

Phase One

Notes for practitioners and teachers

Phase One falls largely within the Communication, Language and Literacy area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In particular, it will support linking sounds and letters in the order in which they occur in words, and naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. It also draws on and promotes other areas of learning described in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), particularly Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Creative Development, where, for example, music plays a key part in developing children's language. Phase One contributes to the provision for Communication, Language and Literacy; it does not constitute the whole language provision.

The activities in Phase One are mainly adult-led with the intention of teaching young children important basic elements of the Letters and Sounds programme such as oral segmenting and blending of familiar words. However, it is equally important to sustain and draw upon worthwhile, freely chosen activities that are provided for children in good early years settings and Reception classes. The aim is to embed the Phase One adult-led activities in a language-rich provision that serves the best interests of the children by fully recognising their propensity for play and its importance in their development.

It follows that the high quality play activities which typify good provision will offer lots of opportunities to enrich children's language across the six areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development.

Practitioners and teachers will need to be alert to the opportunities afforded for language development through children's play, and link learning from the Letters and Sounds programme with all six areas.

Seven aspects and three strands

Phase One activities are arranged under the following seven aspects.

- Aspect 1: General sound discrimination – environmental sounds
- Aspect 2: General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds
- Aspect 3: General sound discrimination – body percussion
- Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme
- Aspect 5: Alliteration
- Aspect 6: Voice sounds
- Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

While there is considerable overlap between these aspects, the overarching aim is for children to experience regular, planned opportunities to listen carefully and talk extensively about what they hear, see and do. The boundaries between each strand are flexible and not fixed: practitioners should plan to integrate the activities according to the developing abilities and interests of the children in the setting.

Each aspect is divided into three strands.

- Tuning into sounds (auditory discrimination)
- Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)
- Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).

Activities within the seven aspects are designed to help children:

1. listen attentively;
2. enlarge their vocabulary;
3. speak confidently to adults and other children;
4. discriminate phonemes;
5. reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear, in order, all through the word;
6. use sound-talk to segment words into phonemes.

The ways in which practitioners and teachers interact and talk with children are critical to developing children's speaking and listening. This needs to be kept in mind throughout all phase one activities.

List of activities

Aspect 1: General sound discrimination – environmental sounds

■ Listening walks	9
■ A listening moment	9
■ Drum outdoors	9
■ Teddy is lost in the jungle	10
■ Sound lotto 1	10
■ Sound stories	10
■ Mrs Browning has a box	10
■ Describe and find it	11
■ Socks and shakers	11
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■ Enlivening stories	12

Aspect 2: General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds

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■ Grandmother's footsteps	15
■ Matching sound makers	16
■ Matching sounds	16
■ Story sounds	17
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■ Animal sounds	17

Aspect 3: General sound discrimination – body percussion

■ Action songs	20
■ Listen to the music	20
■ Roly poly	20

■ Follow the sound	21
■ Noisy neighbour 1	21
■ Noisy neighbour 2	22
■ Words about sounds	22
■ The Pied Piper	23

Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme

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■ Learning songs and rhymes	25
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■ Our favourite rhymes	25
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■ Songs and rhymes	27
■ Finish the rhyme	27
■ Rhyming puppets	28
■ Odd one out	28
■ I know a word	28

Aspect 5: Alliteration

■ I spy names	31
■ Sounds around	31
■ Making aliens	31
■ Digging for treasure	32
■ Bertha goes to the zoo	32
■ Tony the train's busy day	32
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Aspect 6: Voice sounds

■ Mouth movements	37
■ Voice sounds	37
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Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

■ Toy talk	42
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■ Which one?	43
■ Cross the river	43
■ I spy	43
■ Segmenting	43
■ Say the sounds	44

Key



This icon indicates that the activity can be viewed on the DVD.

Summary

Children entering Phase Two will have experienced a wealth of listening activities, including songs, stories and rhymes. They will be able to distinguish between speech sounds and many will be able to blend and segment words orally. Some will also be able to recognise spoken words that rhyme and will be able to provide a string of rhyming words, but inability to do this does not prevent moving on to Phase Two as these speaking and listening activities continue. (See Appendix 3: Assessment).

The purpose of this phase is to teach at least 19 letters, and move children on from oral blending and segmentation to blending and segmenting with letters. By the end of the phase many children should be able to read some VC and CVC words and to spell them either using magnetic letters or by writing the letters on paper or on whiteboards. During the phase they will be introduced to reading two-syllable words and simple captions. They will also learn to read some high-frequency 'tricky' words: **the, to, go, no**.

