

Learning, Achieving and Flourishing Together in God's Promises, Goodness and Love.

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Essential Phonics

A Unique Approach to Essential Phonics Teaching and Learning

Definition

Essential Phonics is a **synthetic** approach to Phonics teaching and learning. It introduces children to the alphabetic code in a **systematic** and **sequential** way.

Essential Phonics has been designed to supplement 'Letters and Sounds' (DfES 2007). Although the 'Letters and Sounds' document offered guidance and a clear framework for practitioners, the programme did not provide a clear set of resources. For teachers to teach in a consistent way, it is important that they have a **consistent** set of **child-friendly** resources. This programme provides these essential resources. It offers support on a more **practical** level.

There are **6** phases of Phonics teaching. The Essential Phonics approach has **6** key principles:

P - PRONUNCIATION H - HIGH EXPECTATIONS R - RESOURCES A - ASSESSMENT S - STRUCTURE E - EARLY INTERVENTION

Impact

To summarise the impact of Essential Phonics:

- Increased confidence. Children know more of their letter sounds and have a better understanding of decoding strategies. Reluctant writers are more willing to 'have a go'.
- Increased independence. Children make better use of the Phonics resources that are available to them. They are less reliant on a supporting adult.
- Increased challenge. At the end of the Foundation year, the majority of Reception children should strive to be working above Age Related Expectations (ARE).

Key Principles

P - PRONUNCIATION

It is important that **practitioners and parents** pronounce letter sounds in the **correct** way. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound. Phonemes should be articulated **clearly** and **precisely**.

Please refer to Appendix A: Pronunciation Guide.

The letter 's' has been described as a stretchy phoneme. Children should be taught to say a long and continuous /s/. They should not say "suh", "suh", "suh".

It is important that all staff model the correct pronunciation. If a child does say "suh", the teacher or TA should correct the child in a sensitive way.

See below for an example conversation:

TEACHER: I am sat on a chair. Can you chop up the sounds in sat?

CHILD: suh - /a/ - /t/

TEACHER: Well done for saying the correct vowel sound: /a/. Let's practise the /s/ sound. You said "suh". Is that right?

CHILD: No!

TEACHER: Remember that the snake makes a long hissing sound. Listen to my snake sound: /s/ /s/. Now it's your turn...

CHILD: /s/ /s/ /s/

TEACHER: /s/ /a/ /t/

CHILD: /s/ /a/ /t/

There are a number of videos and online resources that demonstrate correct pronunciation an example is shown below:

http://www.focusonphonics.co.uk/sound.htm

H – HIGH EXPECTATIONS

It is important that teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of their children. All staff should be aware of **Age Related Expectations** (ARE) and the **expectations for each Phonics phase**.

Essential Phonics has two key resources. These resources should be used in every Phonics lesson.

1. Basic Code

This is a resource for the children to use in their independent work.

2. Working Wall.

This is a display for the children to refer to in their Phonics session. This is a larger version of the Basic Code. Teachers should only display the letters and sounds that they have been taught to the children. The Working Wall is not a complete wall. It is important that the children feel included in the process of 'building' the wall.

These resources can be found in Appendix B: Key Resources.

The national expectation for Reception children at 40-60 months is:

Area of Learning and Development Statement	Examples Please refer to Appendix C: High Expectations		
Communication and Language: Listening and Attention	Practitioners must have high expectations for behaviour and listening skills.		
 Maintains attention, concentrates and sits quietly during appropriate activity 	• Display a visual prompt Listening ears, Looking eyes and Thinking brains. Ask the children: Do we call out in Phonics? No. "We put up our hands".		
	• Play a meditation Play a meditation before each Phonics session. Explain to the children that these short stories help us to relax. They help to calm our busy minds and "fidgety fingers".		
Communication and Language: Speaking	All staff should have secure subject knowledge of Phonics terminology. They should expect their children to use the same terminology.		
 Extends vocabulary () exploring the meaning and sounds of new words 	• Vowels		

