



How we teach phonics

at The Crescent Primary School



What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read. It teaches children how sounds are represented by written letters.

There are 44 main sounds in the English language. Each sound is represented by a grapheme (the written representation of the sound)

Children are taught to read words by blending these sounds together to make words.

For example, they will be taught that the letters 'm-a-t' blend together to make 'mat'.

What is phonics?

Phoneme: the smallest single identifiable sound in a word.

For example, in the word 'cat' there are three phonemes c/a/t.

Grapheme: the written representation of a sound.

Digraph: two letters making one sound. For example, /sh/ in the word 'shop'.

Trigraph: three letters making one sound. For example, /igh/ in the word 'night'.

Split digraph: two vowel letters split by one or more consonants. For example, /a-e/ in the word 'cake'.

What is Essential Letters and Sounds?



Essential Letters and Sounds is our chosen phonics programme.

It uses a simple, consistent approach to teaching and aims to get all children to read well, quickly.

It uses mnemonics and rhymes to support learning and recall.

The scheme teaches four new sounds a week and has a fifth day dedicated to revisit and review, and applying reading skills by reading decodable books in class.

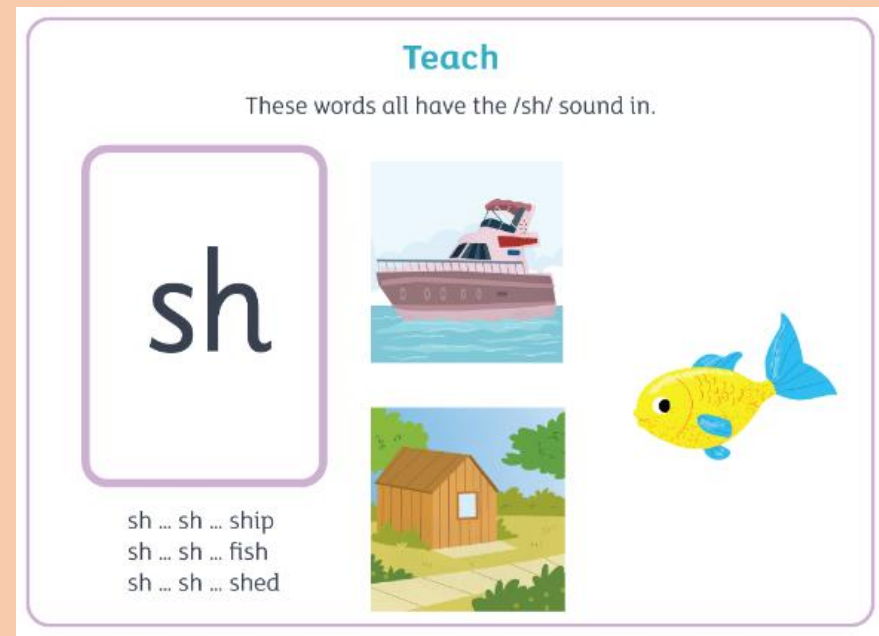
How do we teach ELS?

With ELS, phonics is taught daily from the beginning of Reception, throughout Year 1 and into Year 2.

In each lesson the teacher teaches a new sound or reviews sounds taught earlier in the week. Children learn the letter or group of letters that represent the sound. A picture and rhyme accompanies each sound to help the children remember it.



A white rectangular card with a purple border. On the left, the letters 'sh' are written in a large, black, sans-serif font inside a purple rounded square. On the right, there is a colorful illustration of a brown wooden sailing ship on blue waves. Below the illustrations, the text 'the shabby ship shook' is written in a black, sans-serif font.



A white rectangular card with a purple border. At the top, the word 'Teach' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. Below it, the text 'These words all have the /sh/ sound in.' is written in a black, sans-serif font. On the left, the letters 'sh' are written in a large, black, sans-serif font inside a purple rounded square. To the right of the 'sh' are three illustrations: a red and white motorboat on blue water, a yellow fish with blue fins, and a brown wooden shed with a white window. Below the illustrations, the text 'sh ... sh ... ship', 'sh ... sh ... fish', and 'sh ... sh ... shed' is written in a black, sans-serif font.

How do we teach ELS?

Children are asked to read words and sentences with the new sounds in. This is practiced with the whole class on the whiteboard.

Practise Quit activity ✕

Read the word. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.



pie



Apply Quit activity ✕

Read the sentence. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.

She dried her long hair.



How do we teach ELS?

Children then have a go reading words and sentences with the new grapheme in their work book.

Read the words. Match the words to the pictures.

star

harp

market



Read the sentences.

The dog barks.

They went to see the harvest at the farm.

What order are the sounds taught in?

The teaching of Phase 2, 3, 4 and most of Phase 5 are taught in Reception. Phase 5 and 'beyond' are taught in Year 1.

