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**Early Years and KS1**

**PHONIC INFORMATION SESSION**

**2015**

**Phonics**

**Helping Your Child at Home**

Phonics - Letters and Sounds

Phonics

Phonics is simply the relationships between letters and sounds in a language. Words are made up from small units of sound called phonemes. Phonics teaches children to be able to listen carefully and identify the phonemes that make up each word. This helps children to learn to read words and to spell words. We use ‘Jolly Phonics’ and ‘Letters and Sounds’ to teach phonics.

Jolly Phonics and Letters and sounds

Jolly Phonics is a child centred approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics. There are actions for the 42 letter sounds and this multi sensory method motivates the children. Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills in 2007. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It is a detailed programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven.

**Glossary**

**Grapheme –** spelling of a sound

**Phoneme –** sounds in a word

**Digraph** - A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

**Trigraph** - A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

**Blending** - This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word.

**Segmenting** - This is the act hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it.

Phonics phases

There are six phonics phases.

**Phase 1 - Subject Knowledge**

Phase 1 is absolutely vital. It develops children’s abilities to listen to, make, explore and talk about sounds. This phase is split into 7 aspects that are explored and developed through games.

**Phase 2 - Subject Knowledge**

Sounds are introduced in a very systematic way.

**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 s ss**

It is very important that you pronounce these phonemes clearly and correctly. If you don't, children will find it very difficult to blend them together.

**Phase 3 - Subject Knowledge**

Phase 3 continues in the same way as Phase 2 and introduces more new GPCs. By the end of Phase 3 the children will know one way of writing down each of the 44 phonemes.

**Set 6 - j v w x**

**Set 7 - y z zz qu**

**Consonant digraphs – ch sh th ng**

**Vowel digraphs (and trigraphs) ai ee igh oa oo ar or ur ow oi ear air ure er**

**Phase 4 - Subject Knowledge**

The main challenge in this phase is to help children to blend words with adjacent consonants e.g. **truck, help**. These adjacent consonant sounds can both be heard when you say the word. Children with speech and language difficulties can find Phase 4 very tricky. If children struggle to hear all the sounds in a word encourage them to think about the movements that their mouths are making. Looking in mirrors can help with this.

**Phase 5 Subject Knowledge**

This begins with introducing sounds that are known as split digraphs. They are **a\_e, e\_e, i\_e, o\_e, u\_e**.

The phase continues by introducing the idea that some graphemes can be pronounced in more than one way. E.g. the ch grapheme can be pronounced in each of these ways check, chef and school. This is a vital lesson for children to learn and they need to learn to apply it in their reading.

This phase finishes with children learning that some phonemes have more than one spelling……in fact some of the really awkward ones have loads of different spellings! We do teach children how to make the best guesses when spelling these phonemes. They aren't always infallible but it leaves children with far fewer 'tricky' spellings that they have to just learn in other ways. It is important that children try to discover these rules by themselves by playing investigative type games and looking for patterns.

**Phase 6 - Subject Knowledge**

Phase 6 reinforces much of the learning from Phase 5, helps children to develop greater automaticity in reading, and begins to explore spelling rules and conventions e.g. adding -ing and -ed.

Phonics in School

In Rabbit Class and Squirrel Class we teach Phonics for 20 minutes every morning, 9:00-9:20. Each Phonics session includes an introduction to what we will learn that day, a revisit of what we have been learning, a focus on teaching something new, a chance for the children to practise their skills and an opportunity to apply new learning to reading/writing.

Daily Planning Example 1: Phase 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Introduce | We are learning the sound ‘g’. |
| Revisit | Practise the sounds s/a/t/p/i/n/m/d. Using flash cards |
| Teach | Teach **g** using Jolly phonics & magic finger. Explain sound buttons & then have children put sound buttons under the following words – **tag, gag, gig, gap, nag, sag** |
| Practise | Segmentation for spelling. Play full circle using the words – **got, tot, not, nit, nip, pip, pig, pog, pot, got** |
| Apply | Display the below caption. Have the children to help the puppet read the caption: **Dad and Sam** |

Daily Planning Example 1: Phase 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Introduce | We are learning the trigraph ***ear*** |
| Revisit | Play Phase 3 flashcards up saying them as fast as you can. Time Challenge: 45 seconds. |
| Teach | Teach the trigraph ***ear*** to the children. Ask the children to write the trigraph in the air, on each others backs, on palms etc. In Phonics Pairs ask children to think of words with ***ear.*** |
| Practise | In pairs, children write down as many ear words you can think of at tables. Children come together on carpet and share the words they thought of. Chose some of the children to spell out the words on the whiteboard. Encourage and help the children to segment and blend the words. |
| Apply | .Play Word to Sentence game: Children give teacher an ***ear*** word and teacher needs to put it into a sentence as fast as she can. Children to help if confident. |

FAQ’s and Helpful Hints

**Should I use letter sounds and not letter names?**

Letter names don't always sound the same as the actual sounds. For example, the letter name for B is pronounced with a long E sound after the letter sound; 'bee' However, it actually make a ‘b’ sound as in ‘bat’. Many children find this difference confusing. So, instead of trying to teach the two at the same time, it is helpful to focus on teaching the letter sound first.

**What are 'tricky words'?**

Tricky words are taught separately as they contain letters that don't represent their normal sounds. For example ‘he’ sounds like it should be spelt ‘hee’ and ‘all’ sounds like it should begin with the letter ‘o’. Children are encouraged to learn the tricky bit, then to sound out and blend the rest of the word.

**Does it really matter how phonemes are pronounced?**

Some children pick up the skill of blending very quickly even if the phonemes are

not cleanly pronounced. However, many teachers have found that for other children

pronouncing the phonemes in, for example, *cat* as ‘cuh-a-tuh’ can make learning to blend

difficult. It is therefore sensible to articulate each phoneme as clearly as possible.

**How can I help my child to apply his/her phonics skills to reading and writing?**

Reading can often seem like a chore to children, especially in the beginning when it’s such hard work. Try to make segmenting and blending fun by chopping up the words with actions or by rapping out the different graphemes. Also, the children love to play games on the computer in which they can be rewarded for practising their skills in phonics by feeding an alien or moving up on the rocket.

Websites and Resources

[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk) : Fun games for children to practise segmenting and blending skills. The games can be played at different levels, corresponding to the phase your child is learning at.

[www.familylearning.org.uk](http://www.familylearning.org.uk) : More fun games to play.

[www.letters-and-sounds.com](http://www.letters-and-sounds.com) : Free printable worksheets and games for you to do with your child.

[www.mumsnet.com](http://www.mumsnet.com) : Has some great advice and worksheets to help with phonics at home.