	Talk about vowels with the children. Can you say the letter names? Can you say the letter sounds? How many vowels are there altogether? Say to the children: On our Basic Code and on the Working Wall, vowels are always colour-coded in red .
	• Digraphs Talk about digraphs with the children. Use the following chant: "2 letters1 sound". The children hold up 2 fingers and then 1 finger. Say to the children: On our Basic Code and on the Working Wall, digraphs are always colour- coded in green.
Literacy: Reading	Children should be given lots of opportunities to practise and demonstrate their reading skills.
 Continues a rhyming string Hears and says the initial sound in words Can segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together and knows which letters represent some of them Links sounds to letters, 	 Emphasise the initial sound Story time is an excellent opportunity. Stop, pause and ask the children: "What does _ start with? What sound do you hear at the beginning?" Introduce a 'Sound Box'
 naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet Begins to read words and simple sentences 	Take out a flashcard. For each sound, the children need to: - Say the name of the sound - Say the sound 3 times - Do the action
Literacy: Writing	Children should be given lots of opportunities to practise and demonstrate their writing skills.
 Continues a rhyming string Hears and says the initial sound in words Can segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together Links sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence 	 Marking policy It is important that class teachers mark in a clear and consistent way. Children must understand the marks that are made on their writing. Task sheets Young children can often feel overwhelmed by a blank page in their Literacy book. It is important that teachers think carefully about the specific skill that they would like the

child to demonstrate. For example, - If you would like to assess how well a child can record the initial sound – include a space for that sound.
- If you would like a child to segment all of the sounds in a word - include the correct number of sound boxes.

It is important that these high expectations are communicated to **parents**. Here are some practical ways that you could **include** and **inform** parents:

- Invite them to a Phonics workshop
- Invite them to observe a real Phonics session
- Share key Phonics resources on the school website
- Share the Pace and Progression document (Appendix F).
- Share task sheets in a specific Phonics folder

R - RESOURCES

The Basic Code and the Working Wall are key resources. More Phonics resources can be found in Appendix D.

A - ASSESSMENT

- Children's understanding of Phonics skills and strategies should be assessed on a daily and weekly basis.
- Can the child hear and say the initial sound? Can they write the initial sound?
- Can the child orally blend and segment CVC words? (Phases 2 and 3)
- Can the child orally blend and segment CCVC and CVCC words? (Phase 4)

Their knowledge of letters and sounds should be tracked at the end of each half term. An example of a half termly assessment can be found in Appendix E: Assessment.

S – STRUCTURE

Children benefit from a **consistent** and **familiar** structure to a Phonics session. All sessions should start in the same way: "Let's practise the sounds that we already know".

Examples of weekly plans for Reception and Year 1 can be found in

Appendix F: Weekly

Plans. A long-term plan for Phonics in Reception can be found in Appendix F: Pace and Progression.

E - EARLY INTERVENTION

It is important that all children, regardless of their ability, have access to **high-quality** Phonics sessions. Every child should have the opportunity to participate in a Phonics lesson that is pitched at **Age Related Expectations** (ARE). Even if there are obvious gaps in a child's Phonics knowledge and understanding, they should be exposed to the letters and sounds at their expected Phonics phase.

Half Termly Assessments will enable teachers to identify children that are working below expectations for the current Phonics phase. It is important to 'catch' these children early. They need a focussed Phonics intervention.

Appendix A: Pronunciation Guide

'Systematic Synthetic Phonics Independent Study Document' Produced by Newman University in Birmingham. http://www.newman.ac.uk/school-experience/2083/general-documentsfor-primary-se

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					Stop	conson	ant pho	nemes					
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(as day	(as ii ay	(as in ee as in ((as ir a cat) igh as in	n dog)	It is h sound (as in Vowe bed)	narder to ds. They g n gate) els : sho (as in	get rid (are voice (as in ort i sit)	of the 'ul ed sound j jam)	is (as i	w n wig) (as in	(as u sun)	y in yet)	oi as in oin)

Appendix B: Key Resources

Here is the **Basic Code**.

These are the letters and sounds from Phases 2 and 3.

Aa Bb Co	Dd <mark>Ee</mark> Ff	Gf Hh <mark>Ii</mark>	Jj Kk Ll Mr	n Nn <mark>Οσ</mark> β	Դբ Qq/Rr	Ss Tt Uu	Vv Ww Xx	, Yy, Zz
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Here is the Advanced Code.

