

Basic Phonics Lesson Format:

The standard lesson format for **introducing letter/s-sound correspondences** has a very simple structure:

1. **Revise old learning** of the letter/s-sound correspondences of **The Alphabetic Code** taught to date.
2. **Introduce new learning** of 'next' letter/s-sound correspondence.
3. Include the **new** letter/s-sound correspondence **to practise the three skills of blending, segmenting and handwriting** at word level using the **cumulative word bank** (sometimes with an emphasis on a particular skill as decided by the teacher). Note that the **Sounds Book Activity Sheets** build up a cumulative word bank as letter/s-sound correspondences are taught or revisited.
4. **Extend to sentence level and text level** work with cumulative word bank as appropriate (this will become part of the **basic lesson format** over time). **See variety of resources in each unit for extension work.**

Note: With good understanding of the synthetic phonics teaching principles, teachers and parents do not need elaborate resources or programmes. **Phonics International** provides free start-up resources and good information in unit 1 for teachers and parents so that they can teach reading and spelling with this approach. The **Phonics International** programme is then available to people who would like support with the breadth and depth of 'systematic detailed resources' for the teaching and learning processes.

Description of basic lesson	Possible resources for visual display, and for supporting and developing the teaching and learning activities
<p>1. Revise old learning:</p> <p>Young learners sit in area in front of teacher's board. Older learners sit at desks facing the teacher's board.</p> <p>Aim for revisiting old learning to be fast-paced, focused and lively.</p>	<p>For general reference, select a version of The Alphabetic Code Overview Chart as preferred and display on wall (available in unit 1).</p> <p>Simpler versions available in Early Years Starter Package showing only graphemes featured in units 1 to 5 or units 1 to 6.</p>
<p>Graphemes previously taught can be seen in rows across the top of the teacher's board. Teacher points to graphemes from left to right and then in random order. Learners 'say the sounds' (reading sub-skill). Then, the teacher 'says the sounds', learners point to the corresponding graphemes (spelling sub-skill).</p>	<p>Grapheme Tiles laminated with sticky magnetic tape, or magnetic letters, or previously taught graphemes written across top of teacher's board.</p> <p>Alternately, use Say the Sounds Posters for appropriate unit of work.</p>
<p>OR: Teacher flashes grapheme flash cards of previously taught graphemes (letters and letter groups). Learners call out the sounds collectively. Teacher may ask individuals to 'say the sounds'.</p>	<p>Selection of Simple Code Flash Cards available in unit 1 Extensive set of Picture Flash Cards in Early Years Starter Package for units 1 to 6 Complex Code Flash Cards available in unit 6.</p>
<p>2. Introduce new learning:</p> <p>"Today we are going to learn about this letter [or these letters together, or this grapheme] which is code for the sound /.... / as in the word '.....'. Let's say the new sound together and listen for where we can hear it in the following words."</p> <p>Teacher can use ANY words with focus sound for ORAL work. Use words from cumulative word bank if words are to be seen as PRINT. Teacher maps sound to graphemes as appropriate for new learning by finger-tracking under graphemes as sounds are uttered.</p> <p>[For young beginners using the Early Years Starter Package, at this point they could go to their tables and glue paper versions of Grapheme Tiles in their Sounds Books. Eventually they can glue in Word Lists too.]</p>	<p>Next Grapheme Tile or magnetic letter/s (or simply write down the focus grapheme on teacher's board).</p> <p>OR: Produce next Flash Card from preferred Flash Cards.</p> <p>Visual display: Focus grapheme Alphabetic Code Frieze Poster, Mini Poster and, when appropriate, the Grouping the Spelling Alternatives Poster (this has a pupil activity equivalent without pictures). Posters are useful when laminated - use bulldog clips or blu-tak to fix onto board edges for lesson introduction.</p> <p>In units 1 to 6, the Picture Posters and/or audio-visual online resource 'Hear the Sounds' can be used to support new learning.</p> <p>Colour-in Sounds Book - learners' activity Say the Sounds Booklet - for home-learning</p>

3. Practise three skills of blending, segmenting and writing as appropriate:

BLENDING - If teacher uses magnetic Grapheme Tiles or magnetic letters on a magnetic whiteboard, teacher can select Grapheme Tiles and make new words for learners to blend which include the new letter/s-sound correspondence. Learners sound out and blend all-through-the-word to 'hear' the target words.

OR: Teacher can simply write words to blend on the board.

SEGMENTING - Use a multi-sensory routine particularly for younger learners and beginners. Teacher models, learners join in: - hold up left fist, palm facing. Teacher says word to be 'spelt' very slowly so the individual sounds 'pop out'. At first, teacher supports new learners to 'hear' and 'identify' the sounds all-through-the-spoken-word. The number of sounds are 'tallied' on left thumb then fingers from left to right of left hand. [The sounds are NOT counted as in '1, 2, 3'.] The learners put up thumb and fingers as they say the actual sounds. Then, thumb and fingers are counted and the same number of sound-dashes are written on the board. If the board has magnetic Grapheme Tiles or letters, the learners say which should be pulled down onto the sound-dashes to spell the word. Sound out and blend to check or 'edit' the spelling. Correct the spelling as required. If the board is not magnetic, simply write down the graphemes that the learners say.

OR: Learners have their own mini whiteboards and write down their own spellings having followed the above process of tallying sounds to fingers and writing sound-dashes.

OR: In pairs, learners can share mini magnetic whiteboards at tables, and build up the spellings themselves with magnetic tiles or letters.

