

# Phonics

## Letters and Sounds

### Phonics

Phonics is the first strategy that children should be taught in helping them learn to read. It runs alongside other teaching methods such as Guided Reading and Shared Reading to help children develop all the other vital reading skills and hopefully give them a real love of reading.

The phonics approach teaches children to decode words by sounds, rather than recognising whole words. The emphasis in early years teaching is on synthetic phonics, in which words are broken up into the smallest units of sound (phonemes).

Children are taught the letters (graphemes) that represent these phonemes and also learn to blend them into words. So, at its most basic, children are taught to read the letters in a word like c-a-t, and then merge them to pronounce the word cat. A phoneme can be represented by one, two, three or four letters (such as "ough" in "dough" and "igh" in night).

Children are systematically taught around 40 phonic sounds and the combination of letters used to represent each sound. Most sounds, however, have more than one way to spell them. For example, "e" in "egg" can also be spelt "ea" as in "head" or "ai" as in "said".

We follow letters and sounds for our phonics and once children move to Phase 5 we begin Phonic families.

### Sequence of teaching up to the end of Phase 3

#### Revisit and review

- Practise previously learned letters or graphemes

#### Teach

- Teach new graphemes
- Teach one or two tricky words

#### Practise

- Practise blending and reading words with a new GPC

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## Letters and Sounds

- Practise segmenting and spelling words with a new GPC

### Apply

- Read or write a caption or sentence using one or more tricky words and words containing the graphemes

Help

## Children in EYFS

### Phase 1

Children on entry - Follow letters and sounds for Phase 1 - This concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

### How we work

Faster, faster! We use the principles of Phase 1 continuously from their first day of starting school. Lots of sound walks, environment listening games. Phase 1 is split into 7 key areas and can be done alongside the introduction of Phase 2. Children are usually highly exposed for the first 3 weeks to Phase 1 then begin Phase 2. This should be planned from their baseline assessments and specific needs. This then needs to be continued and built into provision/ key worker group session time so children are still developing their listening and attention skills.

### 1 - General sound discrimination - environmental

The aim of this aspect is to raise children's awareness of the sounds around them and to develop their listening skills. Activities suggested in the guidance include going on a listening walk, drumming on different items outside and comparing the sounds, playing a sounds lotto game and making shakers.

### 2 - General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

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This aspect aims to develop children's awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers. Activities include comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.

### 3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion

The aim of this aspect is to develop children's awareness of sounds and rhythms. Activities include singing songs and action rhymes, listening to music and developing a sounds vocabulary.

### 4 - Rhythm and rhyme

This aspect aims to develop children's appreciation and experiences of rhythm and rhyme in speech. Activities include rhyming stories, rhyming bingo, clapping out the syllables in words and odd one out.

### 5 - Alliteration

The focus is on initial sounds of words, with activities including I-Spy type games and matching objects which begin with the same sound.

### 6 - Voice sounds

The aim is to distinguish between different vocal sounds and to begin oral blending and segmenting. Activities include Metal Mike, where children feed pictures of objects into a toy robot's mouth and the teacher sounds out the name of the object in a robot voice - /c/-/u/-/p/ cup, with the children joining in.

### 7 - Oral blending and segmenting

In this aspect, the main aim is to develop oral blending and segmenting skills.

To practise oral blending, the teacher could say some sounds, such as /c/-/u/-/p/ and see whether the children can pick out a cup from a group of objects. For segmenting practise, the teacher could hold up an object such as a sock and ask the children which sounds they can hear in the word sock.

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The activities introduced in Phase 1 are intended to continue throughout the following phases, as lots of practice is needed before children will become confident in their phonic knowledge and skills.

### Phase 2

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:

**Week 1 - Set 1:** s, a, t, p

**Week 2 - Set 2:** i, n, m, d

**Week 3 - Set 3:** g, o, c, k

**Week 4 - Set 4:** ck, e, u, r

**Week 5 - Set 5:** h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

**Week 6** - Revise Phase

**HFW** - a, an, as, at, if, in, is, it, of, off, on, can, dad, had, back, and, get, big, him, his, not, got, up, mum, but, put

As soon as each set of letters is introduced, children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to blend and sound out words. For example, they will learn to blend the sounds s-a-t to make the word **sat**. They will also start learning to segment words. For example, they might be asked to find the letter sounds that make the word **tap** from a small selection of magnetic letters.

