# Summary of main features of phonics reading and spelling/writing instruction

### Simple View of Reading – official model in England:



### USA: Five Pillars of Literacy

1. Phonemic awareness
2. Phonics
3. Vocabulary enrichment
4. Fluency (repeat reading)
5. Comprehension

A high-quality phonics programme includes the 'big five'.

### The Alphabetic Principle:
- The Alphabet Poste
- The Alphabetic Code Chart

**Display:** (main walls, breakout areas, phonics folders)
- *Permanent* (Alphabet, Alphabetic Code Chart)
- *Cumulative* (Code Frieze, Tricky Words, Spelling Word Banks, planned grammar, punctuation)
- *Incidental* (code as required, unusual code, unplanned grammar, punctuation)

### Change of perception of phonics from 'baby stuff' to 'adult stuff':

- Adults use phonics for reading and spelling.
- Use 'code' language not infant language (These letters *are code for* the sound /ai/...).
- *'Two- pronged systematic and incidental phonics teaching'* addresses differentiation, phonics in the wider curriculum, and caters for all ages and needs.
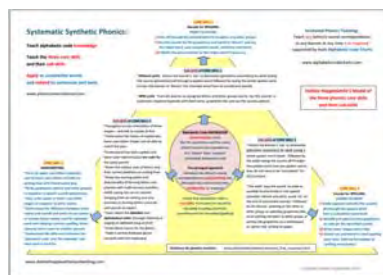
### The Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles:

- Alphabetic Code KNOWLEDGE
- Phonics SKILLS (and *sub*-skills)

No multi-cueing reading strategies for guessing words.

Apply and extend phonics knowledge and skills to cumulative, paper-based resources per learner.

### The three core phonics skills and their sub-skills:



### The Phonics (Hand) Routines:

Print-to-sound for reading (point)
Sound-to-print for spelling (tally)
Handwriting: correct grip and letter formation on lines



### The Teaching and Learning Cycle (always complete):



### Time:

- Allow enough time  – don't underestimate.
- Complete the full 'Teaching and Learning Cycle' per learner.
- Use time efficiently.
- Provide sufficient time for learners to practise – and 'little and often' for slower-to-learn pupils.
- Avoid 'extraneous' or time-consuming games.

### The maths of the phonics:

- Provide ample shorter and longer words for individuals to blend, segment and write.
- For 'revisit and review', consider the quantity of letter/s-sound correspondences, and words/sentences, repeated to build fluency.
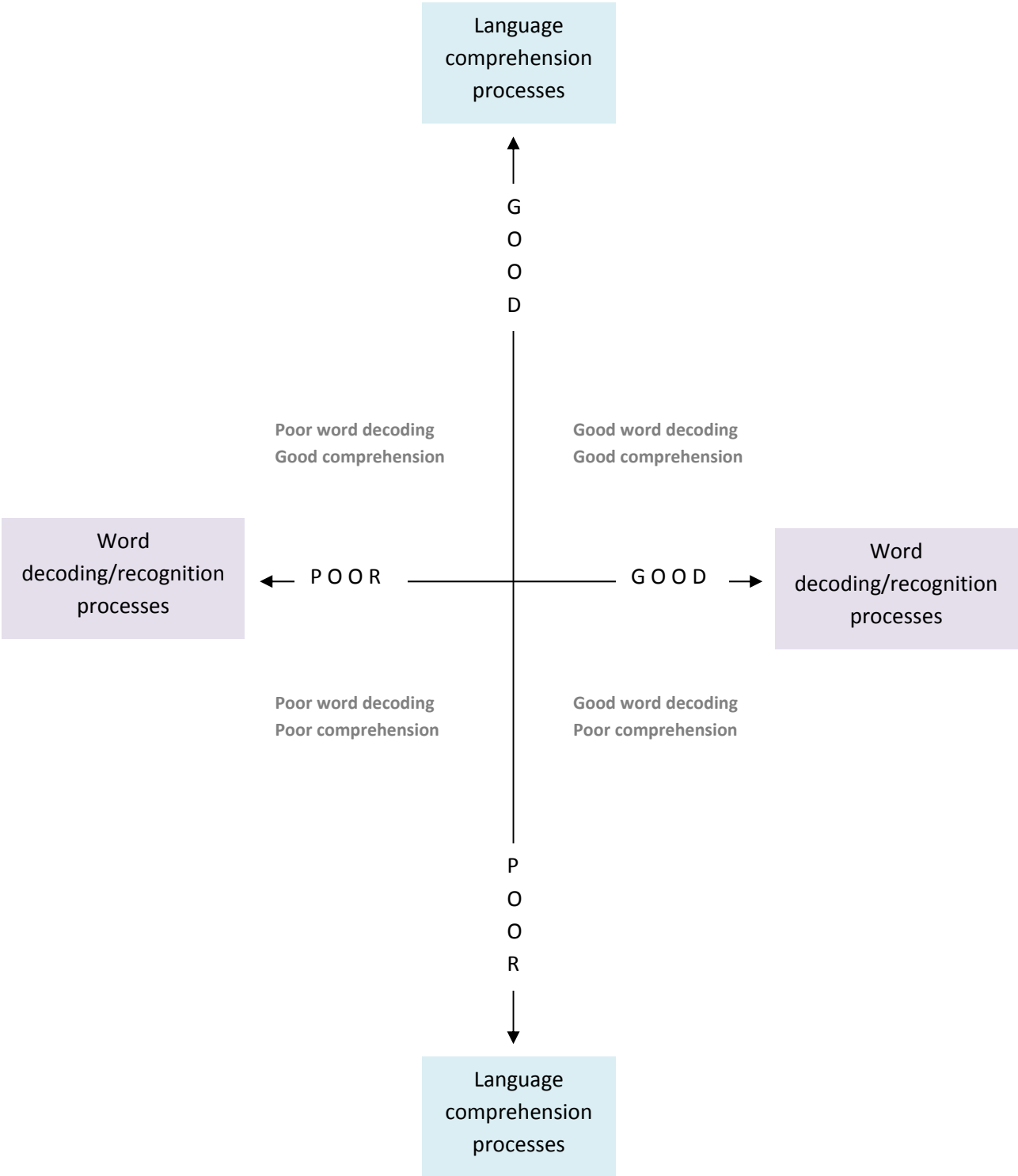- Quantify what 'little and often' means in your setting.

# What Science and Experience Tells Us About Reading and Reading Instruction

- Learning to speak is a natural process but learning to read is not.

- A competent reader should be able to read and understand what he or she can talk about and understand.

- To be a reader in the full sense is dependent upon two main processes:
  i) the ability to *decode the words* [What **ARE** the words?]
  ii) the *language comprehension* to understand the words that have been decoded [What do the words **MEAN**?]
  This can be illustrated by the '**Simple View of Reading**' diagram:
  https://phonicsinternational.com/The_Simple_View_of_Reading_model.pdf

- Scientific evidence from the past half-century confirms that the most effective approach for *teachers to teach reading (and spelling)* includes direct instruction in the '**Five Pillars of Literacy**':
  https://nichd.nih.gov/research/supported/Pages/nrp.aspx/

1) **Phonemic awareness** (awareness of the 44 smallest sounds, or phonemes, identifiable in English speech – most effectively taught alongside print)
2) **Phonics** (includes teaching the letters and letter formation of the '*alphabet'*, and systematically teaching knowledge of the '*alphabetic code'*, that is, the 170+ letters and letter groups which represent the 44 sounds, alongside the phonics skills of blending all-through-the-word for decoding/reading; and segmenting all-through-the-spoken-word, then allotting letters and letter groups, for encoding/spelling)
3) **Vocabulary** (new words explicitly taught to enrich spoken language)
4) **Fluency** (ample reading practice and repeated reading)
5) **Comprehension** (including specific techniques for comprehension of literature)

**Parents can provide the best support for their children by routinely engaging them in high-quality conversations and by sharing experiences of a wide range of books (read to the children and talk about the nature of the books and their contents).**

- All readers need to know and understand the '*alphabetic principle'* but English writing consists of the most *complex alphabetic code in the world* and so it is best taught explicitly and systematically:
  https://alphabeticcodecharts.com/One_side_ACC_with_IPA_symbols.pdf

  'It cannot be left to chance, or for children to ferret out, on their own, how the alphabetic code works.'
  (*Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading*, Sir Jim Rose, March 2006):
  https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://education.gov.uk/publications/eorderingdownload/0201-2006pdf-en-01.pdf

- Teachers need to know and understand the **Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles**:
  https://rrf.org.uk/pdf/Final_03_The_Synthetic_Phonics_Teaching_Principles%2011-2-10.pdf

  Plan the teaching based on a **Teaching and Learning Cycle**:
  https://phonicsinternational.com/Reflecting%20on%20the%20Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Cycle.pdf

- Teachers should be aware of the dangers of teaching children to read using multi-cueing reading strategies which amount to guessing words from cues such as picture cues, word shape, first letters and context. Teaching learners to *guess* words can lead to bad reading habits that can be damaging in the long-term. (Note: 'Context' is required, however, to ascertain meaning of words and, on occasions, to indicate the correct pronunciation of words such as 'read' and 'wind'.)