It can be found on the back of the Basic Code. These are the letters and sounds that are taught in Year 1 and 2.

Ag. Bb.Co	Dd Fe Fl	Gl Hh Ii	Jj Kk Ll Mr	n. Nn. Οσ [Pn. Qa. Rr	Ss Tt Un	VVr WWr XX	6 Yu. 7z
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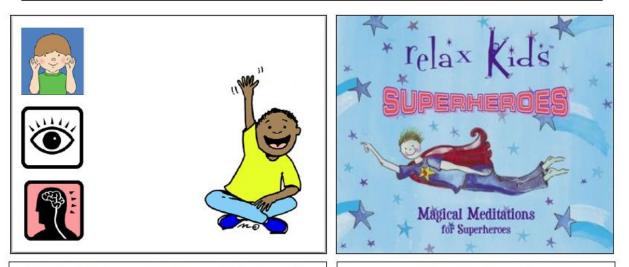
Here is a **Working Wall** in a Reception classroom.

It is November. Only some of the letters and sounds are displayed. The first sound that I taught was /s/. The last sound that I taught was /r/.

There are 3 different ways of making the /c/ sound: /c/, 'k' and 'ck'. The graphemes are displayed on the **same** flashcard.



Appendix C: High Expectations



Visual prompt for behaviour and listening skills

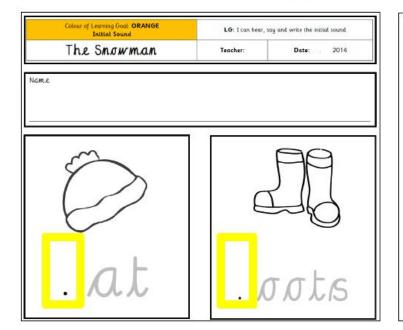
Colour of Learning Goal: PINK Sequencing, Sorting and Matching

Name

One Mole Digging a Hole

det for his head

Relaxation Resource



LG: I can match

Spaces have been left for the children to record the initial sound. The children would be expected to hear and say the initial sound. They would be expected to refer to their Basic Code and record the letter shape on the sound button. Can you trace over the rest of the letter shapes?

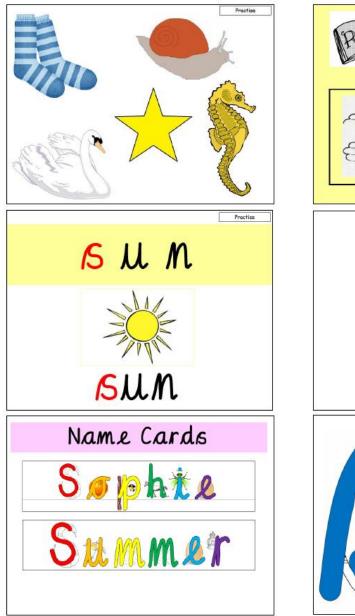
I noticed that Sophie had put a big circle for the 'i' in her name. I colour-coded the top of the letter shape. This is so that Sophie would know the **specific** part that she needed to improve.

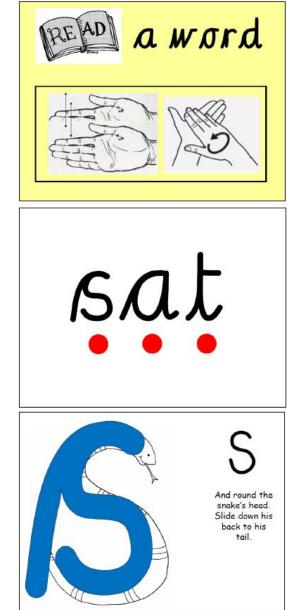
GREEN means 'Green for Grow'. My children say that this means: "Try again!"

I said the rhyme, demonstrated the correct formation in an orange felt-tip and said: "Can you trace over my letter shape? Can you have a go by yourself?" Sophie had improved that specific part and put a "dot for [the insect's] head".

PINK means 'Tickled Pink'. My children say that this means: "Well done!"

