



Phonics and Reading

in the Foundation Stage
at Walter Infant School and Nursery



Our Team of Experts



Mrs Hargreaves, our Head Teacher, has a thorough understanding of how children learn to read.

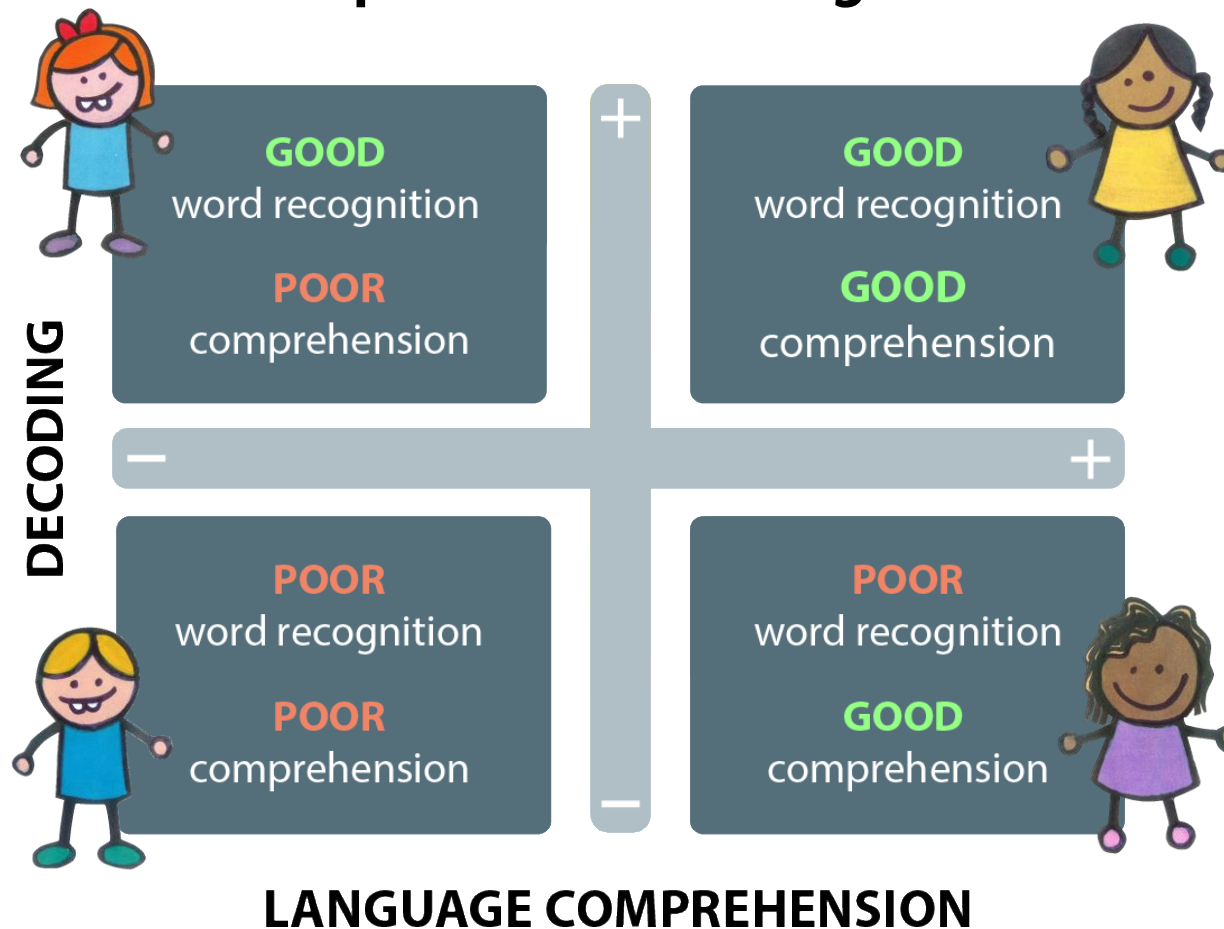
Mr Lee is the school's lead for English, Literacy, Reading and Phonics. He is an English specialist and has worked with other schools to improve their reading provision.



Mrs Bennette, is our Foundation Stage Leader. She is an expert in early years teaching; with a thorough understanding and in depth subject knowledge of the EYFS curriculum.



The Simple View of Reading



Reading can be broken down into two processes or dimensions: word recognition and language comprehension.

Phonics helps with word recognition or decoding words so they can be read.

Phonics does not help develop language comprehension; the understanding of what is being read. This is done through questioning and discussion before, during and after reading a book or text.

By the End of F2

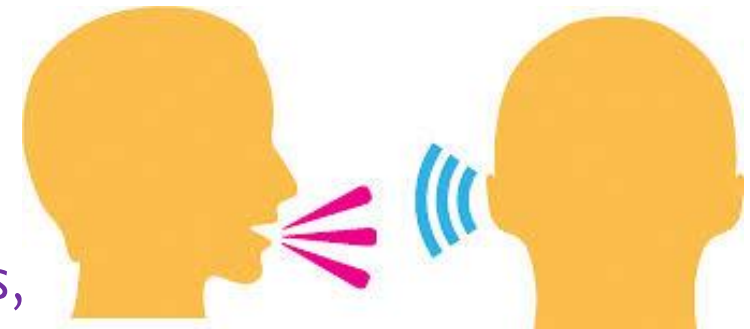
For reading, the children need to:

- Phonics and Reading: Recognize letter sounds, read simple words and sentences.
- Comprehension and Vocabulary: Retell stories, anticipate events, and use new vocabulary in discussions and play.



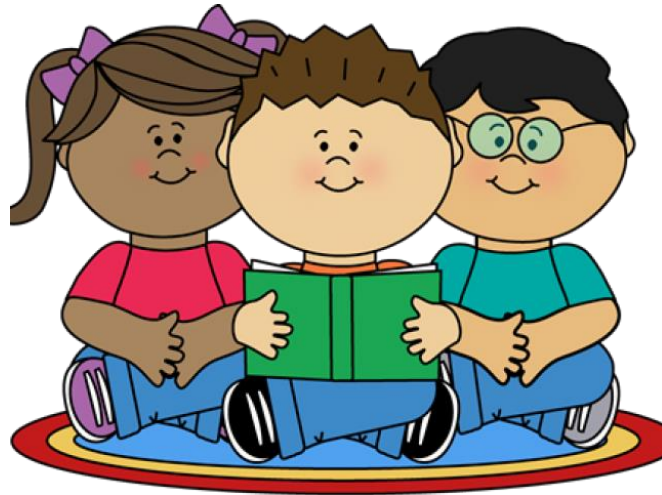
For speaking and listening, the children need to:

- Listening and Responding: Listen attentively, respond with relevant questions and comments, and engage in conversations.
- Discussion and Expression: Participate in discussions, offer ideas, explain events, and express thoughts and feelings using full sentences and new vocabulary.



Why Reading Matters

Reading is an essential skill for life. At Walter Infant School and Nursery, we are dedicated to ensuring that all our children are readers by the time they leave for Junior School. Reading brings social, cultural, and economic value to a person's life. If a child cannot read, it can have a lifelong impact.



Developing Children's Spoken Language

- The skills for reading develop even before the children encounter a book. This is driven by the quality of talk by the grown ups at home and the child's exposure to language and images.
- Children need to hear lots of different talk; conversations, instructions, questions, suggestions etc. They will spend time listening to others, they will absorb the talk around them, mimic it and practise making different sounds and using new words.
- We have hundreds of toys and books to stimulate speaking as we try to make all our learning fun.



