



The Catholic School of Saint Gregory The Great



Helping your child at home

*An activity guide to
support Early Reading and
Phonics*

Contents page

Page 3- Why do we teach children to read?

Page 4- How children learn to read

Page 5- Phonics- the terminology

Page 6- Part 1 and Part 2

Page 6- Part 3

Page 7- Part 4

Page 8- Part 5

Page 9- Sound families

Page 10- Part 6

Page 11, 12- Phonics at home- Jolly actions.

Page 13- useful webpages

Page 14- Getting started

Page 15, 16, 17 and 18- A selection of games to play

Page 19- Information about the Year 1 phonics screening check

Page 20- How to help your child prepare for the phonics screening check.

Why do we teach children to read?

Learning to read is a vital life skill that our children need to acquire at a young age. Children progress through different reading stages and all children will progress through these stages at different rates. Sometimes children progress slowly, sometimes fast and sometimes they plateau for a short while they consolidate their learning. It is often helpful for children to overlearn/repeat their learning to ensure their skills are secure before moving onto next stages. This helps them to build confidence in their abilities.

Reading is not only about segmenting and blending words to actually say a word aloud. It is also about really understanding what they have been reading about. Often, we ask children to repeat reading scheme books so that they can work on their comprehension skills rather than simply reading the words and sentences. If your child repeats a book, please focus upon their comprehension skills. Do this by asking questions that look for simple answers within the text and then more complicated answers which ask their opinion about something that happened in the book, the way a character may be feeling or predict what may happen next. Without these comprehension skills, foundations to their reading ability will be missing and they will find it very difficult to move through later reading development stages inhibiting them from becoming a fluent reader.

Please do not hesitate to come and see me if you have any questions about reading or if you need support in helping your child's comprehension skills.

Kind regards

Mrs Grindle

English Leader

How children learn to read

At The Catholic School of Saint Gregory the Great we teach children to read using a variety of methods. This leaflet is intended to inform parents/carers firstly about how children learn to read and secondly how you can help your child become a confident reader. Confident readers use a variety of strategies in order to read. Children need to be taught these strategies and rehearse them throughout their school life. As children become more fluent in their reading the balance of the strategies change. The strategies listed below do not follow a linear pattern; children use different strategies at different times depending on the texts they read. Here are some of the strategies we use:

Picture clues

A picture book is probably one of the first types of book your child will bring home. Although it may not have any words in it, the pictures focus the child's attention and, with encouragement, they can start to use the pictures to build up a story. When words are included the children can then attach meaning to the words. This is a very important step in helping your child to become an independent reader and it is a strategy, if learnt effectively, they will continue to use.

Phonic clues

It is important for children to know their sounds (phonemes). As they begin to read they learn that either a single letter or a group of letters can make one sound (c/ea/ow). The child can then begin to break words down into phonemes and attempt to read unknown words.

Word recognition

Some words in the English language cannot be read by breaking them down into phonemes. Children learn these words by instant recall and they visualise the pattern and shape of the word. At school this strategy is developed in a variety of ways usually in a game format, bingo, flashcards etc.

Knowledge of content

If a child is reading and understanding a book well, they may be able to 'guess' a word purely by understanding the content of the book and the context in which the unknown word is written. This strategy helps a child to widen their vocabulary and it is useful to then discuss the unknown word so that it may be used again for example, in a child's writing.

Grammatical awareness

When children are reading, they learn and are taught how sentences fit together. They carry out activities including arranging words to fit into a sentence. It is important to point out punctuation to your child when reading and to explain how this affects the way we read a text. As a child's confidence in reading improves, they will start to add expression into their reading.

Aimee Grindle January 2015

The Catholic School of Saint Gregory The Great
Cheltenham

Phonics- The terminology

Phoneme

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

Graphemes

A grapheme is a symbol of a phoneme. It is a letter or group of letters representing a sound.

