Meole Brace
C of E Primary School and Nursery

Let Your Light Shine!

Community Respect Perseverance

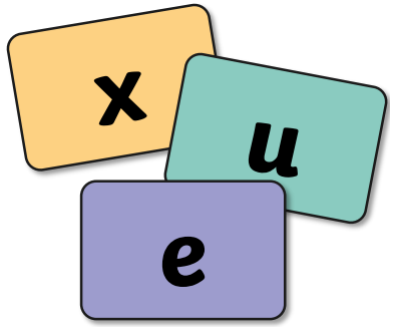
Early Reading and Phonics
EYFS

Parent and Carer Workshop

September 2026

Bug Club Phonics

Phonics



Did you know that the English language has:

26 letters

44 sounds

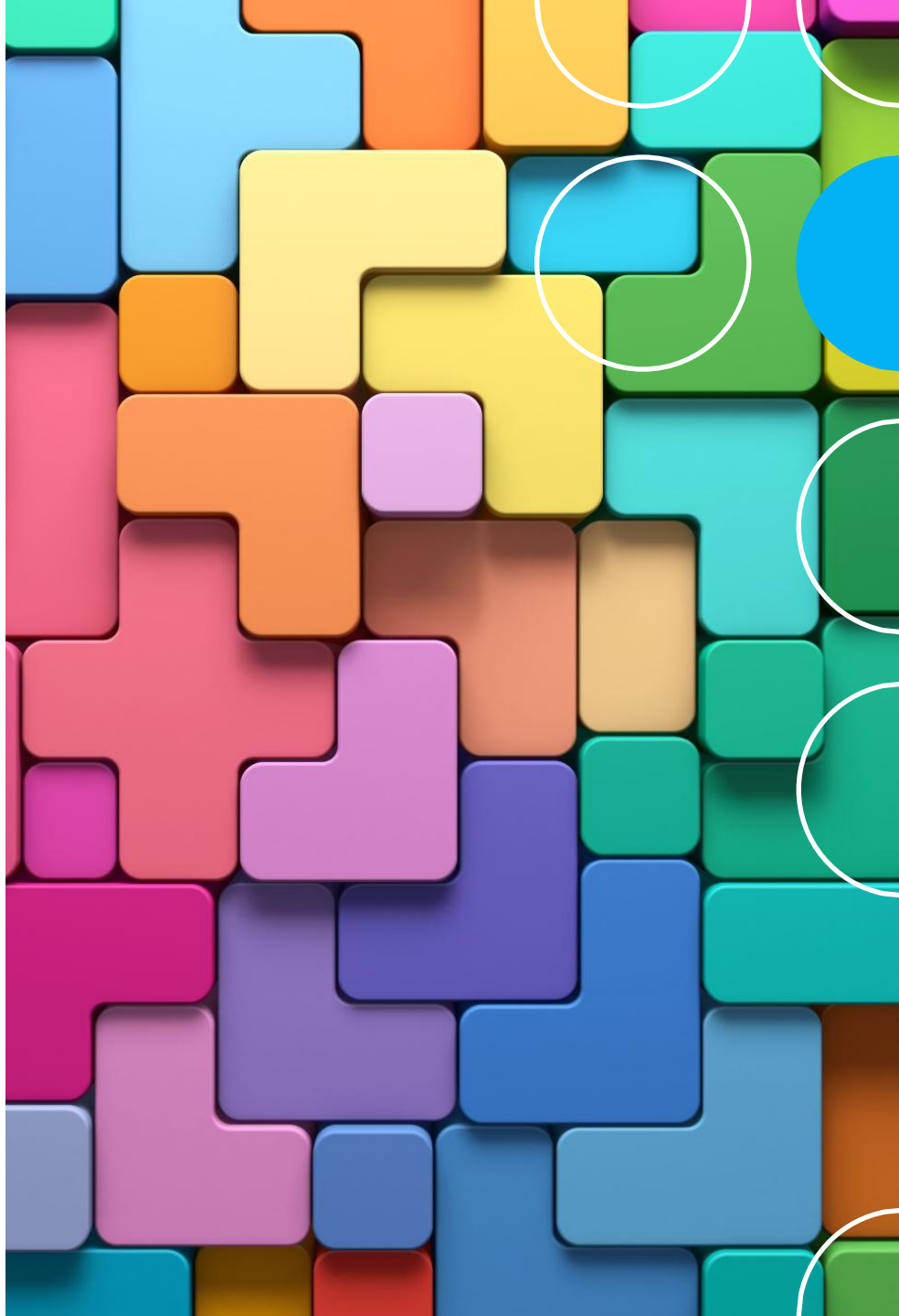
and over 100 ways of spelling these sounds!

Phonics is how we make sense of all of these.