**LET'S
TALK**

The English Language

There are 26 letters
in the alphabet.

26

abcdefghijklmnop

qrstuvwxyz

vwxyz

xyz

40+ phonemes or
sounds in the English
language, accounting
for regional dialects.

40+

200+

Over 200 graphemes or written representations of these sounds. Sounds or phonemes can have one or more grapheme for example the sound s can be spelt with an 's' or a 'c'.

First Steps in Phonics (Phase 1)



Aspect 1 – Environmental Sounds

- Going on sound walks
- Making or matching animal sounds
- Listening for sounds that are all around us
- Sounds of different weather

Aspect 2 – Instrumental Sounds

- Exploring sounds using instruments
- Matching sounds to their instruments
- Playing instruments alongside stories
- Making loud and quiet noises

Aspect 3 – Body Percussion

- Clapping patterns
- What sounds can we make with different body parts?
- Develop an awareness of sound patterns and rhythms

Aspect 4 - Rhythm and Rhyme

- Telling rhyming stories
- Singing nursery rhymes
- Counting or clapping the syllables in words
- Odd one out games, for example cat, dog, mat.

Aspect 5 – Alliteration

- Listening for the first sound in a word
- Matching objects that begin with the same initial sound
 - Playing I-spy games

Aspect 6 – Voice Sounds

- Exploring different mouth movements
- Making different vocal sounds
- Using robot voices to sound out words (c-a-t)

Aspect 7 – Oral Blending and Segmenting

- Games that involve breaking down words into sounds or phonemes and blending.
- Segmenting words together and then blending.

Generally, these skills are taught during Nursery, or Robin Class at Walter.

These 7 aspects are revised again and again. They are used as a basis for teaching phonics.

What is Phonics? Why is it so important?

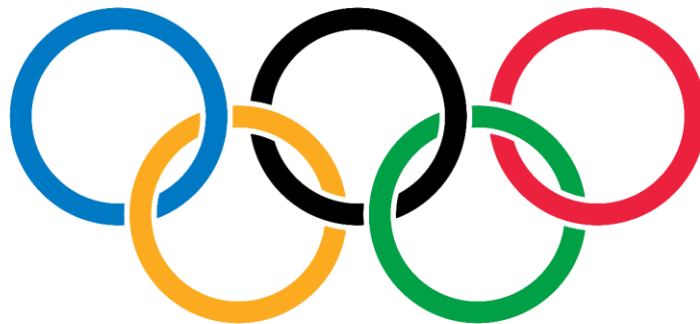
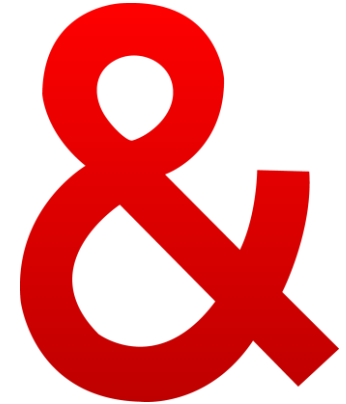
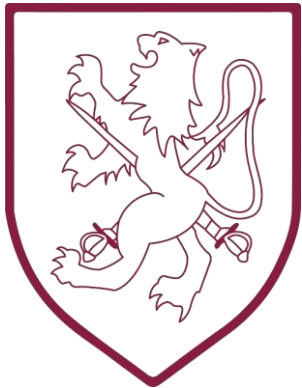
Phonics is a strategy used for word reading or decoding; we also use it for spelling.

Phonics is the prime method for decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) newly encountered or unfamiliar words.



Print to Meaning

Phonics gives the children a strategy needed for word recognition only. Language comprehension is primarily developed through our Guided Reading sessions. Phonics is about turning the marks on the page, the symbols or letters into a sound. Below are some examples of this. What do the following symbols mean?



Technical Vocabulary

Letters – the 26 letters of the alphabet.

Vowel – the letters a, e, i, o, u.

Consonant – all the letters that are not vowels.

Grapheme – the written representation of a sound or phoneme made up of one or more letters.

Phoneme – the smallest possible units of sounds that makes up a word.

Digraph – two letter grapheme (ea, ay)

Trigraph – three letter grapheme (igh, ear)

Quadgraph – four letter grapheme (eigh)

Split digraph – where the letter 'e' at the end of the word changes the vowel sound, e.g. snake, flute or mike.

Common exception words – words that are not so easily; or impossible to decode using phonics.

Grapheme-Phoneme correspondence (GPC) – the process of identifying that a grapheme represents a phoneme or sound.

Segment – breaking down words into their smallest possible phonemes or phonemes.

Blend – to join the phonemes or sounds together to make a word.

Decode – when phonics is used for reading.

Encode – when phonics is used for spelling.

Enunciation and Pronunciation of Phonemes

It is very important to make the sound of each letter or group of letters correctly; we are going to teach you how in a moment or two!

We teach the children how to move their mouths and tongues to pronounce the sound.

If children have speech and language difficulties this will be much harder for them to do, so they will receive additional support. Alphablocks, on the BBC website or iPlayer, is very good at teaching the letter names and phonemes or sounds.



The Added Schwa

The schwa sound is the 'uh' sound that we make. It is used a lot in spoken English. Many people add the 'uh' sound onto phonemes when it should not be there. Be aware of this when saying the letter sounds or phonemes.

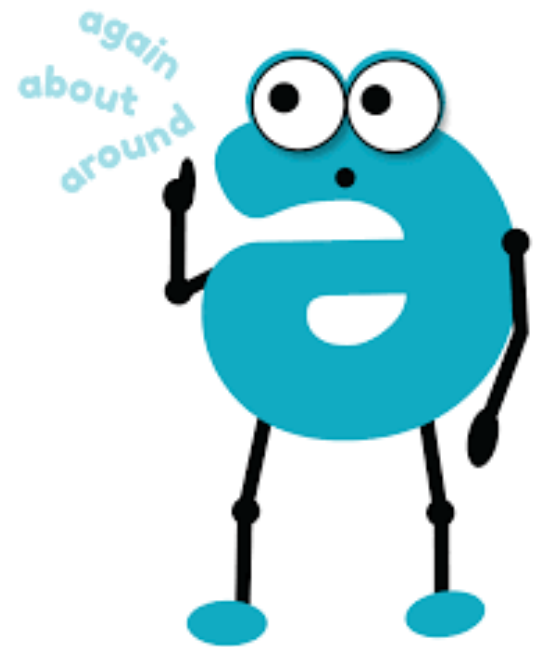
m = "mm" and not "muh"

s = "ss" and not "suh"

Also, remember to keep the phonemes 'clipped' so they are not elongated. Think of them as short and snappy.

m = "mm" and not "mmmmmm"

s = "ss" and not "ssssssssssss"



Letters and Phonemes

There is a difference between letters and phonemes. Think of the word 'letter' as the name of the letter and the 'phoneme' as the sound it makes; BBC's Alphablocks illustrates this very well. Do not be afraid to use these interchangeably. Use the letter name when discussing what letters make up a digraph, for example 'or' is made up of the letters o and r not 'oh' and 'rrr' and makes the sound "aw". Here are some examples with the "k" sound or phoneme.



