



Systematic Synthetic Phonics for reading, spelling and writing

Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills

"The online **Phonics International** programme already provides a fully comprehensive range of systematic synthetic phonics material for people internationally to use in a diverse range of circumstances – but not everyone has access, or easy access, to the internet and some people simply prefer working with ready-made materials. Whatever the context, it is the same English alphabetic code knowledge and three core skills for reading, spelling and handwriting that need to be taught and learned. These highly practical, all-in-one 'teaching and learning books' have been provided in a 'ready-made' paper book format in response to many requests over the years from parents, tutors, mainstream teachers, teaching assistants and special needs professionals for learners of all ages with English as a main or additional language. As always, your feedback is most welcome along with any queries about our educational resources." *Debbie Hepplewhite*



Author: Debbie Hepplewhite MBE FRSA

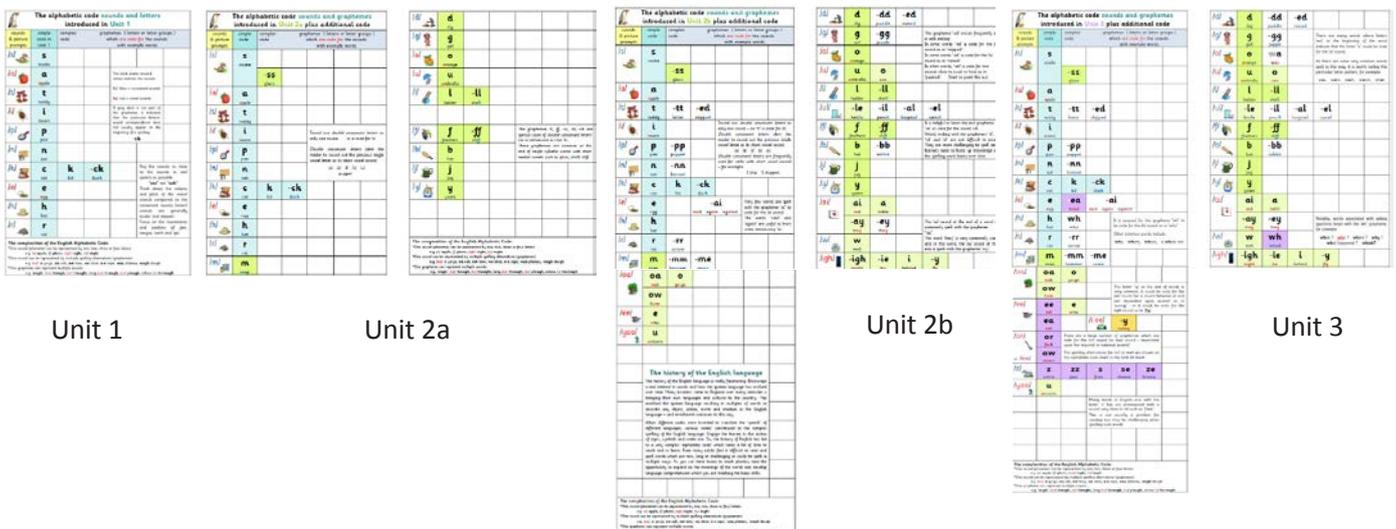
This series of 8 'Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills' books can be used as 'stand alone' books:



Please note that further **Phonics International** and **Early Years Starter Package** online resources can be used to *supplement*, or *complement*, or *extend* the books if required or desired – either viewed online or printed as pdfs.

The 8 'Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills' books are based on the **organisation** (colour-coded 'Units' of work) and **structure** (same order of systematically introducing over 115 letter/s-sound correspondences of the English alphabetic code) of the **online Phonics International programme** using especially selected resources from Units 1 to 6 of the **Phonics International** programme and the **PI Early Years Starter Package**. The 8 books **systematically** introduce **ALL the sounds of English** (44+ phonemes). The sounds of English speech can be heard via video clips at www.phonicsinternational.com where you will find other very useful free resources and guidance. Free full **Alphabetic Code Charts** can be downloaded at www.alphabeticcodecharts.com as preferred. Free additional handwriting and alphabet resources and video guidance are provided at: www.debbiehepplewhitehandwriting.com.

Cumulative and full **Alphabetic Code Charts** and information about the code are provided within the 8 books:



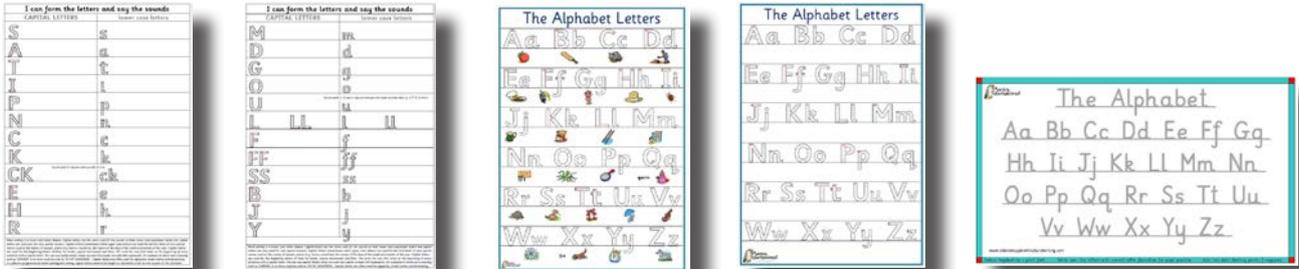
Unit 1

Unit 2a

Unit 2b

Unit 3

Capital and lower case letters are introduced *as code for the sounds* and as **'The Alphabet'** with various resources:



