

Phonics Level 2 Parent Pack

What is phonics?

Phonics is the process of learning to read and spell using specific letters or sounds. These letters and sounds combine to create words that can be broken down or blended together in order to read or spell them.

Glossary

Blending

building up of words from individual phonemes for reading

CVC Words

stands for consonant-vowel-consonant, e.g. 'cat'

Digraph

when a single sound is represented by two written letters, e.g. 'th' or 'er'

GPC



stands for 'grapheme/phoneme correspondence' - the relationship between sounds and the letter or letters that represent that sound

Grapheme

the symbol (written letter) used to represent a sound

Mnemonic



an illustration that is designed to support children's recognition of GPCs

Phoneme

the shortest unit of sound in a word - usually represented by a single letter

Segmenting

breaking down words into individual phonemes for writing

Tricky words (common exception words)

words that are not decodable at the child's current phonic level of understanding. Also called 'sight words' because children are taught to memorise them so they can be recognised by sight

VC words

stands for vowel-consonant, e.g. 'at'

What do children learn in Level 2?

In Level 2, children will learn to recognise written letters (graphemes) and their corresponding sounds (phonemes). These may also be referred to as GPCs (grapheme-phoneme correspondences).

In phonics, children learn the sounds that a letter makes before they learn letter names. This helps them to use these sounds to read words e.g. 'a' for 'ant'. They will learn the sounds in a specific order to help them recognise common letters or sounds that are used in words.

Within Level 2, most of the new GPCs taught are individual graphemes but children will also learn some digraphs. Digraphs are phonemes that are made up of two letters but they only make one sound. The digraphs taught in Level 2 include 'ck', 'ff', 'll' and 'ss'. 'ck' is a digraph that is sometimes used as an alternative spelling for 'c' or 'k' but it makes the same sound. 'ff', 'll' and 'ss' are similar to 'f', 'l' and 's' but they make a slightly longer sound. They are often used at the end of words. These may also be referred to as 'double letters'.

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

Blending and Segmenting

In Level 1, children will have already begun orally hearing and identifying phonemes in words. Once children are familiar with new GPCs, they can begin to read and spell words.

In the early stages of Level 2, children may begin by recognising the initial (first) sound in words. Once they are confident with recognising initial sounds, they will begin to read and spell full written words using the GPCs that they have learned.

The first words that children will begin to read and spell are VC and CVC words:

- VC words (vowel-consonant) - e.g. 'at', 'on', 'in'
- CVC words (consonant-vowel-consonant) - e.g. 'dog', 'mat', 'cap'

Children will use **blending** to read these words. They will read each individual GPC (e.g. 'd-o-g') and then blend them together to read the full word, 'd-o-g - dog'.

In school, children are taught to use sound buttons to identify each individual phoneme within a word.

dog
• • •

They may also use sound bars to identify digraphs or trigraphs.

pack
• • •

When children begin breaking down words for spelling they use **segmenting**. For example, if they hear the word 'at', they may recognise that the initial phoneme is 'a' and the last last phoneme is 't'. Once children are confident with segmenting VC words, they will move onto CVC words where they will begin to identify the middle phoneme.

Tricky Words (Common Exception Words)

Tricky words or common exception words do not fit the regular spelling rules that children have been taught so far. Children are taught to read and spell tricky words by sight (to memorise them) and to point out the tricky part of the word.

Letter Formation

As well as recognising the sounds, children will need to form letters for writing. Some children may already be able to write some letters, such as those that are in their name, but it is also important for children to form letters correctly by starting and finishing in the right place as this will help them with their handwriting as they become more advanced. Children will also learn to form capital letters but they will not learn the letter names until Level 3.



How can you help support your child at home?

To support your child at home, you can practise recognising Level 2 GPCs, by:

Identifying written graphemes by sight - point out written graphemes as you see them in different settings, such as on TV shows, games, toys or posters.

Practise forming graphemes correctly - give your child plenty of opportunities to practise forming graphemes correctly. You can do this in fun ways, such as writing letters in the sand, painting large letters or using chalk in your yard. It is also important for children to practise forming letters using a pencil so that they can improve their fine motor skills and pencil grip.

Recognising and identifying phonemes in words - identifying initial sounds or ending sounds in words by playing 'I Spy' or breaking down words for spelling, such as 'Put on your h-a-t'.

Blending and reading CVC words containing Level 2 GPCs - practise reading stories together containing CVC words or matching words with pictures.

Segmenting and spelling CVC words containing Level 2 GPCs - practise spelling words in fun ways, such as using magnetic letters or writing words in foam or sand.

Practise reading and spelling Level 2 tricky words - hide the words on flashcards and make your own treasure hunt for children to find and read the tricky words.