

Phonics- progress through the phases

Phase 1

Phase One of Letters and Sounds concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2.

The emphasis during Phase 1 is to ensure children have had lots of experience in hearing and recognising sounds of various kinds, including speech sounds, so they are ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

During Phase 1 children develop auditory discrimination (tuning into sounds), auditory memory and sequencing (listening and remembering sounds) as well as developing vocabulary and language (tuning into sounds)

Children working in Phase 1 focus on the following five areas:

1 . General sound discrimination

- **Environmental-** raising children's awareness of the sounds around them and developing their listening skills, with activities such as going on a listening walk, drumming on different items outside and comparing the sounds, playing sound lotto.
- **Instrumental sounds** - developing children's awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers; learning to distinguish between loud sounds and quiet sounds, long sounds and short sounds, by means of comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.
- **Body percussion-** increasing children's awareness of sounds and rhythms by singing songs and action rhymes, clapping, slapping, jumping, stamping, clicking etc., listening to music and developing a 'sounds vocabulary'.

2. Rhythm and rhyme

- Developing children's appreciation and experiences of rhythm and rhyme in speech with activities including rhyming stories, rhyming bingo, clapping out the syllables in words and odd one out.

3. Alliteration

- Focusing on initial sounds of words, with activities such as I-Spy type games and matching objects which begin with the same sound.

4. Voice sounds

- Distinguishing between different vocal sounds and beginning oral blending and segmenting. Activities include Robbie Robot, where the teacher sounds out the name of the object in a robot voice - /c/-/u/-/p/ cup, with the children joining in.

5. Oral blending and segmenting

The main aim is to develop oral blending and segmenting skills.

To practise **oral blending**, the teacher could say some sounds, such as /c/-/u/-/p/ and see whether the children can pick out a cup from a group of objects. For **segmenting** practise, the teacher could hold up an object such as a sock and ask the children which sounds they can hear in the word *sock*.

Phase 2 (approximately 6 weeks)

- Children learn that phonemes are individual units of sound. The mouth does not have to change its shape to say the sound – e.g. a/b/ck/igh
- Children learn that graphemes are the letters that are used in writing to represent a sound and that a digraph is a grapheme that contains 2 letters
- Children are taught to link letters to sounds. There are nineteen graphemes in this phase

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

- Children progress from the oral blending and segmenting of words to blending and segmenting with letters
- Children will learn to read consonant, vowel, consonant words (called cvc words) e.g. cat/dog and begin to segment the words them for spelling c-a-t using magnetic letters and their own writing
- Children are introduced to two syllable words and simple captions.
- Children learn to recognise high frequency 'tricky' words. These are words that they have to recognise on sight because they are very common words, but the children haven't yet learnt the phonic rules that explain them

the	to	I	no	go
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- Children are introduced to digraphs (two letters that make one sound)
- Rhyming is continued throughout this phase and children will only be moved on when they are secure in their sound recognition and able to verbally blend for reading and segment these sounds to make words
- It is very important that the children learn these sounds in their **pure** form (/t/ not /tuh/, /f/ not /fuh/)

Phase 3 (approximately 12 weeks)

- Children are taught another 25 graphemes, these are mostly digraphs (two letters that make one sound) and trigraphs (three letters that make one sound)

j	z/zz	ng ring	ar farm	ear dear
v	qu	ai rain	or for	air fair

w	ch chip	igh night	ur hurt	ure sure
x	sh ship	oa boat	ow cow	er corner
y	th thin/then	oo boot/look	oi coin	

- Children continue to practice blending for reading and segmenting for spelling using the extra sounds
- Children will learn the letter names
- More tricky words are added for reading and children learn how to spell the phase 2 tricky words:

the	to	I	no	go
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- Children are encouraged throughout the year to practice their fine motor skills for writing, but it is the oral ability to blend and segment that is the most important at this stage
- Parents will be given a pack containing all the graphemes for these phases and for the digraphs and trigraphs there are words to help read the sound

Phase 4 (approximately 6 weeks)

- No new sounds are taught in phase 4.
- Children continue to review all the graphemes, digraphs and trigraphs taught in Phases 2 and 3.
- Learning is developed by teaching the children to blend (for reading) and segment (for spelling) more of the sounds they already know in one word.
- Children learn to read and write word where two consonants appear together in a word, as in **bend**, **damp**, **frog**, **bring**.
- Children learn to read and write polysyllabic words (lunchbox, rooftop, magnetic, chimpanzee)
- Children learn to spell the 'tricky' words 'he, she, we, be, me, was, you, they, all are, my, her'