Segmenting and blending

Segmenting consists of breaking words down into phonemes to spell. Blending consists of building words from phonemes to read. Both skills are important.

Digraph

This is when two letters come together to make a phoneme. For example, /oa/ makes the sound in 'boat' and is also known as a **vowel digraph**. There are also **consonant digraphs**, for example, /sh/ and /ch/.

Consonant clusters.

These are 2 or more consonants, but when put together, each can be heard as individual phonemes.

Trigraph

This is when three letters come together to make one phoneme, for example /igh/.

Split digraph

A digraph in which the two letters are not adjacent – e.g. **make**

Abbreviations

VC, CVC, and CCVC are the respective abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of graphemes in words (e.g. *am* (VC), *Sam* (CVC), *slam* (CCVC), or *each* (VC), *beach* (CVC), *bleach* (CCVC).

Grammar focus

During each 25 minute phonics lesson children are also taught a grammar focus, this remains the same for the whole week and is tested along with spellings on a Friday.

Part 1

Part One concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in part 2. The emphasis during part 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills. Part 1 is divided into seven aspects.

Each aspect contains three strands:

- Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination)
- Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)
- Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)

Part 2

In part 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:

Set 1: s, a, t, p

Set 2: i, n, m, d

Set 3: g, o, c, k

Set 4: ck, e, u, r

Set 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss



The children will begin to learn to blend and segment to help begin reading and spelling. This will begin with simple words e.g. sat, tag, kick, get, mug, fun.

Alongside this, children are introduced to tricky words. These are the words that are irregular. This means that phonics cannot be applied to the reading and spelling of these words.

The tricky words introduced in part 2 are:

to	the	no	go	I
but	him	get	up	had
of	into	off		

Part 3

By the time children reach part 3, they will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in part 2. Over the twenty four weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, thirty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

Set 6: j, v, w, x

Set 7: y, z, zz, qu

Consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng

Vowel digraphs: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar,

or, ur, ow, oi, ear, ure, er, or,

Grammar focus:

n sound e.g. before a k- know, know

v at the end of word e.g. live, give, have

tch sound e.g. catch, watch, match

syllables in words



Sounds	Word example
j	jam
v	vet
w	win
x	box
y	yes
z	zip
zz	buzz
qu	quick
ch	chop

Sounds	Word example
sh	shin
th	thick
ng	song
ai	train
igh	sight
oa	boat
oi	coil
oo (long)	boot
ee	tree

Sounds	Word example
oo (short)	cook
ow	now
ar	star
air	hair
ear	hear
er	term
ur	curl
or	fork
ure	pure

Tricky words:

we	me	be	was	no	go
my	you	they	her	all	are
he	she	her	went	from	just
help	children	it's	said	have	so
do	some	come			

By part 4, children will be able to represent each of 42 phonemes with a grapheme. They will blend phonemes to read CVC words and segment CVC words for spelling. They will also be able to read two syllable words that are simple. They will be able to read all the tricky words learnt so far and will be able to spell some of them. This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases and introduces consonant clusters as well as prefixes and suffixes.



Grammar focus: un prefix e.g. unkind, untie.

Compound words: football, laptop

adding s and es suffix e.g. babies, pennies, trees

ore and are at the end of words e.g. share, score, before

Tricky words:

said	so	she	he	have	like
some	come	were	there	little	one
they	all	are	do	when	out
what	my	her	can	get	dad
had	big	him	not	got	mum
but	put	a	an	at	if
in	it	on	up	of	is
as	his	will	for	look	too
he	we	me	be	this	that
then	them	with	you	how	down
my	her	was	will		

Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes, as well as graphemes they already know. They will begin to learn to choose the appropriate grapheme when spelling.