- Even learners who have difficulty learning to read require the same teaching as described above but they may need more 'little and often' and intensive practice of phonics and/or language comprehension. Teachers can use the Simple View of Reading (link above) and specific assessments as appropriate to identify the language needs and the phonics needs of individual learners: https://phonicsinternational.com/Triangle_sub_core_skills.pdf

- The aim is for foundational skills, including knowledge of the main letter/s-sound correspondences, to be largely mastered in the first two to three years for most learners. Initially it is desirable to provide cumulative and decodable texts consisting of code already introduced to increase reading fluency and to build confidence. This is followed by the use of increasingly more complex texts to further increase vocabulary, comprehension skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. Phonics continues for building up *'code' spelling word banks*.

- Alongside teaching children to read well, teachers and parents can encourage and inspire them to love reading and to appreciate literature:
  https://gov.uk/government/news/new-action-plan-to-inspire-thousands-more-pupils-to-read
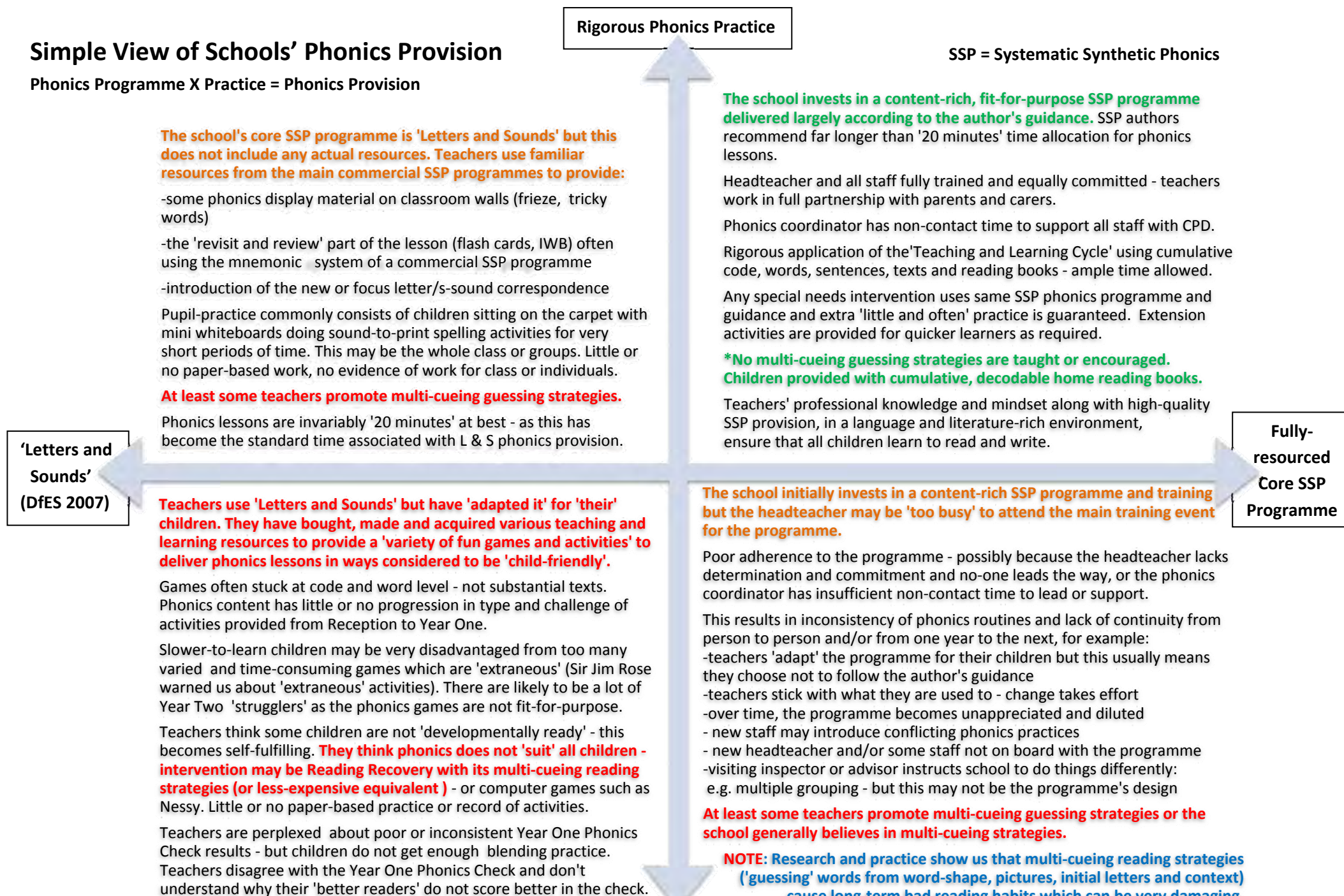
**The Simple View of Reading**

Language
comprehension
processes

G
O
O
D

| Poor word decoding | Good word decoding |
| Good comprehension | Good comprehension |

Word
decoding/recognition
processes ← P O O R —— G O O D → Word
decoding/recognition
processes

| Poor word decoding | Good word decoding |
| Poor comprehension | Poor comprehension |

P
O
O
R

Language
comprehension
processes

# Simple View of Schools' Phonics Provision

**Phonics Programme X Practice = Phonics Provision**

**SSP = Systematic Synthetic Phonics**

**'Letters and Sounds' (DfES 2007)**

**Fully-resourced Core SSP Programme**

**Weak Phonics Practice**

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### Top-left quadrant

**The school's core SSP programme is 'Letters and Sounds' but this does not include any actual resources. Teachers use familiar resources from the main commercial SSP programmes to provide:**

-some phonics display material on classroom walls (frieze, tricky words)

-the 'revisit and review' part of the lesson (flash cards, IWB) often using the mnemonic system of a commercial SSP programme

-introduction of the new or focus letter/s-sound correspondence

Pupil-practice commonly consists of children sitting on the carpet with mini whiteboards doing sound-to-print spelling activities for very short periods of time. This may be the whole class or groups. Little or no paper-based work, no evidence of work for class or individuals.

**At least some teachers promote multi-cueing guessing strategies.**

Phonics lessons are invariably '20 minutes' at best - as this has become the standard time associated with L & S phonics provision.

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### Top-right quadrant

**The school invests in a content-rich, fit-for-purpose SSP programme delivered largely according to the author's guidance.** SSP authors recommend far longer than '20 minutes' time allocation for phonics lessons.

Headteacher and all staff fully trained and equally committed - teachers work in full partnership with parents and carers.

Phonics coordinator has non-contact time to support all staff with CPD.

Rigorous application of the 'Teaching and Learning Cycle' using cumulative code, words, sentences, texts and reading books - ample time allowed.

Any special needs intervention uses same SSP phonics programme and guidance and extra 'little and often' practice is guaranteed. Extension activities are provided for quicker learners as required.

**\*No multi-cueing guessing strategies are taught or encouraged. Children provided with cumulative, decodable home reading books.**

Teachers' professional knowledge and mindset along with high-quality SSP provision, in a language and literature-rich environment, ensure that all children learn to read and write.

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### Bottom-left quadrant

**Teachers use 'Letters and Sounds' but have 'adapted it' for 'their' children. They have bought, made and acquired various teaching and learning resources to provide a 'variety of fun games and activities' to deliver phonics lessons in ways considered to be 'child-friendly'.**

Games often stuck at code and word level - not substantial texts. Phonics content has little or no progression in type and challenge of activities provided from Reception to Year One.

Slower-to-learn children may be very disadvantaged from too many varied and time-consuming games which are 'extraneous' (Sir Jim Rose warned us about 'extraneous' activities). There are likely to be a lot of Year Two 'strugglers' as the phonics games are not fit-for-purpose.