**This is the letter "kay"
and it makes the
sound "k" as in kite.**



**This is the letter "see"
and it makes the
sound "c" as in cat.**



**This is the digraph
"ck" as in wick. It is
made up of the letters
"see" and "kay".**



**This is the digraph
"ch" as in school. It is
made up of the letters
"see" and "aitch"**

The Letter H!



The letter H or h causes a lot of controversy. People call this letter different things. To settle any disagreements at Walter Infant School and Nursery, we would like everyone to say it as “aitch” and not “haytch”.

The Letter Z!

The letter Z or z causes a lot of controversy. People call this letter different things. Some people refer to as “zee” and some people refer to it as “zed”. “Zee” is the American name for this letter, this is due to American television programmes and people learning American English more widely. However, in British English, it is called “zed”.



Graphemes and Phonemes

The children have five discrete phonics lessons a week. By the end of Year One, the children are expected to know all the following phonemes and graphemes. We are going to practise these together.

Rocket Phonics Sounds Mat 1

s sun	a apple	t tap	i insect	p pan
n net	m mouse	d dog	g goat	o octopus
k kite	ck duck	e elephant	u umbrella	r rabbit
h hat	b bat	f frog	ff cliff	l ladder
ll shell	ss dress	j jug	v van	w web
x fox	y yellow	z zebra		

Rocket Phonics Sounds Mat 2

zz fizzy	qu queen	ch chick	sh sheep	th thumb
ng ring	ai train	ee bee	igh light	oa boat
oo moon	or car	ur purse	ow owl	oi coin
ear ear	air chair	ure manure	er hammer	wh wheel
ph ph	ay crayon	a-e cake	a acorn	e-e scene
ie shield	ea peach			

Rocket Phonics Sounds Mat 3

i child	i-e time	ie pie	y spy	o-e rope
ow snow	oe toe	o piano	ey key	u unicorn
u-e statue	ew news	er herbs	ir bird	ou cloud
oy toy	aw strawberry	oul should	a father	al palm
ear ear	or world	eer deer	ere here	are square
our four	ore snore			

Rocket Phonics Sounds Mat 4

oor door	augh daughter	ce celery	ci city	cy cycle
ge germ	gi giraffe	gy gymnast	ea bread	se cheese
ch chef	dge bridge	ge package	o mother	le bottle
ed mixed	mb comb	kn knot	gn sign	wr writing
tch hatching	s treasure	si television	ci college	ssi station
ti musician	ture picture	y pyramid	sc scissors	st whistle
g drilled	ge drilled	o drilled	le drilled	ed drilled

S



a



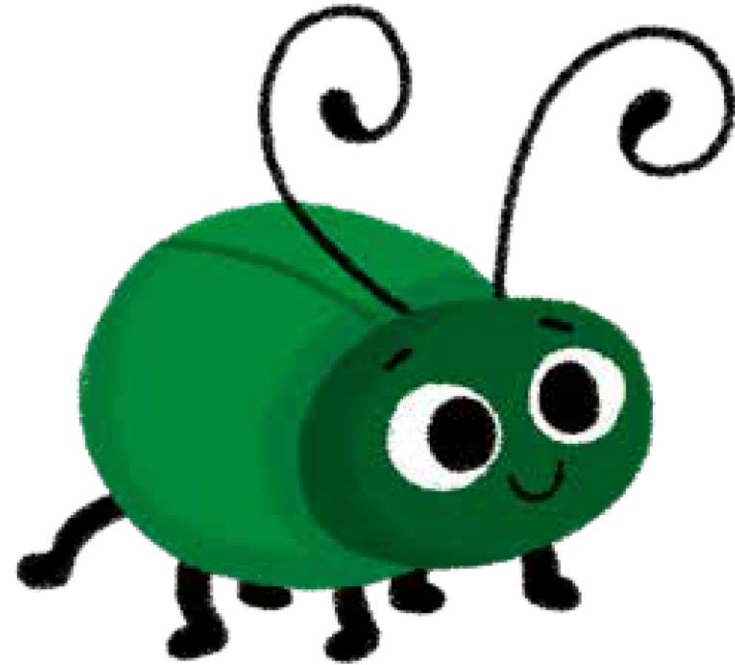
t



p




i




n




The children are taught these six phonemes and graphemes first.
What words can you make from these six letters?

s  S


Reading Planet: Rocket Phonics Copyright © 2021 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd **Flashcard 1**

a  A


Reading Planet: Rocket Phonics Copyright © 2021 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd **Flashcard 2**

t  T


Reading Planet: Rocket Phonics Copyright © 2021 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd **Flashcard 3**

p  P

Reading Planet: Rocket Phonics Copyright © 2021 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd **Flashcard 5**

i  I

Reading Planet: Rocket Phonics Copyright © 2021 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd **Flashcard 4**

n  N

Reading Planet: Rocket Phonics Copyright © 2021 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd **Flashcard 6**

Let's look at the remaining phonemes and graphemes. The children are expected to learn these sounds and be able to blend them when encoding or reading words.