New graphemes for reading:

Sound	Word example	Sound	Word example	Sound	Word example	Sound	Word example
ay	day	oy	boy	wh	when	a_e	make
ou	out	ir	girl	ph	photo	e_e	these
ie	tie	ue	blue	ew	new	i_e	like
ea	eat	aw	saw	oe	toe	o_e	home
				au	Paul	u_e	rule

Grammar focus: ing, er, ed, ey, el, le suffixes

wr sound e.g. write, wrote, written

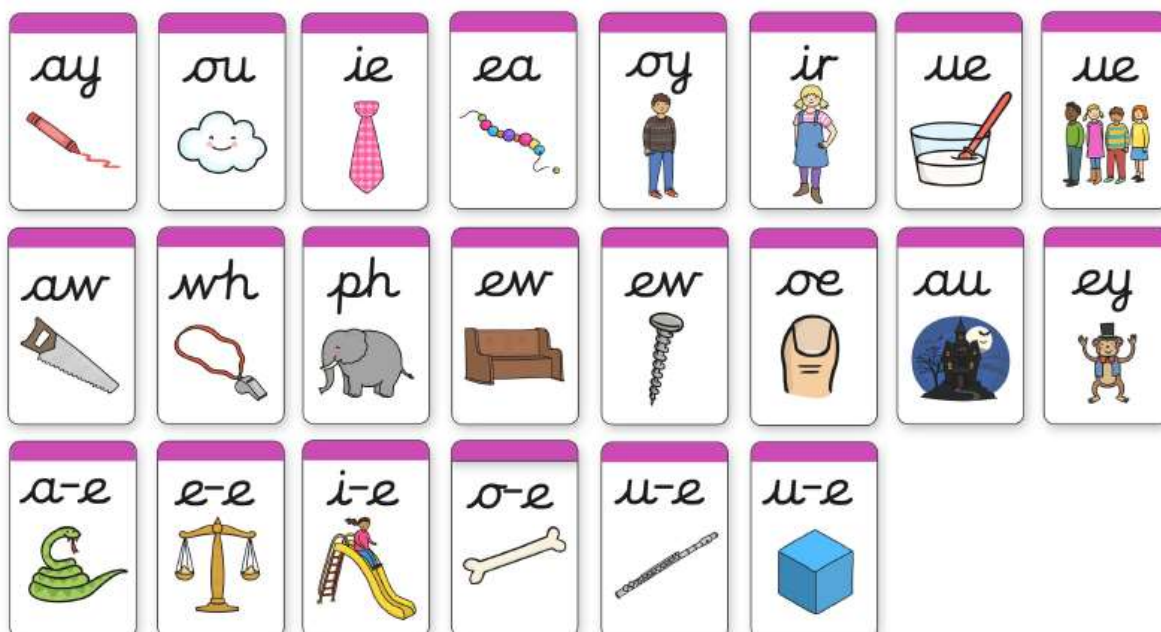
s sound as c e.g. race, ice, lace

words ending with tion e.g. motion, potion, station

words ending with ly e.g. July, reply.

Tricky words:

oh	their	people	Mr	Mrs	looked
called	asked	water	where	who	again
thought	through	work	mouse	many	laughed
because	different	any	eyes	friends	once
please					



Sound families

During part 5, children are taught alternative spellings, we call these sound families.

My Sound Families

My < Family Sound Strip 	My <ch Family Sound Strip 	My f Family Sound Strip
My j Family Sound Strip 	My < Family Sound Strip 	My n Family Sound Strip
My ng Family Sound Strip 	My r Family Sound Strip 	My < Family Sound Strip
My <h Family Sound Strip 	My < Family Sound Strip 	My < Family Sound Strip
My < Family Sound Strip 	My < Family Sound Strip 	My < Family Sound Strip

My Sound Families

My ee Family Sound Strip 	My igh Family Sound Strip 	My oa Family Sound Strip
My oo Family Sound Strip 	My oo Family Sound Strip 	My ar Family Sound Strip
My ot Family Sound Strip 	My ur Family Sound Strip 	My ow Family Sound Strip
My oi Family Sound Strip 	My ear Family Sound Strip 	My air Family Sound Strip
My ure Family Sound Strip 	My er Family Sound Strip 	My o Family Sound Strip