Guidance for fully joined handwriting is in Unit 6b

Summary of Content:

- Selection of core resources from Units 1 to 6 of **Phonics International** and the PI **Early Years Starter Package**
- Additional purpose-designed resources
- Supporting adult guidance throughout the 8 books and internet links provided for free Alphabetic Code Charts, 'Hear the Sounds' video and free handwriting, alphabet and other useful resources.

Pace:

The pace of introducing the lessons in the 8 '**Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills**' books will depend entirely on the age, stage and needs of the individual learner, or group, or class, and the frequency and duration of lessons.

The books are useful in a large range of contexts because it is the **same alphabetic code knowledge and skills** that need to be taught and learned **regardless of the circumstances and age of the learner**. Thus, there is no definitive answer to the 'pace' of using the books and delivering and practising the lessons. The books may last two, three or four years in some contexts such as **multilingual** schools and/or for younger learners, and a much shorter time in other contexts.

An example of **shared use** of the '**Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills**' books:

Sharing the work within the books in a tutoring situation: The learner may '*revisit and review*' the **say the sounds** sub-skills resource followed by the tutor '*introducing*' the new letter/s-sound correspondence and '*modelling*' the sub-skills and core skills. Then the learner may '*practise*' using the **multi-skills activity sheet** – and possibly '*apply*' the new learning to the **simple sentences** if time allows. The **sentences/text** resource could then provide '*extension*' work to be practised, at first, under the supervision of the supporting adult/parent in the home as 'homework'. The tutor can supervise the learner **re-reading** all or some of the words and sentences at the beginning of the next full lesson as part of the '*revisit and review*' process before introducing the next letter/s-sound correspondence.

Underpinning rationale of **Phonics International** and the 8 '**Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills**' books:

- The **Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles** (based on research, leading-edge practice and extensive experience)
- The **Simple View of Reading** (recommended by the UK government in 2006 following the independent Rose Review)
- The **Teaching and Learning Cycle** (a process undertaken for every letter/s-sound correspondence introduced)

The Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles

Teach the **alphabetic code knowledge** (the relationship, or links, between the smallest sounds of speech and the letters or letter groups) by **systematically** introducing the letter/s-sound correspondences of the alphabetic code and teach that the code is **reversible: print-to-sound for decoding** and **sound-to-print for encoding**. [Debbie encourages **incidental** teaching of the letter/s-sound correspondences **in addition** to the systematic introduction – *as required*.]

Model how to put the letter/s-sound correspondences introduced (the alphabetic code knowledge) **to immediate use** with **cumulative** real written and spoken words, sentences and texts teaching the **three core skills** of:

1. **Decoding** (reading):
 - i) Scan the printed word from left to right to recognise any *letter groups*.
 - ii) Then synthesise the word - that is, say the sounds for the letters and letter groups all through the printed word and *blend* the sounds to 'hear', or 'discern', the target word.
 - iii) Modify the pronunciation of the word to sound like the actual spoken word if necessary.
2. **Encoding** (spelling):
 - i) Orally *segment* (split up) all through the spoken word to identify the phonemes (sounds)
 - ii) Allot graphemes (letters and letter groups) as the correct code for the identified sounds.
3. **Handwriting**:
 - i) Learn to write the 26 lower case letters and the 26 upper case (capital) letters of the alphabet correctly (starting points and direction of formation, position on writing line, relative sizes).
 - ii) Hold the writing implement with the tripod grip.

Emphasis is on **sounds** at first and **not letter names**. Teach *letter names* and *alphabetical order* by chanting the alphabet or singing an alphabet song. Never use letter names for reading activities. Avoid spelling with letter names when learners are in the *earliest stages* of learning to spell. Teach that conveying a spelling from one person to another by letter names is a *convention to convey precise spelling* – **not** the spelling **skill** – and that the spelling **skill** is *oral segmenting* and knowing which *spelling alternatives* (the letters and letter groups) to allot for the sounds. **Raise awareness** of the need to learn **spelling word banks** where words are spelt with the same sounds and spelling alternatives. Create spelling word banks, and provide spelling word banks, with **activities** to help embed the words in memory such as linking the word banks to '*story-themes*' and '*illustrations*', and '*acting out*' the words in a word bank. **Avoid** asking learners to read **independently** books which lead to them **guessing** many of the words from *multi-cueing strategies* such as picture clues, initial letter prompts and the context of the sentence.