m



d



g



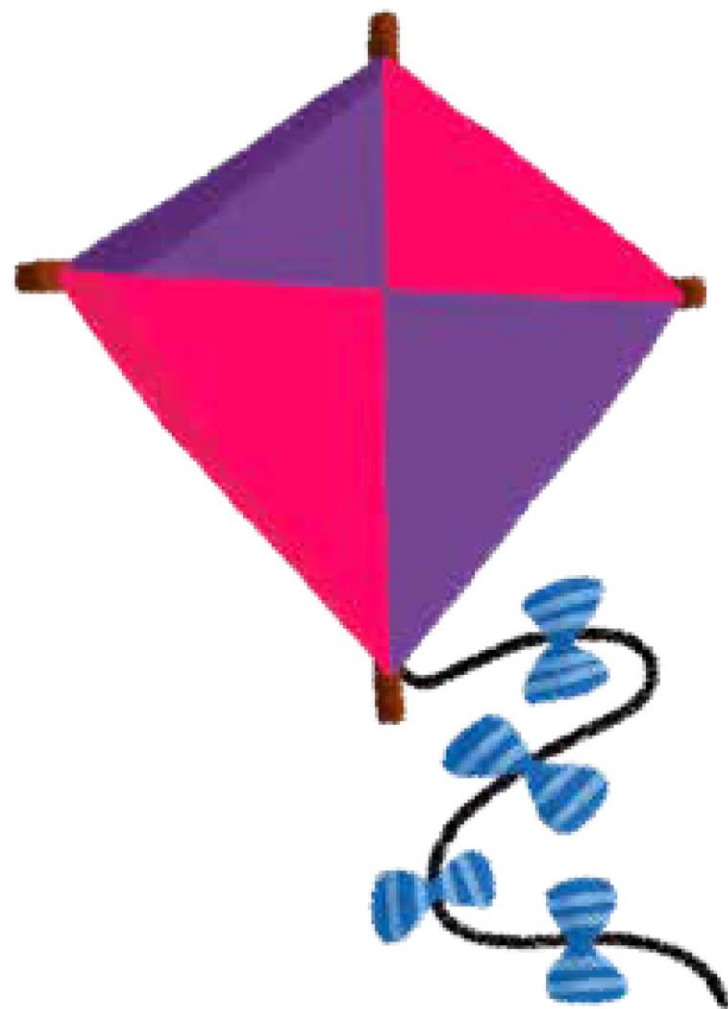
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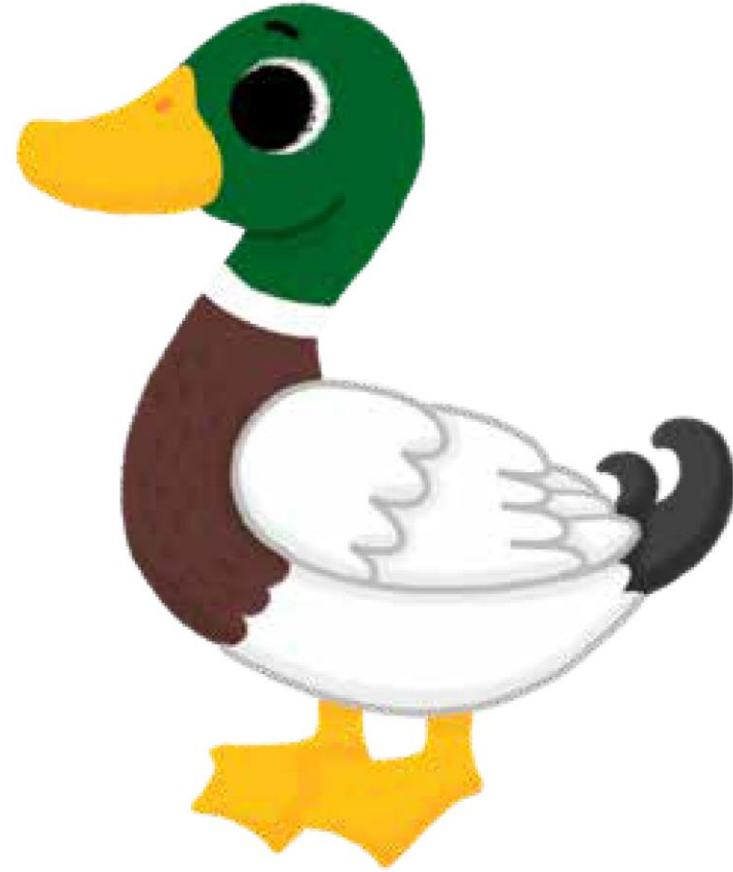
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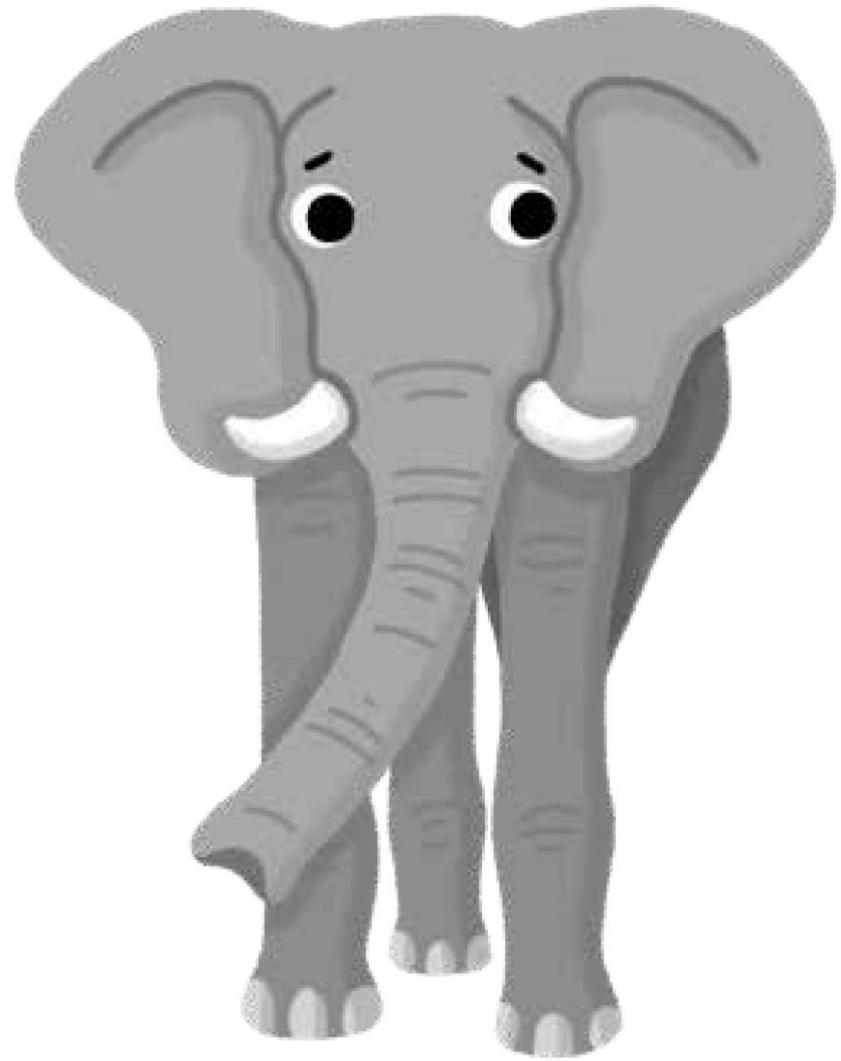
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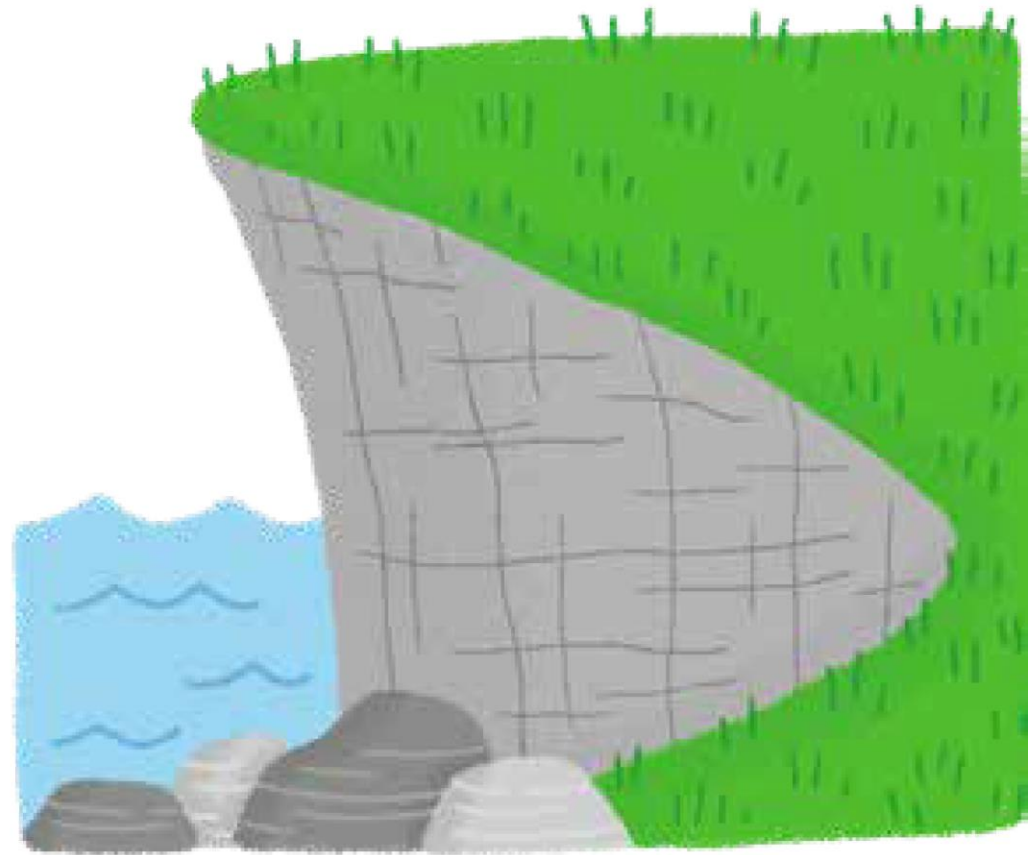
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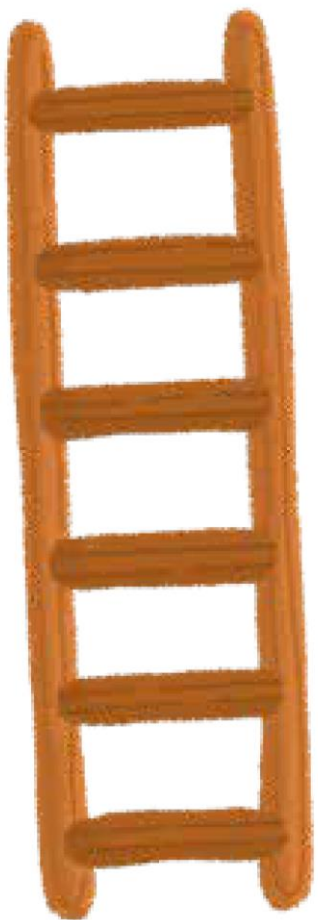