Part 6

In phase 6, the focus is on learning spelling rules for word endings (these are known as suffixes). The children will learn how words change when you add certain letters. There are 19 different suffixes taught:

Week 1 suffix s and es

Week 2 suffix es, ies, ied

Week 3 suffix ed

Week 4 suffix ied

Week 5 suffix pped and ped

Week 6 suffix ing

Week 7 suffix ing (removing/ adding a letter)

Week 8 suffix ing (removing/ adding a letter)

Week 9 suffix ing (removing/ adding a letter)

Week 10 suffix li and ily

Week 11 suffix iest, ily, ier, looked and called

Week 12 suffix ful

Week 13 dge at the end of words edge, sledge, wedge

Week 14 less at the end of words

Week 15: ness at the end of words

Week 16: ment at the end of word s

Week 17 Homophones

Week 18 Contractions (didn't can't won't)

Week 19 Possessive apostrophe

Phase 6 Word Cards - suffixes -ing, -ed, -s, -er, -est, -y, -en



Phase 6 Word Cards - suffixes -ing, -ed, -s, -er, -est, -y, -en



Tips for teaching your child the sounds:

- ◆ It is important for a child to learn lower case or small letters rather than capital letters at first. Most early books and games use lower case letters and your child will learn these first at school. Obviously you should use a capital letter when required, such as at the beginning of the child's name, eg. **Paul**.
- ◆ When you talk about letters to your child, remember to use the letter sounds: **a buh cuh duh e ...** rather than the alphabet names of the letters: **ay bee see dee ee** . The reason for this is that sounding out words is practically impossible if you use the alphabet names. eg. **cat, would sound like: see ay tee**
- ◆ At St Gregory's we use the Jolly Phonics actions to teach the phonemes, below is a description of each of the actions...

- s Weave hand in an s shape, like a snake, and say ssssss.
- a Wiggle fingers above elbow as if ants crawling on you and say a, a, a.
- t Turn head from side to side as if watching tennis and say t, t, t.
- i Pretend to be a mouse by wriggling fingers at end of nose and squeak i, i, i.
- p Pretend to puff out candles and say p, p, p.
- n Make a noise, as if you are a plane – hold arms out and say nnnnnn.
- c k Raise hands and snap fingers as if playing castanets and say ck, ck, ck.
- e Pretend to tap an egg on the side of a pan and crack it into the pan, saying eh, eh, eh.
- h Hold hand in front of mouth panting as if you are shaking out of breath and say h, h, h
- r Pretend to be a puppy holding a piece of rag, shaking head from side to side, and say rrrrrr.
- m Rub tummy as if seeing tasty food and say mmmmmm.
- d Beat hands up and down as if playing a drum and say d, d, d.
- g Spiral hand down, as if water going down the drain, and say g, g, g.
- o Pretend to turn light switch on and off and say o, o, o, o.
- u Pretend to be putting up an umbrella and say u, u, u.
- l Pretend to lick a lollipop and say l, l, l, l, l.

