

Reception Parents' Reading Meeting

Monday 17th November 2025

How do we teach reading?

What is synthetic phonics?

How is Floppy's Phonics taught?

What is Book Talk?

The wider context – what can I do at home?



Synthetic phonics is the ability to convert letters or letter groups into sounds, which are then blended together into words.

“Synthetic phonics offers the vast majority of young children the best and most direct route to becoming skilled readers and writers”

Sir Jim Rose, Rose Review of Reading 2006



How does Floppy's Phonics work?

Children:

- learn 44 sounds and matching letter/s in a structured and considered sequence
- learn to blend sounds to read words
- read lots of specially written books

This is **decoding**.



Select the audio buttons to listen to the words. Select the letters to watch how they are formed. Select Chip, Floppy and the word list and complete the activities.

Level 1+: Book 3

G g



gate

gap
dig
gas
digs



s a t p i n m d g





- The first 6 phonemes (sounds) taught are s a t p i n. Many words can be made using these phonemes eg sat, pin, pit, tap
- Later on the children will learn that some sounds are made up from more than one grapheme (letter) eg **ee**, **ai**, **oa** (digraphs) or even **igh** or **ear** (trigraphs)
- We teach the children how to sound talk. This is the foundation to the skills of blending and segmenting. You might see the children using their 'phoneme fingers'.
- Blending is how to join sounds together to read words eg. c-a-t → cat
- Segmenting is when the children break up a word into sounds to write it. eg cat, they write c-a-t or shop, they write sh-o-p.
- These are reversible skills.
- However in English, not all words are this simple! We call these words 'helpful' words and the children have to learn them by sight, e.g the, was, no, go
- It is important that children still know letter names (the alphabet) as well as sounds. We will make this clear when introducing new phonemes.



- Try to sound out and blend these words...

drep

blom

gris

- Nonsense games like this help to build up skills –and are fun!



Segmenting Activity

Using 'phoneme fingers' can you say how many phonemes are in each word?

shelf

dress

sprint

right



Did you get it right?

shelf = sh-e-l-f = 4 phonemes

dress = d-r-e-ss = 4 phonemes

sprint = s-p-r-i-n-t = 6 phonemes

right = r-igh-t = 3 phonemes



Floppy's Phonics is the phonics programme linked to the Oxford Reading Tree scheme. The books are based around the characters of Biff, Chip, Kipper and their family.

It is a graded reading scheme beginning with picture only books, then books with simple phrases and sentences using the sounds as they are introduced and building up a core sight vocabulary.

We use it alongside Book Talk to support children to build up an understanding of story sequences, characters, plot and to learn new vocabulary. All whilst enjoying good quality books together.



How do we teach a new text?

Look at the front cover - *what can you see?*

Discuss what the book may be about, work out the title together, which characters are in it, where it is set, what might happen.

Turn to page 1, *where do we start?*

Discuss any key/newly learnt sounds the children will need to use. Look at key words that will appear in the story.

Can you sound out these words? Use your finger to point as you read.



Oxford
Reading
Tree

Phonics

Big, Bad Bug



Series created by Roderick Hunt and Alex Brychta



Home Readers

To reinforce the teaching in school, your child will bring home a levelled reading book to share with you. These may be:

- *Floppy's Phonics* decodable readers to practise reading stories and different text types.
- *Decode and Develop* books which are phonically-based and aligned to Letters Floppy's Phonics levels, with a variety of context words to support language development and deepen comprehension
- *Explore with Biff, Chip and Kipper* topic-linked fiction and non-fiction texts to support the wider curriculum



Biff, Chip and Kipper Stories
Decode and Develop





All the books have notes on the inside cover to guide you on how to share them with your child.



Series created by Roderick Hunt and Alex Brychta
Written by Debbie Hepplewhite

Once children have learned all of the sounds in Level 1+ they can go on to read the Level 1+ Floppy's Phonics decodable readers.

USING THIS BOOK TOGETHER:

- 1 Say the letter sound together, e.g. say "g".
- 2 Ask your child to finger-trace the letter shapes and say the sound.
- 3 Ask your child to point to the key picture and say the word, e.g. "g. gate".
- 4 Ask your child to sound out and blend the list of words.
- 5 Find all the words that include the focus sound in the picture. Some are labelled, some are not.
- 6 Talk about what is happening in the picture, e.g. Who can you see? What are they doing? How do you think they might be feeling?
- 7 Ask your child to say the sounds at the bottom of the page as quickly as possible.

