



So, what exactly is phonics?

Words are made up from small units of sound called **phonemes**. Phonics teaches children to be able to listen carefully and identify the phonemes that make up each word. This helps children to learn to read words and to spell words.

How does phonics develop?

In some languages learning phonics is easy because each phoneme has just one grapheme to represent it. The English language is a bit more complicated than this. This is largely because England has been invaded so many times throughout its history. Each set of invaders brought new words and new sounds with them. As a result, English only has around **44 phonemes** but there are around **120 graphemes** or ways of writing down those 44 phonemes. Obviously we only have **26 letters** in the alphabet so some graphemes are made up from more than one letter.

ai

ee

igh

or

ar

How does phonics progress?

- Phase 1 – This is absolutely vital. It is the one phase that shouldn't come to an end. These skills should continue to be developed throughout KS1 and KS2. Phase 1 develops children's abilities to listen to, make, explore and talk about sounds. Ongoing
- Phase 2 - This introduces phonemes (sounds) and their related graphemes (spelling) Set 1 - s a t p Set 2 - i n m d Set 3 - g o c k Set 4 - c k e u r Set 5 - h b f ff l l s ss. Reception.
- Phase 3 – This continues in the same way as Phase 2 and introduces more new sounds and ways to spell them. By the end of Phase 3 the children will know one way of writing down each of the 44 phonemes (sounds). Set 6 - j v w x Set 7 - y z zz qu Consonant digraphs - ch sh th ng. Vowel digraphs (and trigraphs) ai ee igh oa oo ar or ur ow oi ear air ure er. Reception/ Year 1 Revision
- **Phase 4** - The main challenge in this phase is to help children to blend and segment words with adjacent consonants e.g. **truck, help**. Year 1
- Phase 5 – Alternative graphemes (spellings) for taught sounds. Year 1
- Phase 6 – Reinforces phase 5 and begins to explore spelling rules and conventions e.g. adding -ing and -ed. Year 1 and 2.

Children progress at different rates and we cater for this by teaching the right phase at the right time

What is the main message to parents?

Use phonics as a strategy to aid reading of unfamiliar words. Use reading as an opportunity to consolidate their phonics. This will help spelling too!

What is making the ai sound in train? Can you think of any other ways to spell ai? How many ai sounds can you spot in this book?

But what about when phonics doesn't work?

What about "What"?

What happens when phonics doesn't work?

Use repetition to practise those tricky words.

Use quick writing exercises – link them to spelling.

Use contextual clues

Look at the pictures

Read around the tricky word

What about comprehending the text rather than just reading it?

AF1 – I can break the code and read words carefully, understanding what they mean.

AF2 – I can find answers in the text.

AF3 – I can use clues in the text to read between the lines and discover even more information.

AF4 – I can talk about how the text has been put together and organised.

AF5 – I can explain how the writer has used words for different effects.

AF6 – I can explain the writer's viewpoint and how a text makes the reader feel.

AF7 – I can compare and contrast stories set in different cultures and times.

What questions can I ask my child?

- Why do you think the story is called....?
- How do you think the story will end?
- Which part of the story do you think is the funniest/saddest/most interesting?
- Who is your favourite character and why?
- What's going to happen next?
- How do you think that character is feeling?

Any other top tips?

- Choose a quiet time to read
- Make reading enjoyable, model expression.
- 5-10 Minutes each day is more valuable than 1 hour a week.
- Memorising? Read backwards. Roll a dice. Cut and order sentences.
- Maintain the flow, turn take!
- Be positive
- Regular practice
- Talk about the books
- Variety is important
- Read to your children