Teachers think some children are not 'developmentally ready' - this becomes self-fulfilling. **They think phonics does not 'suit' all children - intervention may be Reading Recovery with its multi-cueing reading strategies (or less-expensive equivalent )** - or computer games such as Nessy. Little or no paper-based practice or record of activities.

Teachers are perplexed about poor or inconsistent Year One Phonics Check results - but children do not get enough blending practice. Teachers disagree with the Year One Phonics Check and don't understand why their 'better readers' do not score better in the check.

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### Bottom-right quadrant

**The school initially invests in a content-rich SSP programme and training but the headteacher may be 'too busy' to attend the main training event for the programme.**

Poor adherence to the programme - possibly because the headteacher lacks determination and commitment and no-one leads the way, or the phonics coordinator has insufficient non-contact time to lead or support.

This results in inconsistency of phonics routines and lack of continuity from person to person and/or from one year to the next, for example:
-teachers 'adapt' the programme for their children but this usually means they choose not to follow the author's guidance
-teachers stick with what they are used to - change takes effort
-over time, the programme becomes unappreciated and diluted
- new staff may introduce conflicting phonics practices
- new headteacher and/or some staff not on board with the programme
-visiting inspector or advisor instructs school to do things differently:
 e.g. multiple grouping - but this may not be the programme's design

**At least some teachers promote multi-cueing guessing strategies or the school generally believes in multi-cueing strategies.**

**NOTE: Research and practice show us that multi-cueing reading strategies ('guessing' words from word-shape, pictures, initial letters and context) cause long-term bad reading habits which can be very damaging.**

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These are examples of various profiles of schools in England (2015).
The teachers in all these different schools are hardworking.
The pupils, however, do not all get sufficient fit-for-purpose phonics practice.
Many are taught to guess words they cannot decode. This fails many pupils.

# Systematic Synthetic Phonics:

Teach alphabetic code **knowledge**

Teach the **three core skills**
and their *sub*-skills

**Apply** to *cumulative* words
and **extend** to sentences and texts

www.phonicsinternational.com

## CORE SKILL 1
**Decode for READING:**
**PRINT-TO-SOUND**
**i) Scan all-through-the-printed-word to recognise any letter** *groups*
**ii) Say the sounds for the graphemes and** *blend* **to 'discern' and say**
**the target word** (*use cumulative words, sentences and texts*)
**iii) Modify the pronunciation of the target word if necessary**

### *Sub*-skills of CORE SKILL 1
**\*Without print**: Attune the learner's 'ear' to phonemes (*phonemic awareness*) by adult saying the sounds (phonemes) all-through-a-spoken-word followed by saying the whole spoken word to train the learner to 'discern' the intended word from its constituent sounds

**\*With print**: Train the learner to recognise letters and letter groups and to 'say the sounds' in automatic response (*typically with flash cards, grapheme tiles and say the sounds posters*)

**Incidental Phonics Teaching:**
Teach any letter/s-sound correspondence
to any learner at any time – as required
supported by main **Alphabetic Code Charts**

www.alphabeticcodecharts.com

**Debbie Hepplewhite's Model of the three phonics core skills and their *sub*-skills**

### *Sub*-skills of CORE SKILL 3
**\*Recognise correct orientation of letter shapes** – and link to *sounds* at first
**\*Understand the notion of capital and lower case letter shapes and be able to match the pairs**
**\*Understand that both capitals and lower case matched pairs are code for the same sounds**
**\*Know the relative sizes of letters and their correct positions on writing lines**
**\*Know the starting points and directionality of forming letters and practise with multi-sensory activities whilst saying the correct sounds** (*ranging from air-writing and arty activities to forming letters correctly with pencils on paper*)
**\*Learn about the alphabet and alphabetical order** (*through chanting or singing an alphabet song at first*)
**\*Know letter names for the letters**
**\*Hold a normal thickness pencil correctly with the tripod grip**

**Alphabetic Code KNOWLEDGE**
**Systematically teach**
the 44+ phonemes and the many letter/s-sound correspondences of a 'simple' then 'complex' (*extended*) alphabetic code

**Two-pronged approach**
Introduce the letter/s-sound correspondences **systematically** but introduce *any code at any time*, **incidentally**, as required

Know that alphabetic code is **reversible**, from print-to-sound for *decoding* (reading) and from sound-to-print for *encoding* (spelling)

### *Sub*-skills of CORE SKILL 2
**\*Attune the learner's 'ear' to phonemes** (*phonemic awareness*) by adult saying a whole spoken word slowly , followed by the adult saying the sounds all-through-the-spoken-word (use *any* spoken words, they do not have to be 'cumulative' for this practice)

**\*The adult 'says the sound' as close as possible to phonemes in real speech** (consider volume and pitch, avoid 'uh' on the end of consonant sounds) – followed by the learner: *pointing to the letter or letter group; or selecting grapheme tiles; or air-writing the letter or letter group; or writing the grapheme on a whiteboard or, better still, writing on paper*

## CORE SKILL 3
**HANDWRITING:**
**\*Form 26 upper case letters (capitals) and 26 lower case letters correctly on writing lines with tripod pencil grip**
**\*Write graphemes (letters and letter groups) in response to speech sounds (phonemes)**
**\*Also, write upper or lower case letter shapes in response to letter names**
**\*Understand the difference between letter names and sounds and when to use names or sounds (letter names used for *alphabet work* and *relaying a precise spelling*, letter name by letter name to another person)**
**\*Understand the difference between the 'alphabet code' and 'the alphabet' and what each is used for**

## CORE SKILL 2
**Encode for SPELLING:**
**SOUND-TO-PRINT**
**i) Orally *segment* (identify the sounds) all-through-the-spoken-word from a *cumulative* word bank**
**ii) Identify and select correct graphemes *as code for* the identified sounds**
**iii) Write letter shapes when able**
**iv) Sound out and blend to check spelling** (*over time, build up knowledge of spelling word banks*)

**Guidance for phonics routines:**     www.phonicsinternational.com/new_free_resources.html

# "The Potential of Alphabetic Code Charts and the

# Two-Pronged Approach to Synthetic Phonics Teaching: Systematic and Incidental"
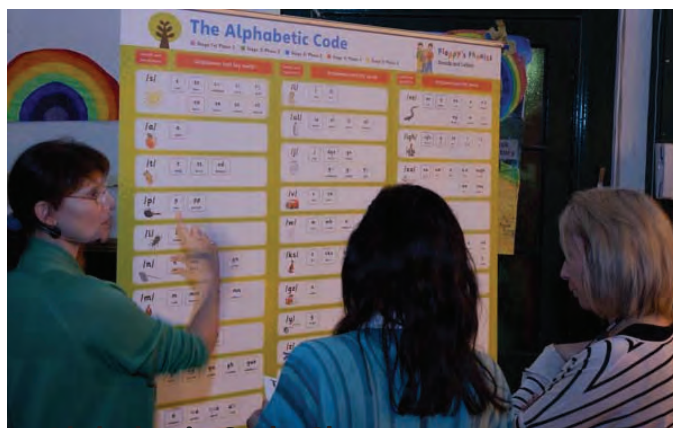


### Debbie's Definition of an Alphabetic Code Chart

- The **'alphabetic code'** is the reversible relationship between the discrete sounds we can identify in speech and the letters or letter groups which are code for the sounds. Some people prefer to describe the alphabetic code as *letter/s-sound* correspondences (GPCs) and others prefer to say *sound-letter/s* correspondences (PGCs). The main point, however, is that they *are* CORRESPONDENCES.
- The correspondences are taught, and learned, reversibly – that is, from 'print to sound' for a reading sub-skill and from 'sound to print' for a spelling sub-skill.

- An **Alphabetic Code Chart** is a core visual aid which lists the units of sound (42- ish phonemes plus some *combined phonemes*) **down the left hand column** with their corresponding spelling alternatives (graphemes) listed **across the rows**.