Following a teacher-led introduction, provide additional activities for learners to practise their blending, segmenting and handwriting. This does not mean the teacher provides individual work, but provides work which can be undertaken BY THE INDIVIDUAL within groups.

HANDWRITING - Teachers can model the directionality of handwriting and the position that letters sit on writing lines in all basic phonics lessons. For example, write letters on sound-dashes in the correct position as if the lines are 'writing lines'.

Once all the single letters of The Alphabet have been introduced through the phonics lessons, additional handwriting activities can be provided to rehearse writing lower case and capital letters correctly. Remember to emphasise that capital letters are code for the same sounds as the lower case letters.

Combine handwriting and phonics assessment with dictation - "Can you write the letter for the sound /b/? Can you write two digraphs for the sound /ee/? Can you write the word 'ship'?"

Refer to cumulative word bank for support if necessary on **Sounds Book Activity Sheets (Word Bank** also provided in **Early Years Starter Package**).

Blend Word Cards can be used as flash cards (hold samples for blending in the air) or laminated with magnetic sticky tape or blu-tak to display on board.

Enlarge **Sounds Book Activity Sheet** to A3 to use with whole class or group if preferred. This is useful particularly with new beginners to model how they can use the activity sheets independently.

Magnetic **Grapheme Tiles**

Spelling Sheets with Word Check Lists - available in units 1 to 6.

Picture Cards - for developing phonemic awareness - attuning the learner's 'ear' to hear the sounds all-through-the-word - available in units 1 to 6.

Guidance for using the picture cards - for the adult!

Blend Word Cards - working in pairs, one learner can 'read' the word aloud and the partner 'spells' the word.

Mini whiteboards and dry-write pens per learner.

Magnetic **Grapheme Tiles** or magnetic letters, mini magnetic whiteboards.

OR: **Grapheme Tiles** laminated or printed on card - use 'loose' on table tops.

OR: Grapheme Cubes (as in www.candocubes.com)

The Core **Sounds Book Activity Sheets** provide for different abilities on the same sheet as they include shorter words to longer words for blending. Teachers can select any words as appropriate for the spelling activities on the folded-up part of the sheets. Do not neglect any of these essential activities.

Look for **Phonics International** resources which include letters and words presented on writing lines. These include the core **Sounds Book Activity Sheets**, optional-lines **Flash Cards** as provided in unit 1, **My Words - word lists**, **Pairs Game** in units 1 to 6, **Read, Write and Draw**, and **I can read** texts from unit 7 to 10.

Sounds Book Activity Sheets include handwriting rehearsal of the focus grapheme. Teachers can model joined writing where appropriate.

The Alphabet Posters showing lower case and capital letters in alphabetical order are provided in unit 1.

Additional **Handwriting** resources are provided in unit 2.

Proformas with writing lines provided in every unit.

4. Extension to sentence level and text level:

Orally, sentence level work is an essential part of all lessons. Speaking in sentences, explaining what words mean, and later holding sentences in memory to write complete sentences are all key practices in basic skills lessons.

Once learners CAN read and once they CAN spell and write, basic phonics lessons to introduce new graphemes (spelling alternatives) can continue at the rate of approximately two per week. Plan in-between lessons to develop sentence and text level work (including grammar). Dictation exercises are very important as part of basic spelling lessons.

Thus, basic instruction in reading and spelling changes over time to become a spelling and writing programme.

At all times provide an enriched literature curriculum. Read stories to young learners, provide opportunities to learn about different types of books and different types of literature - provide opportunities to read in groups and in pairs looking at the same book/s and read individually - silently and aloud.

Sounds Book Activity Sheets - ask learners to circle any words in the cumulative word bank that they don't know the meaning of. Allow time for a speaking and listening opportunity to develop vocabulary and speech in basic phonics lessons.

Read the words, make up a story - designed to extend and enrich vocabulary and to speak in sentences whilst creating stories. Older learners can then go on to write their stories in sentences.

I can read texts - provide texts to read and respond to - suitable for grapheme searches, dictations, extending storylines orally and in writing, converting print to joined writing.

Questions - comprehension questions for **I can read** texts in units 7 to 12. Answer orally and/or in writing.

When learners start receiving cumulative decodable books to read sentences and text at home, also include **Bookmarks** and **My Words - Word Lists** to practise the letter/s-sound correspondences and words until such time as learners are competent free readers.

Note: Not all the **Phonics International** resources are mentioned in this brief overview.

What next?

When people interested in finding out about the **Phonics International** programme have read the two simple documents 'In a Nutshell...' and 'Choices for Basic Phonics Lessons' available to download direct from the homepage of www.phonicsinternational.com, the **next steps** could be a visit to:

1. the **Phonics International** message forum where you can read advice, feedback from users and see how the programme (program) continues to be developed,
2. the **free Unit 1** of **Phonics International** (click on top left plum-coloured **Unit 1** button on homepage) - **scroll quickly** down the whole **webpage** of 'Unit 1' to note the range of **60+** resources available to download for **free** - then go to the free **Overview and Guidance Booklet** at the **top** of the Unit 1 webpage for more detailed information about the 'synthetic phonics teaching principles'.

Then, consider printing your **preferred version/s** of **The Alphabetic Code Overview Chart** selected from the **free downloadables in Unit 1** whether you decide to follow the **Phonics International** programme or not - and please **tell other people** about these important and helpful free alphabetic code charts.

If you have any queries at all about synthetic phonics teaching or require training, use the message forum or contact Debbie at debbie@phonicsinternational.com