Systematic Synthetic Phonics - the teaching of reading and spelling by breaking down words into the smallest unit of sound.

Bug Club

It's all about hearing, recognising and using sounds enabling us to break down and build up words (segmenting and blending).



Reading and Phonics at Meole Brace



The teaching of phonics and reading will take place every day in Reception.

Our phonics teaching follows the DfE approved Bug Club scheme. This scheme entails daily sessions within which we will teach the children a new phoneme, practise applying it in reading and writing and explore how to form letters correctly.

We teach Pure Phonics for reading which means we teach the children to say the sounds letters make. Alongside, we will teach children the letter names.

As well as learning the different sounds (phonemes) across the phases of Bug Club, the children will also learn High Frequency Words, such as 'dad, mum, but' and Irregular Tricky Words, such as 'they, the, all.'

Phonics

All words are reducible to units of sounds called '**phonemes**' which we write down using letters or small groups of letters called '**graphemes**'.

You can have:

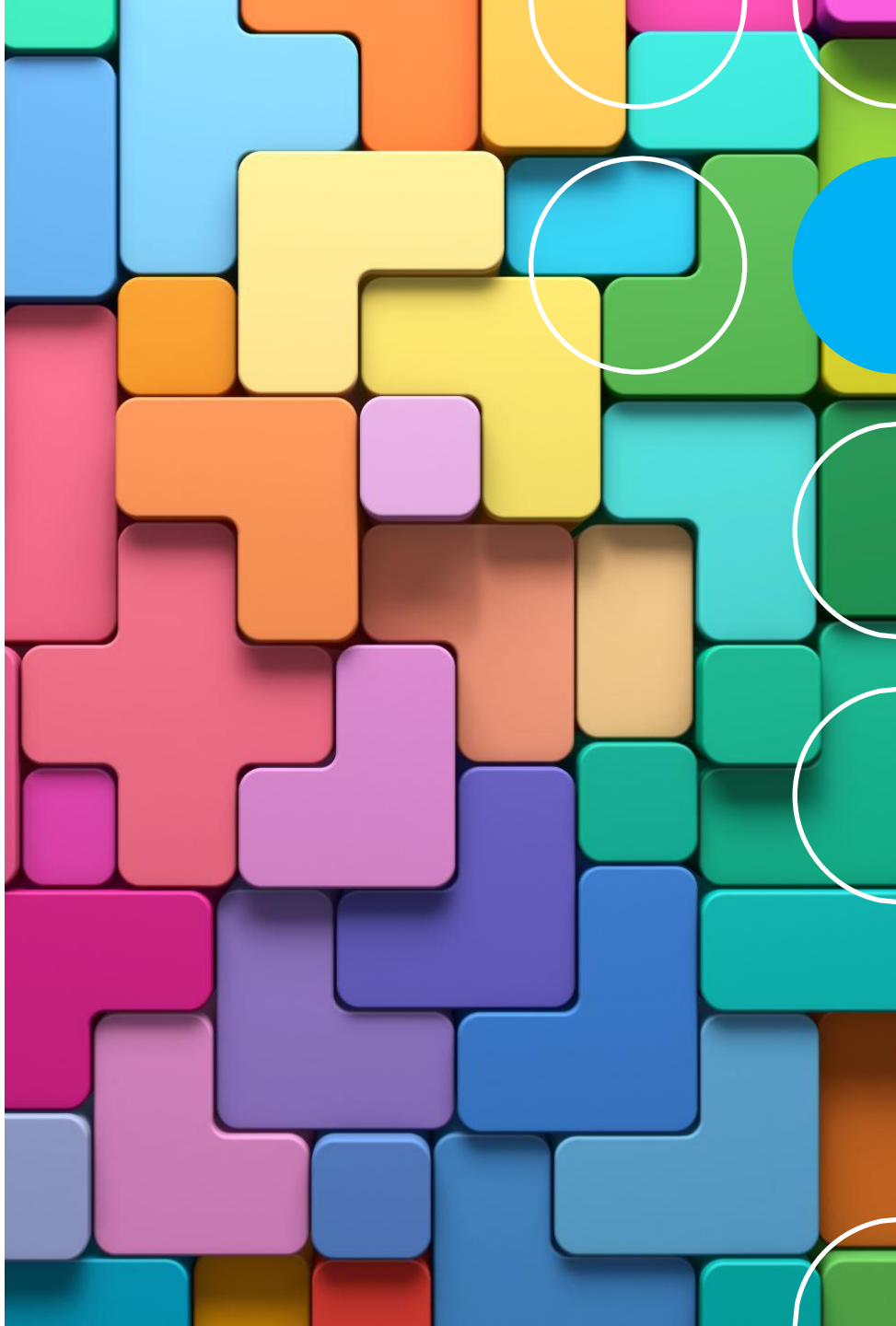
Single letter sounds such as; s, a, t

Digraphs such as; ch, sh, ai

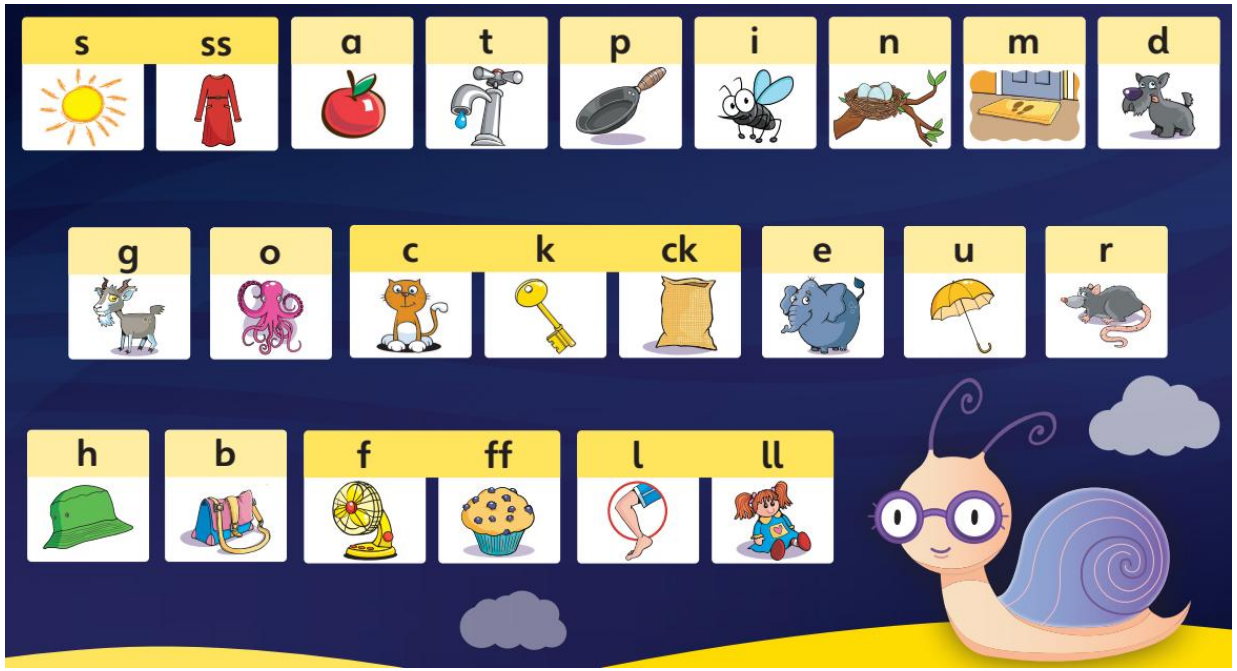
Trigraphs such as; igh, air, ear

These are the building blocks for reading and writing and your children will start by learning single letter sounds at the start of Phase 2, before being introduced to digraphs and trigraphs as they move through the phases.

Phase 1	rhymes, sounds in the environment.	Nursery
Phase 2	alphabet sounds s, a, t, p, i, n	Reception
Phase 3	looking at double/triple letter sounds (digraphs/trigraphs) ch, sh, igh	Reception
Phase 4	cvcc and ccvc words flap, jump	Reception
Phase 5	alternative spellings - ay, ai, a-e	Year 1
Phase 6	refining skills, developing accuracy and fluency and learning rules	Year 2



Phase 2



Unit 1: s, a, t, p
Unit 2: i, n, m, d
Unit 3: g, o, c, k
Unit 4: ck, e, u, r
Unit 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

Pure sounds meaning we pronounce each letter sound clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end.