- The sounds are listed down the left-hand column because they come to an end point! The number of graphemes (spelling alternatives), however, goes on and on! It makes more sense to list the graphemes across the rows. A choice can be made as to how many spelling alternatives are listed on the chart 'as code for' the sounds. The Alphabetic Code Chart, then, is rooted in the 'sounds'.
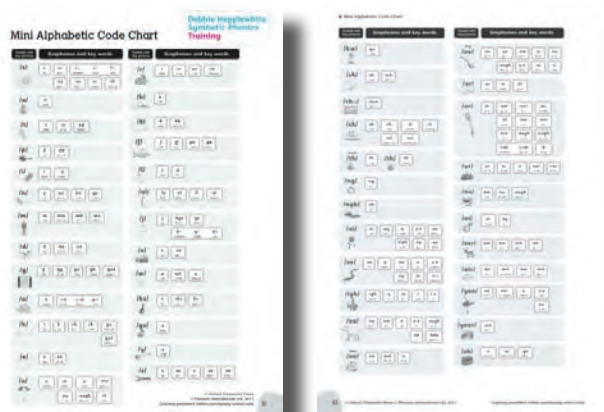


How many **units of sound** can you count on the mini Alphabetic Code Chart?

Which units of sound are **combined phonemes**?

- The *units of sound* need to be written in *slash marks* to make it very clear that letters written within the slash marks indicate the SOUND and not the letter shapes or spelling.
- Choices can be made as to how the sounds in slash marks are notated.

| /k/ | c | k | ck |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | cat | key | duck |

Letter '**k**' is chosen to represent the *sound* in the slash marks because this letter shape is consistently code for the /k/ sound in printed words. The letter '**c**' shape is inconsistent as it is sometimes code for the /s/ sound as in '**c**ity' and sometimes code for the /k/ sound as in '**c**at'.

- The units of sound on an Alphabetic Code Chart can be listed from *top to bottom in any order* – for example, the order that they are introduced in a specific programme or, for a generic chart, starting with sounds which have correspondences of one letter only (rather than sounds like /ch/ which have corresponding graphemes of more than one letter).

- An Alphabetic Code Chart can be designed to be totally *generic* or *specific to a particular phonics programme*. It can include the *mnemonic system* of the programme – for example, pictures to prompt the learning of the sounds.

- The most informative Alphabetic Code Charts show the graphemes (spelling alternatives) discretely and also highlight the spelling alternatives in **key exemplar words**.

## Debbie suggests that 'two-pronged' systematic and incidental phonics teaching is a specific 'approach' and could become the way forwards for the most effective phonics teaching and learning:

- Systematic Synthetic Phonics tends to be a '*linear*' teaching method at first because the teacher introduces letter/s-sound correspondences in a specific order which is *mainly one spelling for the 42+ sounds*. This is teaching a 'basic' (or 'simple' or 'transparent') alphabetic code **before** progressing onto further spelling alternatives and pronunciation alternatives of the 'extended' (or 'complex' or 'opaque') alphabetic code.

- With a 'two-pronged' approach consisting of both systematic and incidental phonics teaching (supported by a giant Alphabetic Code Chart as a high-profile permanent visual aid) the teacher has far greater flexibility for teaching the learners. Both teaching and learning can be accelerated for at least some children (probably ALL children) as there is a sustained approach of *over-learning/revision/consolidation* through not only the planned teaching sequence but also through the constant incidental teaching as opportunities arise – with the Alphabetic Code Chart providing the permanent, supporting visual aid. Thus, beginning teaching includes **both** *introducing* the basic code and *dipping into* the extended code.

- The 'two-pronged' teaching ethos can liberate adults to support any learners as they read any book, or print, aloud. Any adult at any time with any learner is trained and encouraged to 'teach' new alphabetic code as it appears in any reading material – or during any writing activities. Some children will be able to learn this new code instantly, others after a few repeated mentions, and others may take longer but may need supporting like this even when the code in the words has already been systematically introduced.

str**aigh**t

"In *this* word, *these* letters *are code for* /**ai**/."

"I'll teach you more about that, LATER…"

# The Alphabetic Code Chart is an essential visual aid

- It illustrates clearly the *rationale* of the sounds of speech (down the left-hand column) and their spelling alternatives (across the rows) and supports teachers to teach this concept.

- It can support the *organisation* of the *planned systematic programme*.

- It provides the *overview* of the alphabetic code content (the letter/s-sound correspondences) that the school is *formally accountable to teach* through its 'systematic' synthetic phonics programme. A small version can be sent to parents, a small version can be part of the school's literacy policy and a small version can be included in the school's brochure.

- It can provide an instant *training resource* for any supporting adults in the school who are new to synthetic phonics or new to the programme.

- It can train *student-teachers* very quickly.

- It provides a *classroom reference tool* to teach letter/s-sound correspondences '*incidentally*' and at any time as it is permanently to hand.

- It is shared *universally* – teachers, learners, parents.

- It provides a tool for *consistency and continuity* for teaching or revising the alphabetic code across whole schools and from Key Stage One to Key Stage Two. In effect, it is a permanent spelling reference chart.

- It provides an important *sustained* resource for older learners who require it, and will benefit from it, for *basic reinforcement* longer than some of their peers. Suitable versions can be used in secondary schools.

- It provides a great resource for *differentiation*. The teacher or teaching assistant can refer to the chart at any time to teach an individual, a group or the whole class any part of the alphabetic code as required.

- Some learners will be able to 'self-teach' with the Alphabetic Code Chart displayed in the classroom.

- It can support *reading and writing in the wider curriculum*, not just the phonics lessons.

- It supports the teaching of *spelling in Key Stage Two*.

- It provides a core '*work in progress*' resource. Not only can teachers and learners track which letter/s-sound correspondences they have looked at and which they have yet to look at through their planned programme of work, learners can *actively discover* spelling alternatives which are not on the main chart. (An example of a discovered letter/s-sound correspondence would be the '-ffe' grapheme as code for the /f/ sound at the end of 'giraffe'.) The new grapheme can then be *added* to the chart or incidental posters of the discovered grapheme can be made and added to the main phonics display wall.

The inside cover notes in the *Floppy's Phonics Sounds and Letters books* provide guidance for the adult to support the young reader to sound out and blend new words and they provide guidance for oral segmenting:



The spelling routine: When a learner identifies the sounds all-through-the-spoken-word, he or she may need to ask, "*Which spelling do I need for 'feel', the /ee/ as in 'eel' or the /ee/ as in 'eat'*?" The teacher can find the /ee/ row on the **Alphabetic Code Chart** and then track along to *point* to the '**ee**' grapheme and say, "*This one here as in 'eel'*".

# Two versions of the Alphabetic Code Chart



**Version 1**



**Version 2**

## Version 1

**Supports the organisation of the online Phonics International programme:**

1) Top to bottom of the left-hand column illustrates the order of introduction of the 'sounds' which is a *teaching feature.*

2) The grapheme squares are colour-coded to indicate in which unit of 12 Units (webpages) the resources will be located for each grapheme. This is a practical *organisational website feature*.

*Key picture-words* prompt the sounds which is an *early learning mnemonic* (aid to memory).

The chart not only shows the spelling alternatives as *discrete enlarged 'graphemes'* but the graphemes are also shown highlighted in *key printed words*. The words themselves can provide a form of spelling mnemonic.

Ultimately, learners need to assimilate *spelling word banks*. Further aids to memory might be helpful such as *mnemonic spelling stories with pictures;* and *activities to associate words with the same sounds and spelling alternatives* (for example, 'acting' a group of associated words).

## Version 2

In version 2, there are no pictures to prompt the sounds. Instead, there are *pictures to illustrate the exemplar key printed words* for the spelling alternatives. This may be particularly important for young learners and learners for whom *English is a new or additional language*. Such learners need as many supportive pictures as possible not to help them decode the printed words but to help them learn the *vocabulary* – what the words, when decoded, actually '*mean*'.

In both charts, the 'sounds' indicated in slash marks are shown as *coloured* letters. The colours distinguish consonant sounds (in blue) from vowel sounds (in red).

In many phonics programmes and phonics information provided for teachers and parents, there is often a failure to distinguish clearly enough when there is reference to consonant and vowel *letters* and when there is reference to consonant and vowel *sounds*. The use of *slash marks* to notate the *sounds* should not be avoided or substituted by using just letter shapes alone. **This will cause confusion sooner or later!**

How many **units of sound** are shown on the PI charts?

How many **vowel sounds** are there?
How many **consonant sounds** are there?

**Phonics Teaching Tips!**

**Teach a planned, systematic synthetic phonics programme and, in addition, adopt a rigorous approach to incidental phonics teaching:**

1. Teach children never to sound out the 'end **e**' in words. Many words in the English language end with the letter '**e**'. Whilst in some words this 'end **e**' alerts readers to decode the words with long vowel sounds (e.g. 'm**a**k**e**' is /m/ /ai/ /k/ - not /m/ /a/ /k/), nevertheless, many words with 'end **e**' are not 'split digraph' words and this end letter '**e**' does not require decoding with its own 'sound' (apart from words such as 'caf**e**' and 'acn**e**'). The presence of the letter '**e**' at the end of words, however, needs to be noted, over time, for spelling purposes.