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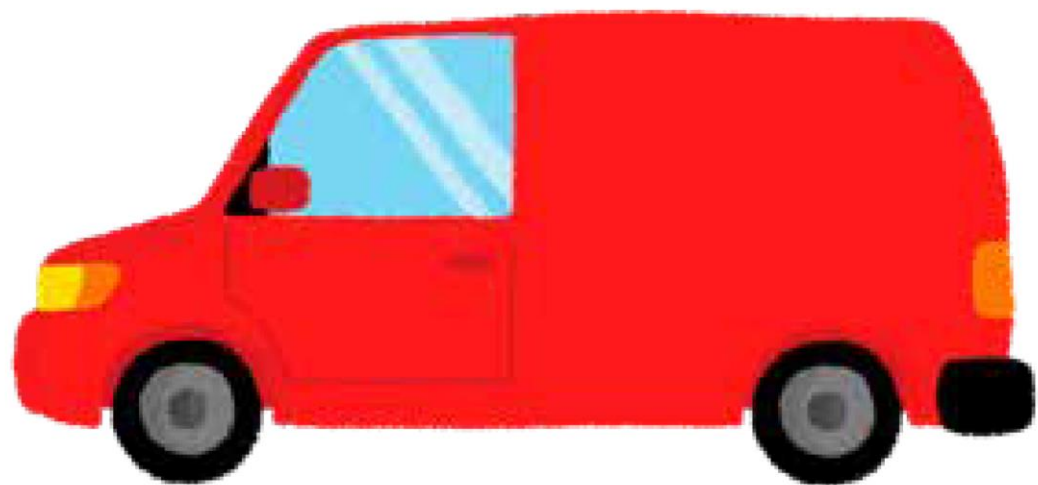
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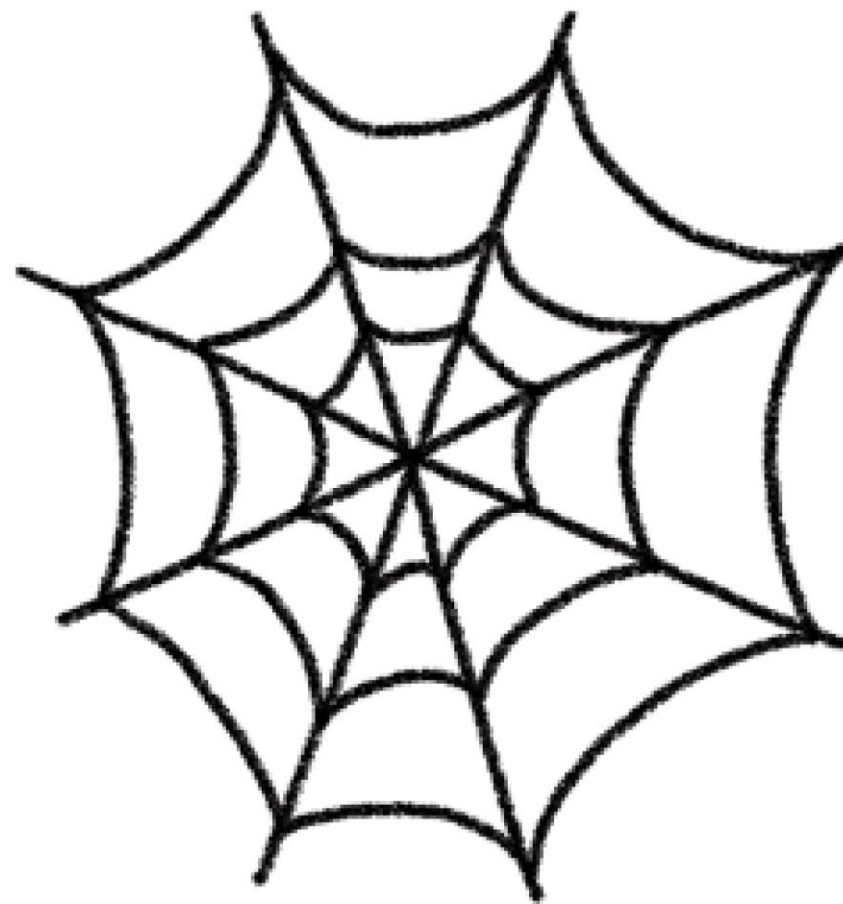
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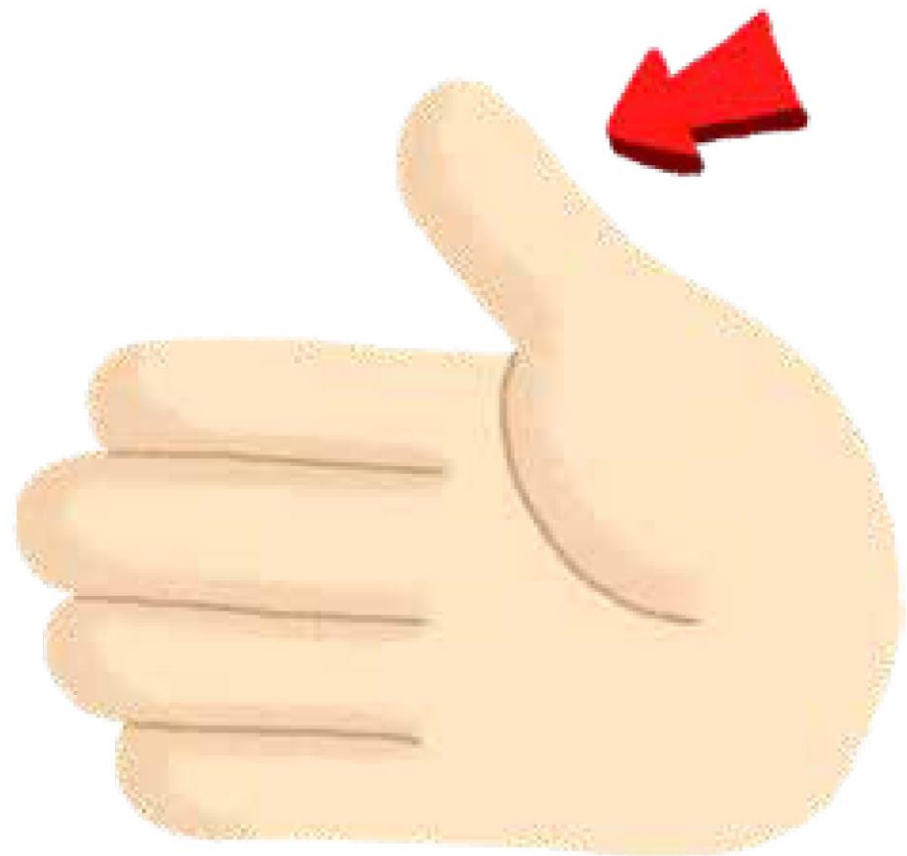
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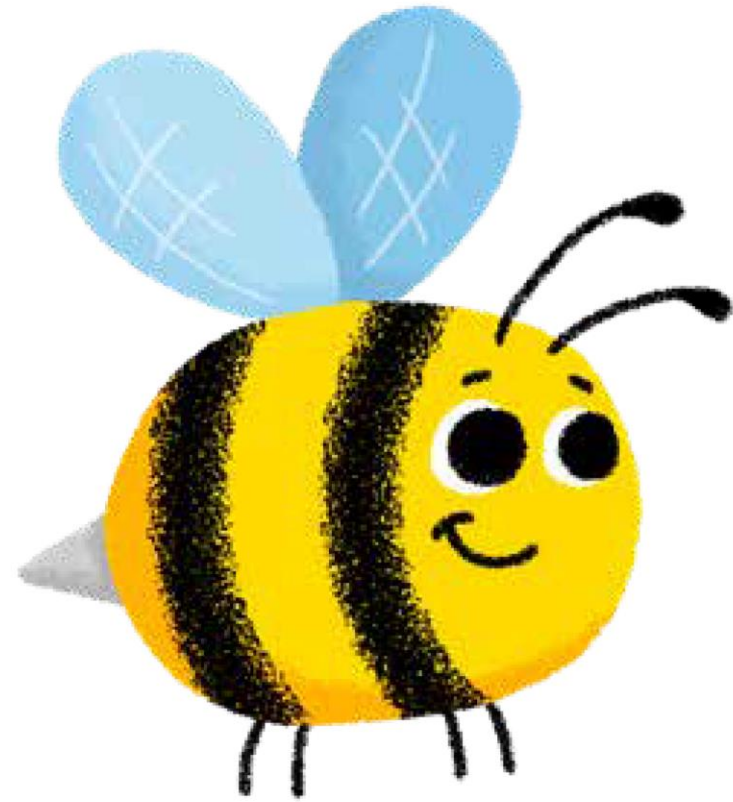
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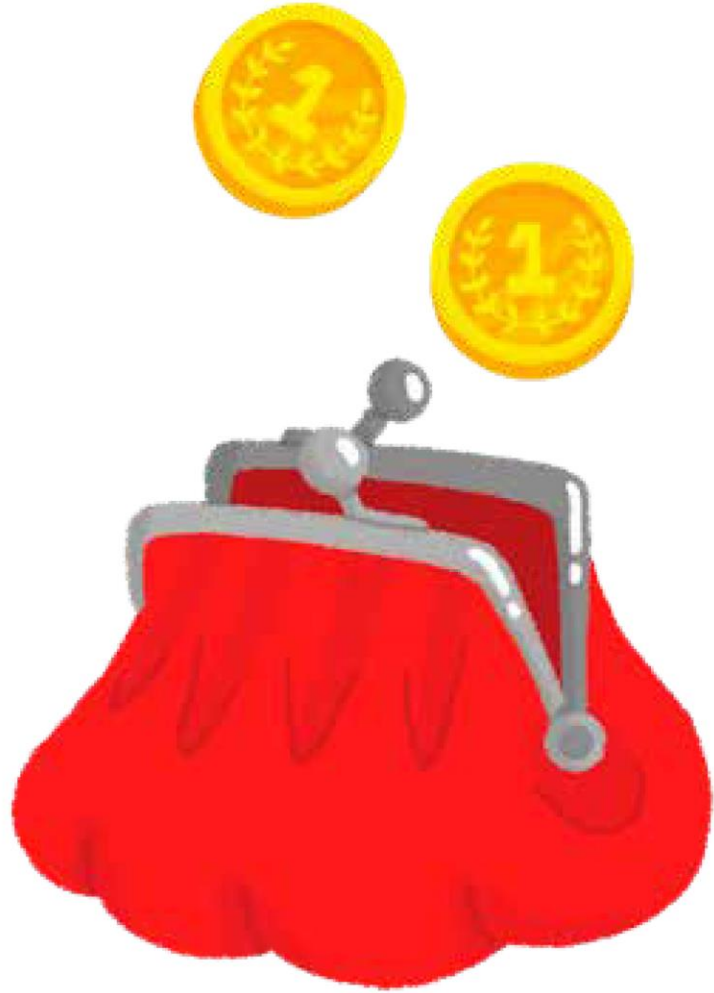
ar