The teaching materials in this phase suggest an order for teaching letters and provide a selection of suitable words made up of the letters as they are learned. These words are for using in the activities – practising blending for reading and segmenting for spelling. This is not a list to be worked through slavishly, but to be selected from as needed for an activity.

It must always be remembered that phonics is the step up to word recognition. Automatic reading of all words – decodable and tricky – is the ultimate goal.

Letter progression (one set per week)

Set 1:	s	a	t	p
Set 2:	i	n	m	d
Set 3:	g	o	c	k
Set 4:	ck	e	u	r
Set 5:	h	b	f, ff	l, ll ss

Magnetic boards and letters

Magnetic boards and letters are very effective in helping children to identify letter shapes and develop the skills of blending and segmenting. For example, teaching sequences can be demonstrated to an entire teaching group or class on a large magnetic board followed by children working in pairs with a small magnetic board to secure the learning objective. Working in pairs in this way significantly increases opportunities for children to discuss the task in hand and enlarge their understanding. Once children are adept at manipulating magnetic boards and letters they can use them to extend many activities suggested in Phase Two and beyond.

Suggested timetable for Phase Two – discrete teaching

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Week 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teach set 1 letters – Practise the letter(s) and sound(s) learned so far – Briefly practise oral blending and segmentation |
| Week 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teach set 2 letters – Practise all previously learned letters and sounds – Briefly practise oral blending and segmentation – Teach blending with letters (blending for reading) – Practise blending for reading – Practise blending and reading the high-frequency words is, it, in, at |
| Week 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teach set 3 letters – Practise previously learned letters and sounds – Briefly practise oral blending and segmentation – Practise blending with letters (reading words) – Teach segmentation for spelling – Teach blending and reading the high-frequency word and – Demonstrate reading captions using words with sets 1 and 2 letters and and |
| Week 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teach ck, explain its use at the end of words and practise reading words ending in ck – Teach the three other set 4 letters – Practise previously learned letters and sounds – Briefly practise oral blending and segmentation – Practise blending to read words – Practise segmentation to spell words – Teach reading the tricky words to and the – Support children in reading captions using sets 1–4 letters and the, to and and – Demonstrate spelling captions using sets 1–4 letters and and |
| Week 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teach set 5 letters and sounds – Explain ff, ll and ss at the end of words – Practise previously learned letters and sounds – Practise blending to read words – Practise segmentation to spell words – Teach reading tricky words no, go, I – Support children in reading captions using sets 1–5 letters and no, go, I, the, to – Demonstrate spelling captions using sets 1–5 letters and and, to and the |
| Week 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Revise all the letters and sounds taught so far – Continue to support children in reading words and captions |

Summary

Children entering Phase Three will know around 19 letters and be able to blend phonemes to read VC words and segment VC words to spell. While many children will be able to read and spell CVC words, they all should be able to blend and segment CVC words orally. (See Appendix 3: Assessment).

The purpose of this phase is to teach another 25 graphemes, most of them comprising two letters (e.g. **oa**), so the children can represent each of about 42 phonemes by a grapheme (the additional phoneme /**zh**/ found in the word **vision** will be taught at Phase Five). Children also continue to practise CVC blending and segmentation in this phase and will apply their knowledge of blending and segmenting to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words and captions. They will learn letter names during this phase, learn to read some more tricky words and also begin to learn to spell some of these words.

The teaching materials in this phase suggest an order for teaching letters and provide a selection of suitable words made up of the letters as they are learned and captions and sentences made up of the words. They are for using in the activities – practising blending for reading and segmenting for spelling. These are not lists to be worked through slavishly but to be selected from as needed for an activity.

It must always be remembered that phonics is the step up to word recognition. Automatic reading of all words – decodable and tricky – is the ultimate goal.

Letters

Set 6: **j** **v** **w** **x***

Set 7: **y** **z, zz** **qu***

*The sounds traditionally taught for the letters **x** and **qu** (/ks/ and /kw/) are both two phonemes, but children do not need to be taught this, at this stage as it does not affect how the letters are used.

