

Phonics Glossary: *to ensure consistency across the academy*

Phoneme

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. For example, the word 'cat' has three phonemes, 'c', 'a', 't'.

When we are writing something down, phonemes are represented by graphemes.

Grapheme

A grapheme is the written symbol of a phoneme. It is a letter, or group of letters, representing a sound. For example, the 'c' sound (or phoneme) can be written using the 'c', 'k' or 'ck' graphemes.

A grapheme may consist of one, two, three or four letters.

There is always the same number of graphemes in a word as phonemes.

Use Letter Names... from the start

The Early Learning Goals expect letter names to be known by the end of the Foundation Stage. Therefore we need to teach using letter names at all times.

In phonics, letter names are essential for children starting to learn digraphs and trigraphs to provide the correct vocabulary needed to refer to the letters making up the grapheme. It is misleading to refer to the grapheme 'ai' as /a/-/i/.

Blending

Blending consists of building words from their smallest units of sound (phonemes) to read.

Blending is the opposite of segmenting.

Segmenting

Segmenting consists of breaking words down into their smallest units of sound (phonemes) to spell.

Segmenting is the opposite of blending

Digraph

A digraph is a two-letter grapheme where two letters represent one phoneme such as 'ea' in seat and 'sh' in ship.

Trigraph

A trigraph is a three-letter grapheme where three letters represent one phoneme. For example, 'igh' in 'light'.

Split Digraph

A split digraph is where another letter comes in between the two graphemes of a single phoneme/sound, for example, the 'K' in 'make' separates the digraph /ae/, creating split digraph /a_e/.

Vowels and Consonants

Teach the letters of the alphabet referring to them as vowels or consonants. Five of the 26 alphabet letters are vowels: A, E, I, O, and U. The letter Y is sometimes considered a sixth vowel because it can sound like other vowels. Unlike consonants, each of the vowel letters can make more than one phoneme, some can even be silent.

Phonics

Children in F2, Y1 and Y2 should have a 15-20 minute phonics session every day. This session should be **fast, fun and multisensory**. Each session will follow a clear sequence as follows:

Introduction - The teacher will explain to the children what they will be learning today and get them **enthusiastic and motivated** for the session.

Revisit and review - The children will play a quick-fire game to practise something they have learned before and help build their confidence.

Teach - The children will be taught a new phoneme/grapheme or a new skill - this will be taught in a **fun multisensory** way and may well involve: songs, actions, pictures, puppets, writing giant letters in the air.

Practise - The children play fast, fun games to practise the new thing they have just learned.

Apply - The children will have a quick go at reading or writing sentences that involve the new skill that they have just learned.

Each of these sections lasts a few minutes at most.

Remember!

It is essential to provide opportunities to practise and apply phonic skills **throughout the day** and **in all subjects** when reading and writing. Make sure you know which phonic skills every child is learning this week.