Remember to do the fun activities at the end - letter-tracing, matching and reading!

THIS BOOK INTRODUCES:

- g** as in gate.
o as in octopus.
c as in cat.
k as in key.

Hear the sounds on our website
www.oxfordowl.co.uk

LABELS IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS

The labels show the focus letter in block. Encourage your child to listen for the focus sound within the word as you read the whole word to them.



Debbie Hepplewhite's Top Tips

What is blending?

For reading (decoding), say the sounds from left to right of the word and blend the sounds to hear the whole word.

How to blend:

Point under each letter as you say the sound, then run your finger under the whole word as you say the whole (or blended) word.

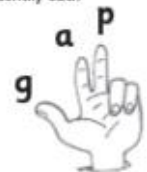
e.g. **c-a-t** **cat**



Tips for spelling (encoding)

Say the word slowly to identify each sound in the word.

Use your left hand to tally the individual sounds to your thumb and fingers.



Write down the letters which are code for each sound you have tallied.

Sounds and spellings

Letters written like this /k/ refer to a sound, not a spelling.

e.g. /k/ as in cat, key, duck

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The characters in this book are the original creation of Roderick Hunt and Alex Brychta who retain copyright in the characters.

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Home Readers

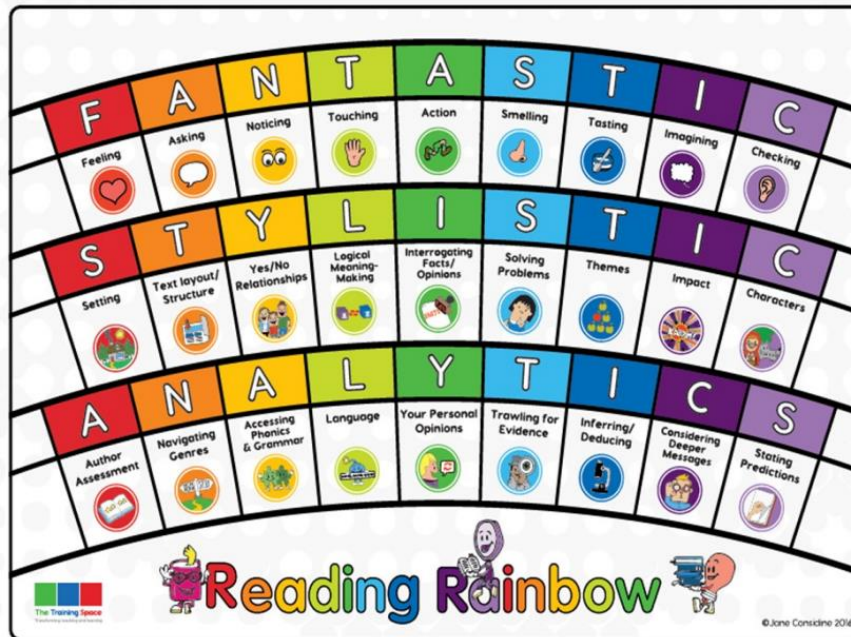
Your child will receive a reading book to take home from January on Wednesdays

Along with this will be a home reading diary (green book) in which you can make any relevant comments about your child's reading. It is really helpful if you can write the date and title of the book with any comments you make.

Please return the reading book and diary to us on Mondays to be changed. This allows time for us to change books and respond to any of your comments.



We use the 'Reading Rainbow' to give children a purpose for their reading and when reading whole class stories together. Looking through these lenses can help children to focus their thinking, develop their vocabulary and help them to structure what they want to say about a text.





Guidance for reading at home

- Encourage your child to read with you regularly but for short periods of time, say 5-10 minutes at most.
- Try and find a quiet time with no distractions when you sit together and share a book. It should be as enjoyable and stress-free as you can make it!
- Praise their efforts - be calm (don't make it a battle!)
- When your child first brings home a book don't expect them to know all the words. If they are uncertain simply supply the word and let them continue.
- Model the reading by reading it to them at first or taking it in turns. Many first books have a repeated phrases which can help your child to anticipate, e.g. 'I like to paint', 'I like to...swim'
- A big part of early reading is memorising. This does not mean there is no value in 'reading' the book again. On the contrary - with repeated readings the memorised words will start to become familiar as text.
- Encourage your child to use the pictures to help predict what the words might be— they are an important part of the understanding of the text too!