Graphemes	Sample words	Graphemes	Sample words
ch	chip	ar	farm
sh	shop	or	for
th	thin/then	ur	hurt
ng	ring	ow	cow
ai	rain	oi	coin
ee	feet	ear	dear
igh	night	air	fair
oa	boat	ure	sure
oo	boot/look	er	corner

Suggested timetable for Phase Three – discrete teaching

- Week 1**
- Practise previously learned letters and sounds
 - Teach set 6 letters and sounds
 - Learn an alphabet song
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Practise reading high-frequency words
 - Read sentences using sets 1–6 letters and the tricky words **no, go, I, the, to**
- Week 2**
- Practise previously learned letters and sounds
 - Teach set 7 letters and sounds
 - Point to the letters in the alphabet while singing the alphabet song
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky words **he, she**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Teach spelling the tricky words **the** and **to**
 - Practise reading captions and sentences with sets 1–7 letters and **he, she, no, go, I, the, to**
- Week 3**
- Practise previously learned GPCs
 - Teach the four consonant digraphs
 - Point to the letters in the alphabet while singing the alphabet song
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky words **we, me, be**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Practise reading two-syllable words
 - Practise reading captions and sentences
 - Practise writing captions and sentences
- Week 4**
- Practise previously learned GPCs
 - Teach four of the vowel digraphs
 - Point to the letters in the alphabet while singing the alphabet song
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky word **was**
 - Teach spelling the tricky words **no** and **go**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Practise reading two-syllable words
 - Practise reading captions and sentences
 - Practise writing captions and sentences
- Week 5**
- Practise previously learned GPCs
 - Teach four more vowel digraphs
 - Point to the letters in the alphabet while singing the alphabet song

- Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky word **my**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Teach spelling two-syllable words
 - Practise reading captions and sentences
 - Practise writing captions and sentences
- Week 6**
- Practise previously learned GPCs
 - Teach four more vowel digraphs
 - Practise letter names
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky word **you**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Practise spelling two-syllable words
 - Practise reading captions and sentences
 - Practise writing captions and sentences
- Week 7**
- Practise previously learned GPCs
 - Teach four more vowel digraphs
 - Practise letter names
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky word **they**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Practise spelling two-syllable words
 - Practise reading captions and sentences
 - Practise writing captions and sentences
- Week 8**
- Practise all GPCs
 - Practise letter names
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky word **her**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Practise spelling two-syllable words
 - Practise reading captions and sentences
 - Practise writing captions and sentences
- Week 9**
- Practise all GPCs
 - Practise letter names
 - Practise blending for reading
 - Practise segmentation for spelling
 - Teach reading the tricky word **all**
 - Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
 - Practise spelling two-syllable words
 - Practise reading captions and sentences
 - Practise writing captions and sentences

Summary

Children entering Phase Four will be able to represent each of 42 phonemes by a grapheme, and be able to blend phonemes to read CVC words and segment CVC words for spelling. They will have some experience in reading simple two-syllable words and captions. They will know letter names and be able to read and spell some tricky words.

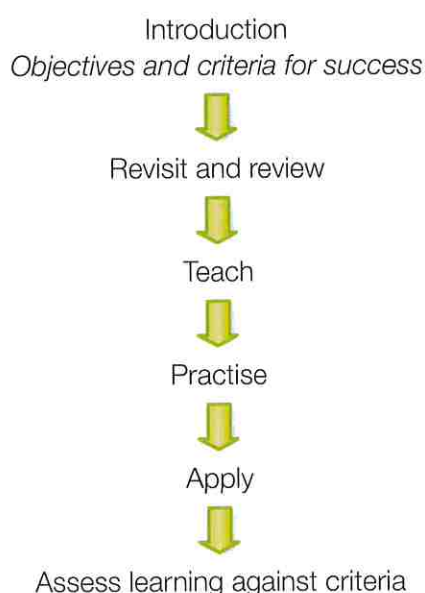
The purpose of this phase is to consolidate children's knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words.

The teaching materials in this phase provide a selection of suitable words containing adjacent consonants. These words are for using in the activities – practising blending for reading and segmenting for spelling. This is not a list to be worked through slavishly but to be selected from as needed for an activity.

It must always be remembered that phonics is the step up to word recognition. Automatic reading of all words – decodable and tricky – is the ultimate goal.

