

Suggested ways to use the My Letters and Sounds Phonics Readers

Reading practice sessions using the **My Letters and Sounds Phonics Readers** will take place outside the daily phonics sessions. These reading sessions are flexible: they could be one-to-one or they could be with small groups of up to six children who are at the same level in their phonics knowledge.

The **Phonics Readers** used in the reading sessions should be matched to children's secure phonics knowledge so they can decode every word using their current knowledge of grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and tricky words. The **Readers Phonics Coverage Charts** in the **Reception Teacher's Handbook** (pp.317–322) and **Year 1 Teacher's Handbook** (pp.347–352) will help you to choose a book that matches the children's current phonics knowledge.

Children will benefit from reading the same **Phonics Reader** a number of times to build fluency (the number of words read automatically) and confidence. It is recommended that there are three reading sessions for a **Phonics Reader**, each with a different focus, but this is an example framework and can be adapted as you wish, depending on the time you have available and the particular needs of the children in your class.

The first reading of a **Phonics Reader** should focus on decoding and applying phonics knowledge to decode the text. The second reading should focus on building up fluency and confidence in reading through reading more words 'at a glance'. The third reading should focus on reading with meaning and expression as well as developing comprehension of the text.

Once the children have read a **Phonics Reader** a number of times with a teacher or trained adult, they can read it to a 'reading buddy' or take the books home to read to their parents or carers. The document **Reading at home: My Letters and Sounds Phonics Readers** is available to download from the **Schofield & Sims** website and explains how parents can help their children to read the **Phonics Readers**.

Example framework for reading practice sessions

First reading session

Before reading

Focus the children's attention on the phonics knowledge needed to read the book. Use the information on the inside front cover to help you. You might:

- ▶ Review graphemes the children need to know to read the book. You could show **Grapheme cards** for the ones you know the children need to consolidate and ask them to say the sounds.
- ▶ Check the children can read the 'tricky words' that appear in the book. In Reception, tricky words are shown in blue inside the books.

- ▶ Use the title of the book, the names of the characters and a few key words from the book to practise blending to read words. Look through the book and point out these words or write them on the whiteboard or create word cards before the session. Ask the children to identify any digraphs or trigraphs, as appropriate, and then ask them to sound and blend the words.
- ▶ Where applicable, ask the children to blend and read the words in the 'Vocabulary check' on the inside cover of the books. Then discuss the meaning of those words.

Ask the children to suggest what the book might be about to help engage them with reading it.

While reading

The children should read the book aloud independently. Remind them to work out any unfamiliar words by sounding and blending them.

When the children are reading in a group, listen to each child read a few pages. Check that each child is using phonics to sound out unfamiliar words and not relying on picture cues, context or guessing from the first letter of the word. If a child is clearly struggling with a word, prompt them to look for digraphs and trigraphs, or help them to sound and blend it correctly. Make a note of the word or GPC that proves to be difficult so you can follow up later.

Use the 'While you are reading' question from the inside front cover of the book to encourage prediction and help the children engage with the text.

After reading

Review how the children did. Comment on how well they used their phonics knowledge and skills to read words, for example, praising how they sounded and blended a particular word. Sound-talk and blend together one or two words that proved difficult.

Second reading session

Before reading

Ask the children to tell you what the book was about (using their memory of the first reading).

Review the children's decoding from the first read with a view to improving automatic word recognition and fluency. You might:

- ▶ Practise sounding and blending a few decodable words from the book that the children found more difficult in the first read, so they can read them accurately this time.
- ▶ Practise reading some decodable high-frequency words from the book (or words used repeatedly in the book) so children can read them straight off, rather than needing to sound them out.
- ▶ Practise reading any tricky words from the book that you noticed the children did not recognise automatically during the first read.

While reading

Model reading the first page from the book with fluency and appropriate intonation and phrasing. Ask the children to follow the words with their finger as you do this. Talk about what you are doing to achieve the 'sound' of fluent reading. For example: reading words automatically where possible; reading in phrases rather than individual words; pausing at the end of sentences; paying attention to the punctuation marks in the text. Demonstrate pausing to sound and blend a word and then going back to the start of a phrase or sentence to check sense and maintain fluency. Ask the children to read the first page as you did, following your example.

The children should continue to read the book aloud and independently. Remind them to read familiar words 'at a glance' to improve their fluency, but to still use phonics as the prime approach to reading unfamiliar words or when they are unsure about a word.

If reading in a group, listen to each child reading a few pages to check they are reading accurately and fluently, and that they are reading more words at a glance. If they stop to decode a word or go back to self-correct when something does not make sense, encourage them to go back to the start of the phrase or sentence to maintain the fluency and sense of what they are reading.

After reading

Review how the children did. Comment on improvements in fluency. For example: words they managed to read without needing to sound and blend; sounding and blending but then returning to the start of a phrase or sentence; good use of punctuation and self-correction.

Third reading session

As long as children can now read the book fluently and accurately, the third reading can focus on reading with expression, developing comprehension and appreciating what they read. (For some children you may still need to focus on building up fluency and confidence in using phonics to read words, as in the second reading session.)

Before reading

- ▶ Discuss the title and recall the main events in the story or the key information given in a non-fiction book.
- ▶ Discuss any particular features such as captions, labels, diagrams in non-fiction texts, or dialogue, familiar patterns or sequences of events in fictional stories.
- ▶ Discuss the meaning of the words in the 'Vocabulary check' on the inside front cover of the book, or other key words that were new to the children. Clarify their meaning in the context of the book.
- ▶ Review any outstanding problems with decoding from the first and second read. For example, practise reading any words from the book where children were still hesitant or slow to decode, identifying digraphs or trigraphs, or reinforcing particular GPCs.

While reading

Model reading a page from the book using appropriate expression to add meaning. Ask the children to follow the words with their finger as you do this. Explain what you are doing and why. For example, you might discuss a character's feelings and how you can use your voice to show this emotion, or you might discuss the significance of an event and how to make it sound exciting. Ask the children to read the same page, independently or in pairs, using appropriate expression as you did.

The children should read the book aloud independently or in pairs to practise reading with fluency and appropriate expression to make the meaning clear. If reading in a group, listen to each child reading a few pages to check fluency, accuracy and reading with meaning and appropriate expression. Remind the children to continue to use their phonics skills if they are stuck on a word. Encourage the children to notice more about what they are reading and about what is happening in the pictures.

Use the 'Comprehension questions' on the inside back cover to check the children's understanding.

After reading

Review how the children did and ask questions about the whole book. For example: What was the best part/the most interesting thing in the book? Why?; Did it remind you of anything? How/Why?; Were there any surprises? What were they?