or



wr



Ow



Oi



er



This phoneme should be taught as 'uh' and not 'ergh'.

Common Exception Words Examples

Common Exception Words used to be called tricky words. These words cannot easily be decoded or encoded using phonics. The children should be able to read most of these words by the end of F2.

Pink	Red		Yellow	
I	he	are	come	do
no	she	her	have	like
the	we	was	one	out
to	me	all	said	so
go	be	they	some	there
into	you	my	were	what
			when	

Guided Reading

We use a guided reading method. Our children read in small groups of up to six, led by an adult. Each session starts with teaching or consolidating a reading skill. The children explore the book and engage in discussions before, during and after reading. They might discuss the front cover, technical vocabulary or their thoughts on the characters. This approach allows for high-quality discussions using high-quality texts.



Guided Reading

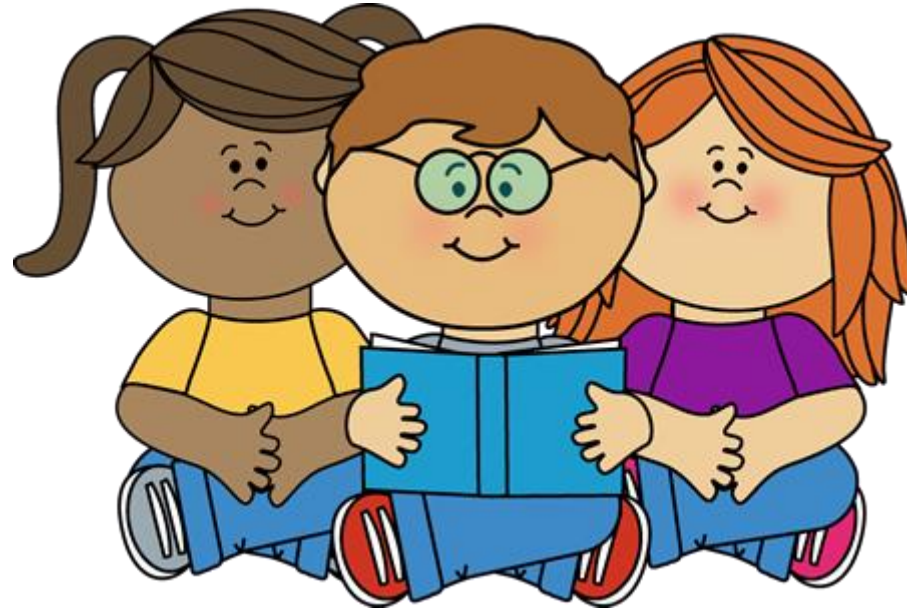
Our Guided Reading scheme uses a colour banding system. The children progress through the colour bands; these could be considered levels. Below are the end of year expectation for each year group. By the end of F2, most children are securely reading Red Books.