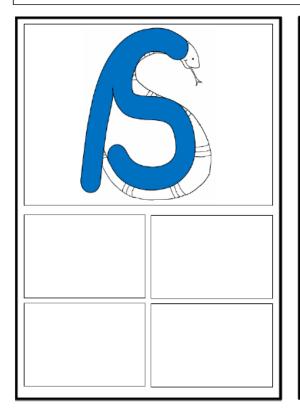


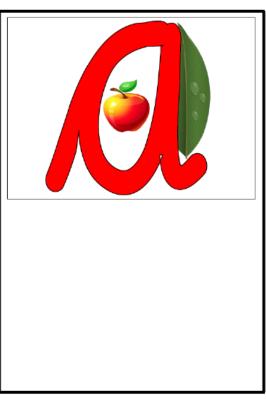


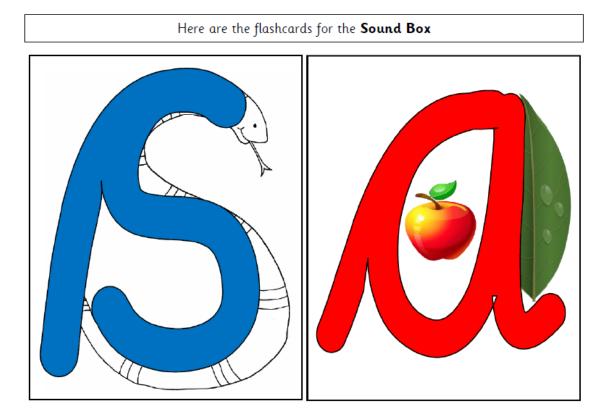


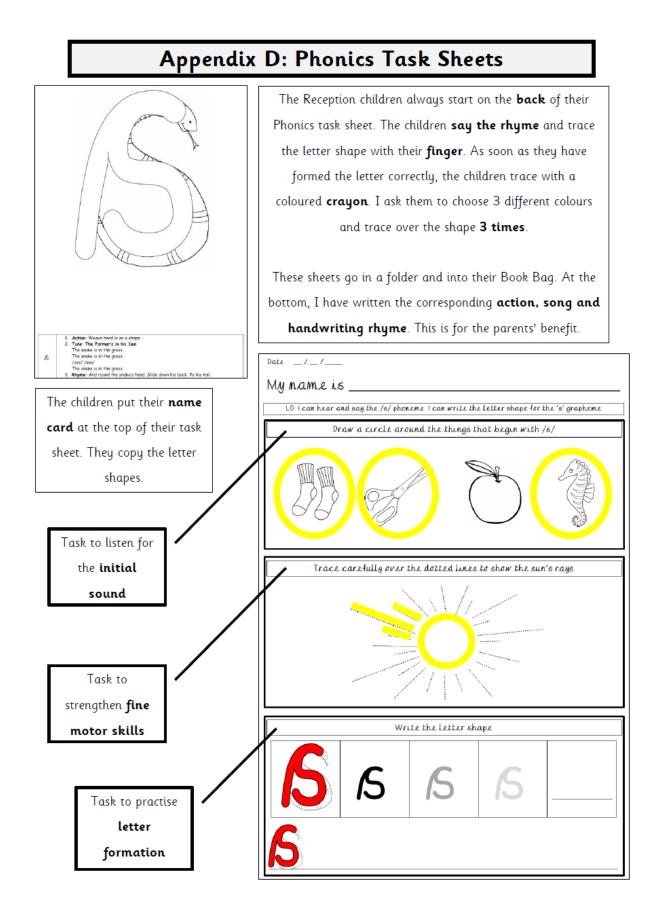
Appendix D: Flashcards

Here are the flashcards for the **Working Wall**











Teachers must use a consistent font for all Phonics resources. From Reception to Year 6,

we teach cursive handwriting.

