



**Wellstead Primary School**

Sowing the Seeds of Success

# Phonics and Early Reading Workshop

October 2025

# Did you know?

There are **26 letters** of the alphabet but there are **44 sounds** and **over 100** different ways of spelling them.

This is why learning to read and write is a very complex process!

# What is phonics?


The government recommends phonics as the best way to teach children to read and write.

**“Phonics is a body of knowledge that is necessary for children to learn to read and spell. Because of the complex alphabetic code of English, children are taught the correspondences between letters and sounds (graphemes and phonemes), as well as the skill of blending the individual sounds together to read.”**


The Reading Framework, Department for Education (2021), p.41



# What is synthetic phonics?

- Synthetic phonics refers to the word 'synthesise' meaning 'to combine'
  - The skill of segmenting words into their individual sounds and then blending them together into words for reading, or, conversely, whole words are segmented into their sounds for writing.
  - Sounds are taught in a prescribed order starting with s, a, t, p, i, n, as this allows for the most words to be made from the start, such as 'sat', 'tap' and 'pin'.
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# What are the benefits of synthetic phonics?

- Children progress through the stages as they are ready.
  - Planning ensures progression and coverage.
  - Children can attempt new words working from sounds alone.
  - Reading and writing become practices which are developed hand in hand.
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# Phonics Glossary

1. Phoneme – the smallest unit of sound in a word (verbal)
2. Grapheme – a letter, or combination of letters, that corresponds to a single phoneme (written)
3. Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence (GPC) – the link between graphemes and phonemes (e.g. the /ee/ sound can be written as 'ee', 'ea', 'e\_e' 'ey' etc.
4. Digraph – a grapheme where two letters represent one phoneme (e.g. sh)
5. Trigraph – a grapheme where three letters represent one phoneme (e.g. igh)
6. High Frequency Word (HFW) – words that occur most often in texts
7. Common Exception Word (CEW) – a high frequency word with a GPC that is unusual or not yet taught (e.g. have)



Why  
Phonics  
Shed?



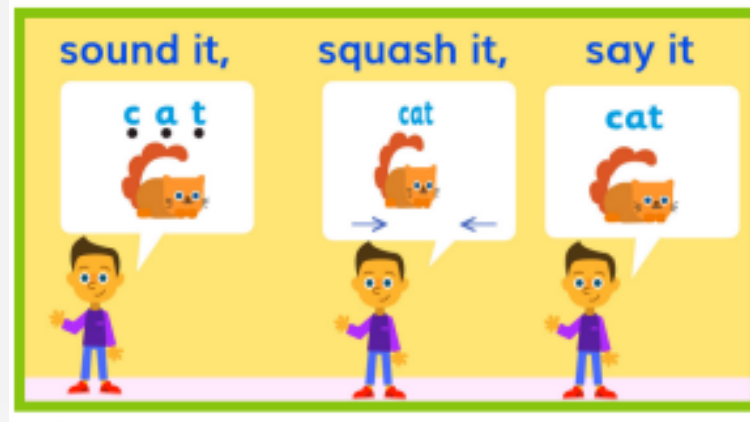
# Key Features of a Phonics Lesson

- ▶ Flashcards – recall of letter sounds (GPCs) in isolation - building fluency
- ▶ Blending for reading – model and practise together
- ▶ Segmenting for spelling – model and practise together
- ▶ Practise activity
- ▶ Common Exception Words (CEW)

# Blending

Your child will be taught to say the sounds that make up a word and then merge the sounds together until they can hear what the word is. The method used to teach this is Sound it, Squash it, Say it:

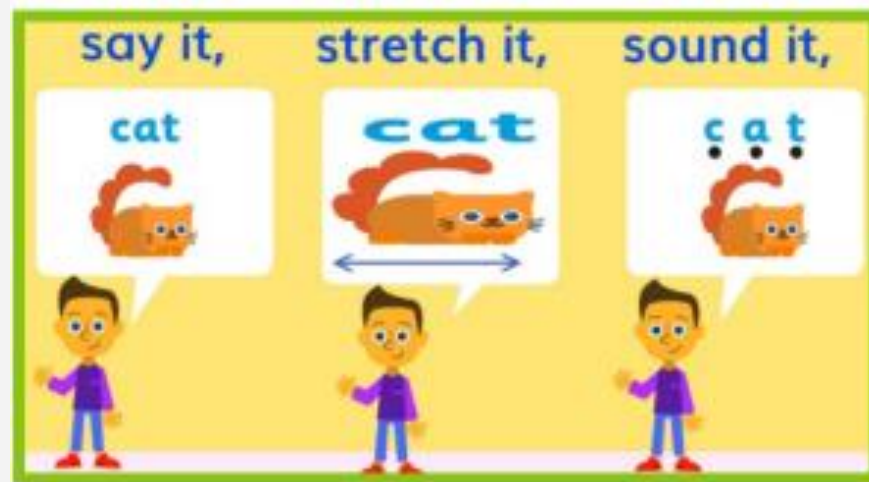
- Sound the word out, e.g. c-a-t. Using pure sounds (/t/ not 'tuh') and the sounds rather than letter names (/k/ not 'see').
- Squash the sounds together by saying them in order faster than before.
- Say the word that is made by squashing the sounds together.
- Your child will start with shorter words (known as CVC or consonant-vowel-consonant words, like 'cat' or 'dog') and progress to longer words.