2. Once the single vowel letters **a**, **e**, **i**, **o**, **u** are introduced as code for their _short_ vowel sounds of /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/ (as in '**a**t', '**e**nter', '**i**n', '**o**n' and '**u**nder'), start to teach 'incidentally' (whenever the opportunity presents itself) that these single letters can also be code for the _long_ vowel sounds of /ai/, /ee/, /igh/, /oa/ and /y+oo/ (as in 't**a**ble', 'm**e**', 'f**i**nd', '**o**ld' and '**u**nit'). When decoding, teach, "If blending with the _short_ vowel sound does not make a 'real' word, try blending again with the _long_ vowel sound." This creates a very flexible early reader who understands that the decoding process needs to be addressed with common sense, **trying alternative sounds and able to modify pronunciation**. This also creates young readers who are not afraid of getting words wrong because that's what happens with this reading business in the English language – it's part of the learning process and not a totally precise state of affairs!

3. Teaching the notion of 'tweaking (modifying) the sounds' will address many words such as 'o**f**', 'hi**s**', 'ha**s**', 'i**s**', 'a**s**', 'th**e**', 'p**u**t' and 'p**u**ll' ("/o//v/, /h//i//z/, /h//a//z/, /i//z/, /a//z/, /th//u/, /p//oo//t/, /p//oo//l/"). It is a fundamental aspect of teaching the alphabetic code that we need to apply a level of common sense. If all the early words taught are totally straightforward, this can mislead the children and may not lead to an early ability to decode words fearlessly!

4. Teach the children to say only <u>one</u> sound when consonant letters are doubled. Whilst '**ss**', '**ll**', '**ff**' and '**zz**' are taught as special cases for spelling purposes, it is easy to teach children to simply say the 'sound' once for any double consonant letters for reading purposes. If the notion of 'short vowels' and 'long vowels' for single vowel letters is introduced (see point 3. above), then children can learn that double consonant letters (including '-**ck**') are always preceded by **single letter 'short vowel sounds'**.

5. Once letter '**e**' and letter '**d**' have been introduced, then through your incidental teaching start to draw attention to them in 'wider reading' (for example, in shared Big Books and story books) and modelled in your general 'wider writing' <u>when they are used as '-**ed**' verb endings</u>. This addresses '-**ed**' verb endings as code for the sounds /d/ (rain**ed**), /t/ (skipp**ed**) and /(schwa **u** or **i**)+**d**/ (decod**ed**). Also teach how to pronounce the letter '-**y**' endings as code for a /ee/ and /igh/ (funn**y**, m**y**). Address '-**er**' endings as soon as practicable (schwa /**u**/ or /er/ as in sist**er**, moth**er**, fath**er**, broth**er**). These incidental early teaching steps are liberating for the possibility of reading more natural text in a wide variety of books and they also begin to help children with early spontaneous writing in addition to systematic controlled writing practice.

**Teach a planned, systematic synthetic phonics programme and, in addition, adopt a rigorous approach to incidental phonics teaching – RATIONALE:**

Incidental teaching is ESSENTIAL. Systematic programmes take a long time to deliver because there is a lot of alphabetic code to teach explicitly! Children cannot 'wait' to learn about a 'full' alphabetic code until it happens to occur in the planned programme. Teachers and learners need to be proactive and ambitious and teach incidentally to supplement the structured programme for reading and spelling skills!

Incidental phonics teaching should occur as the need arises naturally and where it is common sense. This may well be on a daily basis or several times a day including whenever children are asked to read aloud.

Incidental teaching should be a feature of general class teaching. It significantly increases and accelerates knowledge of the alphabetic code and personalises the teaching, addresses differentiation and provides constant revision.

For example: Alice is learning about the /s/ sound and the letter shape 's'. She thinks about her name and tells her teacher that she can hear /s/ at the end of her name but there is no letter 's'. The teacher tells Alice that she is right and together all the children and the teacher orally segment Alice's name to identify the sounds in it /a/ /l/ /i/ /s/. Now the teacher writes Alice's name on the board (or everyone looks at Alice's name card). The teacher leads the children along as they note the capital 'A' as code for /a/, the 'l' for /l/, the 'i' for /i/ and so what is code for the last /s/ sound? Once 'ce' is identified as code for /s/, it might also be appropriate for the teacher to quickly say (and write on the board if possible) that there are other words with 'ce' as code for /s/ like 'dance' and 'prince'. If there is an Alphabetic Code Chart nearby (see the free charts in Unit 1 of Phonics International), this is a good opportunity to find the /s/ row and to track along it to the code 'ce' demonstrating to children how the chart works. Alice may be the child who remembers this from now on as this bit of code information is very meaningful to Alice and she is already astute about letters and sounds. One or two other children in the group may remember this code too, so that when they look at story books, they see 'prince' or 'ice-cream' and can remember that the letter group 'ce' is code for /s/. Other children may not remember at this stage but, over time, more children will learn elements of the alphabetic code from constant, incidental teaching.

Free Unit 1 resources:  https://phonicsinternational.com/unit1

When children read books aloud and encounter an unknown grapheme, the supporting adult can say, "In this word, those letters [*point*] ARE CODE FOR the /___/ sound" and then the child can blend the word. For some children, this will only support them to blend the word in this instance, but other children *will* be able to remember alphabetic code taught incidentally in this way.

It doesn't matter if children don't learn 'there and then' the code which teachers tell them about incidentally. This is, after all, an 'add-on' to the planned teaching and the constant 'drip-drip' approach will take effect.

The overarching message for incidental teaching, whether the teacher's explanation is very brief indeed or a little more protracted, is to say at the end, "...and I am [or, *the next teacher is*...] going to teach you more about that later". This reassures the child that they are not under pressure to remember it 'now' because it will be repeated and taught again 'later'.

**Simple approaches to differentiation:**

A teacher constantly differentiates his or her teaching as a tool of the trade. The SAME phonics resource can be suitable for ALL the children on the basis that the teacher understands each child can access the resource at his or her own level. The more simple the teacher's classroom management, the more focused the teacher can be to support those with most need. With phonics teaching, children can be <u>trained</u> in the skills and routines of using <u>familiar</u> resources so that many can complete basic activities <u>independently</u>, whilst the adults support the children who need extra teaching and/or supervision more directly.

**Provide guidance for adults who hear children read:**

"In this word, those letters (or '*that grapheme*') are code for the /___/ sound."

When <u>reading books</u>, clearly some children will need more support than others. Even where books are designed to be cumulative and decodable, some children will need extra assistance such as reminding them, or teaching them, about specific letter/s-sound correspondences during the reading process.

Other children may have no difficulty reading books including alphabetic code that has not been formally taught as part of a planned programme. Some children are able to deduce code for themselves. If teachers and parents are properly guided in how best to oversee the 'reading aloud' process, many more books will fall into the domain of being suitable for children to attempt to read aloud (see pdf link below).

In other words, even where schools go to some lengths to provide cumulative, decodable books to match the level of alphabetic code already taught, the individualism and learning rate of the children will always make this a less than perfect system – fine in theory but not always in practice. If <u>good guidance</u> is provided for all the adults (for example, direct in reading record books, as part of school policies on reading, in the school prospectus and through training and information evenings), then this will ease the concern about 'decodability'.

This document (see link below) is a one-side '**guidance for parents**' leaflet which may be considered suitable to stick into children's 'reading record' books (free to download from the free Unit 1 of Phonics International):

http://www.phonicsinternational.com/unit1_pdfs/parents_guidance_for_reading.pdf

There need be no concern about variations in accent. Teachers or parents simply need to point to the letter group (*grapheme*) and say, "In this country/county/state, we pronounce those letters (or '*that grapheme'*) as /...../" then the learner can go on to sound out and blend the word).