Appendix D: Name Cards

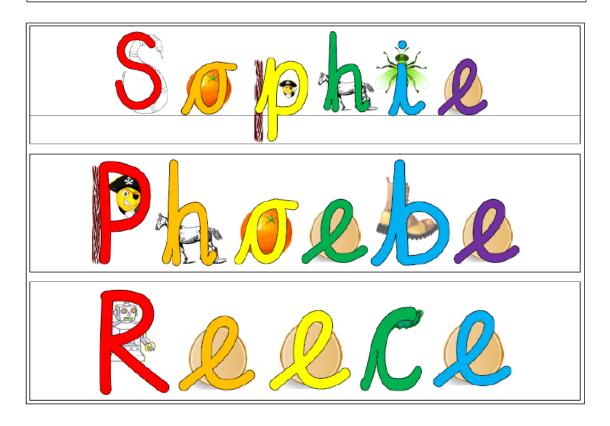
When the children start in Reception, they are given a name card. They use this name card for every Phonics and Literacy task. Each letter corresponds to a handwriting rhyme.

Here is the handwriting rhyme for the /p/ in the middle of Sophie's name:

And down the plait. Up. Over the pirate's face.

Phoebe's name starts with a /f/ sound: 'ph'.

The 'p' is a pirate. The 'h' is a horse. We say that this digraph is a **Pirate Horse**!



Appendix E: Assessment

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	Baseline _ / _ / _ (Total:) Autumn 1 _ / _ / _ (Total:) Autumn 2 _ / _ / _ (Total:) Spring 1 _ / _ / _ (Total:) Spring 2 _ / _ / _ (Total:) Summer 1 _ / _ / _ (Total:) Summer 2 _ / _ / _ (Total:) Summer 2 _ / _ / _ (Total:) Summer 2 _ / _ / _ (Total:)					
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Phase 4	dr fl fr gl gr pl pr sæ sk sm	10				
	en ep et ew tr tw epr etr ehr	٩				
	cy > Reading > 40-60+ months iounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet					

Appendix F:

Рнаѕе	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS DECODABLE TRICKY
PHASE 1 PRE-SCHOOL CONTINUES INTO SR. S1 AND S2 THE OVERARCHING AIM IS FOR CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE REGULAR, PLANNED OPPORTUNITIES TO LISTEN CAREFULLY AND TALK EXTENSIVELY ABOUT WHAT THEY SEE, HEAR AND DO.	THIS PHASE IS SPLIT INTO 7 ASPECTS THAT ARE EXPLORED AND DEVELOPED THROUGH GAMES. ASPECT 1: GENERAL SOUND DISCRIMINATION - ENVIRONMENTAL SOUNDS ASPECT 2: GENERAL SOUND DISCRIMINATION - INSTRUMENTAL SOUNDS ASPECT 3: GENERAL SOUND DISCRIMINATION - BODY PERCUSSION ASPECT 4: RHYTHM AND RHYME ASPECT 5: ALLITERATION ASPECT 5: ALLITERATION ASPECT 6: VOICE SOUNDS ASPECT 7: ORAL BLENDING AND SEGMENTING	N/A
PHASE 2 Reception (up to 6 weeks) The purpose of this phase is to teach at least 19 letters and move children on from oral blending and segmentation to blending and segmenting with letters. • Read and spell VC and CVC words • Read two-syllable words and simple captions	SIMPLE GRAPHEMES FOR PHONEMES SET 1: /s/ /A/ /T/ /P/ SET 2: /I/ /N/ /M/ /D/ SET 3: /G/ /O/ /C/ /C/ AS 'K' SET 3: /G/ /O/ /C/ /C/ AS 'K' SET 4: /C/ AS 'CK' /E/ /U/ /R/ SET 5: /H/ /B/ /F/ /F/ AS 'FF' /L/ /L/ AS 'LL' /S/ AS 'SS'	A AN AS AT IF IN IS IT OF OFF ON CAN DAD HAD BACK AND GET BIG HIM HIS NOT GOT UP MUM BUT THE TO I NO GO INTO