Learner-practice based on the **Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles**:

*Practise the **sub**-skills of the **three core skills** repeatedly: '*See the letter/s, say the sounds*' and '*Hear the sounds, point to, or write, or air-write the letters and letter groups*'. [See the guidance for the *sub*-skills of the three core skills at the back of the **Unit 1** and **Unit 4** books, also provided on the 'Free Resources' page at www.phonicsinternational.com]

*Revisit previous **code** (letters and letter groups as code for specific sounds), and re-visit the words, plain sentences and texts **frequently** to embed learning and increase fluency [content and routines provided in the '**Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills**' books].

*Respond to regular teacher-led dictation from letter level, to letter groups, to words, to sentences as appropriate, and undertake **self-dictation** exercises [learner *re-reads* sentences, *holds them in memory* and *writes them* on paper with writing lines using the '**simple sentences**' and '**sentences**' resources from the '**Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills**' books].

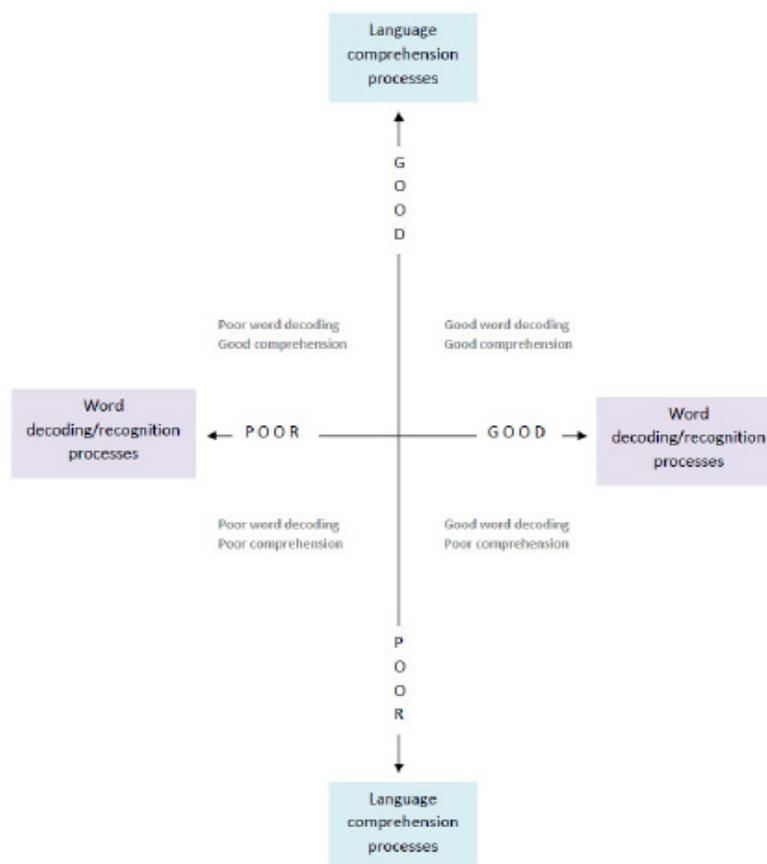
*Practise blending, segmenting and handwriting skills with *cumulative*, decodable words, sentences, plain texts and reading books which match the level of alphabetic code knowledge taught to date, when being asked to do exercises mainly **independently**.

*Pull words out of **cumulative texts** [the '**simple sentences**' and '**sentences**' resources from the '**Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills**' books] to create **spelling word banks** (*words with the same letter/s-sound correspondences*). Add further words if required. *Draw illustrations* to help embed the word lists in memory. Practise memory games and *link words to pictures and story themes*, and provide '*acting out*' activities for the bank of words to help re-call. **Note specific words with very unusual and rare spellings**.

The Simple View of Reading

The *Simple View of Reading* diagram illustrates the **two main processes** that underpin 'being a reader' and helps us to understand the reader's *reading profile*: To be a reader you need the ability to **decode** the printed words (What **ARE** the words?) and the language comprehension to *understand* the words that have been decoded (What do the words **MEAN**?). To gain meaning from the words that have been decoded, the reader must be able to understand the language at a **SPOKEN** level. Teachers and parents need to teach *explicitly* the **knowledge** of the English *alphabetic code* and the technical **phonics skill** to decode the words and, at the same time, **develop the learner's spoken language** and **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Masses of **TALK** and access to a wide range of **BOOKS** hugely enhances the learner's capacity to become a good reader:

The Simple View of Reading



Original concept: Gough and Tunmer (1986); model recommended by Sir Jim Rose (*Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading Final Report, March 2006*); model adopted by UK government (2006) as a 'useful conceptual framework'.

For the diagram of the **Simple View of Reading** and the **Simple View of Writing**, see: http://www.phonicsinternational.com/The_Simple_View_of_Reading_model.pdf

For purchasing the 'Alphabetic Code and Phonics Skills' books (as singles or in sets), contact us:

For purchasing or technical queries, contact: support@phonicsinternational.com

For programme-specific queries, contact: debbie@phonicsinternational.com

To enquire about training opportunities and events, contact: caroline@phonicsinternational.com