



PHONICS TEACHING @ KLS

Phonics taught at Kings Lodge School in Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage classes.



At Kings Lodge School we teach phonics regularly through the week using a variety of word games and investigations, songs and actions, pictures and stories. Most of our ideas for teaching your children to read and spell come from a government guided scheme called Letters and Sounds;

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190599/Letters_and_Sounds_-_DFES-00281-2007.pdf

We also make use of the numerous interactive games and activities that can be found on the internet, use magnetic letter boards and small white boards and pens for the children to practise on. We aim to make the lessons fun and interactive!

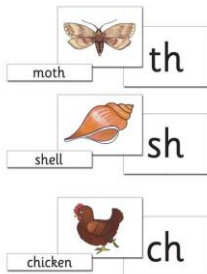
Phonics lessons are typically 20 minutes long and usually follow this pattern;

Revisit → **Teach** → **Practise** → **Apply**

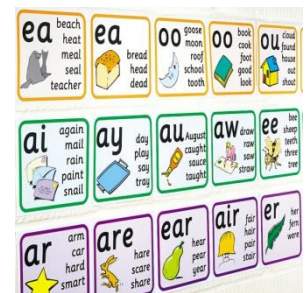
Through these lessons the children are taught to recognise graphemes (*written letters in words*) and blend these to decode words in reading. They are taught to hear the phonemes (*small units of sound heard in words*) in order to segment and spell words.



WHAT ARE GRAPHEMES AND PHONEMES ?



Words are made up from (phonemes) and phonics teaches children to listen carefully and identify the phonemes that make up each word. This helps them learn to read and spell words.



Phoneme: the smallest unit of sound that you can hear within a word; the word phoneme refers to the sound, **not** the letter(s) which represent the sound in writing. For example, in the word *gate*, there are three phonemes (g-long ay-t); in *school* there are four (s-c-long ooh-l).

Grapheme: a grapheme is a 'symbol' of a phoneme – it's a letter or group of letters representing a sound and we use the letter names for this. A one letter grapheme is the 'c' in *cat* where the hard 'c' sound is represented by the letter 'c'; a two letter grapheme is in *leaf* where the long 'ee' sound is represented by the letters 'ea'; a four letter grapheme is contained in *through* where the letters 'ough' make the long 'oo' sound.

Digraph: is a two letter grapheme, such as 'ch', 'sh', 'oa' (two letters making one sound).

Split digraph: the 'e' at the end of words works with another letter to make a sound. Think about the difference between *hop* and *hope* – both have three sounds (phonemes), but the split digraph in *hope* creates an 'long o' sound.

Trigraph: a three letter grapheme, where three letters represent one phoneme, as in *ear*, *air*, *high*, *pear* (three letters making one sound, even in a word like *pear* where the 'r' is not really said).

In our phonics lessons children are taught three main things:

1. GPCs (grapheme phoneme correspondences)

GPCs simply means that children are taught all the phonemes in the English language and ways of writing them down.

2. Blending

Children are taught to blend sounds together by merging the individual sounds together until they can hear what the word is. This is a vital reading skill.

3. Segmenting

Segmenting is the opposite of blending! Children are able to say a word and then break it up into the phonemes that make it up. This is a vital spelling skill.



(1) When you talk about sounds to your child, use the phonemes (the letter sounds). The reason for this is that sounding out words is practically impossible if you use the letter names: *cat* doesn't sound like 'see-ay-tee'.



(2) When saying the sounds of **b, d, g, j** and **w** and other letters, you might notice the 'uh' sound which follows each ('buh', 'duh'...). It's hard to say the sound without it but do try to emphasise the main letter sound and avoid saying the 'uh' too much. In some letters, avoid the 'uh' completely (say 'mmm' rather than 'muh' and 'sss', not 'suh'). This is to avoid your child spelling a word like *cat* and wanting to add the 'uh' sound (c-u-a-t).



(3) When you talk about sounds to your child, use the phonemes (the letter sounds). Soon, though, it's a good idea to distinguish this from the letter name; the hard sound 'c' can be made using a 'c' (a 'see') as in *cat*, a 'k' (a 'kay') as in *kit*, or a 'ck' (a 'see-kay').

These lessons, combined with our reading, grammar and writing lessons make up your child's English learning at King's Lodge School.

*Germaine Greig, Phonics lead learner
March 2015*