- f Let hands gently come together as if toy fish deflating, and say f, f, f, f, f, f.
- b Pretend to hit a ball with a bat and say b, b, b.
- ai Cup hand over ear and say ai, ai, ai
- j Pretend to wobble on a plate and say j, j, j.
- oa Bring hand over mouth as if you have done something wrong and say oh!
- ie Stand to attention and salute, saying ie ie.
- ee or Put hands on head as if ears on a donkey and say eeyore, eeyore.
- z Put arms out at sides and pretend to be a bee, saying zzzzzz.
- w Blow on to open hand, as if you are the wind, and say wh, wh, wh.
- ng Imagine you are a weightlifter, and pretend to lift a heavy weight above your head, saying ng...
- v Pretend to be holding the steering wheel of a van and say vvvvvv.
- oo OO Move head back and forth as if it is the cuckoo in a cuckoo clock, saying u, oo; u, oo
- y Pretend to be eating a yoghurt and say y, y, y.
- x Pretend to take an x-ray of someone with an x-ray gun and say ks, ks, ks.
- ch Move arms at sides as if you are a train and say ch, ch, ch.
- sh Place index finger of lips and say sh sh sh.
- th th Pretend to be naughty clowns and stick out tongue a little for the th, and further for the th sounds (this and thumb).
- qu Make a duck's beak with your hands and say qu, qu, qu.
- ou Pretend your finger is a needle and prick thumb saying ou, ou, ou.
- oi Cup hands around mouth and shout to another boat saying oi! Ship ahoy!
- ue Point to people around you and say you, you, you.
- er Roll hands over each other like a mixer and say er er er.
- ar Open mouth wide and say ah. (UK English). Flap hands as if a seal, and say ar, ar, ar. (US English).

Useful webpages

<http://www.mrthorne.com> - A fantastic place to find all of the sounds from each phase being correctly pronounced.

www.glosenglish.org

www.lettersandsounds.com

www.communication4all.co.uk Lots of fantastic free resources

www.focusonphonics.co.uk

www.outoftheark.co.uk- musical resources

www.tts-group.co.uk

www.OxfordPrimary.co.uk

www.collinsbigcat.com

www.communicationcookbook.org.uk

<http://www.bigbrownbear.co.uk/>

<http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html>

www.phonicsplay.co.uk-

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/magickey/adventures/index.shtml>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks1bitesize/literacy/phonics/index.shtml>

<http://www.Roythezebra.com>

<http://www.Fruitphonics.com>

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk>

<http://topmarks.co.uk>

<http://twinkl.co.uk>

www.kenttrustweb.org.uk

Getting Started

Sharing books - Always remember that we teach phonics to help our children learn to read and write and in order to do this successfully they need to love books! The best way to help your child is to read as many books as possible in both English and your child's home language. Read anything that your child is interested in (including magazines, menus, etc). You don't have to read all (or any) of the words each time. Remember to use silly voices, make sound effects, pull faces, act things out, talk about what you can see, talk about what you both think and feel and have fun!

Unofficial homework - Encourage your child to tell you what they have done at school today. Sharing new songs and rhymes is something that you can easily do when you are busy with something else e.g. cooking, cleaning, driving in the car.

Give everything a name - Build your child's vocabulary in both English and their home language by talking about interesting words and objects. For example, "Look at that aeroplane! Those are the wings of the plane. Why do you think they are called wings?"

General tips to support reading

Once is never enough! - Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems as well as their school reading scheme book. Re-reading helps children read more quickly and accurately.

Dig deeper into the story - Ask your child questions about the story you've just read. Say something like, "Why do you think he did that?"

Take control of the television - It's difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a distraction free activity.

Be patient - When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind to child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.

Pick books that are at the right level - Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.

I read to you, you read to me - Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Children enjoy this special time with their parents.

One more time with feeling - When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often children are so busy figuring out a word they lose the meaning of what they've just read.

Games to play with your Foundation Stage / Key Stage One child

Inside games

Bingo

Pass the parcel to music – pick out a sound and read it

Golden River- choose a sound and the children call out words, if their word contains your sound they can cross the golden river.

Sounds tennis – give them a sound and see how many words with that sound they can fire between them and a partner

Create your own wordsearch containing words with the chosen sound in.

Reading champion – list of words on a piece of paper. They have to try to read all of the words their partner in a given time.

Countdown – time children to write as many words as they can in any given time

Hangman style game

Snowballs – all children are given a word. If it is correct spelling they throw it like a snowball into the ✓bin, if not they throw it into the ✗bin.

<http://www.mrthorne.com/>

Tongue twisters using same sounds in the sentence



Outside games

Sound relays- children are split into teams and given various alternative spellings on large pieces of paper, they have to run and write words 1 by 1 with the sounds they have been given in. Time them for a more competitive aspect.