Pink (A, B & C)	Red (A, B & C)	Yellow	Blue	Green	Orange	Turquoise	Purple	Gold	White	Lime	Copper	Topaz
F2 Expected	F2 Exceeding	Grey background										
Year One Working Towards			Year One Expected			Year One Greater Depth			Grey background			
Year Two Working Below KS1 Standards			Year Two Working Towards				Year Two Expected			Year Two Greater Depth		

Home Reading Books

- The children take reading books home. This starts with 2 a week.
- The children are encouraged to change the books themselves.
- Generally, they take home the colour band below.
- This is to allow the children to practise and consolidate the skills they have been taught in school. It should still be a challenging read, and the children will still need help and support with some words or comprehension of the text.
- Please discuss the book before, during and after reading. Use the illustrations to engage in discussion and talk about the characters, the setting or the facts in the book.
- The children are expected to re-read the book to help develop fluency.
- The children should use their phonics as the prime method for decoding or reading a word. However, if they are struggling, just tell them the word.
- It should be a fun activity, that is enjoyable. If your child is having an 'off day' then they are not ready to read - leave it for another time.

Children Reading for Pleasure



We foster a love for reading at school and encourage you to do the same at home. Share your love of reading with your child and regularly read books together. It's important for children to see you reading, especially boys seeing men read. Discuss their favourite books, whether fiction or non-fiction, as we offer a wide variety of both.

Rocket Phonics

We teach phonics through a scheme, called Rocket Phonics. This includes phonic lessons, a reading scheme, a method for teaching handwriting and many other things.

Rocket Phonics allows for a good level of flexibility, whilst ensuring rigor, parity and an holistic approach to teaching reading.



Phonics Taught in Class Groups

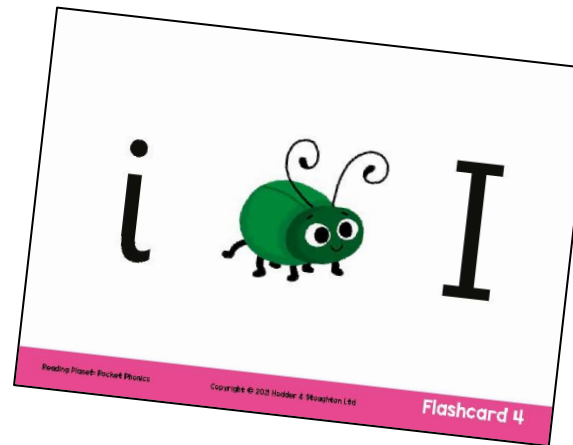
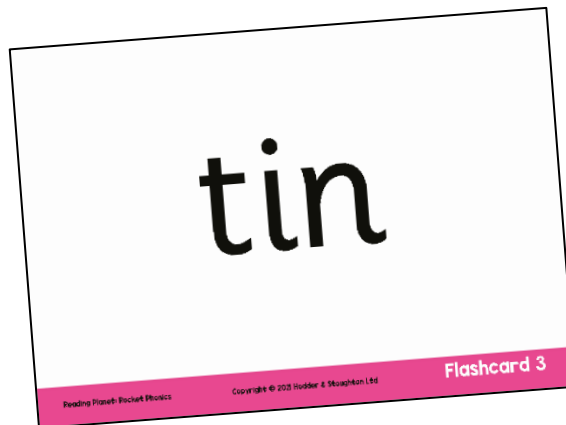
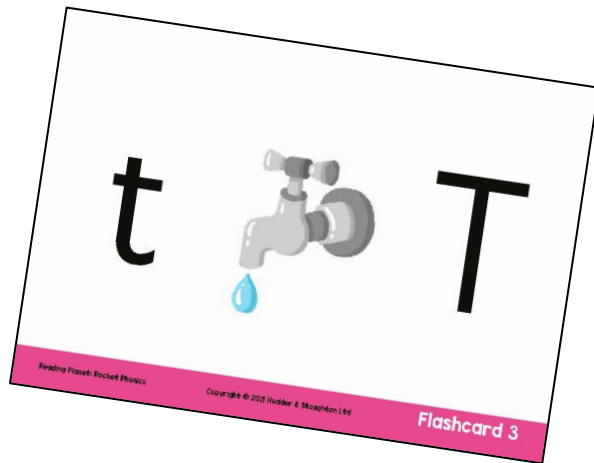
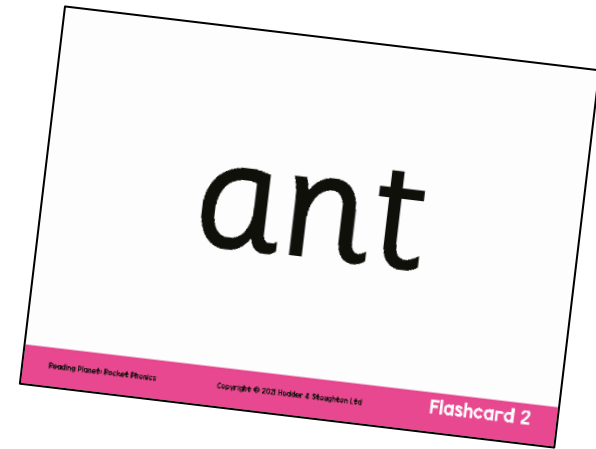
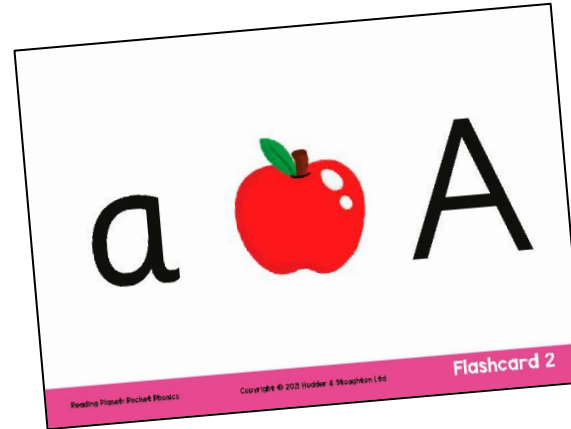
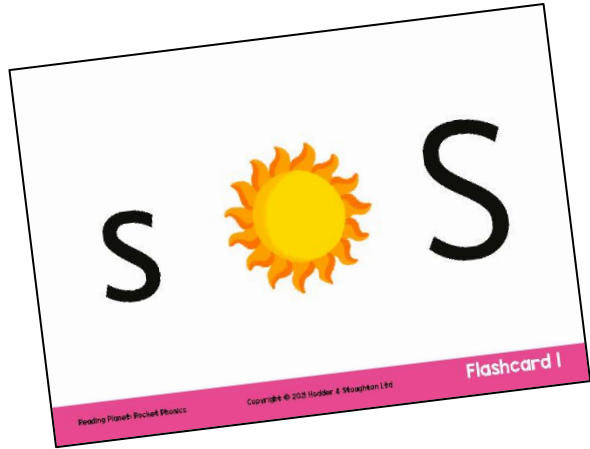
Phonics is taught in the class and by the class teacher. Any children that are finding the work challenging, will have an opportunity to revisit and secure their knowledge. The idea is that gaps are closed quickly and rapidly. Some children may sit outside of this phonics provision; however, these children will have other barriers to their learning; i.e., children with an EHCP.