PHASE 3	REMAINING PHONEMES	
RECEPTION (UP TO 12 WEEKS) THE PURPOSE OF THIS PHASE IS TO TEACH ANOTHER 25 GRAPHEMES SO THAT THE CHILDREN CAN REPRESENT EACH OF THE PHONEMES WITH A GRAPHEME. • READ AND SPELL CVC WORDS WITH DIGRAPHS AND TRIGRAPHS • READ AND SPELL SIMPLE SENTENCES	SET 6: /J/ /V/ /W/ /X/ SET 7: /Y/ /Z/ /Z/ AS 'ZZ' /QU/ CONSONANT DIGRAPHS: /CH/ /SH/ SOFT /TH/ HARD /TH/ /NG/ VOWEL DIGRAPHS: /AI/ /EE/ /OA/ LONG /OO/ SHORT /OO/ /AR/ /OR/ /UR/ /OW/ /OI/ SCHWA /ER/ VOWEL TRIGRAPHS: /IGH/ /EAR/ /AIR/ /URE/	WILL THAT THIS THEN THEM WITH SEE FOR NOW DOWN LOOK TOO HE SHE WE ME BE WAS YOU THEY ALL ARE MY HER
PHASE 4 RECEPTION (UP TO 6 WEEKS) THE PURPOSE OF THIS PHASE IS TO CONSOLIDATE CHILDREN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GRAPHEMES. • READ AND SPELL WORDS WITH ADJACENT CONSONANTS • READ AND SPELL POLYSYLLABIC WORDS	ADJACENT CONSONANTS SIMPLE CVCC: _FT _LD _LF _LK _LP _LT _MP _ND _NK _NT _SK _ST _CT _PT _XT MORE CVCC: CONSONANT DIGRAPH VOWEL DIGRAPH POLYSYLLABIC SIMPLE CCVC: BL_ BR_ CL_ CR_ DR_ FL_ FR_ GL_ GR_ PL_ PR_ SC_ SK_ SM_ SN_ SP_ ST_ SW_ TR_ TW_ MORE CCVC: CONSONANT DIGRAPH VOWEL DIGRAPH POLYSYLLABIC CCVCC: BL_ BR_ CL_ CR_ DR_ FL_ FR_ GL_ GR_ PL_ PR_ SC_ SL_ SP_ ST_ SW_ TR_ TW_ SPR_ STR_ SHRNCH POLYSYLLABIC POLYSYLLABIC	WENT IT'S FROM CHILDREN JUST HELP SAID HAVE LIKE SO DO SOME COME WERE THERE LITTLE ONE WHEN OUT WHAT
PHASE 5A	New GRAPHEMES	DON'T OLD T'M BY TIME HOUSE ABOUT YOUR DAY

 YEAR 1 (THROUGHOUT THE YEAR) THE PURPOSE OF THIS PHASE IS FOR CHILDREN TO BROADEN THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF GRAPHEMES AND PHONEMES FOR USE IN READING AND SPELLING. THEY WILL LEARN NEW GRAPHEMES AND ALTERNATIVE PRONUNCIATIONS FOR THE GRAPHEMES THEY ALREADY KNOW. DECODE DIGRAPHS AND TRIGRAPHS QUICKLY (HOOSE APPROPRIATE GRAPHEMES TO REPRESENT PHONEMES BUILD WORD-SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE SPELLINGS OF WORDS 	MORE CONSONANT GRAPHEMES:/W/ AS 'WH' /F/ AS 'PH' MORE VOWEL GRAPHEMES: /AI/ AS 'AY' /EE/ AS 'EA' /EE/ AS 'EY' /IGH/ AS 'IE' /OA/ AS 'OE' LONG /OO/ AS 'UE' LONG (Y)/OO/ AS 'UE' LONG /OO/ AS 'EW' LONG (Y)/OO/ AS 'EW' /OR/ AS 'AW' /OR/ AS 'AU' /OR/ AS 'AUGH' /OW/ AS 'OU' /OI/ AS 'OY' /UR/ AS 'IR' SPLIT DIGRAPHS: /AI/ AS 'A_E' /EE/ AS 'E_E' /IGH/ AS I_E /OA/ AS O_E LONG /OO/ AS 'U_E' LONG (Y)/OO/ AS 'U_E'	MADE CAME MAKE HERE SAW VERY PUT OH THEIR PEOPLE MR MRS LOOKED CALLED ASKED COULD
Phase 5b Year 1 (throughout the year)	ALTERNATIVE PRONUNCIATIONS FOR KNOWN GRAPHEMES OTHER SOUNDS FOR VOWEL GRAPHEMES: A - /AI/ AS 'A' /AR/ AS 'A' /O/ AS 'A' E - /EE/ AS 'E' I - /IGH/ AS 'T' O - /OA/ AS 'O' U - SHORT /OO/ AS 'U' JONG /OO/ AS 'U' JONG (Y)/OO/ AS 'U' Y - /EE/ AS 'Y' /IGH/ AS 'Y' /I/ AS 'Y' EA - /E/ AS 'EA' EY - /AI/ AS 'EY' IE - /EE/ AS 'IE' OW - /OA/ AS 'OW' OU - JONG /OO/ AS 'OU' /OA/ AS 'OU' ER - /UR/ AS 'ER' OTHER SOUNDS FOR CONSONANT GRAPHEMES: F - /F/ AS 'GH'	