Phase 5 (approximately 30 weeks)

- Children continue to review all the graphemes, digraphs and trigraphs taught in Phases 2 and 3.
- Children continue to practise reading and writing polysyllabic words (lunchbox, rooftop, magnetic, chimpanzee).
- Children learn new digraphs to recognise in their reading

ay day	oy boy	wh when	a-e make
ou out	ir girl	ph photo	e-e these
ie tie	ue blue	ew new/ blew	i-e like
ea eat	aw saw	oe toe	o-e home
		au Paul	u-e rule

(The digraphs in the final column used to be called 'Magic E'. Now this group of sounds are called 'split vowel digraphs'; digraphs because you need both the vowel in the middle and the 'e' on the end to make the sound, vowel because both letters are vowels, and split because another letter splits the two vowels apart.)

- Children learn to spell the 'tricky' words 'said, so, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, do, when, what, out, oh, their, people, Mr., Mrs., liked, called, asked'
- Children learn to read the words 'water, where, who, again, thought, through, work, mouse, many, laughed, because, different, any, eyes, friends, once, please'.
- Children learn common alternative pronunciations for some graphemes and digraphs

i fin find	ow cow blow	y yes by very
o hot cold	ie tie field	ch chin school ch ef
c cat cent	ea eat bread	ou out shoulder could you
g got giant	er farmer her	
u but put	a hat what	

Phase 6 (approximately 30 weeks)

This phase follows the same format as the earlier phases but the teaching focuses on more complex aspects of spelling and reading, for example, the use of suffixes, longer words, and the introduction of the past tense.

	Suffix	Base word	Base word and suffix
1	s/ es	Singular noun <i>dress, pot, leaf</i>	Plural <i>dresses, pots, leaves</i>
2		Verb (I) <i>eat, drink, push, go</i>	Verb (he, she, it) <i>eats, drinks, pushes, goes</i>
3	ed	Simple present tense <i>want, live, shred</i>	Simple past tense (regular verbs) <i>wanted, lived, shredded</i>
4	ing	Simple present tense <i>hope, hop, cry</i>	Present continuous tense <i>hoping, hopping, crying</i>
5	er	Adjective <i>big, hairy, cold</i>	Comparative adjective <i>bigger, hairier, colder</i>
6		Verb <i>run, read, listen</i>	Noun <i>runner, reader, listener</i>
7	est	Adjective	Superlative

		<i>big, hairy, cold</i>	<i>biggest, hairiest, coldest</i>
8	ness	Adjective <i>happy, kind, cold</i>	Noun (describing state, condition or quality) <i>happiness, kindness, coldness</i>
9	ment	Verb <i>agree, entertain, amaze</i>	Noun (describing condition, result or act of doing something) <i>agreement, entertainment, amazement</i>
10	y	Noun <i>hair, bone</i>	Adjective <i>hairy, bony</i>
11	ly	Adjective <i>kind, loud, sudden</i>	Adverb <i>kindly, loudly, suddenly</i>
12		Noun <i>week, time</i>	Adverb <i>weekly, timely</i>
13	ful	Noun <i>thought, hope, taste, power</i>	Adjective <i>thoughtful, hopeful, tasteful, powerful</i>
14	en	Adjective <i>flat, loose, soft</i>	Verb <i>flatten, loosen, soften</i>
15	less	Noun <i>power, fear, hope, penny</i>	Adjective <i>Powerless, fearless, hopeless, penniless</i>

- Children learn strategies for spelling and reading polysyllabic words e.g. animals, garden, everyone.
- Children learn rules about 'v' at the end of words: **give, live, have, love, above, alive, save, stove.** (**Rev,** is an abbreviation.)
- Children learn that we sometimes shorten words in speech and there is a way to write this and that the apostrophe marks the place where letters are left out. Examples of contracted words include: **I'll, she'll, he'd, they've.**
- Children learn how to use a dictionary/thesaurus
- In handwriting children learn to join to letters without ascenders, for example, **ai, ar, un, ed** and horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, for example, **ou, vi, wi, ing** using common words.