Suggested daily teaching in Phase Four

Sequence of teaching in a discrete phonics session



Revisit and review

- Practise previously learned graphemes

Teach

- Teach blending and segmentation of adjacent consonants
- Teach some tricky words

Practise

- Practise blending and reading words with adjacent consonants
- Practise segmentation and spelling words with adjacent consonants

Apply

- Read or write sentences using one or more high-frequency words and words containing adjacent consonants

Suggested timetable for Phase Four – discrete teaching

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Week 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practise recognition and recall of Phase Two and Three graphemes and reading and spelling CVC words – Teach and practise reading CVCC words – Teach and practise spelling CVCC words – Teach reading the tricky words said, so – Teach spelling the tricky words he, she, we, me, be – Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words – Practise reading sentences – Practise writing sentences |
| Week 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practise recognition and recall of Phase Two and Three graphemes and reading and spelling CVC words – Teach and practise reading CCVC words – Teach and practise spelling CCVC words – Teach reading the tricky words have, like, some, come – Teach spelling the tricky words was, you – Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words – Practise reading sentences – Practise writing sentences |
| Week 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practise recognition and recall of Phase Two and Three graphemes – Practise reading words containing adjacent consonants – Practise spelling words containing adjacent consonants – Teach reading the tricky words were, there, little, one – Teach spelling the tricky words they, all, are – Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words – Practise reading sentences – Practise writing sentences |
| Week 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practise recognition and recall of Phase Two and Three graphemes – Practise reading words containing adjacent consonants – Practise spelling words containing adjacent consonants – Teach reading the tricky words do, when, out, what – Teach spelling the tricky words my, her – Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words – Practise reading sentences – Practise writing sentences |

Bank of suggested words and sentences for use in Phase Four

The words in this section are made up from the letters taught for use in blending for reading and segmentation for spelling. These lists are not for working through slavishly but to be selected from as needed for an activity (words in *italics* are from the list of 100 high-frequency words).

CVCC words

Words using sets 1–7 letters			Words using Phase Three graphemes		Polysyllabic words	
<i>went</i>	best	fond	champ	shift	<i>children</i>	shampoo
<i>it's</i>	tilt	gust	chest	shelf	helpdesk	Chester
<i>help</i>	lift	hand	tenth	joint	sandpit	giftbox
<i>just</i>	lost	next	theft	boost	windmill	shelter
tent	tuft	milk	Welsh	thump	softest	lunchbox
belt	damp	golf	chimp	paint	pondweed	sandwich
hump	bust	jump	bench	roast	desktop	shelving
band	camp	fact	sixth	toast	helper	Manchester
dent	gift	melt	punch	beast	handstand	chimpanzee
felt	kept		chunk	think	melting	champion
gulp	tusk	<i>(north)*</i>	thank	burnt	seventh	thundering
lamp	limp	ask*				
wind	soft	fast*				
hump	pond	last*				
land	husk	daft*				
nest	cost	task*				
sink	bank					
link	bunk					
hunt						

*In the North of England, where the letter **a** is pronounced /**a**/, these are appropriate as Phase Four words.

CCV and CCVC words

Words using sets 1–7 letters		Words using Phase Three graphemes			
from	grip	green	flair	clear	speech
stop	glad	fresh	trail	train	smear
spot	twin	steep	cream	swing	thrill
frog	sniff	tree	clown	droop	
step	plum	spear	star	spoon	
plan	gran	smell	creep	float	Polysyllabic words
speck	swim	spoil	brown	smart	treetop
trip	clap	train	stair	groan	starlight
grab	drop	spoon	spoil	brush	floating
track	(north)*	sport	spark	growl	freshness
spin	glass*	thrush	bring	scoop	
flag	grass*	trash	crash	sport	
	brass*	start	bleed	frown	

CCVCC, CCCVC and CCCVCC words

Words using sets 1–7 letters			Words using Phase Three graphemes	Polysyllabic words
stand	crust	(north)*	crunch	driftwood
crisp	tramp	graft*	drench	twisting
trend	grunt	grant*	trench	printer
trust	crept	blast*	Grinch	
spend	drift	grasp*	shrink	
glint	slept	slant*	thrust	
twist	skunk			
brand	think		spring	
frost	thank		strap	
cramp	blink		string	
plump	drank		scrap	
stamp	blank		street	
blend	trunk		scrunch	
stunt				

Sentences

Fred and Brett spent a week in Spain.

I kept bumping into things in the dark.

Milk is good for children's teeth.

The clown did tricks with a chimpanzee.

The frog jumps in the pond and swims off.

I must not tramp on the flowers.

A crab crept into a crack in the rock.

A drip from the tap drops in the sink.

I can hear twigs snapping in the wind.

It is fun to camp in a tent.