Set 1, the first four letters are introduced and seven words can be used for segmenting and blending

Set 2 includes four new letters. As each new letter is learnt, children will be able to sound out several new words, as follows:

Set 3 introduces four new letters, with 28 new decodable words suggested, including four high frequency words, shown in italics below

Set 4 introduces four new graphemes, with 36 new decodable words suggested. For the first time, some of the suggested words contain two syllables, such as pocket,

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sunset etc., which some young children might find too difficult at this stage. Personally, I would leave these out if they cause problems. At this stage, it is more important for children to experience success at sounding out short words. Their ability to decode longer words will improve as their short-term memory develops

Set 5 introduces seven graphemes (three of which are doubled letters), with 69 new decodable words suggested

Help - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvAYUvQUrGo> Jolly Phonics on YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvMyssfAUx0> Tricky words

### Phase 3

By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2.

Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

**Week 1 - Set 6:** j, v, w, x

**Week 2 - Set 7:** y, z, zz, qu

**Week 3 - Consonant digraphs:** ch, sh, th, ng

**Week 4 - Vowel digraphs:** ai, ee, igh, oa

**Week 5** - oo, ar, or, ur

**Week 6** - ow, oi, ear, air words)

**Week 7** - ure, er words)

**HFW** - he, she

we, me, be - alphabet sing

was

my (teach spelling 2 syllable words)

you (teach spelling 2 syllable

they (teach spelling 2 syllable

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**Week 8** - practise and application words)

her (teach spelling 2 syllable

**Week 9** - practise and application

all

**Week 10** - practise and application

are

**Week 11** - will, that, this, then, them, with, see, for, now, down, look, too

Help - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ni4uOTjAZ38> Tricky words song

### Phase 4

In Phase 4 children are not taught any new phonemes or graphemes. Instead, they are taught to further manipulate the phonemes and graphemes they have already learnt. Many of the words children explored in Phase 2 and 3 were monosyllabic (words of one syllable). In Phase 4 children explore more polysyllabic words (words containing more than one syllable). Many of the words in Phase 2 and 3 required children to blend approximately three sounds together in order to read them. Phase 4 requires children to blend an increasing number of sounds together in order to read.

The key to Phase 4 is repeat, repeat repeat!

**Week 1** - CVCC  
me, be

**Read;** said, so

**Spell;** he, she, we,

**Week 2** - CVCC

**Read;** have, like, some, come

**Spell;** was, you

**Week 3** - Reading/spelling word with adjacent consonants

**Read,** were, there, little, one

**Spell;** they, all, are



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**Week 4** - Reading/spelling word with adjacent consonants + 2 syllable words

**Read:** do, when, out, what

**Spell:** my, her

**HFW** - went, it's, from, children, just, help

At this point use the existing time to recap and plug gaps across Phase 3 and 4 in preparation for Phase 5.

Help - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NOzgR1ANc4> - Phase 4 tricky words

### Phase 5

In Year 1 we start Phase 5 phonic families; Phonic Families - Sound families refers to groups of graphemes and spelling patterns that make the same sound. Some graphemes can belong to different sound families depending on the word they are being used in. The families are made up of various characters depending on how many different patterns there are for each particular spelling. The male characters go mainly in the middle of words, and the female characters go mainly on the end of words, though there are one or two exceptions. It is also fun to let the children investigate and find out how many words they can identify with the pattern in the middle, compared to words which have the same pattern at the end. This pattern has helped children visualise where they hear the sound. For example, if they were focusing on the 'ai' family and were trying to spell 'day', the 'ai' sound comes at the end of the word so they know it will be a female character. This gives the visual learners an extra prompt in remembering the spelling pattern. If the sound is in the middle of the word, for example 'pain' or 'late', then it can be one of two characters: Daddy 'ai' or The Naughty Twins 'a-e'.

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### Phase 5 teaching schedule

Week		Sound families BOLD = common	Sample Words	Tricky Words
Week 1	24	<b>ai</b> , <b>ay</b> , <b>a-e</b> eigh ey	train stay flake eight grey	Oh, old, their, said, no
Week 2	25	<b>ee</b> , <b>ea</b> , <b>ie</b> , <b>y</b> , <b>e-e</b> ey	Tree he leaf happy thief key Pete	People, house, about have, like
Week 3	26	<b>igh</b> , <b>ie</b> , <b>y</b> , <b>i-e</b>	Fright pie try strike mind	Mr, Mrs, don't, by, some, come
Week 4	27	<b>oa</b> , <b>ow</b> , <b>oe</b> , <b>o-e</b> oe	Float slow goes stroke	Worked, time, your, called, were
Week 5	28	<b>oo</b> , <b>ew</b> , <b>ue</b> , <b>u-e</b> ui	Moon blue rude true grew juice	Asked, very, there, Called, school, didn't
Week 6	29	(you) <b>ue</b> , <b>ew</b> , <b>u-e</b>		Water, where, day, when
Week 7	30	<b>or</b> , <b>ur</b> , <b>ir</b> , <b>ear</b> , <b>er</b>	Thursday world thirsty farmer heard	Out, made, came, who, because
Week 8	31	<b>or</b> , <b>au</b> , <b>aw</b> , <b>a our</b> augh ough	Thorn haunted straw talk fourteen daughter bought	One, make, here, again, different



