

What is Phonics?

Phonics is the most common method used for teaching children to read and write the English language. It develops phonemic awareness (the ability to hear, identify and manipulate phonemes), and it enables children to understand the link between the sounds they hear and the spelling patterns/letters that represent them.



Phoneme - the smallest unit of sound in a word and it is the sound that the grapheme makes.

Grapheme - the written letter or groups of letters that represent the phoneme.

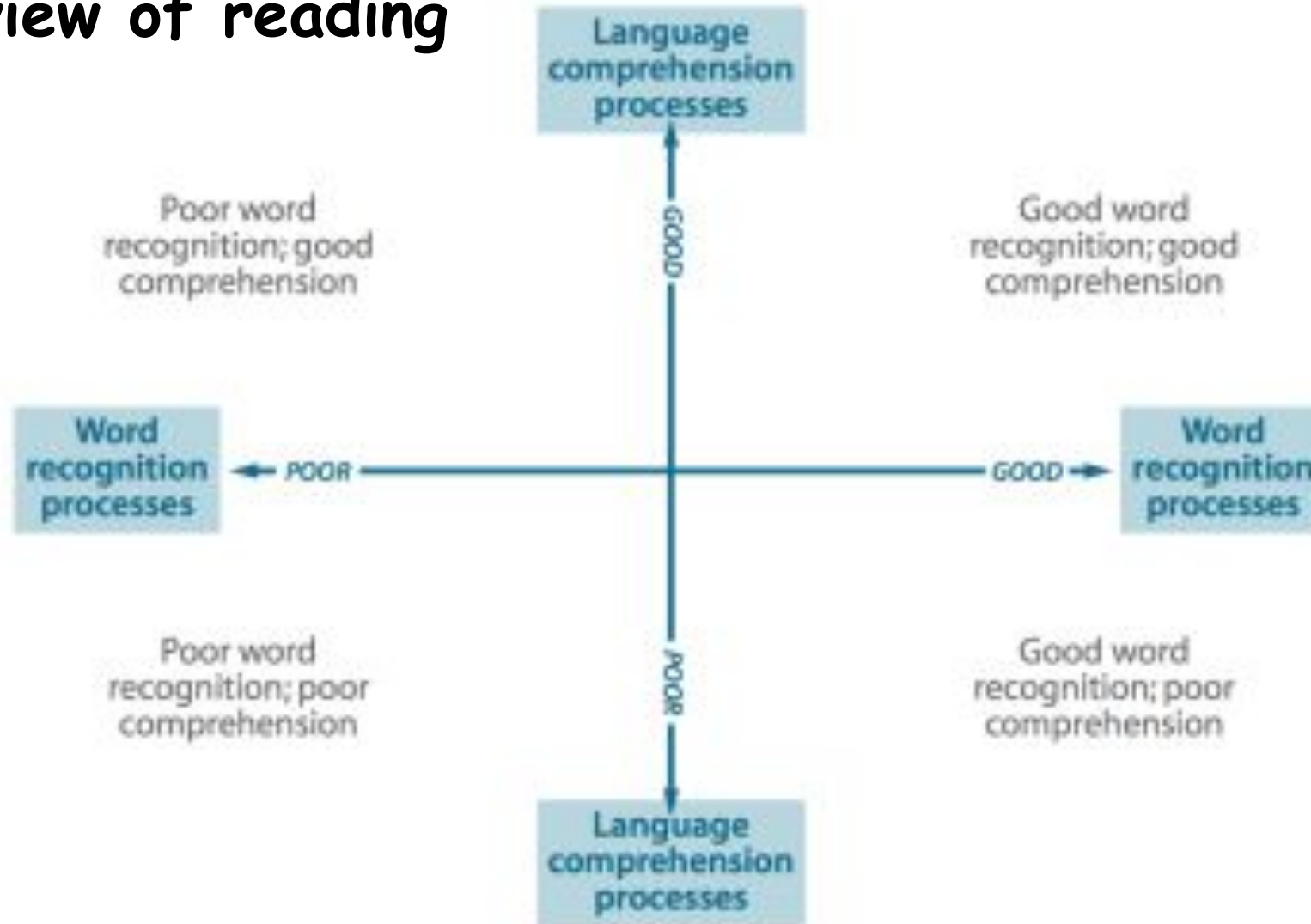
Each grapheme could contain 1, 2, 3 or sometimes more letters.



There are **44** taught phonemes but approx. **140** graphemes in the English language - mainly due to multiple invasions of the British Isles!

Think of it like a secret code - we need to crack the alphabet code in order to become proficient readers and writers!

The simple view of reading



Both **word recognition** and **word comprehension** skills are necessary to become a fluent reader.

Phases:

Phase 2, 3, and 4 are taught in Reception

Phase 4 (review) and phase 5 in Year 1

All phases revisited and referred to in Year 2 and beyond in spelling

- These are simple, clear actions that don't impede the child saying the sound
- The sound is only voiced once, so that the teacher can spot those children who are saying the sound slightly behind the rest of the group
- The actions also help warm up hands and fingers, ready for writing

GPC	Image	Action	Lower Case Letter Formation	Upper Case Letter Formation
s		Snake – Slithering snake action with arm	Up and over, around the other way	Up and over, around the other way
a		Arrow – Firing an arrow	Around, up, down and flick	Down, down, lift and across
t		Tap – Twisting a tap	Down and round, pencil off, across	Down from the top, lift and left to right across the top
p		Paint – Painting with a paintbrush	Down, up to the top, round to the middle	Down and back up, around to the middle

Actions, Images and Handwriting – Phase 2 page 1

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Ss	Aa	Tt	Pp	li	Nn
Mm	Dd	Gg	Oo	Cc	Kk
ck	Ee	Uu	Rr	Hh	Bb
Ff	ff	Ll	ll	ss	

We teach 4 phonemes a week Monday-Thursday and review on Fridays.