Sentences and substitute words for 'Sentence substitution'

(See page 114)

The man burnt the toast.	towel	girl	milk	brings
The frog swam across the pool.	pond	flag	jumps	dog
Gran went to get fresh fish.	Stan	needed	meat	grill
Trisha took a book off the shelf.	grabs	desk	Krishnan	spoon
A clock stood on the wooden chest.	was	lamp	soft	cabinet
The train had to stop in the fog.	hand	wait	storm	truck
Fran took a scarf as a gift for Brad.	present	Vikram	sent	snail
I will travel to the Swiss Alps next week.	winter	punch	this	go
Fred has spent lots of cash this year.	Gretel	lost	lent	bricks
We had sandwiches for a snack.	plums	slugs	picnic	took

Yes/no questions

(See page 123)

Can a clock get cross?

Can crabs clap hands?

Are you fond of plums?

Did a shark ever jump up a tree?

Can frogs swim in ponds?

Is the moon green?

Can you bang on a big drum?

Have you ever slept in a tent?

Are all children good at sport?

Have you seen a trail left by a snail?

Are you afraid of thunderstorms?

Can a spoon grab a fork?

Do chimps come from Mars?

Can letters have stamps stuck on them?

Do trains run on tracks?

Will a truck go up steep stairs?

Do some dogs have black spots?

Are you glad when you have a pain?

Can we see the stars on a clear night?

Summary

Children entering Phase Five are able to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants and some polysyllabic words. (See Appendix 3: Assessment.)

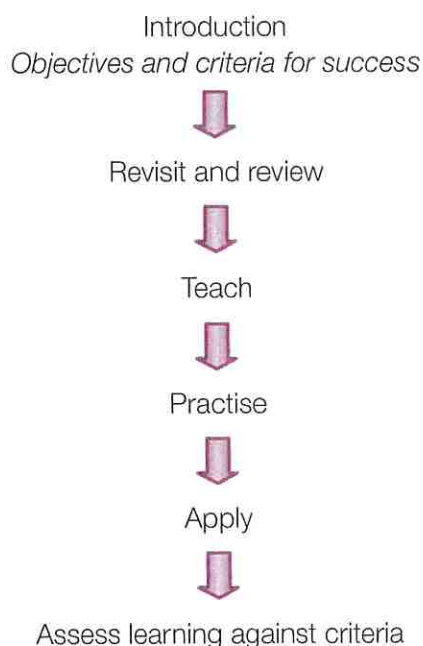
The purpose of this phase is for children to broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling. They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know, where relevant. Some of the alternatives will already have been encountered in the high-frequency words that have been taught. Children become quicker at recognising graphemes of more than one letter in words and at blending the phonemes they represent. When spelling words they will learn to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spellings of words.

The teaching materials in this phase provide a selection of suitable words and sentences for use in teaching Phase Five. These words are for using in the activities – practising blending for reading and segmenting for spelling. These are not lists to be worked through slavishly but to be selected from as needed for an activity.

It must always be remembered that phonics is the step up to word recognition. Automatic reading of all words – decodable and tricky – is the ultimate goal.

Suggested daily teaching in Phase Five

Sequence of teaching in a discrete phonics session



Revisit and review

- Practise previously learned graphemes
- Practise blending and segmentation

Teach

- Teach new graphemes
- Teach tricky words

Practise

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

Apply

- Read or write a sentence using one or more high-frequency words and words containing the new graphemes

Suggested timetable for Phase Five – discrete teaching

Weeks 1–4

- Practise recognition and recall of Phase Two, Three and Five graphemes as they are learned
- Teach new graphemes for reading (about four per week)
- Practise reading and spelling words with adjacent consonants and words with newly learned graphemes
- Learn new phoneme /zh/ in words such as **treasure**
- Teach reading the words **oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked**
- Teach spelling the words **said, so, have, like, some, come, were, there**
- Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
- Practise reading and spelling polysyllabic words
- Practise reading sentences
- Practise writing sentences

Weeks 5–7

- Practise recognition and recall of graphemes and different pronunciations of graphemes as they are learned
- Teach alternative pronunciations of graphemes for reading (about four per week)
- Practise reading and spelling words with adjacent consonants and words with newly learned graphemes

- Teach reading the words **water, where, who, again, thought, through, work, mouse, many, laughed, because, different, any, eyes, friends, once, please**
- Teach spelling the words **little, one, do, when, what, out**
- Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
- Practise reading and spelling polysyllabic words
- Practise reading sentences
- Practise writing sentences

