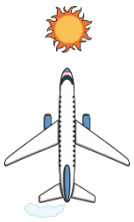


Phonics

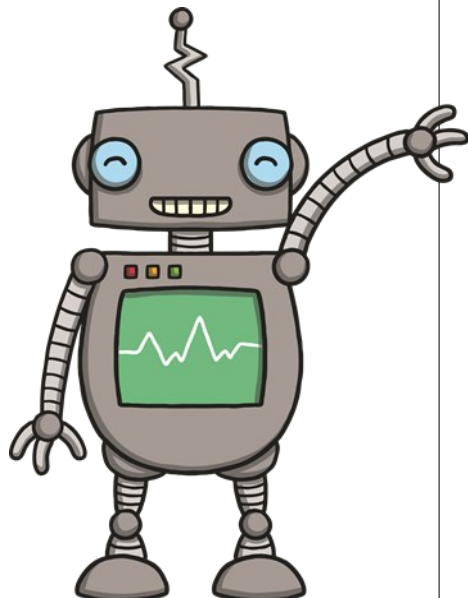


WHAT IS PHONICS?

Synthetic phonics is a method of teaching reading and writing in which words are broken up into their smallest units of sound or 'phonemes'.



There are 6 levels for teaching phonics and more information about each one is inside....



LEVEL 1

Level 1 is all about listening! It's really important that the children hear different sounds in their environment. We focus on sound discrimination and also body percussion!

Rhythm and rhyme are taught next. It's fun to clap different beats and rhythms and listen to the odd one out. We also play lots of rhyming games using picture cards and read lots of stories that contain rhyme.



We look closely at alliteration. This is when a sequence of words start with the same letter or sound.

It is important to focus on voice sounds before moving onto oral blending and segmenting. This is when you sound out a word before blending the sounds together to hear the whole word.

Using a sound box is a really great way to help children to blend and segment. You could have a selection of items on a table and sound out an item. Can your child pass you that item?



/c/-/u/-/p/ = cup

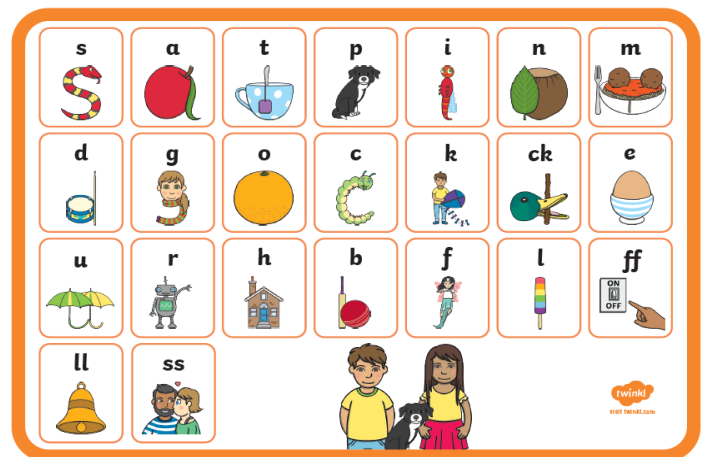
LEVEL 2

In Level 2 both the letter name and the letter sound is introduced. A single unit of sound is called a **phoneme** and a **grapheme** is when the sound is written down. The children are taught these terms and are expected to use them.

New phonemes are taught in a prescribed order to enable children to practice reading and writing CVC words as soon as possible, e.g. sat, pin, pat.

Tricky words are also taught in Level 2. A **tricky word** is a word that cannot be decoded yet and needs to be learnt by sight.

Towards the end of Level 2 the children are taught **digraphs**. A digraph is when two letters make one sound. E.g. ck, ff, ss



LEVEL 3

In Level 3, new graphemes and phonemes will be taught. They will also be introduced to **trigraphs**. This is when three letters make one sound. E.g. air

Children will continue learning how to **blend** when reading. This is where they join sounds together to make a word. There are new tricky words too.

Children will practise **segmenting** words containing the phonemes taught in Level 2 and 3. This is where they break down words into phonemes to help spell a word.