How to help:

Use pure sounds [pronunciation guide](#)

Have fun sound talking at home:

“What a tidy r-oo-m!”, “Where’s your c-oa-t?”

“Time for b-e-d!”

Talk to your child – encourage a love of words, play with language, discuss meanings.

Read to your child as well as hearing them read.



Research says that the optimum length of time for children to be read to each day is 20 minutes. That's where you come in! We will read to your child for 10 minutes each day and also require you to read with your child for another 10 minutes, to give them the best opportunity for success in reading.



By **talking** to your child as much as possible and ‘feeding’ them new and different words:

“Let’s **eat** our lunch now.”

“Let’s **munch** our lunch now.”

“Let’s **scoff** our lunch now.”

“Let’s **devour** our lunch now!”



By enriching conversations through description:

“Look at that rain. It looks like little diamonds sparkling on the window pane!”

By having fun with words and language.

“I’m as hot as a spud in a cooking pot!”

By praising your child for using new words or interesting phrases.



“Vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency and ultimately school achievement”

Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2002)

By the age of 4 a child who comes from a ‘talkative’ family has been exposed to an average of 30 million more words than a child from a ‘talk-a-little’ family.

Hart and Risley (2000)

“Students who lack adequate vocabulary have difficulty getting meaning from what they read, so they read less because they find reading difficult.”

Anderson and Freebody (2004)



Support your child's progress by reading with your child lots!

Promote talk about books by asking questions but avoid the closed question.

Do you like this book? It's a good story, isn't it? Do you like reading?

Change these so that the answer cannot be yes or no.

What do you like about this book?

Why do you think this is a good story?

What's great about reading?

What do you think happens next?

What is that character thinking?

What do you think that character is feeling now?



What are your reading memories?

- Do you have a good childhood memory about books and reading?
- Do you have an unpleasant memory?
- Think about these times and if you would like, share these memories with the people next to you.



It is the conditions and feelings associated with your good memory that you should aim to recreate for reading with your child.

Some ideas but you will have more:

- Introduce children to different kinds of books: picture books; short stories; joke books; poetry; comics and information books.
- Read them the book that was your favourite when you were a child.
- Read with expression – try to use different and funny voices for characters.



Acting out stories

Reading for information

Instilling a lifelong love of reading

Environmental reading

**Sharing
favourite books**

**Listening to stories
- being read to, audio books**

Being able to retell a story

**Adult modelling of
being a reader**

**Understanding the
purpose of reading**



Find out more online:

Phonics Play -

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/resources/phase/2>

Oxford Owl – [Phonics](#)

[Supporting Reading at Reception \(4-5 years\)](#)

Floppy's phonics pronunciation guide – [How to pronounce pure sounds](#)



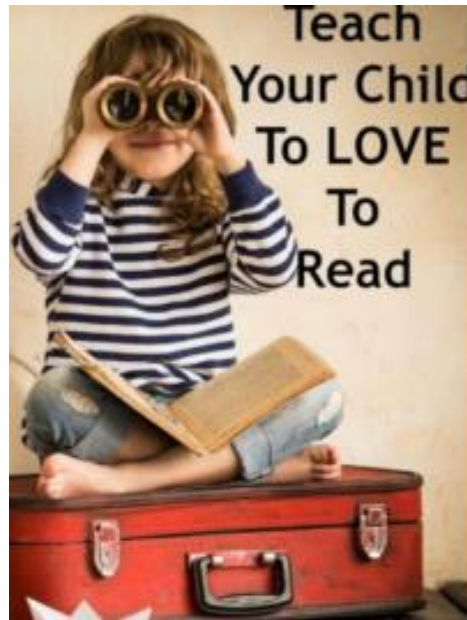
Phonics Interactive Lesson

Come and join us in Reception for a Phonics lesson,
along with some practical phonics activities and
games with your child!

Wednesday 28th January at 2-3pm



Are you and your child a member of Rugby Library?



Happy reading!