

Year 1 Reading and Phonics Information October 2020

Dear Parents,

Usually at this time of year we would be inviting you in to Year 1 to attend a reading and phonics workshop. Unfortunately, we are unable to do this at the present time, so we would like to share some information to help you support your child with reading at home.

At present we can only accommodate sending home one school reading book each week. Some books are what we call 'decodable' books which enable children to practise their phonics skills, decoding by breaking words into sounds.

Eg 'harp' can be segmented: h - ar - p = harp.

Other books might appear simpler with less text, but where the focus is on fluency in recall of common exception words which do not fit the phonics code and cannot be segmented into sounds *eg. was, said, are etc.* Non-fiction books tend to be more challenging than fiction within the same banded level. When reading fiction children can often make plausible substitutions or work out unfamiliar words from reading around sentences and using picture clues for inference. In non-fiction books there are often more unfamiliar words to decode in a context the child may be unfamiliar with.

At Barford our reading scheme has been organised into book baskets, where each basket has fiction and non-fiction books which we have carefully grouped to provide a range of the above reading opportunities. Books generally follow banded numbers, but your child may sometimes bring home a book in the band above or below to rehearse skills identified in class.

We read with all children every week, sometimes individually and sometimes in a small, guided group where we have multiple copies of the same text. Sometimes our reading focus may involve using other materials such as games to rehearse common exception words or a particular phonic focus we are learning in class. Ultimately, we provide the children with skills to become technically efficient readers. You as parents teach your children to read from providing regular opportunity to practise, hence whether it be reading a book or playing a reading game, little and often is the key to your child becoming a confident and independent reader.

We hope that the following information will be useful in supporting your child with learning to read.

Best wishes

Mrs Hurlock & Mrs Partridge

Reading book activities

When your child brings their new book home, before you read with them, take a moment to look on the inside or back cover to see what the reading focus may be. This will give you information on how you can use the same book 2 or 3 times but with a different reading skill focus each time. As well as reading the book in a traditional way, reading skills can be made more enjoyable by playing games with the book.

Common Exception Words (CEWs)

Where these words focus in the book, you may wish to write them down (or identify them on the CEWs sheet we recently emailed) Look at the word first with your child and identify them.

1. **Word match:** Look at word in isolation.
2. **Word 'treasure' hunt:** Match the word to the word or words in the book. How many times can you find it?
3. **Actions speak louder than words** - Think of an action that you can both do (eg touch your forehead or wiggle your fingers) every time you read that word in your book. Who spots it first?
4. **Word jumble.** Pick a page of the book and write out the words and a full stop on pieces of paper. Tell your child the words from one page are in a jumble - can they sort them out? If your child cannot read words in the jumbled sentence, open the book and let them match the words to the page first.

Decodable books

These are the reading books where your child can phonetically segment and blend sounds into words. These books may have more text but less focus on the CEWs. Always take time to check the book cover to see which sounds will appear in the book and identify them with your child first. If your child takes some time to decode words in a sentence, read it back to them when they have finished each sentence, so they can understand the context of what they have read within the story or information.

You can play games similar to those mentioned above with individual phonemes from your child's reading book. Other ideas include:

1. **Sound families** - write out words with the focus phonemes on pieces of paper and see if your child can sort them into sound families.

ar	air	ear
star	fair	dear
tart	repair	beard

2. **Sound buttons** - before reading together, find words in the book that are within the same sound families and write them out for your child to draw on buttons they can press to segment the word into sounds. Help them to notice that some digraphs appear hidden in the middle of words such as 'beard' b - ear - d

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Teaching phonics

TERMINOLOGY

When we teach phonics at school the children soon get used to the following specific terminology:

Phoneme - A **phoneme** is a single 'unit' of sound.

Graphemes - A **grapheme** is a letter that on its own or with others represents a sound (phoneme) in a word.

Segmenting and blending - The action of breaking down or piecing together the phonemes in a word.

We segment a spoken word to identify individual sounds for writing, eg. 'start' said slowly we can hear 4 phonemes: **s - t - ar - t**.

We decode words by blending written sounds together into spoken words

Decodable - A word that can be blended to create a word. It follows phonic rules.

Digraph - a combination of two graphemes representing one sound, as in 'ph'.

Trigraph - a combination of three graphemes representing one sound, as in 'igh'.

Split digraph - When a digraph of two vowels is split by a **consonant** it becomes a split vowel digraph.

For example: wrote (**wrote**) - the 'o' and 'e' here make one sound.

In school, we follow the Letters and Sounds programme. Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills which consists of six phases.

Phase 1 is taught in early years and concerns sound awareness such as listening games.

Phase 2 is taught throughout Reception class, teaches the skill of blending 'consonant / vowel / consonant' (CVC) words using graphemes which can be rearranged to make lots of different CVC words -

Eg. The graphemes *s a t p i n* can be blended into *sat / pin / pit / pat / tip / tap* etc.

Phase 2 phonemes:

- **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

Phase 3 phonemes:

- **Set 6:** j, v, w, x
- **Set 7:** y, z, zz, qu
- **Consonant digraphs:** ch, sh, th, ng
- **Vowel digraphs:** ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

Phase 4

- This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases.
- Focus is on consonant clusters at the start and end of words
 - CCVC: s - p - i - n = spin
 - CVCC: d - a - m - p = damp
 - CCVCC: s - t - a - m - p = stamp
- Read and spell multi syllabic words e.g. lunchbox, desktop
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Phase 5 Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes.

- **Vowel digraphs:** wh, ph, ay, ou, ie, ea, oy, ir, ue, aw, ew, oe, au
- **Split digraphs:** a_e e_e i_e o_e u_e (flute / tube)

Phase 6 The focus is on learning spelling rules for suffixes.

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

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

The Phonics Screening check is a statutory test carried out usually in June each year to check Year 1 children's ability to recall phonemes and phonetically blend sounds into words.

The check consists of 40 decodable words.

20 are real words

20 are non-words or

'alien' words.

grit

start

best

hooks

blan 

steck 

hild 

quemp 

By the summer term the children will have had lots of opportunity to rehearse segmenting and blending skills ready for the screening. Later in the year we will send home weekly practise sheets like the example above for your child to practice this skill.