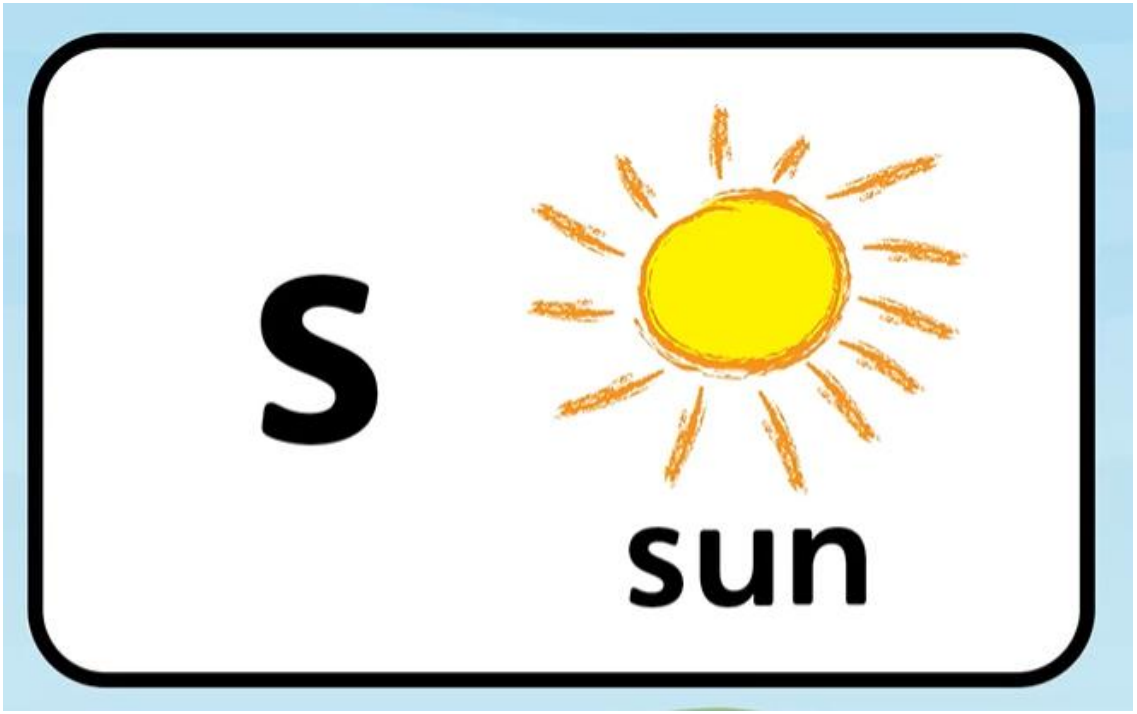
Phoneme
The smallest unit of sound in a word. The sound a letter or group of letters makes. You hear a phoneme.

Grapheme
Letter(s) representing a phoneme. How you write the sound down. You can see a grapheme

Single letter sounds such as; s, a, t

Digraphs
Two letters making one phoneme (sound) such as; ch, sh, ai. In phase 2 these are our friendly letters - ll, ck, ss, ff, zz.

Actions and pictures to aide recall





Demonstration videos of how to say each phoneme and of the action and image which corresponds to each one are available on the 'Supporting Your Child at Home' page in the English Curriculum section of our school website.
https://www.meolebraceceprimary.co.uk/page/supporting-your-child-at-home/57774

How do we use our phonics to help us learn to read and spell?

After learning their first few sounds, your children will be ready to start using these to help them segment to spell and blend to read.