Weeks 8–30

- Practise recognition and recall of graphemes and different pronunciations of graphemes as they are learned
- Teach alternative spellings of phonemes for spelling
- Practise reading and spelling words with adjacent consonants and words with newly learned graphemes
- Teach spelling the words **oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked**
- Practise reading and spelling high-frequency words
- Practise reading and spelling polysyllabic words
- Practise reading sentences
- Practise writing sentences

READING

It must always be remembered that phonics is the step up to fluent word recognition. Automatic and effortless reading of all words – decodable and tricky – is the ultimate goal. By repeated sounding and blending of words, children get to know them, and once this happens they should be encouraged to read them straight off in reading text, rather than continuing to sound and blend them aloud because they feel that this is what is required. They should continue, however, to use overt or silent phonics for words that are unfamiliar.

Teaching further graphemes for reading

New graphemes for reading

ay day	oy boy	wh when	a-e make
ou out	ir girl	ph photo	e-e these
ie tie	ue blue	ew new	i-e like
ea eat	aw saw	oe toe	o-e home
		au Paul	u-e rule

It is probably unnecessary to continue teaching mnemonics for new graphemes. As children build up their speed of blending and read more and more words automatically, many of them will assimilate new graphemes in the course of their reading. To ensure that all children know these graphemes, they should be quickly introduced through high-frequency words such as those suggested above.

SPELLING

Teaching alternative spellings for phonemes

Alternative spellings for each phoneme

(See 'Bank of words and other materials/activities for use in Phase Five' on page 154.)

/c/	/ch/	/f/	/j/	/m/	/n/	/ng/	/r/	/s/	/sh/	/v/	/w/
k	tch	ph	g	mb	kn	n(k)	wr	c	ch	ve	wh
ck			dge		gn			sc	t(ion)		
qu									ss(ion, ure)		
x									s(ion, ure)		
ch									c(ion, ious, ial)		

/e/	/i/	/o/	/u/ (south)	/ai/	/ee/	/igh/	/oa/	/oo/	/oo/
ea	y	(w)a	o	ay	ea	y	ow	ew	u
	ey			a-e	e-e	ie	oe	ue	oul
				eigh	ie	i-e	o-e	ui	o (north)
				ey	y		o	ou	
				ei	ey				
					eo				

/ar/	/or/	/ur/	/ow/	/oi/	/ear/	/air/	/ure/	/er/
a (south)	aw	ir	ou	oy	ere	are	our	our
	au	er			eer	ear		e
	al	ear						u
	our							etc

New phoneme

/zh/
vision

Summary

By the beginning of Phase Six, children should know most of the common grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs). They should be able to read hundreds of words, doing this in three ways:

- reading the words automatically if they are very familiar;
- decoding them quickly and silently because their sounding and blending routine is now well established;
- decoding them aloud.

Children's spelling should be phonemically accurate, although it may still be a little unconventional at times. Spelling usually lags behind reading, as it is harder. (See Appendix 3: Assessment.)

During this phase, children become fluent readers and increasingly accurate spellers.

READING

At this stage many children will be reading longer and less familiar texts independently and with increasing fluency. The shift from learning to read to reading to learn takes place and children read for information and for pleasure.

Children need to learn some of the rarer GPCs (see *Notes of Guidance for Practitioners and Teachers*, Appendix 2, page 19,) and be able to use them accurately in their reading.

A few children may be less fluent and confident, often because their recognition of graphemes consisting of two or more letters is not automatic enough. Such children may still try to use phonics by sounding out each letter individually and then attempting to blend these sounds (for instance /c/-/h/-/a/-/r/-/g/-/e/ instead of /ch/-/ar/-/ge/). This is all too often misunderstood by teachers as an overuse of phonics rather than misuse, and results in teachers suggesting to children that they use alternative strategies to read unfamiliar words. Instead the solution is greater familiarity with graphemes of two or more letters. The necessity for complete familiarity with these graphemes cannot be overstated. The work on spelling, which continues throughout this phase and beyond, will help children to understand more about the structure of words and consolidate their knowledge of GPCs. For example, children who are not yet reliably recognising digraphs and are still reading them as individual letters will get extra reinforcement when they learn to spell words containing the digraphs such as **road**, **leaf**, **town**, **cloud**, **shop**.

