

# Phonics at WWA

## Information for Parents

In school, we follow the Read, Write Inc. programme. RWI is a phonics resource published by Oxford University Press; we follow the RWI programme but adapt to suit the needs of our pupils.

### The Terminology

#### **Phoneme**

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. It is generally accepted that most varieties of spoken English use about 44 phonemes.

#### **Graphemes**

A grapheme is a symbol of a phoneme. It is a letter or group of letters representing a sound when it is written down.

#### **Segmenting and blending**

Segmenting consists of breaking words down into phonemes to spell. Blending consists of building words from phonemes to read. Both skills are important.

#### **Digraph**

This is when two letters come together to make a phoneme. For example, /oa/ makes the sound in 'boat' and is also known as a **vowel digraph**. There are also **consonant digraphs**, for example, /sh/ and /ch/.

#### **Trigraph**

This is when three letters come together to make one phoneme, for example /igh/ and /ure/.

#### **Split digraph**

A vowel digraph in which the two letters are not adjacent - e.g. /a\_e/ in make, /i\_e/ in kite, /o\_e/ in phone, /u\_e/ in flute.

#### **Abbreviations**

VC, CVC, and CCVC are the respective abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of graphemes in words (e.g. *am* (VC), *Sam* (CVC), *slam* (CCVC), or *each* (VC), *beach* (CVC), *bleach* (CCVC).

# Stage 1 of phonics and reading

Stage 1 of language acquisition happens prior to children entering school, usually at home or in nursery settings. This stage concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work for when pupils enter school. The emphasis during stage 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

- Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination, e.g. dogs barking, doorbell)
- Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing e.g. reciting songs and nursery rhymes)
- Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)

## Stage 2: RWI set 1 speed sounds

In stage 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. Sounds are taught in the following order.

### Speed Sounds Set 1:

m a s d t

i n p g o

c k u b

f e l h sh

r j v y w

th z ch q x ng nk

The children will begin to learn to blend and segment to help begin reading and spelling. This will begin with simple words, where children practise blending and segmenting with the sounds taught. For example when pupils have learnt the first five sounds they practise reading words with the phonemes, m a s d t

mad	sad	dad	mat	sat	Sam
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At this stage words with 'grotty graphemes' (not phonetically decodable) are introduced in RWI these are referred to as red words.

to	the	no	go	I
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At this stage the children also begin reading the RWI reading books in school.

## Stage 3: RWI set 2 speed sounds

By the time children reach stage 3, they will already be able to blend and segment words containing the sounds taught in set 1. They will also be fluent readers of books which contain words with the sounds in set 1. Throughout stage 3 they will be introduced to the to new graphemes; these are introduced (one at a time).

**Speed sounds set 2:**

ay ee igh ow oo oo air ir ou oy

Sounds	Word example
ay	play
ee	seen
igh	flight
ow	blow
oo (short)	book
oo (long)	zoo
ar	bark
or	fork
air	air
ir	girl
ou	mouth
oy	toy

When ready they will move on to the next sets of RWI books; Green, Purple then Pink. These books will be used in school.

The children will continue to learn red words as they come up in their reading books.

## Stage 4: RWI set 3 speed sounds

**We would expect this stage of phonics to be taught in Year 1.**

By this stage, children will be able to represent each of the phonemes they have learnt with a grapheme. They will blend phonemes to read CVC, CVCC and CCVC to read and segment spell. They will be confident with the set 2 digraphs and trigraphs and be able to read and write words with these graphemes. They will also be able to read two syllable words that are simple for example cobweb. They will be able to read all the red words learnt so far and will be able to spell some of them. This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases and introduces the final phonemes they need to learn, these will be taught alongside the phonemes taught in set 2 as many are alternate spellings.

## **New graphemes for reading:**

Sound	Word example						
ea	seat	ow	brown	are	share	ire	inspire
oi	point	o-e	note	ur	fur	ear	fear
a-e	plate	u-e	cute	er	letter	ure	picture
i-e	kite	aw	saw	ai	paid	tion	attention
e-e	concrete	au	haul	oa	boat	cious	delicious
				ew	flew	tious	scrumptious

The pupils will also be taught incidental phonemes as they come up in their reading books and these will be highlighted on the RWI Speed Sound chart. These will include the other alternative spellings for sounds such f which are ff and ph, and z which are zz, s and se. These are in the sound boxes and pupils will make reference to them as they go through school. It is most likely that they will investigate alternate spellings for phonemes in KS1 (Years 1 and 2).

In this phase pupils will also be taught to read words with the suffixes.

-s	-es	-ing	-ed
-er	-est	-y	-en
-ful	-ly	-ment	-ness

When ready they will move on to the next sets of RWI books; Orange, Yellow, Blue and Grey. As before these books will be used in school

The children will continue to learn red words as they come up in their reading books and in other reading and spelling lessons.

**Some more red words that pupils need to be able to read and spell:**

said	so	she	he	have	like
some	come	were	there	little	one
they	all	are	do	when	out
what	my	her	should	could	would

## **Useful webpages**

<http://www.ruthmiskin.com>

This is the official RWI website. There is a parent's section on this site which is very useful it has information how to pronounce the phonemes correctly, video clips and lots of guidance.

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk>

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home>

If you have any questions or queries please feel free to talk to your child's class teacher.