hat

pot

Segmenting

- Identifying and splitting a word up into individual sounds

Blending

- Combining the individual sounds we can hear together to make a word



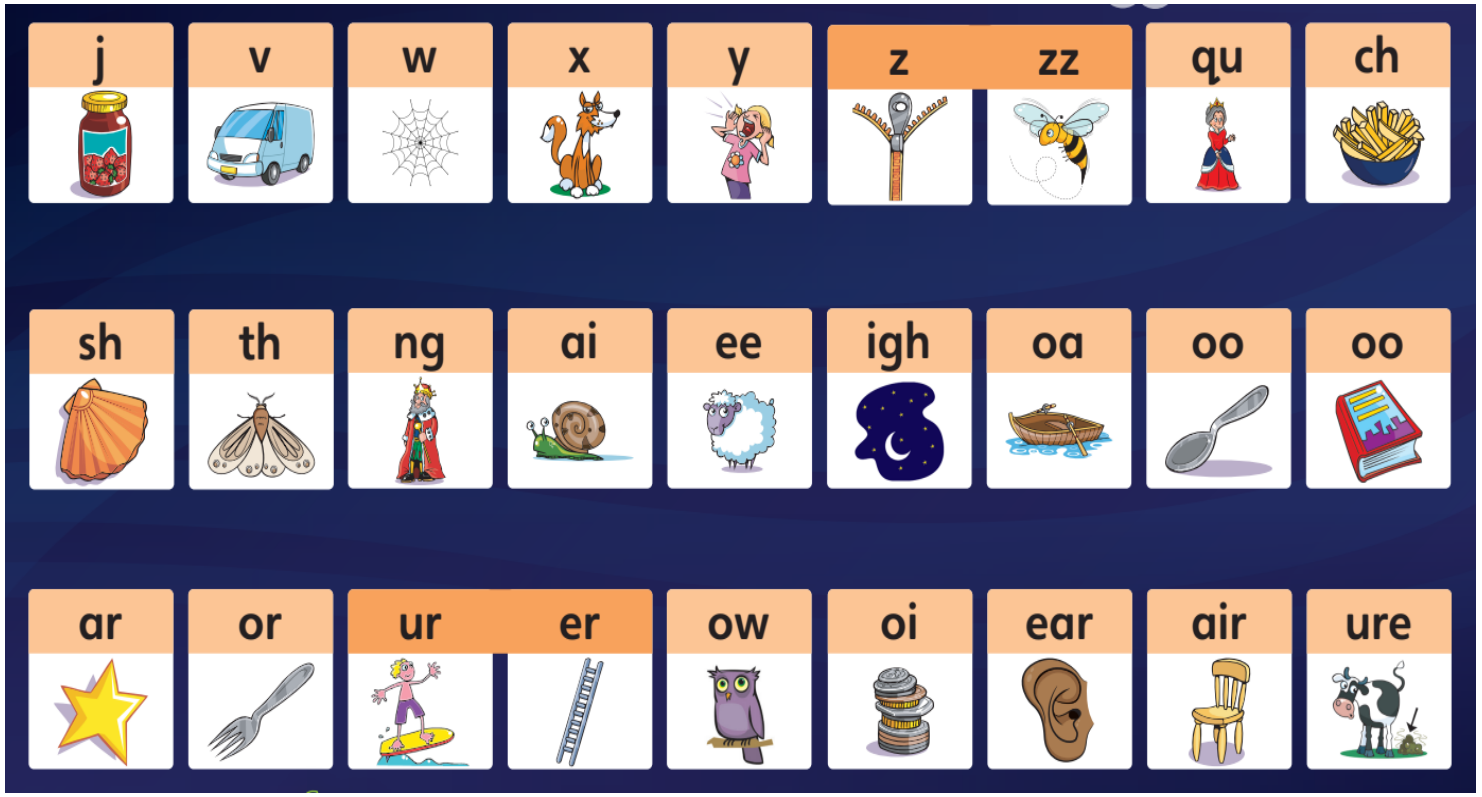


b	a	t

Strategies

- Sound talking - robot talk, arm, sound fingers, Switch-It fingers
- Sound buttons
- Phoneme frames

Phase 3



Unit 6: j, v, w, x
Unit 7: y, z, zz, qu
Unit 8: ch, sh, th, ng
Unit 9: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo
Unit 10: ar, or, ur, ow, oi
Unit 11: ear, air, ure, er

Digraphs

2 letters which make one phoneme (sound)

Friendly letters - zz

Common digraphs sh, ch, th, ng

Vowel digraph - contains at least 1 vowel ar, or, ur, ow

Long vowel digraphs - Two vowels which together make the vowel letter name - ai, ee, ie, oa, oo

Trigraphs

3 letters which make 1 phoneme (sound) - igh, air, ear, ure

Not as common

Segmenting and Blending Digraphs and Trigraphs
Sound buttons and tiles

goat night stop spear

ch	i	ck

s	l	ee	p

bell boat flip

shell jumper

Phase 4

When children start Phase 4 they will know a grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes. They will be able to blend phonemes to read CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words, and segment in order to spell them.

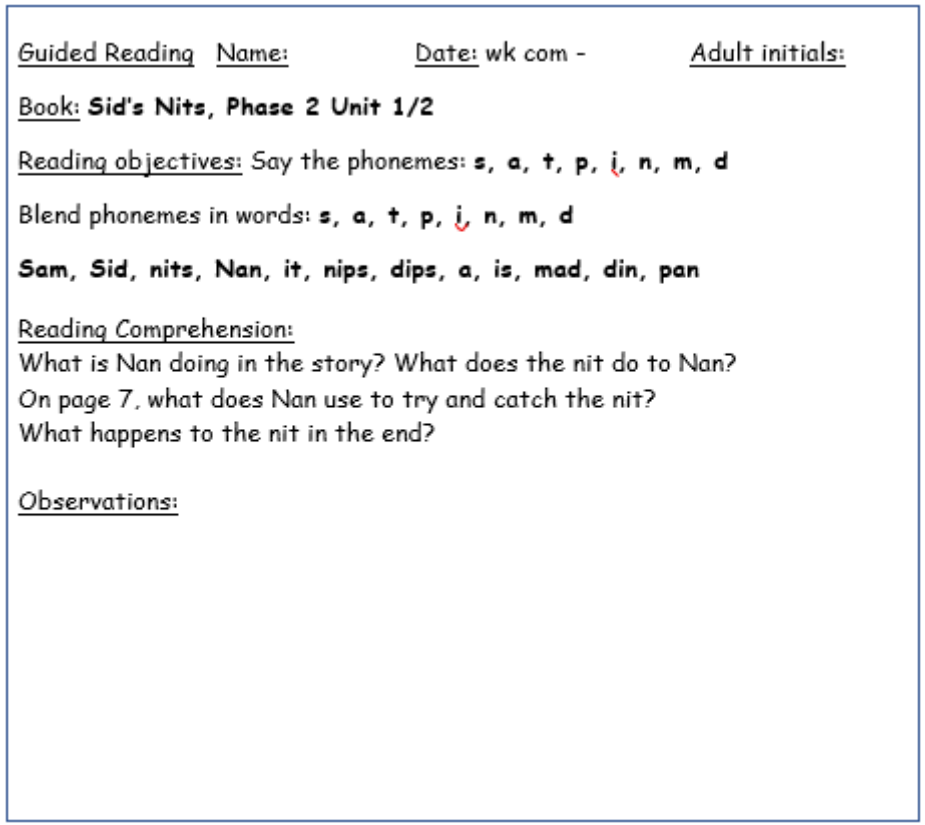
Children will also have begun reading straightforward two-syllable words and simple captions, as well as reading and spelling some tricky words.

