

Phonics vocabulary

Blending - the process of merging sounds together when reading to pronounce a word. When reading the word van, a child will first recognise the GPC (v-a-n) and say them separately. Then through listening carefully to the sounds, and possibly repeating the sounds multiple times, they will merge the phonemes together to form the word van. Children need this process to be demonstrated to them and have lots of opportunities to practise.

Common exception words (tricky words) - words that are high-frequency but have more unusual sound-spellings which have not been taught in the phonics programme. For example the letter 'o' is taught to children as showing the sound in the middle of 'pot'. However, in the common words 'go' and 'to', the 'o' represents different sounds. This is where the colours and monsters in Monster Phonics really support the children's learning of these trickier words.

These words are not taught as whole words. The children are taught to recognise the more unusual sound-spellings as this helps them to become a flexible, strategic reader.

Decoding - the term used to describe reading. When we write, we use the alphabet as a code for our spoken sounds. In order to read, we have to crack the code - **decode** the text.

Digraph - when 2 letters are used to represent 1 sound (th, sh, oa, ee)

Encoding - the term used to describe writing. When we want to write, we have to hear the sounds we are saying and then use the correct code (letters) to write down what we want others to read.

Grapheme - the letters which are used to represent phonemes. A grapheme might be 1 letter, 2, 3 or 4 letters.

Grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) - Knowing which grapheme links to which phoneme in a word. This is needed for spelling so you know which way to spell the sound A in the word play. It is also needed when reading so when you see the word now, you know if the ow is showing the ow sound like cow or the O sound like snow.

High frequency words - words that appear frequently in the English language. There are 300 words that make up about 65% of all written English. Knowing how to read and spelling these words is hugely beneficial to developing fluent reading.

Phonics screen check (PSC) - the national assessment taken by all children at the end of Year 1. This assessment usually takes place at the start of June. Children are required to read 40 words which contain the GPCs they have been taught. In order to assess their decoding skills, some 'nonsense' words are included to ensure that children are not learning to read through whole word recognition.

Phoneme - the smallest unit of sound. Words are made up of phonemes when we speak. The word 'cat' has 3 phonemes (c-a-t) The word 'house' also has 3 phonemes (h-ou-s).

Phoneme addition - the ability to manipulate words by adding phonemes. For example, adding 'f' to 'an' to make 'fan' or adding the 'ee' to 'sun' to make 'sunny'.

Phoneme deletion - to ability to manipulate words by deleting phonemes from words. For example, removing 's' from 'sit' to make 'it' or removing the 'r' from 'frog' to get 'fog'.

Phoneme isolation - being able to identify specific sounds in words. For example, recognising that dog and dad start with the same sound or that sun and fun end in the same sound.

Phoneme substitution - the ability to swap sounds in words to make a new word. For example, swapping the 's' for a 'f' to change 'sun' to 'fun'.

Quadgraph/tetragraph - when 4 letters are used to represent 1 sound (eigh in eight and augh in caught)

Segmenting - is the process of splitting spoken words into sounds before spelling. This is a skill that needs to be demonstrated to children and they need lots of opportunities to practise. When a child wants to spell the word 'hat' they need to be able to say the word and identify the sounds. Once they can hear the 3 different sounds, they then have to remember which letters are used to represent these sounds.

Sound-spellings - the term used to describe how different sounds are spelt. Because of the complexity of the English language, children need lots of practise so that they can quickly recognise which sound-spelling it is. For example, when reading the word 'great' the sound-spelling of 'ea' is different to when you're reading the word 'meat'.

Syllable - the beats or chunks within a word. Each time you say a syllable your chin will drop. Being able to hear syllables makes it easier to read and spell longer words. 'Sun' has 1 syllable. 'Sunny' has 2 syllables. 'Sunniest' has 3 syllables.

Trigraph - when 3 letters are used to represent 1 sound (igh in light and are in care)