



**Supporting your  
child at home with  
phonics**

## What is this booklet for?

This booklet is to help guide you when reading with your child at home. It should help answer any questions you may have with how we teach phonics in school and how you can support your class with phonics at home.

## What is Phonics and why do we teach it?

Phonics is a method for teaching reading by developing learners' phonemic awareness. Phonics is essential for helping children begin to read. Once the code of reading has been cracked through phonics, children will then have the ability to explore the length and breadth of English as a whole. Phonics has been repeatedly proven to be the most effective way to get children reading early.

## What terminology do we use in School?

**Phoneme** - It is the smallest unit of sound and a word that children are familiar with. At first, it will be associated with a letter sound but later on will include digraphs and trigraphs.

**Grapheme** - A grapheme is a letter or number of letters that represent a sound (phoneme) in a word. Another way of understanding this, is that a grapheme is a letter or letters that spell a sound in a word.

For example, the /ee/ /ea/ /ey/ phonemes can be spelt with different graphemes.

**Digraph** - This is when two letters come together to make a phoneme. /oa/ makes the sound in 'boat'.

**Trigraph** - This is when three letters come together to make a phoneme. /ure/ makes the sound in pure.

**Split Digraph** Sometimes the two letters in a digraph are separated by a consonant and these are referred to as 'split digraphs' (e.g., 'a-e' as in 'cake', 'e-e' as in 'athlete', 'i-e' as in 'kite', 'o-e' as in 'bone' and 'u-e' as in flute).

# Complex Speed Sounds Explained

The complex speed sounds chart is a way of exposing children to the alternative spelling for each sound.

At Montpelier Primary School this chart is used at the beginning of every phonics lesson. The teacher points to the sound and the child says the stretchy or bouncy sound with actions. The top line are the sounds, which the children are most familiar with.

## Complex Speed Sounds

### Consonant sounds

f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng
ff	ll	mm	nn	rr	ss	ve	zz	ti		nk
ph	le	mb	kn	wr	se		s	ci		
					c		se			
					ce					

b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y	ch
bb	k	dd	gg		g	pp		tt	wh			tch
	ck				ge							
	ch				dge							

### Vowel sounds

a	e	i	o	u	ay	ee	igh	ow
	ea				<u>a-e</u>	y	<u>i-e</u>	<u>o-e</u>
					ai	ea	ie	oa
						e	i	o
							y	

oo	oo	ar	or	air	ir	ou	oy	ire	ear	ure
<u>u-e</u>			oor	are	ur	ow	oi			
ue			ore		er					
ew			aw							
			au							

## Phase Three Sounds



igh



or



ear



ure

Fly high Shut the door What can you hear? Sure it's pure



ee



oa



ar



ai

What can you see? Goat in a boat Start the car Snail in the



oi



oo



oo



ow

Spoil the house Poo at the zoo Look at the book Brown Cow



ur



ng



er



air

Nurse with a purse Thing on a string Better letter That's not fair

## Phase Five Sounds



ay

May I play



ou

Shout it out!



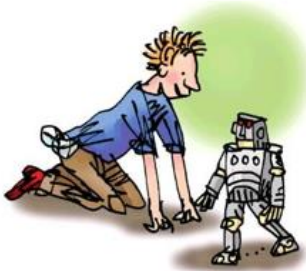
ie

Pie with a tie



ea

Cup of tea



oy

Boy with a toy



ir

Whirl and twirl



ue

Blue glue



aw

Yawn at dawn



wh

What can you  
whisper



ph

Philippa loves  
phonics



oe

Joe's toe



au

Call for Paul





ey

Money for honey



a \_ e

Make a cake



e \_ e

Meet Pete



i \_ e

Nice smile



o \_ e

Phone home



u \_ e

Huge brute

## Phonics phases explained

### Phase 2

These letters are introduced one at a time:

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, ss

**Phase 3** - See the sounds.

### Phase 4

The main aim of this phase is to consolidate the children's knowledge and to help them learn to read and spell words which have adjacent consonants, such as trap, string and milk.

**Phase 5** - See the sounds.

## What is Blending?

Blending is the process that is involved in bringing the sounds together to make a word or syllable and is how /c/ /a/ /t/ becomes cat.

To learn to read well, children must be able to smoothly blend sounds together. Blending sounds fluidly helps to improve fluency when reading. Blending is more difficult to do with longer words so learning how to blend accurately from an early age is imperative.

The method we teach our children to use at Montpelier is by using their fingers (sound buttons). They raise one finger for each sound that it is within a word.



## What is Segmenting?

Segmenting is the skill used in spelling. In order to spell the word 'cat', it is necessary to segment the word into its sounds: c/a/t.

Before writing a word, children need time to think about it, say the word several times, segment the word using their fingers for each sound, and then write it. Once children have written these words several times and become familiar with them, they will not need to use this process as frequently.



# Tricky Words / Common Exception Words

These are words that do not follow the most common spelling rules or patterns. They are taught explicitly and the children need to know how to read and spell them.

the  
a  
do  
to  
today  
of  
said  
says  
are  
were  
was

is  
his  
has  
I  
you  
your  
they  
be  
he  
me  
she  
we

no  
go  
so  
by  
my  
here  
there  
where  
love  
come  
some

one  
once  
ask  
friend  
school  
put  
push  
pull  
full  
house  
our

## Rainbow words

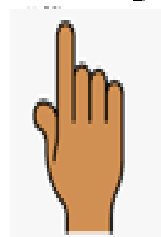
Write your spelling word and trace over it 5 times using a different colour each time.



## Make the Word

Encourage younger children to make their target words out of different materials. These could include:

- Magnetic letters
- Large letters from magazines or newspapers
- Pipe cleaners
- Plasticine
- Jumble the letters up for your child to rearrange



## Air Write!

Write your spelling words in the air using your finger. Ask someone to read your words as you write them OR have them air write and you read them.