	SOFT C - /s/ As 'C' SOFT G - /J/ As 'G' CH - /C/ As 'CH' /SH/ AS 'CH'
РНАЅЕ 5С УEAR 1 (THROUGHOUT THE YEAR)	ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS FOR PHONEMES OTHER SPELLINGS FOR VOWEL PHONEMES: /AI/ AS 'EIGH' SHORT /OO/ AS 'OUL' /U/ AS 'O' /AIR/ AS 'ERE' /AIR/ AS 'EAR' /AIR/ AS 'EAR' /AIR/ AS 'ARE' /AR/ AS 'AL' /EAR/ AS 'ERE' /EAR/ AS 'EER' /OR/ AS 'AL' /OR/ AS 'OUR' /UR/ AS 'EAR' /UR/ AS 'OR' OTHER SPELLINGS FOR CONSONANT PHONEMES: /J/ AS 'DGE' /M/ AS 'MB' /N/ AS 'GN' /N/ AS 'KN' /R/ AS 'WR' /S/ AS 'ST' /S/ AS 'SE' /Z/ AS 'SE' /CH/ AS 'TCH' /SH/ AS 'CI' /SH/ AS 'TI' /SH/ AS 'S' /SH/ AS 'SSI' NEW PHONEME: /ZH/ AS 'S'

 PHASE 6 Year 2 (throughout the year) By the beginning of Phase Six, children should know most of the common GPCs. They should be able to read hundreds of words, doing this in three ways: Reading the words automatically if they are very familiar Decoding them quickly and silently because their sounding and blending routine is now well established Decoding them aloud 	DOUBLE (ONSONANTS: /T/ AS 'TT' /P/ AS 'MM' /D/ AS 'DD' /G/ AS 'GG' /R/ AS 'RI SUFFIXES: -S -ES -ING -ED -FUL MENT -NESS -Y	R' /B/ AS 'BB'
EXTENSION THESE ARE THE SPELLING PATTERNS FOR THE CHILDREN THAT ARE CONFIDENT AND READY TO MOVE ON.	/B/ AS 'BU' /C/ AS 'QU' /C/ AS 'QUE' /G/ AS 'GH' /G/ AS 'GU' /G/ AS 'GUE' /H/ AS 'WH' /M/ AS 'WH' /M/ AS 'MN' /R/ AS 'RH' /S/ AS 'SC' /S/ AS 'SC' /V/ AS 'VE' /W/ AS 'U' /Z/ AS 'ZE' /CH/ AS 'TURE' /SH/ AS 'SCT'	/U/ AS 'OU' /U/ AS 'OUGH' /U/ AS 'OUR' /U/ AS 'RE' /AI/ AS 'AE' /AI/ AS 'EA' /AI/ AS 'EI' /OA/ AS 'OUGH' /OA/ AS 'EAU' LONG /OO/ AS 'O' LONG /OO/ AS 'OUGH' LONG /OO/ AS 'UI' LONG (Y)/OO/ AS 'EU' /OW/ AS 'OUGH' /OR/ AS 'OAR' /OR/ AS 'OOR' /OR/ AS 'OUGH'

/NGK/ AS 'NK' /ZH/ AS 'GE' /ZH/ AS 'SI'	/OR/ AS 'AR' /OR/ AS 'A' /OR/ AS 'ORE' /EAR/ AS 'IER' ALTERNATIVES FOR THE SCHWA PHONEME	
--	--	--