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| Phonics Glossary | |
| Phonics | Phonics teaches children to listen to and identify the sounds that make up words. This helps them to read and write words. |
| ****Phoneme**** | The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words. |
| Grapheme | A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be one letter or a group of letters which represent one single sound (phoneme) e.g. s, ch, igh, ough |
| ****GPC**** | This is short for ‘Grapheme - Phoneme Correspondence’. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa. |
| Pure Sound | Pronouncing each letter sound clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end e.g. ‘f’ not ‘fuh.’ |
| ****Digraph**** | A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound (phoneme) e.g. ee, oa, ay.  There are different types of digraph:  • Vowel digraph: a digraph in which at least one of the letters is a vowel, for example; b(oa)t or d(ay).  • Consonant digraph: two consonants which can go together, for example (sh)op or (th)in.  • Split digraph (historically called magic e): two letters, which work as a pair to make one sound, but are separated within the word e.g. a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e. For example c(a)k(e) or p(i)n(e). |
| ****Trigraph**** | A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme)e.g. ear, air, igh, dge, tch. |
| ****Oral Blending**** | This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words. |
| Oral Segmenting | This is the act of hearing the whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them. |
| ****Blending**** | This involves looking at written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading. |
| ****Segmenting**** | **This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.** |
| Consonant | Most letters of the alphabet (excluding the vowels: a,e,i,o,u) |
| Vowel | The letters a, e, i, o, u |
| CVC words | Abbreviation used for ‘consonant-vowel-consonant’ words, used to describe the order of sounds. Some examples of CVC words are: cat, pen, top, chat (because ch makes one sound).  Other similar abbreviations include:  • VC words e.g. on, is, it.  • CCVC words e.g. trap and black.  • CVCC words e.g. milk and fast. |
| Common Exception Words | Words where the usual spelling rule doesn’t apply. As children come across unfamiliar spelling and sound patterns in tricky words, their phonics knowledge won’t always help them to sound out and read the word. E. g. said, the, because. |
| Tricky Words | Another term used for ‘Common Exception Words’. |
| Sound Buttons | Sound buttons are little spots or circles that can be placed or written below sounds in words to help children with reading skills. Each sound button denotes an individual phoneme. |
| Syllable | A syllable is a single, unbroken sound of a spoken (or written) word. Syllables usually contain a [vowel](https://www.theschoolrun.com/what-are-vowels-and-consonants) and accompanying [consonants](https://www.theschoolrun.com/what-are-vowels-and-consonants). Sometimes syllables are referred to as the ‘beats’ of spoken language. Syllables differ from phonemes in that a [phoneme](https://www.theschoolrun.com/what-is-a-phoneme) is the smallest unit of sound; the number of syllables in a word is unrelated to the number of phonemes it contains. |
| Prefix | A prefix is a word part added to the beginning of a word that changes that word’s meaning.  tidy à untidy |
| Suffix | A suffix is a word part added to the end of a word that changes the word's meaning.  Play --> playing |
| Phonics Phases 1-6 | **Phase 1:** This is split into 7 aspects, which focus on hearing and talking about environmental sounds and letter sounds.  **Phase 2:** Learning 19 letters of the alphabet, along with the first 5 ‘tricky words' and using them to read and spell simple words and captions.  **Phase 3:** Learning the remaining letters of the alphabet, some 2 and 3 letter digraphs, along with the next set of ‘tricky words’. Reading and writing captions and sentences.  **Phase 4:** Learning to blend and segment longer words, including words with adjacent consonants and more than one syllable. Reading and writing using these and the next ‘tricky words’, within sentences.  **Phase 5:** Learning alternative spellings and pronunciations for phonemes, including their common usage within words. Reading and writing using these and the next ‘tricky words’, within sentences.  **Phase 6:** Learning longer words and spelling rules. |
| Phonics Screening Test | The phonics screening is a test to check if children have met the expected standard in phonics. It is completed at the end of Year 1. Children who do not meet the pass mark, repeat the test in Year 2. During the Phonics Screening Check , children are asked to read (decode) 40 words. Some words are real and some are pseudo-words (alien words). Pseudo-words are included to ensure that children are using their decoding skills and not just relying on their memory of words they’ve read before. |