**When the general teaching tips above are applied along with a systematic phonics programme, the vast majority of learners will be able to access natural text surprisingly quickly!**

# Floppy's Phonics Teaching and Learning Sequence

**Revisit and Review:** Revise sounds and graphemes with Flashcards, Frieze and Say the Sounds Posters

**Teach:** Introduce new sound and grapheme using the Flashcard, Frieze and CD-ROM

**Practise:** Pupils practise new and revised sounds and graphemes with S & L Books and Activity Sheets

**Apply:** Pupils extend their core skills with words and sentences using Cumulative Texts and Grapheme Tiles

**Consolidate:** Pupils use the CD-ROM activities and the end pages of the S & L Books to consolidate code knowledge and their skills

**Practise reading:** Pupils read FP fiction and non-fiction books as independently as possible

Complete end pages after full j, v, w sequences.

Debbie Hepplewhite Synthetic Phonics Training

Please note: Original interactive CD-ROMs updated to the online Floppy's Phonics subscription platform

All learners need to learn the same alphabetic code, and the same phonics skills, but they need age-appropriate resources and plenty of guaranteed, personal practice.

Paper-based personal resources presented within a routine Teaching and Learning Cycle contribute significantly to all the 'Five Pillars of Literacy'.



**Teacher-led:**

**'Revisit and review'**

Whole class 'interactive' or whole class, each learner re-reads own resources: words, sentences and texts

**Pupil-practice:**

**'Independent reading'**

Use cumulative, decodable books at first, support as necessary with wider reading.



Setting-up, and use of, the essential Phonics Folder for every learner

**Teacher-led:**

**'Introduce' focus letter/s-sound correspondence**

Include reference to the main Alphabetic Code Chart.

Model the three core skills quickly, simply, interactively.



**Pupil-practice:**

**'Apply and extend' new learning with sentences/texts**

Use personal, paper-based resources per learner. Annotate, collate, value.

**Pupil-practice:**

**'Learn' focus code and apply all phonics skills at word level**

Use personal paper-based resources per learner. Annotate, collate, value.

## Phonics Routines

Teach the **knowledge** of the alphabetic code
(the letter/s-sound correspondences)
and the **three core skills** and their **sub-skills**

### I. Decoding (blending or synthesising)

**Sub-skill without print:**

Adult says the separate sounds "/f/ /r/ /o/ /g/".

/f/ /r/ /o/ /g/

frog

Learners 'discern' or 'hear' the whole word 'frog'
and then say the whole word "frog".

**Sub-skill with print:**

or   S s / A a     -ng

Point to pre-printed graphemes
that have been taught to date:
"See the graphemes [letters or letter groups]
and say the sounds."

**Core skill for decoding:**

- Glance at (scan) the printed word
  from left to right to 'recognise' any letter groups.
- Use the index finger to point directly under **each**
  grapheme whilst saying the sounds
  as close to real speech as possible
  from left to right of the printed word.
- Say the whole word whilst running the index finger
  left to right beneath the whole printed word.
- Modify the pronunciation of the blended sounds into the
  real word's pronunciation if necessary.

---

### 2. Encoding (oral segmenting, spelling-with-editing)

**Sub-skill without print:**

Say the whole word "soap" very slowly and naturally so
that the separate sounds become evident [oral segmenting].

Repeat the separate sounds as close to real speech sounds as
possible   "/s/ /oa/ /p/".

Do not repeat the whole spoken word after that !

**Sub-skill with print:**

Listen to sounds as close as possible to real speech sounds.

1. "Hear the sounds, point to the graphemes."
2. "Hear the sounds, select the graphemes."
3. "Hear the sounds, write the graphemes."

**Core skill for encoding:**

- Use the left hand, palm facing,
  to tally the sounds identified
  all-through-the-spoken-word
  onto thumb and fingers.
- Write a 'sound dash' for every sound identified
  which also act as 'writing lines'.   ___ ___ ___
- Select grapheme tiles, magnetic letters
  or write graphemes, to spell the word.
- Sound out and blend the selected     s  oa  p ✓
  graphemes to check the spelling.

---

### 3. Handwriting (linking graphemes to sounds)

**Sub-skill:**

Hold the pencil correctly
with the tripod grip.

"Froggy legs [thumb and index finger] grip the pencil at the
end of the painted part [not on the sloping cone part]
with the log under [the middle finger]".

**Sub-skill:**

"ch"
as in chick      ch

Establishing 'directionality' of
writing letter shapes whilst saying the sounds.

**Finger-tracing:** Use the index finger of the writing hand
to trace pre-printed letter shapes.
**Pencil-tracing:** Trace pre-printed grey or dotted letter shapes
with a pencil.
**Copying:** Copy letter shapes with finger or pencil.

**Core skill for handwriting:**

- Correct tripod pencil grip
- Correct posture sitting at a desk
- Slightly slanted paper, use free hand to hold steady
- Write under the letters and words – avoid hooking hand
  and wrist around
- Say the sounds whilst writing graphemes as part of the
  spelling process
- Write on writing lines frequently as appropriate

www.phonicsinternational.com          www.debbiehepplewhitehandwriting.com

# Teach the knowledge of the alphabetic code (the letter/s-sound correspondences) and the three core skills and their sub-skills

Suggestions for good phonics routines and raising awareness of some common misunderstandings - by Debbie Hepplewhite

| Skill one: **Decoding** (reading: blending or synthesising) | Skill two: **Encoding** (spelling: oral segmenting and selecting graphemes) | Skill three: **Handwriting** |
|---|---|---|
| *Sub*-skill **without** print:<br><br>Adult says the separate sounds " **/d/ /r/ /e/ /s/** ".<br>Learners 'discern' or 'hear' the whole word 'dress' then say the whole word "**dress**".<br><br>Try not to say the sounds with an added 'schwa' or 'uh' sound on the end – say the sounds as close as possible to 'real speech sounds'.<br><br>If in doubt, to work out how to say the individual sounds, start with a whole spoken word and say it very, very slowly but as close as possible to the natural way of saying the word – and the individual sounds will become distinguishable as real speech sounds.<br><br>Note that vowel sounds are often low and loud compared to consonant sounds. Avoid <u>monotone</u> 'robot talk' as this may result in all the sounds having the same volume and pitch unlike real speech sounds. | *Sub*-skill **without** print:<br><br>Adult says the whole word "**duck**" <u>very slowly</u> so that the separate sounds start to become evident and then models how to orally segment (split up) the word into its separate sounds " **/d/ /u/ /k/** ".<br>Learners repeat the whole word "**duck**" and then repeat the separate sounds " **/d/ /u/ /k/** ".<br>Eventually the learners can do this independently for any short words building up to longer words. Chunk multi-syllable words into syllables first if necessary.<br>Begin to do the oral segmenting process with left hand, palm facing, to tally the sounds to thumb and fingers.<br>Make sure that learners know which is their left hand and right hand for this process. If everyone faces the same way, this is much easier.<br>**Do <u>not</u> repeat the whole word <u>after</u> saying the separate sounds. The last thing learners should say and hear are the separate sounds to support their spelling – <u>not the whole word</u>.** | *Sub*-skill:<br><br>Hold the pencil with the correct tripod grip.<br>To make this child-friendly and fun, say "**Froggy legs** [*thumb and index finger*] **grip the pencil at the end of the painted part** [*not on the sloping cone part*] **with the log under** [the middle finger]".<br>Sit at a correct-height desk with good posture and practise writing or drawing on paper.<br><br>Use an incentive such as a beanbag frog to place on the table of the learners making a good effort – or use the frog as a reminder.<br><br>Provide normal thickness pencils as small hands cannot grip fat pencils well enough. This might explain why many young learners hold the pencils on the cone part which then obscures their writing. |
| *Sub*-skill **with** print:<br>Point to pre-printed graphemes that have been taught to date: "**See the graphemes** (letters or letter groups) **and say the sounds**."<br>Make sure that this routine is very frequent using Grapheme Flash Cards, Say the Sounds Posters, Say the Sounds Strips. Place **Say the Sounds Posters** around the classroom and around the school **and** build them up in the learners' personal folders. Avoid loud calling out as this will lead to the 'schwa' or 'uh' being added. Provide opportunities for slower-to-process or reserved learners to do this in quiet places and small groups or one to one. | *Sub*-skill **with** print:<br>Say the separate sounds as close to possible as real speech sounds that have been taught to date:<br>"**Hear the sounds, point to the graphemes**."<br>"**Hear the sounds, write the graphemes**."<br>Use Grapheme Tiles for learners to select when they cannot write well enough.<br>Learners can air-write the graphemes as they begin to learn letter formation.<br>Introduce 'quickfire' activities for learners to write the graphemes on whiteboards or paper once they can handwrite. | **Air-writing for directionality of letter shape formation:**<br>When modelling air-writing, **do not face** the learners and air-write in reverse, instead **face the same way as the learners** and model the air-writing in the correct direction for both you and them.<br>Display an alphabet poster, or alphabet letter shapes, as a visual aid for upper and lower case letter shapes – with writing lines. Provide a small version to take home.<br>**Finger-tracing:** Use the index finger of the writing hand to trace pre-printed letter shapes.<br>**Pencil-tracing:** Trace pre-printed grey or dotted letter shapes with a pencil.<br>**Copying:** Copy letter shapes with finger or pencil. |

## Core skill for decoding (blending):

1. Glance at (scan) the printed word from left to right to 'recognise' any letter groups.
2. Use the index finger to point directly under each grapheme (letters and letter groups) whilst saying the sounds as close to real speech-sounds as possible from left to right of the printed word.
3. Say the whole word whilst running the index finger left to right beneath the whole printed word.
4. Modify the pronunciation of the blended sounds into the real word's pronunciation if necessary.