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Week 9	32	Letter names - a, e, i, o, u		Thought, any, saw, Asked, know, can't, ran
Week 10	33	<b>wh, ph,</b> kn, wr, mb	who phone knee wrist lamb	What, please, through, eyes
Week 11	34	<b>ar, a</b>	Star half	Little, work, friends, Bear, long, things, new
Week 12	35	<b>oi, oy</b>	Spoil enjoy	Mouse, once, put, could
Week 13	36	<b>ow, ou, ough</b>	Cow mouse plough	Many, good, away
Week 14	37	<b>Oo, ou, u</b>	Good should crush	Laughed, want, over, Eat, everyone, our
Week 15	38	<b>air,</b> ere, ear, are	Stair somewhere wear scare	how, did, man, Two, has, yes
Week 16	39	ear, eer, ere	Tear steering interfere	Going, Play, take, well
Week 17	40	gn, tch, soft c	Gnome match centipede	People, would, or, Find, more, I'll
Week 18	41	/sh/ ti, ch, s, soft c	station,	took, home, Round, tree, magic
Week 19	42	s(zh), dge	treasure, edge	Looked, who, think, Shouted, us, other
20	43	s(zh), dge, soft c	treasure, edge	
21	44	s, st, se	Sand, listen, house	

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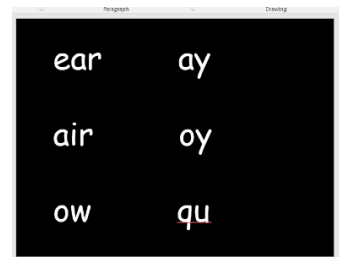
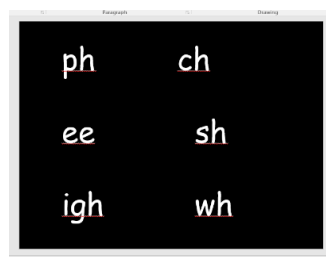
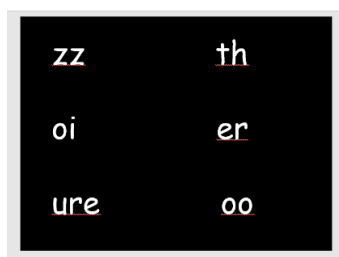
## Letters and Sounds

Help - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPW-ZkhRUPY> phase 5 sounds

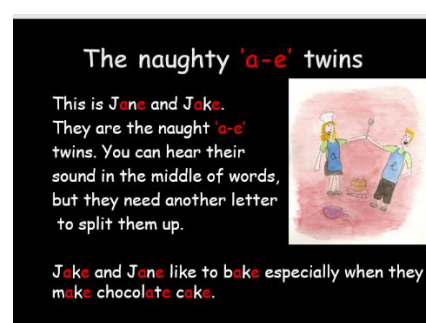
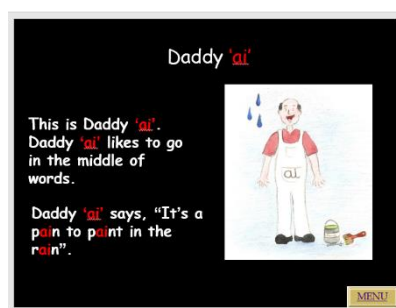
### Example lesson

- Children taught together in Year 1.
- In the hall 9- 9:30 daily
- Every Monday - parents are invited as part of family phonics
- Phonics should be active and fun

Revisit and review - Practise previously learned letters or graphemes



- Teach - Teach new graphemes



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## Letters and Sounds

### Practise

- Practise blending and reading words with a new GPC
- Practise segmenting and spelling words with a new GPC

Lets read some ...


wait	date	late	bait
play	day	way	away
gate	brake	train	rain
pray	make	flame	grain
grey	obey	they	prey

### Apply

- Read or write a caption or sentence using one or more tricky words and words Containing the graphemes



Practise segmenting and spelling words with a new GPC

Tricky Words 

oh	their
	people
Mr	Mrs

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### Phase 6

At the start of Phase Six of Letters and Sounds, children will have already learnt the most frequently occurring grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in the English language. They will be able to read many familiar words automatically. When they come across unfamiliar words they will in many cases be able to decode them quickly and quietly using their well-developed sounding and blending skills. With more complex unfamiliar words they will often be able to decode them by sounding them out.

