

Blend — to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap

Consonant — speech sound in which the breath channel is at least partly obstructed and which can be combined with a vowel to form a syllable (the letters b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z). The following abbreviations are used to describe the order of letters in words.

VC— the abbreviations for vowel-consonant eg 'in'

CVC— the abbreviations for consonant-vowel-consonant eg 'pin'

CCVC — the abbreviations for consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant eg 'spin'

Digraph — two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph.

Grapheme — a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. sh, ch, igh, ough ('though')

Phoneme — the smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but 'sp' represents two (/s/ and /p/)

Split digraph — two letters, split, making one sound, e.g. a-e as in make or i-e inside. Six split digraphs in the English language a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, y-e (eg type)

Vowel — speech sounds in which the breath channel is not blocked and does not cause friction when making vocal sounds (the letters a, e, i, o, u)

Vowel digraph — comprise one or two vowels which, together, make one sound, e.g. ai, ee, oa

How can I help my child?

There are a number of things that parents can do to support early reading development:

- Let your child see you enjoy reading yourself. They are influenced by you and what you do!
- Immerse your child in a love of reading
- Make time for your child to read their school book to you
- With all books, encourage your child to 'sound out' unfamiliar words and then blend from left to right rather than looking at pictures to guess
- Listen to your child as they practice the sounds learnt.

Where can I find help?

Remember, we are here to help your child achieve their very best. If you have any questions please ask your child's class teacher or the school's Phonics leader Miss Pillay.

Try this useful website for further help (including correct pronunciation of sounds)
<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/expert-help/phonics-made-easy>

Also, there are many free phonics games for children to access on the computer:
<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/ParentsMenu.htm>
<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>

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ARK OVAL PRIMARY ACADEMY



PHONICS SCREENING CHECK

Information for parents

PHONICS - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What is Phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. Children are first taught to recognise the sounds (phonemes) made by each letter or group of letters (graphemes) in the English alphabet. There are 44 different sounds that children will learn.

EXAMPLE

'm' is a one letter grapheme which makes one sound
'sh' is a two letter grapheme which makes one sound
'igh' is a three letter grapheme which makes one sound

Children are taught to read by looking for the separate sounds in a word. Then they are taught how to blend these sounds together to read the whole word. e.g. m-igh-t

At Ark Oval Primary Academy we teach daily phonics lessons, following the *Ruth Miskin, Read Write Inc. Programme*. Children start with 20 minutes a day when they are in Reception, gradually moving onto 45 minutes as the year progresses and in year 1 and 2 they have 1 hour lessons.

Why we teach Phonics?

Research has shown that when phonics is taught in a structured way, starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to more complex sounds, it is the most effective way of teaching children to read. Almost all children who receive good teaching of phonics will learn the skills they need to tackle new words. They can then progress onto reading any text fluently, confidently and for enjoyment.

THE PHONICS SCREENING CHECK

What is the phonics screening check?

The national phonics screening check is a statutory assessment that was introduced in 2012 to all Year 1 pupils and is a quick and easy check of your child's phonics knowledge. It will assess phonics skills and knowledge learnt through reception and year 1.

Who is it for?

All year 1 pupils will take the phonics screening check in 2014 during the week beginning 16th June.

What does the check involve ?

Each child will read a list of 40 words comprising real and pseudo (nonsense) words. They will be asked to 'sound out' the word and blend the sounds together to read the word. Your child will read on a one to one basis with a teacher whom the child is familiar with. The words will be presented as a booklet with up to 4 words per page. Pseudo words will be presented with a colourful picture of an alien. The children will be asked what the alien's name is by reading the pseudo word. This will make the check a bit more fun and provides the children with a context for these nonsense words. The check will probably be completed in 10-15 minutes.

Will the check be stressful for the children?

The children at Ark Oval Primary Academy are familiar with the set up as we review children's progress in the same way once every half term. The assessment will be age appropriate and the adults involved will all be familiar to the child. It should be an enjoyable activity for children which takes no more than 15 minutes to complete. There will be a few practice words at the beginning to make sure your child understands the activity.

THE PHONICS SCREENING CHECK

What are Pseudo or Nonsense words?

These are words that are phonetically decodable but not actual words. They have no associated meaning.

EXAMPLES:



Why are they included in the check?

These words are included in the check specifically to assess whether you child can decode any word using phonic skills and not their memory. This will support their ability to read unfamiliar words they encounter later on. Children generally find nonsense words amusing so they will probably enjoy reading these words.

How will the results from the screening be used?

You will be informed of your child's progress in phonics and how he or she has done in the screening check, towards the end of the summer term.

All of the children are individuals and develop at different stages. The results of the screening check will assist teachers to identify which children will need further support with decoding.

What happens if a child struggles with the screening check?

The screening check will identify children who have phonic decoding skills below the level expected for the end of year 1 and who therefore need help. Schools are expected to provide extra help and children will then be able to re-take the assessment in year 2.