In Phase 4, no new graphemes are introduced. The main aim of this phase is to consolidate the children's knowledge and to help them learn to read and spell words which have adjacent consonants, such as **trap**, **string** and **milk**

tent flap cramp float sprout

Reading in Reception

- Your child will have group Guided Reading and/or an individual reading session in school, led by the Class Teacher or the Teaching Assistant. These session take place every day for different groups of children so we ask that Reading Diaries and books are in school every day ready for us to use whenever we might need them.
- Reading books will be changed once a week on a Friday and are carefully matched to the sounds your child will have been learning in school in phonics.
- We will have one session each week in our school library (Starfish Tuesday, Seahorses Friday) where your child will be able to select a book to bring home to share. A new one can be chosen each week when the old one is returned.



Guided Reading Name: Date: wk com - Adult initials:

Book: **Sid's Nits, Phase 2 Unit 1/2**

Reading objectives: Say the phonemes: **s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d**

Blend phonemes in words: **s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d**

Sam, Sid, nits, Nan, it, nips, dips, a, is, mad, din, pan

Reading Comprehension:
What is Nan doing in the story? What does the nit do to Nan?
On page 7, what does Nan use to try and catch the nit?
What happens to the nit in the end?

Observations:

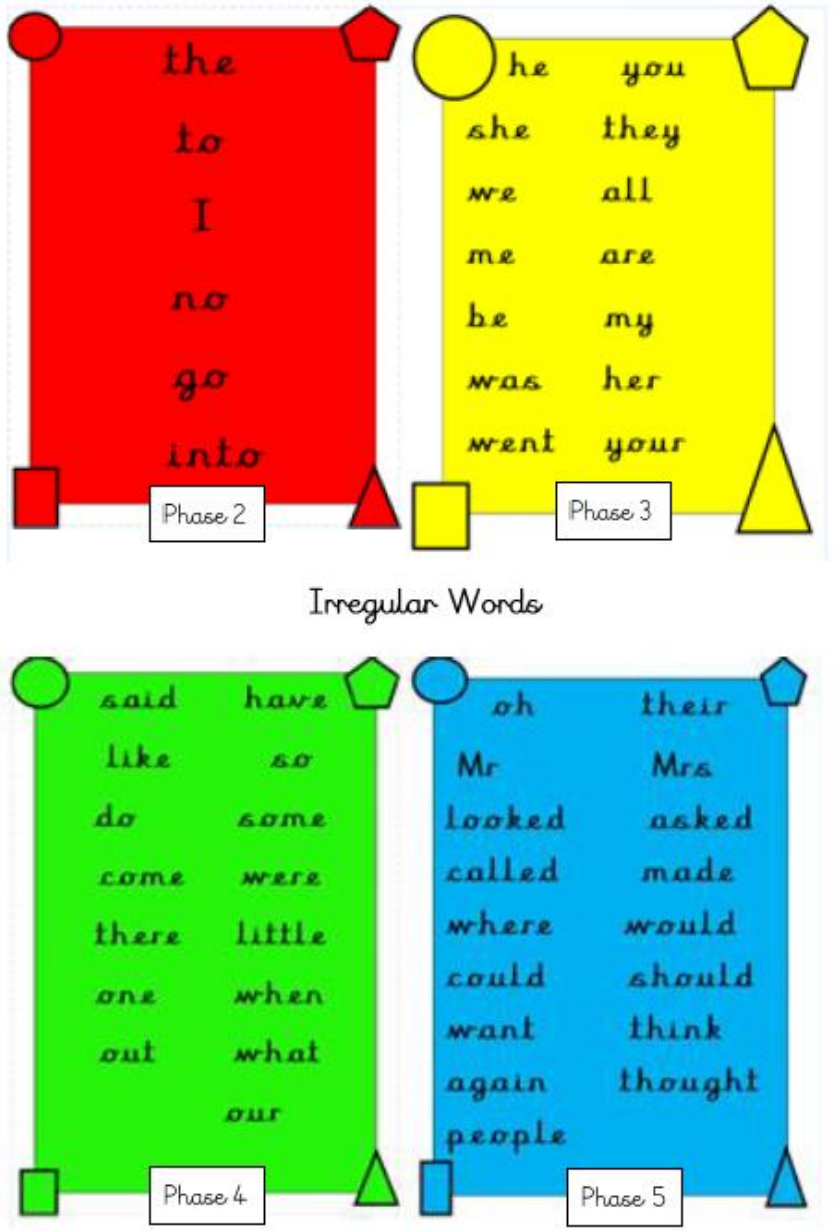
Words we have to learn

Tricky/irregular words (shape words)
Common exception words

- You can't sound them out - you just have to learn them!
- Daily practice

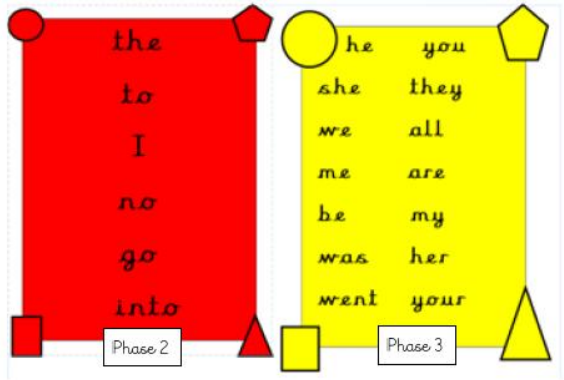
Strategies:

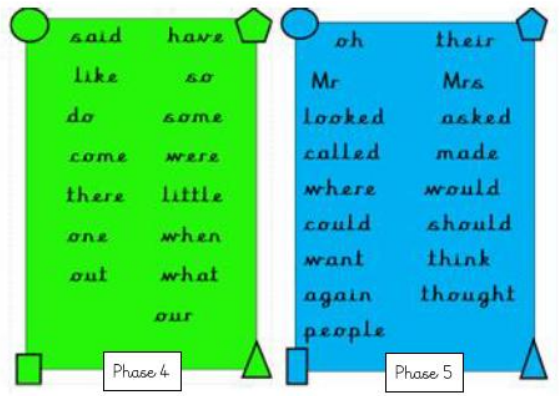