We teach the phoneme, grapheme and a corresponding action.

As soon as we can, we practise reading words containing our new grapheme.

All phonemes are taught following a sequence based on their frequency of occurrence in the English language.

A note on pronunciation

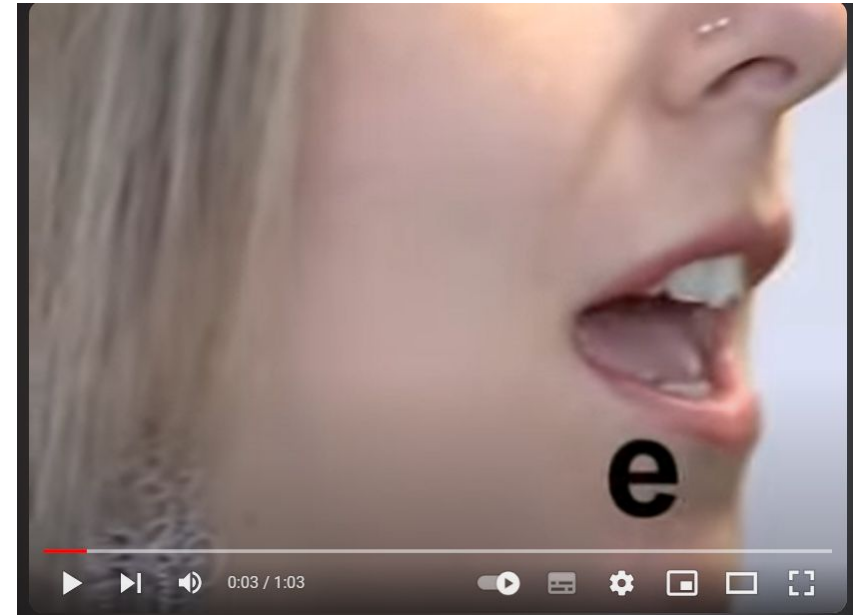
It is important to ensure children are practising correct pronunciation of each phoneme.

This video demonstrates how to say each sound.

Articulation of phonemes:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW_v-1s

Please ensure you are aware of correct pronunciation and exposing your child(ren) to British phonics online.



'Schwa'

Be especially careful not to add an unnecessary 'uh' sound to the end of phonemes!

Segmenting

Splitting words up into the individual phonemes you hear.

Sometimes called 'sound talking' or 'robot talk'. Please get your b-a-g.

This skill is vital in being able to spell words.

cat

Blending

Pushing the phonemes together to make a word.

This is the act of reading.

sh-ee-p

To help ch with these skills we sometimes use sound buttons.

What else?

<i>the</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>into</i>
<i>no</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>go</i>

Unlocking
Letters & Sounds CEW Sound Mat Phase 2

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In phonics we also teach **Common Exception Words** - CEWs

These used to be called High Frequency words (HFWs) or Tricky words in some phonics programs.

Words that cannot be decoded phonetically - the, go, to

Also some very common phonetic words - and, but



Books and reading

Children will be given books to bring home when they can blend - this will be different for every child.

Books precisely match children's phonics attainment.

Books are phased to match the phonics teaching phases - 2, 3, 4, 5 and mastery.

We want all children to have a love of reading books.

Set aside time to read at home (whether your child is bringing home phonics books yet or not).

Be positive and enthusiastic - celebrate small successes.

Encourage them to point to the grapheme, say the phoneme and blend it together - this takes time, be patient!

Things to do at home

Talk about and identify sounds around you

Practise the phonemes they know

Practise segmenting and blending to read words

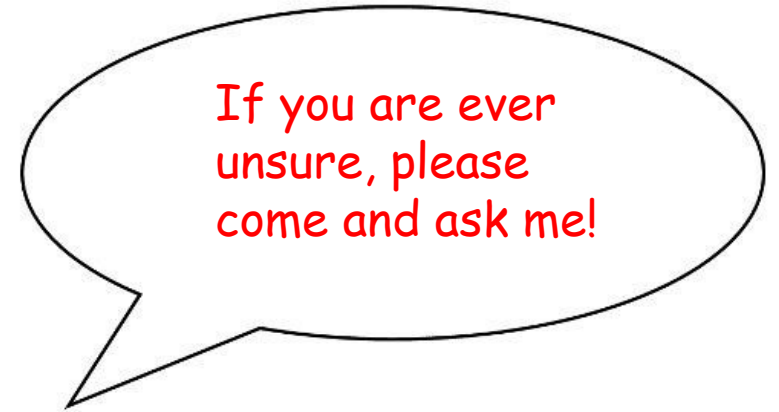
Sound talk in every day life - please pass the c-u-p.

Learn how to read the CEWs eg. the

Segment words to help with spelling

Watch Alphablocks on CBeebies

Ensure you are working in lower case lettering



Talk, talk, talk; read, read, read!