A great way to help your child look out for digraphs and trigraphs within words is to use **sound buttons**.

These are when **dots**, **lines** and **dashes** are used to show how many sounds are in a word.



LEVEL 4

In Level 4, no new graphemes are introduced. The main aim of this Level is to consolidate the children's knowledge and to help them learn to read and spell words which have **adjacent consonants**. This is where two consonant sounds are next to each other in a word, such as trap, string and milk.

However a selection of new tricky words are introduced.

Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
the	he all	said there	oh
to	she are	have little	there
I	we my	like one	people
no	me her	so when	Mr
go	be	do out	Mrs
into	was	some what	looked
	you	come	called
	they	were	asked
			could

Tricky Words /
Common Exception Words

LEVEL 5

In Level 5, children will learn more graphemes and phonemes. For example, they already know 'ai' as in rain, but now they will be introduced to 'ay' in day and 'a-e' as in make.

'a-e' is a **split digraph**. This is when a digraph is split by a consonant.

Alternative pronunciations for graphemes will also be introduced, e.g. 'ea' in tea, head and break.

Even more tricky words will be introduced.



LEVEL 6

By now the children should be secure in their knowledge of phoneme to grapheme correspondences and confident in their blending and segmenting skills to help them to read and write.

In Level 6, there are no more phoneme or graphemes to be taught, but new spelling patterns will be introduced.

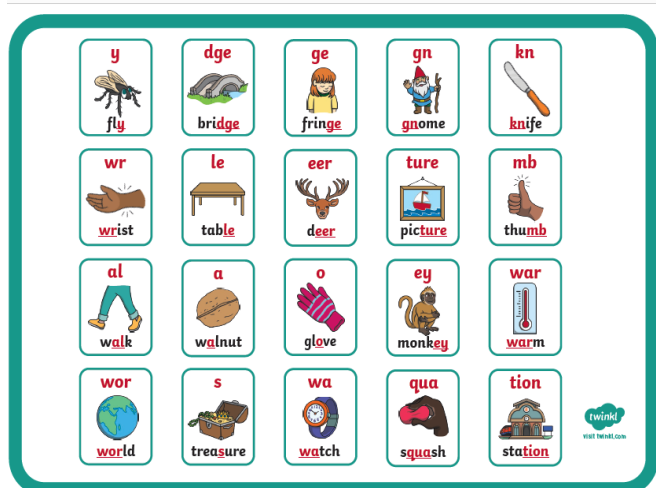
We focus on different tenses and how to change the given word using suffixes. A **suffix** is a letter or a group of letters added to the end of a word to change its meaning.

○ The focus is on learning spelling rules for suffixes.

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

Useful websites::

- School website
- Twinkl Phonics— www.twinkl.com
- Twinkl Phonics on Youtube
- Mr Ts Phonics on Youtube
- www.letters-and-sounds.com



Phonics Terminology

Here is some of the terminology you might hear as your children begin to learn phonics.

Phoneme	the smallest unit of sound in words
Grapheme	the written representation of a sound
GPC (Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence)	being able to match a phoneme with the correct grapheme and vice versa
Blending	joining individual speech sounds together to read a word
Segmenting	breaking down words into individual speech sounds to spell a word
Digraph	two letters making one sound e.g. 'sh'
Trigraph	three letters making one sound e.g. 'igh'
Split Digraph	two letters making one sound which are divided by a consonant e.g. the 'i_e' sound in the word 'side'
Tricky/Common Exception Words	words that are not fully decodable such as 'the' and 'was'
Sound buttons	circles or spots that can be written underneath a sound to support reading
Sound bars	lines that can be written underneath digraphs or trigraphs to show that the letters make one sound
Mnemonic	a visual prompt to help children remember a sound



How you can help at home:

- Practise the new sounds and graphemes your child learns each week - it will be on the **Leedon Link**.
- Read with your child **every day**
- Support your child to complete any phonics challenges.
- Ask your child's class teacher if you are unsure about any aspect of your child's phonics learning. A consistent approach is important.