Throwing the ball/hot potato- Choose a sound and as the children catch the ball they have to say a word with that sound in.

Writing with chalk/ paintbrushes and water/ shaving foam- on the floor outside, walls etc.

Parachute- hide sounds underneath and run in to get the 'g' sound.

Throw a dice and the children need to read the sentence written on the side that lands facing upwards.



Oral Blending games

Robotic talking - Words are made up from sounds and children need to be able to hear these sounds individually. Sometimes when you are playing you can say words as if you were a robot (saying the sounds separately) and see if your child can work out what you are saying. Stick to short simple words that only have a few sounds in them. Make sure you are saying the letter sounds (p-i-g) not the letter names (pee-eye-gee). E.g.

Pass that p-i-g to me.

Sit d-ow-n.

Point to your t-ee-th.

I spy – Say the rhyme ‘I spy with my little eye something beginning with _____’ allow your child plenty of opportunities to guess what you have chosen, for example, ‘something beginning with **t**’ could be a tree, toy, tent or train.

Point out print everywhere - Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find familiar words on each outing such as ‘McDonald’s’, ‘Coke’ or ‘Family Mart. .

Playing with words – Encourage your child to sound out the word as you change it from mat to fat to sat; from sat to sag to sap; and from sap to sip.

Phoneme recognition games

Looking for letters – Ask your child to look for English letters whilst you are out and about. Can they find letters from their own name, letters they have learnt in school or letters that specific words begin with?

Fast letter sorting - You will need:

A large piece of paper with three hoops drawn on

12 small pieces of card with letters written on (4 sets of 3 letters)

Choose 3 sets of letters – 2 which the child knows and one new one. Spread the letter tiles out on the table making sure they are all the correct way up. Encourage your child to sort the letters into the correct hoop using both hands, saying each letter as they move it.

Letter discrimination You will need: A 3x3 grid

Write the letter you are learning with your child onto half of the spaces (for example **c**). Fill the rest with other letters. Ask your child to cover all the **c**’s with a counter as quick as they can.

Ladder letters

You will need: A ladder template

Make a pile of letter tiles (use a mixture of known and new letters). Place a counter at the bottom of the ladder and move up a rung for every letter they can read correctly. This game can be changed to covering spots on a ladybird, petals on a flower – go with your child’s interests if possible.

Letter sound bingo. You will need: A 3x3 grid for each player & counters or coins

Write some of the letters into the spaces on each card, making each card slightly different. The 'bingo caller' says each letter in turn and the players cover the letter up. The winner is first to fill their board. To make this game easier for new readers, show them the letter for them to match.

Tricky word games

Bingo – You will need: A board for each player and counters or coins

The list of words your child is currently learning, for example their spelling list

Write some of the words into the spaces on each card, making each card slightly different. The 'bingo caller' says each word in turn and the players cover the words up. The winner is first to fill their board. To make this game easier for new readers, show them the word for them to match.

Matching pairs – You will need: Small pieces of card or paper with the words your child is currently learning written on each. Each word will need to be written twice so you can search for a matching pair. Turn all the cards face down on the table. And take turns to turn over two. When a matching pair is found that player can keep them. The winner is the person with the most pairs at the end of the game.

Snap - Make a set of cards with words your child is learning written on. Ensure that each word is written on two separate cards. Shuffle up the cards and share them out. Each player takes turns to turn over their card, put it down and read the word. If it matches the previous card played, the first person to notice shouts 'snap!' and wins the pile. This game is best used to practise words your child knows fairly well, rather than new ones, as it's quite fast-paced.

Once your child knows a word reliably, you can take it out of the current pack of cards and bring in a new word. Every so often, play a game with the 'old' cards, so that your child doesn't forget them. It's a good idea to try and discard a known word and add a new word every day, once your child is getting the hang of learning new words.