Week	Teach	HF/Tricky Words	
1	Past tense and 'ed' suffix	animals, garden, another, everyone, keep, last, even, before	
2	Vowels and irregular past tense	jumped, cried, stopped, wanted, lived, liked, pulled, dragon, morning, grandad, narrator	
3	Consolidate past tense 'ed' and irregular	been, must, am, run, red, bed, air, classroom, together, grandmother	
4	Present tense and 'ing' suffix	something, looking, coming, thing, fishfinger, springboard, clingfilm	
5	s and es suffix	clothes, birds, plants, trees, eggs, looks	
6	er	never, next, first, lots, need, fish, better, under, river	
7	est	best, bad, tea, top, fell, box, sleep	
8	contractions	that's, I've, let's, there's, he's, we're, couldn't	
9	Pronouns e.g. he is, they are (other people doing things) W 'o' phoneme e.g. wallet, watch, was Qu/squ 'o' phoneme e.g. quad, squash, quantity	told, hot, book, cold, park, dark	

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10	W 'ur' phoneme e.g worship, work, word, worth	why, white, end, than, sun, across	
11	'ly' suffix	gone, please, ever, miss, suddenly	
12	'ly' suffix	cat, after, much, most, tell, boat, let, every, stop, night, sea, began, feet	
13	'y' 'or' sound before l e.g. all, call, ball, also, always	around, great, duck, horse, rabbit, small	
14	ness	really, baby, floppy, door, boy, homelessness, hopelessness, forgetfulness	1
15	Their/they/them There/their/they're	food, fox, way, room, these enormous, terrific, horrific,	
16	'ment' suffix	car, three, head, king, town, gave, may, still, found	
17	'ful' suffix	each, its, green, girl, which, say, soon, night, nightmare, nightdress	
18	'less' suffix	wind, wish, fly, only, place, giant, use, along, grow, sat	
19	'en' suffix	mother, queen, fast, dog, window, importantly, especially, confidently, immediately	

### Year 2

In Year 2 the children move to Phase 6, these sessions can be built into their SPAG sessions or split with guided reading. At this stage it is important to see their previous skills in practise. Anyone who did not achieve their phonics screening should be given daily interventions to plug their gaps.

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### Our Non-Negotiables

- Families are invited in every Monday morning (9-9:30) to join in phonics in Ks1. Those who struggle to attend we will always share via Dojo or 1:1 the sound/family we are working on so they can support at home.
- Phonics should be active! Children should spend most of their session learning through exploring and 'playing'
- Every Friday is application day where we practise writing what we have been learning.
- Writing can take place in a session but should not be the focus, once children understand their phonics they will use it in their writing
- Phonics should not just be considered as a daily session, it needs to be threaded through the curriculum.
- Reactive support and interventions should take place daily for Phonics - if you are not teaching all of your class please discuss with the adult who had your class who needs what.
- Precision teaching works for Phonics and should be used across all phases daily.
- Children should be able to access phonic sound mats to support their writing along across every subject not just English.





## Assessment

Assessing children for Phonics should be continuous. After every Phonic session if a child/children have struggled they should receive reactive support that day to help plug their gaps. In addition to this, if they are still struggling an intervention should be planned.

Children are judged to be secure at a particular phase once they know most of the phonemes associated with that phase most of the time, and can apply the skills of blending and segmenting using an appropriate range of grapheme-phoneme correspondences. It is important to remember that boundaries between the phases should not be seen as fixed. For example, some children will be introduced to Phase 3 graphemes before they are secure at Phase 2, while continuing to practise the skills of blending and segmentation. Similarly, some children will learn to blend and segment words containing adjacent consonants during Phases 2 or 3, rather than waiting until Phase 4.

In deciding when children are secure at phonic phases, teachers need to be thinking about what children know and can do when their attention is on phonics. This can be during the discrete daily phonics session, but will also be apparent during shared guided and independent reading and writing sessions.

## Phase 1

Phase One of 'Letters and Sounds' concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills. Children at this phase do not necessarily need to be able to recognise written print. Rather this phase children begin to blend phonemes together orally to make words. During this phase children also develop understanding of other literacy skills such as syllables, compounds, rhyming and alliteration.

## Phase 2

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. The children will begin to learn to blend and segment to help begin reading and spelling. This will begin with simple words such as 'on' and 'at', and progress to CVC words such as 'cat', 'rat' and 'sack'. Alongside this, children are introduced to tricky words. These are the words that are irregular. This means that phonics cannot be applied to the reading and spelling of these words like to, the, no, go and I.

