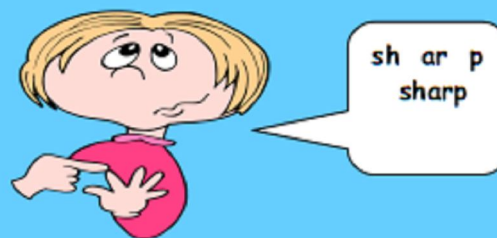


Blending Sounds – Phonics

- The words that your children speaks and reads are made up of separate sounds, (phonemes). Your child will learn these sounds in Reception and Key Stage One. S/he will learn to blend the separate sounds together to read a word. This is what your child might call 'sounding out'.
- You can help your child to blend sounds by making sure that they recognise the sound that the letter/s make and say the sounds correctly. The separate sounds in words are very short and crisp. There should be no 'er' sound at the end. So, t is 't' not 'ter'. m is 'mmm' not 'mer'. 'c a t' not 'cur arh tur'. If the sounds are too long, the word will not make any sense to the reader.
- Play oral blending games at home and when out and about. 'Please could you bring me the c u p. Let's go to the sh o p s'
- Use phoneme fingers - say each sound crisply and point to the tip of each finger; thumb first. Fold down any unused fingers. Run your finger across the tips and blend the sounds to read the word.



When phonics are not enough

- Sometimes 'sounding out' is not enough. Some words don't fit the rules so other strategies are needed.
- If your child cannot read a word suggest that they miss it out and read to the end of the sentence. What word would make sense?
- What sound does it begin with?
- Does it sound right? Ran not runned; gave not gived.
- Does it look a bit like other words you know? e.g. if your child knows 'could' they might be able to read 'should' and 'would'.
- What word would make sense in this story or subject?
- Does the picture give you a clue?

Understanding, connecting, engaging and responding to texts

Being able to read the words, does not necessarily mean that your child understands what they have read. S/he might sound like a fluent reader which can make you believe that they are a 'good' reader.

The only way to judge how much your child understands is to talk about the book and ask questions that make him/her think.

- What do you think this story/book will be about?
- I wonder what will happen next. What do you think?
- Does this remind you of anything/a place that you have been to/a feeling?
- What is happening here?
- How do you think this character feels?
- What do you think s/he should do?
- What would you do?
- Why do you think the character has done/said that?
- Where might we find information about . . . ?
- What do you already know about?
- Does this remind you of any other stories that you have read?
- What were the main events in this story?
- What happened at the beginning, middle, in the end?
- What does this word mean? How can we find out?
- Do you like these words? Why? How do they make you feel? Why do you think the author has used them?
- How do you think the author feel about this character/situation/subject?
- Did you like the story/book? Why? Why not?
- Which five words would you choose to describe this character and why?
- If you could ask the character three questions what would they be?
- Do you think this character is good or bad? Why?
- What was the best bit?