- funny voices
- take a photo
- flashcards (repeat after an adult)
- games - run to a word, write them in paint, flour, shaving foam etc

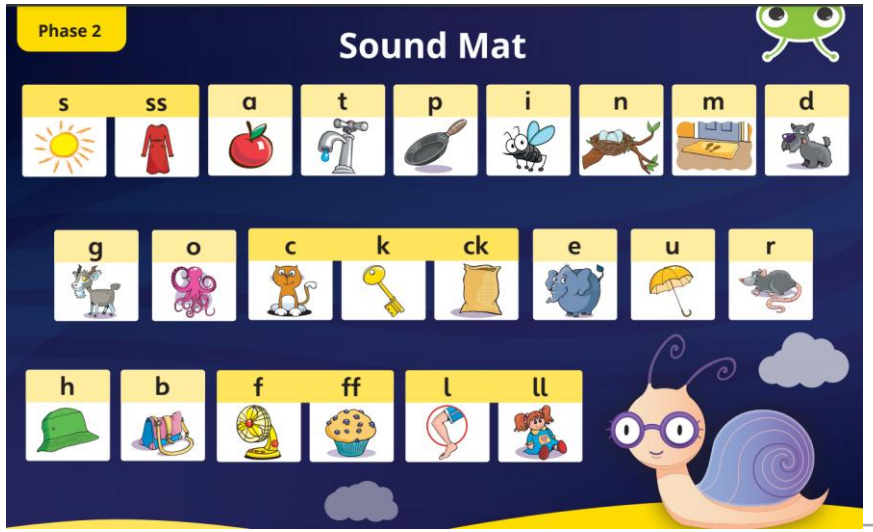


Resources to support recall













All of these resources are available to download on the **'Supporting Your Child at Home'** page in the English Curriculum section of our school website.

How can you help at home?



Research has shown that, once social and economic factors are removed, parental engagement has a more significant impact on attainment than almost everything else.
The younger a child is, the stronger the impact. At age 5 it is some 5 x greater than the impact of school.

Please make a note in Reading Diaries to show whenever you have shared a book with your child at home so we know we can change the book.

Reading books will be changed once a week on a Friday and are carefully matched to the sounds your child will have been learning in school in phonics.

Explore the inside covers of their reading books for an outline of the sounds each book covers, some practice words to segment and blend and some possible questions for you to ask about the story you have shared.

Little and often is the best way to help your children whilst they are learning to read. Even as little as 5 minutes at a time, encouraging them to read to you or you sharing a story with them will have a massive impact on their ability to read.



Using Bug Club at Home

Bug Club provides carefully graded reading books and eBooks. Every week your child will bring home a physical book from school, ready for them to share and read with you at home. They will also have access to a teacher allocated range of online eBooks which will link tightly to the phonemes they have been learning and practising in school.

