

Phonics

Phonics in EYFS and Year 1:



Nursery: children are taught to say the sounds of letters with the help of mnemonics, to blend the sounds into words and read simple 'blending books'.

Reception: In Reception your son/daughter will learn the sounds below by sight. They will also learn how to blend them together to read words e.g. c-a-t = cat.

Set 1: To begin, we learn a sound a day. We use pure sounds so that your son/daughter will be able to blend the sounds into words more easily. Letter-sound pictures are used to help your son/daughter learn these sounds quickly. E.g. mmaisie mmmountain is morphed into m and t-t-t-tower is morphed into t.

Set 1 sounds are taught in the following order: m a s d t, i n p g o, c k u b, f e l h sh, r j v y w, th z ch qu x ng nk.

Once they have learnt the first 5 sounds we teach them to blend them. When we say words in pure sounds we call it 'Fred Talk'. E.g. p-a-n, c-l-a-p.

We never use letter names at this early stage.

When teaching a speed sound we either have to 'stretch' or 'bounce' it. Please see video for example.

These first sounds should all be stretched slightly.

Try to avoid saying uh after each one. E.g. /mm/ not muh, /ss/ not suh, /ff/ not fuh.

Please see video for guidance.

m – mmmmmmountain (keep lips pressed together hard)

s – sssssnake (keep teeth together and hiss – unvoiced)

n – nnnnnnet (keep tongue behind teeth)

f – ffffflower (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out sharply – unvoiced)

l – llllleg (keep pointed curled tongue behind teeth).

r – rrrrrrobot (say rrr as if you are growling)

v – vvvvvulture (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out gently)

z – zzzzzig zzzzag (keep teeth together and make a buzzing sound)

th – thhhhank you (stick out tongue and breathe out sharply)

sh – shhh (make a shhh noise as though you are telling somebody to be quiet!)

ng – thinnnnngg on a strinnnngg (curl your tongue at the back of your throat)

nk – I think I stink (make a piggy oink noise without the oi! nk nk nk)

These next sounds cannot be stretched. Make the sound as short as possible avoiding uh at the end of the sound:

t – (tick tongue behind the teeth – unvoiced)

p - (make distinctive p with lips – unvoiced)

k – (make sharp click at back of throat)

c - as above h – (say h as you breathe sharply out – unvoiced)

ch - (make a short sneezing sound)

x – (say a sharp c and add s – unvoiced)

You will find it harder to avoid saying uh at the end of these sounds.

d – (tap tongue behind the teeth)

g – (make soft sound in throat)

b – (make a short, strong b with lips)

j – (push lips forward)

y – (keep edges of tongue against teeth)

w – (keep lips tightly pursed)

qu – (keep lips pursed as you say cw – unvoiced)

The short vowels should be kept short and sharp:

a: a-a-a (open mouth wide as if to take a bite of an apple)

e: e-e-e (release mouth slightly from a position)

i: i-i-i (make a sharp sound at the back of the throat – smile)

o: o-o-o (push out lips; make the mouth into o shape)

u: u-u-u (make a sound in the throat)

Speed Sounds Sets 2 and 3: The long vowels

Once your child knows all Set 1 sounds by sight and sound and uses them to blend to read words, we start teaching Set 2 initially and then Set 3 long vowel sounds. They will need to learn that most vowel sounds have more than one spelling.

Green Words: 'Green words' are words which your child will be able to 'go ahead' and read as they are made up of the speed sounds that s/he will have learnt.

Red words: These words are not easily decodable and challenge words to extend children's vocabulary. They are learnt by sight, for example, my, said, the.

Handwriting- In Nursery and Reception, we use mnemonics (memory pictures) to help children visualise the letter when writing it down.

at	mad
sad	dad
sat	mat

I
you
said