If learners cannot 'discern' the word when they have said the sounds, train them to have more attempts automatically – building up the speed and fluency at which they say the sounds.

Then, if necessary, the adult can say the sounds as close as possible to real speech and, sometimes, the learner is then able to discern the word. Tick, or acknowledge, the letter/s-sound correspondences that the learner knew.

Make sure that there are supportive Frieze Posters nearby so that the learners can see the mnemonic prompts to remind them of the sounds.

Avoid doing too much for the learners – this results in 'learned helplessness'- learners may never get sufficient practice and independence to progress.

Do not restrict slow-to-learn pupils with only words consisting of three letters and three sounds. Model longer words, and provide longer words, as part of their daily practice as well as simple words.

## Core skill for encoding (spelling-with-editing):

1. Adult stands and faces the same way as the learners, to their 'left', and models how to raise the left hand, palm facing, to tally the separate sounds on to thumb and fingers.
2. Say the focus word slowly and tally each sound identified to thumb and fingers in turn.
3. Then, count how many sounds are identified and write 'sound dashes' top left of board or paper (draw the lines from left to right). The sound dashes are used to account for a grapheme per sound, but also act as **writing lines**.
4. Select Grapheme Tiles, or magnetic letters, or **write the graphemes** whilst saying each separate sound from beginning to end.
5. Finally, sound out and blend all-through-the-word (as if blending it for the first time) to check the spelling. Then 'tick' the spelling.
6. If a sound and grapheme is missing, demonstrate how to use an 'arrow head' in the correct place to add the missing grapheme. Cross off the spare sound dash if it has been replaced with an arrow head pointing to a grapheme. Re-check the spelling by sounding out and blending.

Repeat this routine frequently, and as learners progress, hold back on modelling the tallying and the rest of the routine to allow the learners the chance to do these things independently and show you.

Draw back the adult support over time and in response to the needs of the learners – but remember not to over-model even for the slower-to-learn pupils.
Aim for as much **pupil-engagement** as possible.

## Core skill for handwriting:

1. Correct tripod pencil grip (– be vigilant!)
2. Correct posture sitting at desk
3. Slightly slanted paper, use free hand to hold paper steady
4. Write under the letters and words – don't hook hand and wrist around
5. Say the sounds whilst writing graphemes or words – making links between graphemes and sounds

- Provide plenty of examples of letters, words and sentences on writing lines for learning correct position.
- Provide writing lines for practising letter formation - mainly paper and pencil exercises.
- Have very high expectations for pencil hold, letter formation and writing activities.

Mini whiteboards can be fit-for-purpose for 'quick-fire show me' activities but they are **not suitable** for sustained writing beyond graphemes and word level and learning how to hand-write well.

Make a record of how many learners currently throughout the school do not hold their pencils correctly, do not sit with good posture, do not form letter shapes correctly, and tend to hook their wrists round to write their words from the 'top' rather than 'beneath' the words. Aim to improve this record in both the short term and the long term.

For a print style and a fully joined handwriting style with free resources and an efficient method for teaching joined handwriting quickly, see www.debbiehepplewhitehandwriting.com

# straig̲h̲t̲



"In *this* word, *these* letters are code for the /ai/ sound."

Teach the alphabetic code (the letter/s-sound correspondences) in any word incidentally.

Let me help you to spell *that*

tricky / unusual / interesting word ...

What sounds can we hear

all through the word ?

Let's find the /ee/ sound on our Alphabetic Code Chart.

Look, you need *this* spelling alternative – as in ' ch**ie**f '.

Other examples of words with *this code* are br**ie**f and sh**ie**ld.
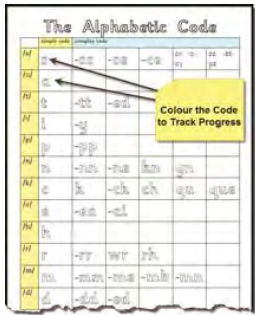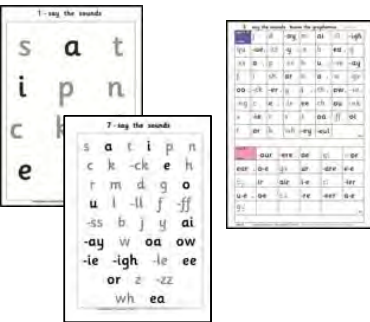
Quickly, let's make a poster of the /ee/ ie word bank.

# Setting-up, and use of, the essential Phonics Folder for every learner

This is suggested *best practice* for the *Phonics International* programme (author: Debbie Hepplewhite) and the *Oxford Reading Tree Floppy's Phonics Sounds and Letters* programme (phonics consultant: Debbie Hepplewhite).

Establishing an easy-to-use **phonics folder** (such as a ring binder) and a **phonics work-in-progress book** (an exercise book with writing lines) for every learner as essential resources and concepts will *maximise the teaching and learning effectiveness* underpinning Debbie's '**two-pronged systematic and incidental phonics teaching approach**'.
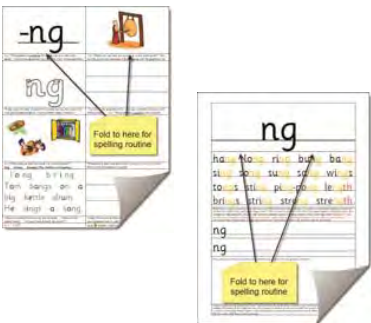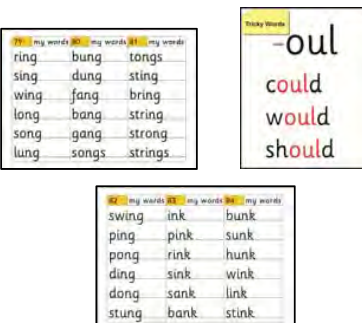
**Core resources for setting up the phonics folder:**

1. a mini Alphabetic Code Chart to provide the overview of the English alphabetic code and to track the code introduced
2. a mini Alphabet Poster with print or the school's preferred joined handwriting style
3. a series of Say the Sounds Posters as required (cumulative alphabetic code letter/s-sound correspondences)

| 1.  | 2.  | 3.  |
|---|---|---|
| mini Alphabetic Code Charts<br>many variations free at:<br>www.alphabeticcodecharts.com | mini Alphabet Posters<br>many variations free at:<br>www.debbiehepplewhitehandwriting.com | Say the Sounds Posters – provided in Phonics International and in ORT Floppy's Phonics Sounds and Letters |

**Core resources for collating cumulatively in the phonics folder:**

- Sounds Book Activity Sheets (multi-skills practice from code to word level with essential banks of cumulative words to practise sounding out and blending for reading; earlier Activity Sheets include letter formation; all Activity Sheets include a spelling-with-editing activity on the folded up part of the sheet)
- Cumulative Sentences or Texts (alternate these with their parallel Activity Sheets to 'apply and extend' the code and word level learning)
- Spelling Word Banks (additional material to build up knowledge of words spelt with the same letter/s-sound correspondences)

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| Sounds Book Activity Sheets<br>many variations in Phonics International and in Floppy's Phonics Sounds & Letters | Cumulative Sentences and Texts<br>many variations in Phonics International and in Floppy's Phonics Sounds & Letters | Spelling Word Banks resources<br>many variations in Phonics International and in Floppy's Phonics Sounds & Letters |

# Why is the use of Phonics Folders as part of the school's 'book-bag routine' such important practice?

## Building up paper-based resources per learner:

Building up paper-based material in each learner's personal phonics folder engages the learner fully and provides **content-rich** 'revisit and review' opportunities *beyond* just once-a-day teacher-led 'revisit and review'. In effect, a copy of a mini Alphabetic Code Chart, a mini Alphabet, a Say the Sounds Poster and any core cumulative phonics resources (code, words, sentences, texts) belong to the learner and place the opportunity for *permanent visual support* and for *extra practice* in the **hands of the learner in school and at home**.