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### Phase 3

By the time children reach Phase 3, they will already be able to blend and segment words containing the letters taught in Phase 2. This phase completes the sounds of the alphabet and introduces long vowel digraphs and consonant digraphs.

- Consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng
- Vowel digraphs: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

### Phase 4

This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases and focuses on blends (CVCC such as h-a-n-d and CCVC words such as t-r ai-n).

### Phase 5

In this phase, children are introduced to new graphemes and alternative pronunciations through Phonic Families, for these graphemes (ie: ay-ai-a\_\_e), as well as graphemes they already know. They will begin to learn to choose the appropriate grapheme when spelling.

### Phase 6

In phase 6, the focus is on learning spelling rules for word endings (these are known as suffixes). The children will learn how words change when you add certain letters. There are 12 different suffixes taught: -s -es -ing -ed -er -est -y -en -ful -ly -ment -ness

### Making secure judgements about 'secure at Phase 2'

The purpose of Phase 2 is to teach children at least 19 graphemes and move them on from oral blending and segmentation to blending and segmenting with letters. This phase should take up to six weeks. Children are secure at Phase 2 when they can:

- give the sound when shown any Phase 2 grapheme, securing first the starter letters s, a, t, p, i, n
- find from a display any Phase 2 grapheme when given the sound

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- Orally blend and segment CVC words
- blend and segment in order to read and spell (using magnetic letters) VC words such as if, am, on, up and 'silly names' such as ip, ug, and ock.

### Making secure judgements about 'secure at Phase 3'

The purpose of Phase 3 is to teach children another 25 graphemes and further develop their ability to apply the skills of blending for reading and segmentation for spelling. This phase should take up to 12 weeks. Children are secure at Phase 3 when they can:

- give the sound when shown all or most Phase 2 and Phase 3 graphemes
- find from a display all or most Phase 2 and 3 graphemes when given the sound
- blend and read CVC words consisting of Phase 2 and 3 graphemes
- segment and make a phonemically plausible attempt at spelling CVC words using Phase 2 and 3 graphemes

### Making secure judgements about 'secure at Phase 4'

The purpose of Phase 4 is to consolidate children's knowledge of Phase 2 and 3 graphemes and teach blending and segmenting of adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words. This phase should take four to six weeks. Children are secure at Phase 4 when they can:

- give the sound when shown any Phase 2 and Phase 3 graphemes
- find from a display any Phase 2 and 3 grapheme when given the sound
- blend and read words containing adjacent consonants
- segment and spell words containing adjacent consonants.

### Making secure judgements about 'secure at Phase 5'

The purpose of Phase 5 is to teach alternative pronunciations for known graphemes, and teach new graphemes and their alternative pronunciations. During Phase 5, children will learn to choose the appropriate grapheme to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spelling of words. This phase should continue throughout Year 1 (approximately 30 weeks). Children are secure at Phase 5 when they can:

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- give the sound when shown any grapheme that has been taught
- write the common graphemes for any given sound
- use phonic skill and knowledge as the prime approach to reading and spelling unfamiliar words, including those that are not completely decodable
- read and spell phonically decodable two-syllable and three-syllable words

### Mock Phonics screening.

This should be done from Autumn term 2 in Year 1, then continued to be carried out every 4 weeks to prepare the children for their screening. Please save results in the file under assessment on Tdrive, mock phonic results. All assessment material can be found under phonics planning and resources on Tdrive and in the Phonics Handbook and Assessment file, Interventions should be planned for phonics using the practise results.

### Assessment guide

- Assessments should be carried out at the end of every half term
- Teachers should record any observations made during assessments to then be used for interventions and shared with parents to support.
- Half termly judgements should be handed into SLT
- Children do not need to get all the assessment correct before moving on, use your professional judgement to assess if a child requires some intervention and time to revise a phase whilst beginning a new phase rather than being held back.
- Phase 1 can be taught/assessed through teaching session in class not directly related to Phonics. This could be observations in provision/key worker sessions /carpet time or direct teaching time. Phase 1 can continued to be taught in the classroom alongside Phase 2.
- During each assessment children will first attempt to recognise the phoneme they are attempting such as 'j' if they are able to say the sound, tick next to it and move on, if not make an observation of what they said.
- Blending words is a way for children to decode words, also known as letter-sound correspondence, blending consists of building words from phonemes to read.
- Segmenting consists of breaking words down into phonemes to spell

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Letters and Sounds