



CONONLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL
Inspiring and Challenging Our Children

Cononley Primary School

Letters and Sounds Workshop EYFS



Aims of workshop

To outline the main principles of 'Letters and Sounds'.

To demonstrate some of the teaching strategies we use.

To provide information about the early stages of reading and writing in Reception.

Introduction

- In EYFS and Key Stage 1, we focus on teaching children to decode (using phonics) and read fluently, as this makes reading more enjoyable. Research has shown that children who read for pleasure do better at school.
- Phonics is recognised as the most successful approach for the teaching of reading as it is the key to unlocking the alphabetic code. It is also vital for the teaching of spelling. A high quality phonics programme is crucial for teaching early reading and spelling.
- At Cononley Primary School we teach 'Synthetic Phonics' using the Letters and Sounds programme. Synthetic Phonics is a way of teaching reading and spelling.
- The DfE is currently validating a number of Systematic Synthetic Phonics programmes. During Autumn 2021, we will review the options and choose a new Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme to replace Letters and Sounds.



Letters and Sounds has 6 phases taught in EYFS, Yr1 and Yr2. Within Reception we work from phase 1 to phase 4.

Phase 1

Your child should have had experience of this phase at nursery or their pre school-setting

Your child will have learnt to:

- Have fun with sounds
- Listen carefully
- Develop their vocabulary
- Speak confidently to you, other adults and children
- Tune into sounds
- Listen and remember sounds
- Talk about sounds
- Understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds



Phase 1 in detail

- Phase 1 is made up of 7 different areas:
 - Environmental sounds
 - Instrumental sounds
 - Body percussion
 - Rhythm and rhyme
 - Alliteration (words that begin with the same sound) **big blue bouncing ball**
 - Voice sounds
 - Oral blending and segmenting



Phase 2

- This begins for all children in Reception.
- Children begin to formally learn the sounds in the English language (**phonemes**) and the letters that represent them (**graphemes**).
- Phonics sessions are fun and interactive involving lots of speaking, listening and games.
- Phonics sessions happen daily.



Not all children will learn at the same rate!

- Your child should be supported *whatever* their rate of learning
- By rapidly introducing all 44 phonemes children are all exposed to all the phonemes to aid both reading and writing.
- There is a very close link between *difficulty with phonics* and *hearing*, so if your child is making progress more slowly than expected, it is worth having their hearing checked.
- If you feel your child has difficulties with speech sounds Skipton Hospital and have monthly speech and language 'drop ins' which are really useful and informative and can give you games and activities to do at home.



The key to ALL phonic work is the ability to 'split up' and 'put together' different sounds

Decoding for Reading

- Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sounds (phonemes) they represent. Children then start to read words by blending the phonemes together (synthesising) to make a word.

n-e-t – net / s-o-ck - sock




Encoding for Spelling

- To encode or spell words, children are taught to identify the phonemes in spoken words first. This is also referred to as ‘segmenting’ spoken words. Then they write the graphemes (letters) that represent the phonemes.
- hat h-a-t / can c-a-n



Key Vocabulary

Term	Definition	Term used with children
Pure sounds	The correct pronunciation of phonemes so that children can more easily blend to read words.	Pure sounds
Phoneme	The smallest unit of sound in a word.	Sound or phoneme
Grapheme	grapheme is a letter or letters that spell a sound in a word.	Letters or graphemes
Digraph	A combination of two letters representing one sound, as in 'ai' and 'ph'.	Digraph <i>'2 letters 1 sound'</i>
Consonant digraph	Two consonants which make one sound e.g. sh, ch, th	Consonant digraph (From Year One)
Vowel digraph	A digraph in which at least one of the letters is a vowel e.g. oa, ar	Vowel digraph (From Year One)
Split digraph	A digraph that is split by a consonant. Usually a long vowel sound e.g. 'a-e' (cake), u-e (rule).	Split digraph Marked with a curve under the split digraph 
Trigraph	Three letters which together make one sound e.g. igh	Trigraph <i>'2 letters 1 sound'</i>
Blending	The process of using phonics for reading. Children identify and synthesise the phonemes in order to make a word. E.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap.	Blending <i>'blend the sounds'</i>
Segmenting	Separating words into their constituent phonemes to spell.	Segmenting
Adjacent consonant	Two or three letters making two or three sounds. E.g. the first three letters of strap are adjacent consonants. Previously known as the consonant cluster.	n/a
Nonsense words	Tool to assess phonetic decoding - shows that the word hasn't been memorised or learnt by sight.	Nonsense or alien words
High frequency words	The most common words used in English- a combination of phonetically decodable words and common exception words.	High frequency words
Common exception words	Words in which the English spelling code works in an unusual or uncommon way e.g. the, you, was.	Tricky words
Cvc, ccvcc	The abbreviations used for consonant- vowel consonant and consonant- consonant-vowel - consonant- consonant words, used to describe the order of sounds.	n/a
Morphology	An understanding that prefixes and suffixes can be added or taken away to change the meaning of a word. Can make spelling of complex words or spelling exceptions easier for students to remember. It enables children to identify root words and build word families effectively.	n/a