Bug Club Phonics

Have a look at our handy Bug Club User Guide to help you get the most out of reading Bug Club books and exploring the Bug Club Online World at home.

Using the printed books

•Every week, your child will come home with a book closely linked to the sounds they have been working on in school.

•Inside every printed book there are notes to help you make the most of reading with your child.

How can you help at home?



Getting involved with reading

The reader

Until they are fluent readers, younger children will benefit from reading aloud to you as often as possible. By the time they are in Years 5 or 6, many children prefer to read silently to themselves. Create quiet opportunities for them to do so, but make sure you build in opportunities to talk to them about the book they are reading.

Before reading: look at the book cover and talk about your child's expectations. Is the book likely to be fiction or non-fiction? Have you read other books together about these characters or by this author? What does your child think the book is going to be about?

While reading: support your child when unknown words need tackling: you can sound them out, split them into syllables, or identify suffixes and prefixes. Remind your child to listen to the words while reading them, to make sure that they make sense. Have a 'meaning check' every now and again to ensure that your child understands the text.

After reading: talk about the book. What was it about? Did it match your child's expectations? Ask questions beginning with the words how and why to check that your child has been able to read between the lines. Ask whether anything seemed puzzling. Then ask your child to explain what they did or didn't like and why.

How can you help at home?



Provide opportunities for reading and writing at home.

Play games.

Share your own love of books and words.

Make it fun - it doesn't have to be a chore.



Think about the building blocks - it doesn't always have to be reading a book.

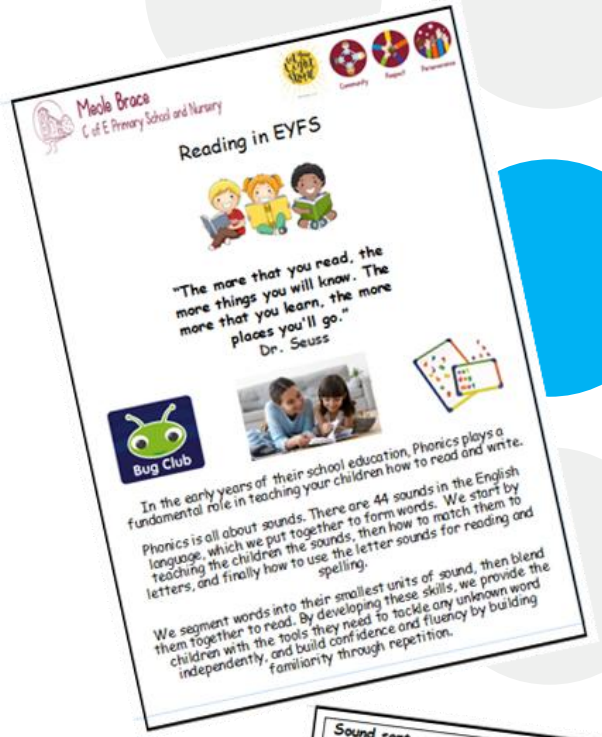
Repetition leads to fluency.



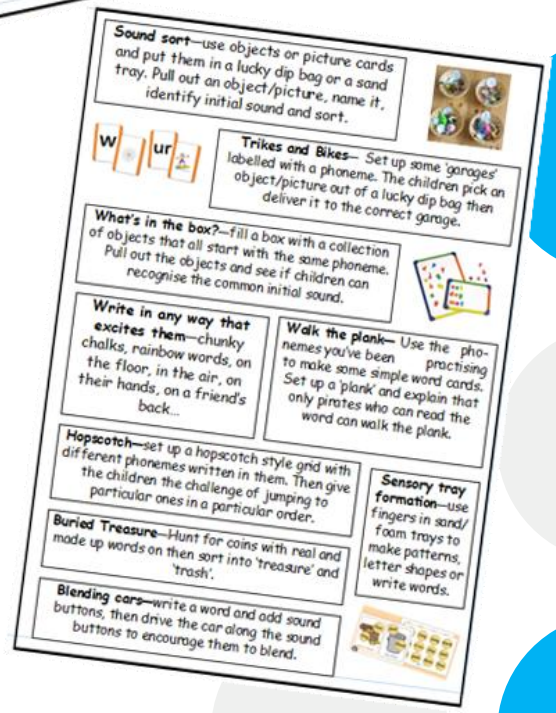
Actions, songs and rhymes aide memory.

Give your children a model to follow.









Reading Rewards

Reception Reading Reward

How many Reading Rewards can you collect? Read your book at home at least once a week to earn a sticker for your chart. Fill your chart and collect a prize.

Meole Brace
C of E Primary School and Nursery



Recommended Reads



Brilliant books to share with your children