Not only can the phonics folders include the learners' own practice-resources, but also the *range of printable or photocopiable posters and charts* in Debbie's programmes can be *utilised creatively* – for example, options for reducing their size (via the 'multiples per page' printer facility or via photocopying) and including them in the phonics folders – *which may be especially helpful for additional intervention or special needs support*.

## 'Little and often' multi-skills practice:

Most learners require repetition of many aspects of phonics and language work. Knowledge to be acquired includes the letter/s-sound correspondences of the alphabetic code, knowledge of the alphabet (alphabetical order, the lower case and upper case letters and how to form them correctly on a writing line for print and joined handwriting styles), knowledge of specific word-spellings and spelling word banks. Multi-sensory practice is often referred to as VAK (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) and relevant *VAK multi-skills practice* should be as *little and often* as possible **to enable learners to actually learn and embed the learning**! Without a visual bank of material belonging to each learner, it is impossible to provide the little and often practice essential for many learners – and difficult to provide a tangible record of *learning to date and next steps* for all supporting adults and the learners **to understand and share commonly**. Words, sentences and texts provided in content-rich phonics programmes inevitably include vocabulary not within the spoken language of learners. New words and ideas need re-visiting as much as possible (reading, speaking and writing) **to develop language comprehension** – and to develop *greater automaticity* of the *sub*-skills and the *three core skills* of decoding (reading), encoding (spelling) and handwriting.

The '**phonics folder in the school's book-bag routine**' informs parents and guardians regularly. It *facilitates collaboration* between teachers, parents, teaching assistants, supply staff and tutors as required and when possible.

## Intervention and personalisation:

The phonics folder's *cumulative* contents provide the '**intervention**' material for learners who need **extra** *little and often* practice and *over-learning*. **No other phonics programmes or practices are required** – in fact slower-to-learn pupils should not be confused with a plethora of additional games or activities of different programmes or phonics practices for decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling). Of course learners will benefit from additional reading material in the form of cumulative, decodable reading books and other literature. **It is vital, however, that all supporting adults are *consistent* with the *phonics language* and *phonics skills' routines* they present to the learner.**

*Supplementary Phonics International resources* can be included in the phonics folders for groups and individuals who require them – for example, any letter/s-sound correspondences which address *gaps in code knowledge* or additional words or sentences based on specific letter/s-sound correspondences, or where some learners need regular *over-learning* to embed the phonics knowledge and skills or noting words causing extra difficulty for spelling.

## Learner's engagement and assessment of his or her own learning:

Essentially, every learner is enabled to be *fully engaged* with his or her own content and learning *because* it is *paper-based and in the hands of the learner* - enabling the learner to appreciate **tangibly** his or her own progress and achievement (clarified by the input of the supporting adults as required).  In effect, the work is **high-profiled** via paper-based cumulative resources collated in the phonics folder and regularly sent home (and back) as a continuum.

It is recommended that, using a pencil, learners routinely '**tick**' the graphemes (letters or letter groups) for which they can *say the sounds*, and '**tick**' the words they think they have blended accurately. In contrast, they can '**circle**' the graphemes and words of which they are not sure and/or of which they *don't know the meaning*.

For teacher-led **spelling-with-editing** activities, the supporting adult needs to ensure that any attempted spelling is correct *before* the learner can 'tick' the word as this is not about *invented* spelling but *accurate spelling*.

*Guidance for the Phonics Routines:*  http://www.phonicsinternational.com/FR_PI_Posters_for_phonics_routines.pdf

## Marking and annotating:

It is very important that supporting adults *mark the paper-based work* incorporating methods of praise and appreciation - noting landmark and 'wow' moments to fully acknowledge each learner's effort.

With personal paper-based resources, teachers *and* learners can annotate the work freely including any relevant '**next steps**'. This creates ongoing tracking and monitoring documents – *informative and constantly accessible* for **learners**, any **supporting staff** in a school context, for **literacy or phonics coordinators** and **senior management**, and for the **learners' parents or guardians**. It is, in effect, an *accountability and planning record* for teachers and teaching assistants in school contexts, for special needs teachers or for tutors in a personalised learning context.

## The phonics 'work-in-progress' exercise book:

This is an ordinary exercise book with writing lines which learners can have with them at all times, for focus or practice activities, as a *work-in-progress* resource. It may be used as part of the *main phonics lessons* (decoding, spelling and handwriting) and for use in the *wider curriculum* whenever learners are required to read and write. The teacher or supporting adult can direct the learners to use the books for any phonics activities, for example: sticking-in paper grapheme tiles or word lists or cumulative texts, for drawing and matching pictures to words or captions – according to the instructions for use at the time. In addition, any extra handwriting or spelling practice, any listing of words in spelling word banks, any additional spelling practice of common words with unusual or tricky spellings, or any modelling by the adult, or working out a spelling by the learner – or feedback and next steps as appropriate.

**The 'phonics folder in the school's book-bag routine' and the free use of a phonics exercise book facilitate very effective teaching and learning. Whilst these are regarded as essential features in the two phonics programmes mentioned above, this is actually sensible, generic practice which everyone can consider adopting if possible.**

**Please note:** The **mis-use or over-use of mini whiteboards** by learners sitting on the floor is leading teachers away from more *fit-for-purpose* paper-based activities where learners sit comfortably and sensibly at tables to practise the three core phonics skills and their *sub*-skills. **The popularity of using mini whiteboards to displace paper-based practice for teaching foundational literacy skills is very worrying.** Further, no pre-printed content is provided via this medium. Mini whiteboards are therefore *only* suitable for quick-fire 'show me' **sound-to-print** spelling activities.

The use of mini whiteboards is *not conducive to good handwriting*, is not a rewarding activity which can be shared with home, does not provide any words or sentences for further little-and-often practice and embedding learning.

The use of mini whiteboards *does not cater for* **print-to-sound** decoding activities which require many cumulative words/sentences for every learner to practise reading independently, nor any true personalisation of teaching and learning, nor does it provide a permanent tracking/monitoring system, nor a reward or sharing information system.

Name .................................................... Date ....................................................

j

Say the sound. Trace the letter.

Say the word. Listen for the /j/ sound.

jug   jet   jam   jig   jab   jog

Jill   Jack   just   jump   jets

jacket   juggle   jet lag   just

Blend to read the words.

j   j   j   j

Say the sound. Trace the letters. Write the letters.

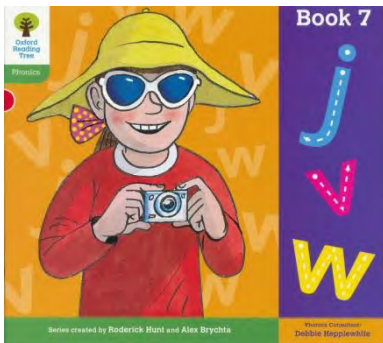Say the words. Can you hear the /j/ sound?

Draw something beginning with j.

h   b   f   -ff   l   -ll   -le   -ss   j

# Learner practice, extension and consolidation

**Stage 2**

Jess and Jill get on a jet.

Jack stuffs a jam bun in his jacket.

1. **FP Sounds and Letters Book 7:** Repeat all the activities on the **/j/ J j** spread.
2. **Multi-skills activities:** Complete the first side of your **/j/ j Activity Sheet** *independently* and *at your own speed*. Soon (at the 'right time') we'll repeat the word-decoding *together* (saying the sounds and blending and/or saying the whole words) and talk about the *meanings* of the words. After that, everyone will fold up their sheets for the spelling-with-editing activity. Remember to use your *sound-dashes* as writing lines.
3. **Extension: Cumulative Text** – Underline the *focus graphemes* (**J** and **j**) then read and *re-read* the sentences. In your phonics exercise book, write the sentences (as copy-writing or self-dictation) in your best *school* handwriting. Draw a picture on the same page for one of the sentences.
4. **Consolidation: FP Sounds and Letters Book 7** – Discuss how you can use the 'end pages' not only for *oral activities* but also for spelling, writing and drawing activities in the phonics exercise book.