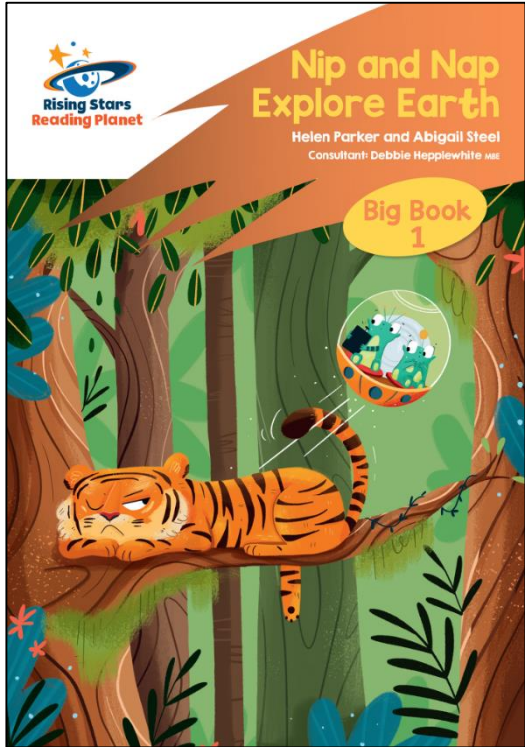
Let's take a look at a Rocket Phonics Lesson



We teach phonics daily. The children and the adults love their Rocket Phonics lessons. All phonic sessions start with revisiting what the children have previously learned through the use of flash cards.



The main teaching of the phonics session is done through a shared guided reading text. This is presented on the interactive whiteboard, as a big book.

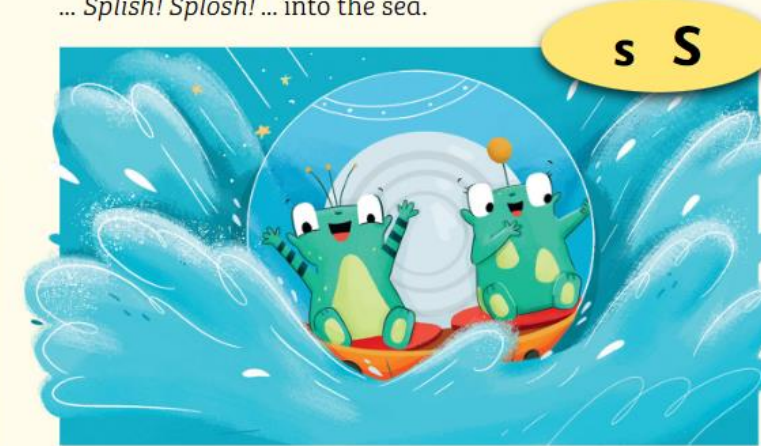


From a galaxy far, far away, a tiny spaceship shot through the stars, heading for planet Earth.

Inside the spaceship were two tiny aliens called Nip and Nap. They were on a secret mission to explore Earth and send information back to their planet.



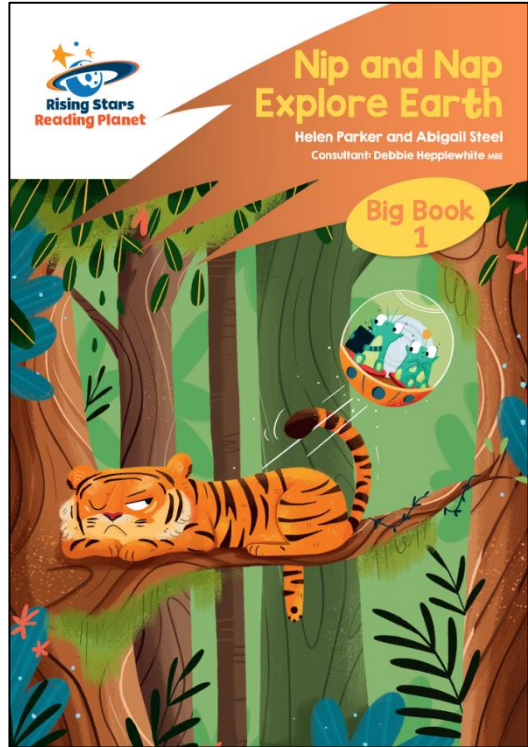
The little space-pod sped through space and then splashed ... *Splish! Splosh!* ... into the sea.



The space-pod floated on the waves. Nip took out his special scanner and sent pictures back to their home planet.



The teacher reads through the story and shares the sound or phoneme for the lesson. The children have the opportunity to respond to questions and activities.

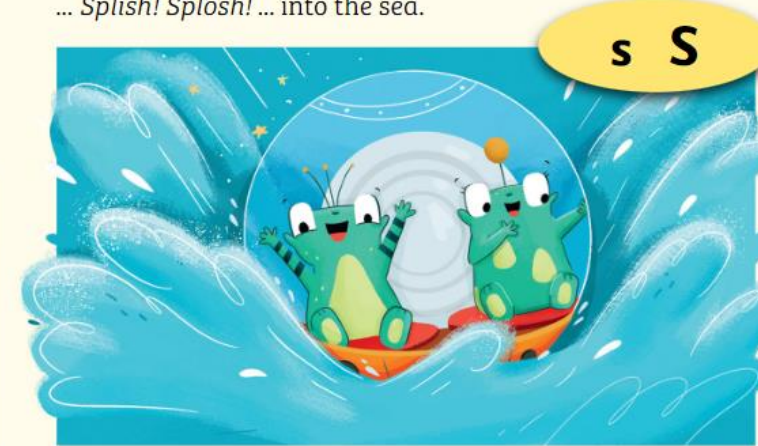


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Once the teaching is done, the children complete an activity in their workbooks. The tasks are designed so the children can demonstrate what they have learned and to practise their skills further. Adult support is still available if needed.

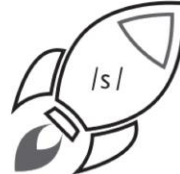



Pupil Practice Booklet

1




Abigail Steel
Consultant: Debbie Hepplewhite MBE



Name: _____



s


S

1. Revisit and review: Listen to the sounds and point to the letters and pictures.
 s  S s  S s 
2. Grapheme write: Copy the letters and say the sound as you write.
 s s s
 S S S
3. Pre-segmenting practice: Say the word and write s.

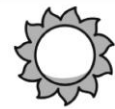
4. Apply: Let's write.



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s


S



1. Revisit and review: Say and tick each sound and picture.
 s S  s S  s S
2. Grapheme search: Find and circle all the s letters.
 Sam sits on a mat.
 How many did you spot?
3. Pre-blending practice: Match the letters to the pictures.

S
S
S




4. Colour the items that begin with s.



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Home Access to Rocket Phonics

The children will have access to Rocket Phonics at home; this is coming soon. The login details will be sent home once this has been setup.



Any Questions?