Learning the phonemes

- Children will learn the phonemes (sounds) for a number of letters (graphemes) quite rapidly.
- They will also learn that some phonemes are made up of more than one letter,
eg: 'sh' as in ship 'ss' as in kiss 'ck' as in kick
- We use actions to help to remember the phonemes.



Saying the sounds

- Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (phonemes) correctly to make blending easier
- Sounds should be sustained where possible (eg, **s**ssss, **m**mmmm, **f**ffff)
- ‘Uh’ sounds after consonants should be reduced where possible (eg, try to avoid saying ‘m-uh’, ‘c-uh’ ‘s-uh’)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTe5_Em0BHQ



The order of phonemes/graphemes

Order of phonemes/graphemes introduced in phase 2 and 3

Phase 2	Phase 3
s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d g, o, c, k e, u, r, ck h, b, f/ff, l/ll, ss	j, v, w, x y, z, zz, qu sh, ch, th, ng ai, ee, igh, oa oo, ar, or, ur ow, oi, ear, air ure, er
Phase 2 will have been taught by October half term.	Phase 3 will have been taught by the end of January.

VC and CVC words

- C = consonant V = vowel
- VC words are those consisting of a vowel and then a consonant, eg: *at, in, up*
- CVC words follow the pattern consonant, vowel, consonant, eg: *cat, dog, pet*
- Words such as *tick, bell, chip, fish* also count as CVC words. Although they contain four letters, they only have three sounds.

t-i-ck

b-e-ll

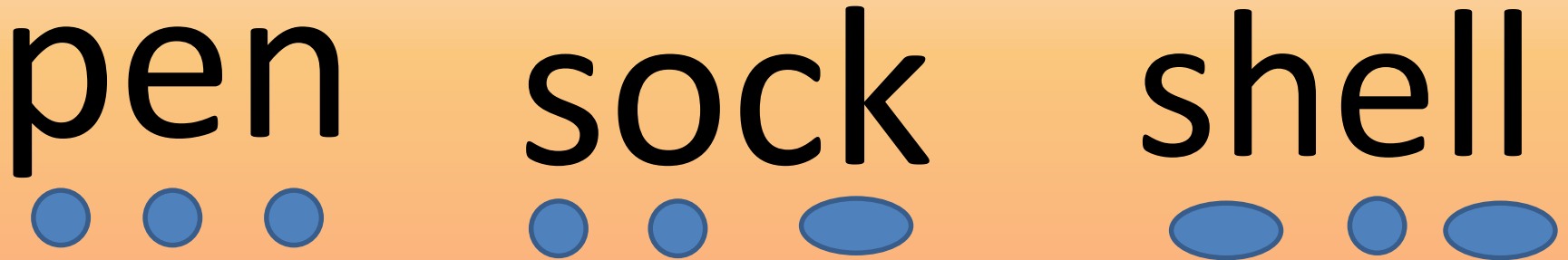
ch-i-p

f-i-sh



Sound Buttons

all these words have 3 phonemes/sounds



Note how the elongated sound button represents sounds that are made up with more than 1 letter.

Segmenting for spelling

- Children will put together sounds/phonemes to make words
- At first children will push together magnetic letters or letter tiles
- We use 'phoneme frames' to remind children how many sounds/phonemes they need

Phoneme frames

n

e

t

l

i

ck

sh

i

p

High Frequency Words

- These words are the most commonly used words in the English language
- Your child will bring home lists of words that need to be recognised *on sight*. Found at the back of their reading record e.g. **in, on, up, dad, mum, that, this**

Tricky Words

- Your child will also learn several tricky words; those that cannot be sounded out eg: **the, to, I, go, no**. We have actions to go with these words.

