

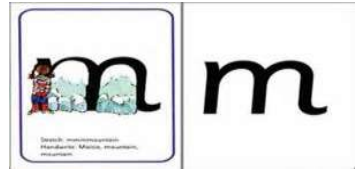


Holmer CofE Academy

Phonics



Simple advice on helping your child with



Phonics are special sounds: The sounds which make up 'talk'. Children progress naturally from talking to writing, and from listening to reading. We need to encourage this process!

Phonemes: When we speak, we make sounds. These sounds form words and phrases. These sounds are 'phonemes'. Take the sound 'shhh'. (Make it by putting your finger on your lips as if you were telling someone to be quiet!) This is a phoneme because it forms part of the words 'shark', 'flash' and many others. But the sound you make when clapping your hands is not a phoneme, as a hand-clap sound is not part of any words!

How many phonemes?: There are approximately to be around 44 different phonemes or sounds that make up spoken English. This will vary from area to area as different accents use different sounds.

What about letters?: Letters are graphemes - ways of writing down the sounds that come out of our mouth. We use the term 'grapheme' rather than letter because many sounds are written using more than one letter.

E.g. the 'shhhh' sound is often written using the letters s and h as in 'shark' or it is written using the letters 'ti' as in 'nation'. The grapheme representing this sound

Learning Phonics

Children need to learn three things:

1. The words that we SAY can be broken up into single sounds (phonemes). 'c' 'a' 't' is cat.
2. Written script is a code - we learn how to write each sound we hear in a word. When we read, one of the

What we do at Holmer

We do a 15 minute phonics session each day and learn roughly 2 new sounds a week. At the beginning of each session we go through the sounds we have learnt so far so that the children are very familiar with them.

It is very important that when you say a sound that it is kept pure and that you do not add the 'u' sound to the end of it. For example it is 'c' and not 'cuh'. This will enable the children to sound out words much easier.

When we learn a new sound, we try and think of as many words as we can think of that begin with that sound or have that sound in them. Lots of children find this very difficult to begin with but this soon comes with practise. **This is something you can do together at home.**

We practise sounding simple words out using our 'Fred fingers'. Each time we say a sound we hold up a finger. We keep repeating this, getting faster and faster until we end up saying the word.

We learn 'red' words. These are words that are not possible to sound out. E.g 'the'. We say that they are trying to trick us and that we have to try and just remember these words.

We learn nonsense words as well like 'gleem', nox, mab- By using nonsense words, we can find out whether a child knows the most common sound for letters (letter-sound correspondence), and whether a child can blend the sounds to read words he has never seen before.



Writing

We try and write for as many different purposes as possible. This includes lists, letters, news writing and labels.

When we write in school, we use key word cards and alphabet sheets to help us. We ask the children to find the key words they need on the cards so that they can copy them. For any words that are not key words we encourage them to listen for the sounds. This is quite difficult to start with and we only ask them to listen for the first and last sounds, then as their confi-

Reading



We try and teach children as many different strategies to help them read their books.

At the beginning, we give the children books with no words so that they can look at the pictures and re-tell the story.

The children also start reading by memory and tracking the words with their finger. This helps them understand which direction the text goes in and may help them to start recognising words that are repeated on each page.

The next step is to start sounding out simple 2 and 3 letter words using 'Fred fingers'. Just pick a few words in the book to start with, then build up the amount of words they are sounding out. It also helps if you model how to sound the words out so they understand how to read the words.





Websites that can help at home

<http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/resources/sound-pronunciation-guide/>

- Read Write Inc information for parents

phonicbooks.wordpress.com/2011/03/13/how-to-say-the-sounds-of-letters-in-synthetic-phonics/ - video of how the pure sounds should be said

www.oxfordowl.co.uk - Oxford Reading Tree Books

www.letters-and-sounds.com - Games and resources to use at home

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/freeIndex.htm> - games and resources for home use

http://www.familylearning.org.uk/phonics_games.html - fun games for children