As children find that they can decode words quickly and independently, they will read more and more so that the number of words they can read automatically builds up. There is a list of the 300 high-frequency words in Appendix 1 on pages 193–195. Increasing the pace of reading is an important objective. Children should be encouraged to read aloud as well as silently for themselves.

Knowing where to place the stress in polysyllabic words can be problematic. If the child has achieved a phonemic approximation of the word, particularly by giving all vowels their full value, the context of the sentence will often provide a sensible resolution; the child should then recheck this against the letters. Working through the word in this way will make it easier for it to be read more automatically in future.

In Phase Six, many children will be able to read texts of several hundred words fluently at their first attempt. Those children who are less fluent may benefit from rereading shorter texts several times, not in order to memorise the texts, but to become more familiar with at least some of the words that cause them to stumble, and to begin to experience what fluent reading feels like.

To become successful readers, children must understand what they read. They need to learn a range of comprehension strategies and should be encouraged to reflect upon their own understanding and learning. Such an approach, which starts at the earliest stages, gathers momentum as children develop their fluency. Children need to be taught to go beyond literal interpretation and recall, to explore the greater complexities of texts through inference and deduction. Over time they need to develop self-regulated comprehension strategies:

- activating prior knowledge;
- clarifying meanings – with a focus on vocabulary work;
- generating questions, interrogating the text;
- constructing mental images during reading;
- summarising.

Many of the texts children read at this stage will be story books, through which they will be developing an understanding of the author's ideas, plot development and characterisation. It is important that children are also provided with opportunities to read a range of non-fiction texts, which require a different set of strategies. The use of a contents page, index and glossary makes additional demands on young readers as they search for relevant information. In reading simple poems, children need to adapt to and explore the effects of poetic language, continuing to develop their understanding of rhythm, rhyme and alliteration.

From an early stage, children need to be encouraged to read with phrasing and fluency, and to take account of punctuation to aid meaning. Much of the reading now will be silent and children will be gaining reading stamina as they attempt longer texts.

In addition, as children read with growing independence, they will engage with and respond to texts; they will choose and justify their choice of texts and will begin to critically evaluate them.

It is important throughout that children continue to have opportunities to listen to experienced readers reading aloud and that they develop a love of reading.

Appendix 1

100 high-frequency words in order

1. the	21. that	41. not	61. look	81. put
2. and	22. with	42. then	62. don't	82. could
3. a	23. all	43. were	63. come	83. house
4. to	24. we	44. go	64. will	84. old
5. said	25. can	45. little	65. into	85. too
6. in	26. are	46. as	66. back	86. by
7. he	27. up	47. no	67. from	87. day
8. I	28. had	48. mum	68. children	88. made
9. of	29. my	49. one	69. him	89. time
10. it	30. her	50. them	70. Mr	90. I'm
11. was	31. what	51. do	71. get	91. if
12. you	32. there	52. me	72. just	92. help
13. they	33. out	53. down	73. now	93. Mrs
14. on	34. this	54. dad	74. came	94. called
15. she	35. have	55. big	75. oh	95. here
16. is	36. went	56. when	76. about	96. off
17. for	37. be	57. it's	77. got	97. asked
18. at	38. like	58. see	78. their	98. saw
19. his	39. some	59. looked	79. people	99. make
20. but	40. so	60. very	80. your	100. an

Tables from: Masterson, J., Stuart, M., Dixon, M. and Lovejoy, S. (2003) Children's Printed Word Database: Economic and Social Research Council funded project, R00023406

100 high-frequency words in phases

Phase Two

Decodable words

a	had
an	back
as	and
at	get
if	big
in	him
is	his
it	not
of	got
off	up
on	mum
can	but
dad	put (<i>north</i>)

Tricky words

the
to
I
no
go
into

100 high-frequency words in phases

Phase Three

Decodable words

will	see
that	for
this	now
then	down
them	look
with	too

Tricky words

he	you
she	they
we	all
me	are
be	my
was	her

100 high-frequency words in phases

Phase Four

Decodable words

went
it's
from
children
just
help

Tricky words

said	were
have	there
like	little
so	one
do	when
some	out
come	what

100 high-frequency words in phases

Phase Five

Note that some of the words that were tricky in earlier phases become fully decodable in Phase Five

Decodable words

don't	day
old	made
I'm	came
by	make
time	here
	saw
house	very
about	put (<i>south</i>)
your	

Tricky words

oh
their
people
Mr
Mrs
looked
called
asked
could