Year 1 phonics screening check

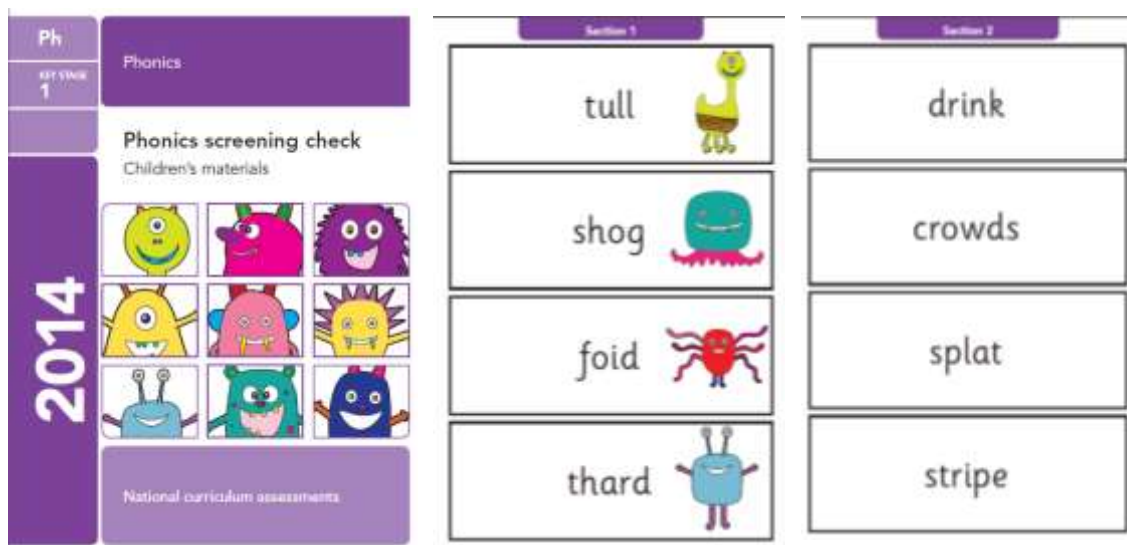
The Phonics Screening Check was developed to show how well your child can use the phonics skills they've learned up to the end of Year 1, and to identify students who need extra phonics help. The Department for Education defines the checks as "short, light-touch assessments" that take about four to nine minutes to complete.

The checks consist of **40 words and non-words** that your child will be asked to read one-on-one with a teacher. Non-words (or nonsense words, or pseudo words) are a collection of letters that will follow phonics rules your child has been taught, but don't mean anything – your child will need to read these with the correct sounds to show that they understand the phonics rules behind them.

The 40 words and non-words are divided into two sections – one with simple word structures of three or four letters, and one with more complex word structures of five or six letters. The teacher administering the check with your child will give them a few practice words to read first – including some non-words – so they understand more about what they have to do. Each of the non-words is presented with a picture of a monster / alien, as if the word were their name (and so your child doesn't think the word is a mistake because it doesn't make sense!).

Schools will administer the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check the week beginning 15 June 2015. All children in Year 1 must take the Screening Check. Your child will be scored against a national standard, and the main result will be whether or not they fall below, within or above this standard. In 2013 and 2014 the "pass threshold" was 32, which means children had to read at least 32 words out of 40 correctly. In 2015 the threshold mark will be communicated to schools at the end of June, after the test has been taken, so that teachers can mark the Check.

You will be told how your child did, but schools' results will not be published. If your child's score falls below the standard, they will be given extra phonics help and can re-take the Phonics screening check in Year 2.



How can I help my child prepare?

You can help your child prepare for their Phonics Screening Check by going over the phonics they've learned in Foundation Stage and Year 1. Read new books and stories with them where they will be introduced to new words that they'll have to sound out. Practise reading 'real words' and 'alien words', this will help the children to understand that the 'alien words' do not need to make sense.

There are lots of resources to help you practise these skills at home, see the list below for information...

www.twinkl.co.uk



www.phonicsplay.co.uk