# Segmenting

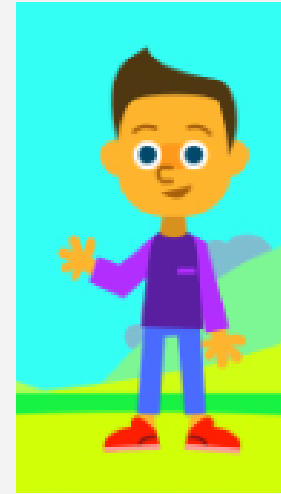
This is the opposite of blending – breaking up the sounds so that they can spell the words. The method used to teach this is Say it, Stretch it, Sound it:

- Say the word.
- Split it up into its individual sounds. Again, use pure sounds here. Saying it slowly will help.
- Say the sounds that make up the word.
- Once your child knows more than one spelling for a sound and/or more than one sound for a spelling they will begin to use best fit rules to choose which one to use.



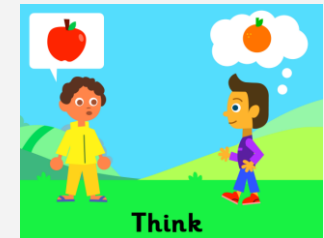
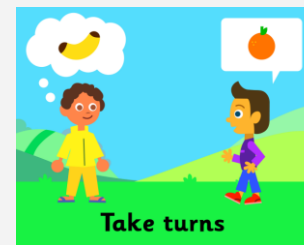
# Chapter One

Chapter one is all about building the foundations for reading and writing. Children develop their listening, attention and comprehension skills.



By the end of chapter one children have had opportunities to...

- listen attentively
- hear and identify environmental sounds and sounds made with bodies and voices
- explore rhyme and rhythm
- listen to and identify initial sounds
- practice orally blending and segmenting simple words



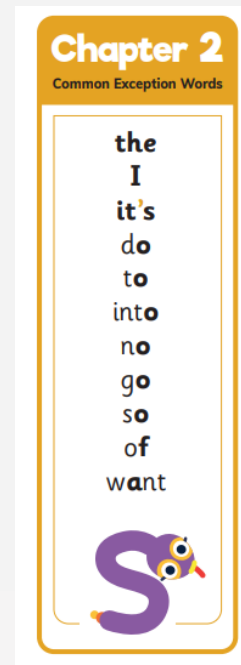
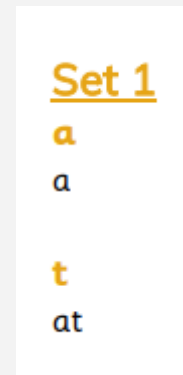
# Chapter Two

The aims of this chapter are to:

- Reinforce the core skills introduced in chapter one.
- Develop blending and segmenting skills.
- Introduce some high frequency words and common exception words,
- Begin the process of grapheme-phoneme correspondence recognition and recall.
- Each sound has a character, action and song.




Phonics Shed



# Chapter Three

The aims of this chapter are to:

- Reinforce the skills introduced in chapters one and two.
- Introduce more GPCs – by the end of chapter three children should know at least one grapheme for every phoneme.
- Continuing to introduce high frequency words and common exception words.



ng ch sh th th ai ee

igh oa ue ow oi oo oo ar

or ur er er ear air ure a


## Set 2

ee  
see  
he  
she  
we  
me

### Chapter 3

Common Exception Words

they	are
he	all
she	said
we	little
me	can't
be	
my	
was	
you	







# Reading at home

- Phonics home learning – this includes blending practice, HFVs and CEVs alongside sentence reading activities.
- A decodable book will be sent home and changed weekly, please re-read each book a few times to develop fluency.
- Library book.
- Phonics Shed onlinelog in
- Sound Mat with QR Code

Phonics Shed Year R Reading Home Learning 3rd November 2023

This week we have been learning...

 its	 in	 man	 did
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Practice blending the words using sound it, squash it, say it...

pin	nap	man	dip
pit	nip	map	did
nip	lan	mat	dad

This high frequency words we have been learning this week...

I an in man dad

Phonics challenge  
Can you read the sentences...






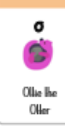









I am in a pit.

It is a map.

It did nip.



### My Chapter 2 Sound Mat

s 	a 	t 	p 	i 	n 	m 	d 
g 	o 	c 	k 	ck 	e 	u 	r 
h 	b 	j 	v 	w 	x 	y 	qu 
f 	ff 	l 	ll 	ss 	z 	zz 	

SCAN ME

# Phonics Shed Online



Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4a	Chapter 4b
 Pat and the Pasta	 Pat's Pants	 The Map	 Pip and Dan	
Set 2 – i, n, m, d				
 Dad Snips	 Cat Nap	 Kit Sinks	 Kit Sinks	
Set 3 – g, o, c, k				

# How can you help?