Please do not rush these words –they take time to learn!



Phase 3

- The main individual letter phonemes have now been learnt, and children are reading CVC words independently
- Phase 3 teaches children to learn the graphemes (written sounds), made up of more than one letter – known as **digraphs** eg: **'oa'** as in **boat**, **'ee'** as in **leek**, **'ur'** as in **church**, **'igh'** as in **light**
- Your child will also learn all the letter names in the alphabet and how to form them correctly



Sound buttons and phoneme frames

In phase 3 all words still have **3** phonemes/sounds

king toad night

The words 'king', 'toad', and 'night' are shown with phoneme frames. 'king' has two small blue circles under 'k' and 'n', and a larger blue oval under 'ing'. 'toad' has a small blue circle under 't', a larger blue oval under 'oa', and a small blue circle under 'd'. 'night' has a small blue circle under 'n', a larger blue oval under 'igh', and a small blue circle under 't'.

p ar k

The word 'park' is shown in a blue box divided into three sections: 'p', 'ar', and 'k'.

c oi n

The word 'coin' is shown in a blue box divided into three sections: 'c', 'oi', and 'n'.

High Frequency Words and Tricky words

- Children will be expected to read a greater number of high frequency words and tricky words and begin to spell some of them
- Children will begin to write down words
- Children will begin to write words in simple phrases and sentences



Phase 4

- Children will have learnt all 44 phonemes and have had experience of reading and writing words with 3 sounds/phonemes
- Phase 4 simply extends all knowledge to words with 4 sounds/phonemes
- CVCC words eg – **help, lamp, pond, chest, boast, chunk**
- CCVC words eg – **stop, swim, clap, sniff, frog, creep, train, crash, sport, growl**

Sound buttons and phoneme frames

In phase 4 all words have 4 phonemes/sounds

help



frog



train



s	w	i	m
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ch	e	s	t
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p	o	n	d
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How can you help?

- Sing an alphabet song together
- Play '**I spy**' reinforcing initial sounds
- Play sound talk games at home encouraging listening to, as well as making sounds (eg f-or-k, s-p-oo-n, c-a-t, sh-ee-p, d-o-g, c-ow, c-a-rr-o-t, l-e-m-o-n, t-r-ee, c-l-ou-d, c-ar)
- Play with magnetic letters (or homemade letter tiles) making real or made up words
- Praise your child for trying out words
- Create fun phonic games with a timer
- Play matching games with words or letters
- Spot letters/words around the environment or in books
- Act as a role model for both reading and writing
- Practise high frequency words and tricky words regularly at home
- Share reading books everyday – 5 minutes everyday is FAR more beneficial than 20 minutes in 1 block!
- Encourage any writing at home – birthday cards, shopping lists, stories...



- Be patient!
- Don't worry if they get it wrong sometimes!
- These sounds and words are hard to remember and need plenty of practice.
- You will be surprised how quickly your child will pick it all up.
- Not all children will be as confident as others using their phonic knowledge but they will ALL have had experience of phase 2, 3 and 4 by the time they move into year 1.
- Make it fun and enjoyable. If reading and writing become a chore children can quickly be 'turned off'.



- Children will be using their phonics skills through reading and writing activities every day at school.
- To begin with, an adult will listen to your child read individually. Once confident we will move on to group reading led by an adult three times each week.
- Reading books will be changed on MONDAYS.
- Weekly phonics will be sent home on FRIDAYS to practice reading and writing



Word Collectors

This year we will be really promoting the use of new and extended vocabulary and encourage you to do the same at home too.



Language development takes high priority in EYFS. It underpins all development... and successful writers must first be successful talkers!

In the coming weeks we will be introducing this to the children and we will have an interactive display developing all year in the classroom.



Questions Questions Questions!



Again in order to promote language development we will be focussing on **asking** and **answering** questions.

We will encourage children to ask a range of **appropriate** questions and also answer these carefully.

Children often find it hard to ask and answer questions **appropriately**.



Any questions?

We hope you have found this workshop useful. Please fill in the evaluation form with any comments and return to school. This will be useful for future workshops.

😊 Thank you for coming! 😊