Click below to download the sounds your child will learn.

Phase 2 [Click to download Phase 2 sounds](#)

Phase 3 [Click to download Phase 3 sounds](#)

Phase 5 [Click to download Phase 5 sounds](#)

How should the sounds be pronounced?

Pronounce the sounds as you would say them within a word. Make sure you don't add 'uh' onto the end, so for 'm' say 'mm' not 'muh' and for 'l' say 'ull' not 'luh'. If we mispronounce these sounds we make reading harder for our child.

The video link below shows you how to pronounce all 44 sounds.

[YouTube clip of correct pronunciation of pure sounds.](#)

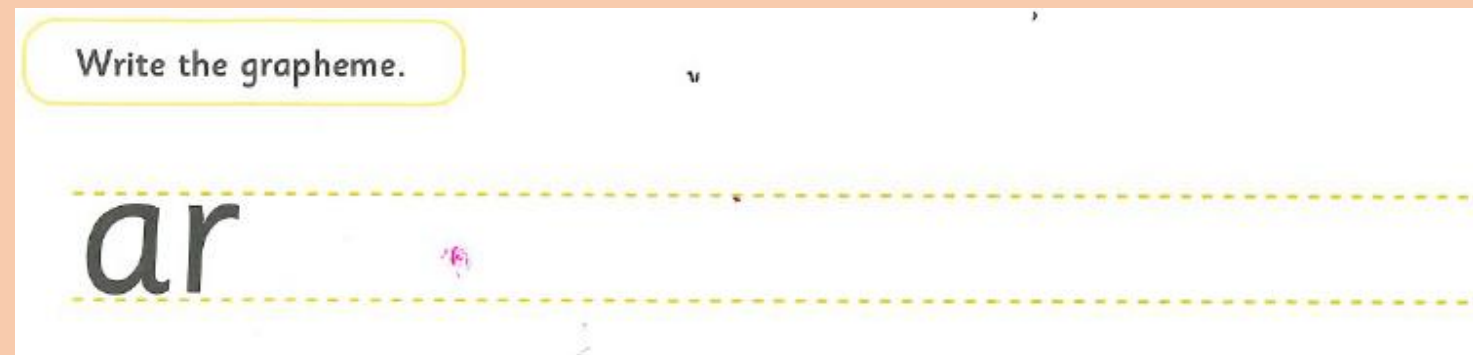
How does phonics help with writing?

There is a big focus on writing, as well as reading, within ELS.

In Reception, children follow the phase 2 rhymes to help learn letter formation.



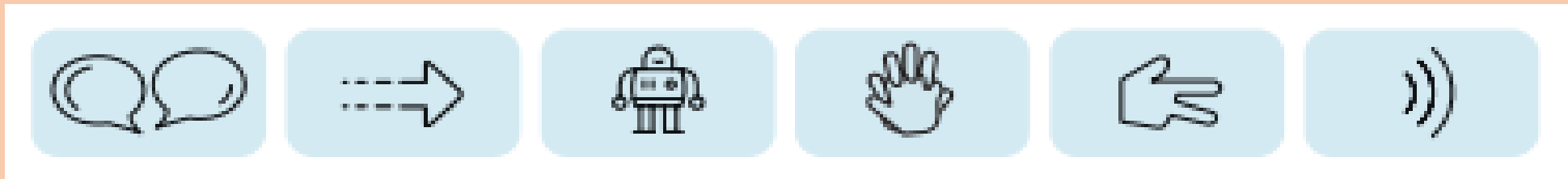
In every lesson, children practice writing the new grapheme they have learnt



How does phonics help with writing?

Children may also practice writing words or a sentence containing their new grapheme. When children are learning to spell words with a new grapheme they are taught to :

Say the word / stretch the word / segment the word / blend the word/
count the sounds in the word / say the whole word.




Have a go with the word 'rain'.

How can I help at home?

Practising the sounds

You can help your child practice the sounds that they have been learning at school. You can download the charts under 'What order are the sounds taught in?' and show these to your child along with the picture to help them remember.

Grapheme	Picture	Rhyme
igh		light up the night

Blending

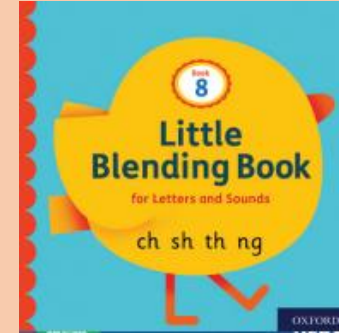
After children learn to read sounds separately, they can start blending them together to form words.

The video link below will show you ways you can practice blending with your child.

[How to help your child to blend](#)

How can I help at home?

Reading decodable books



Every Friday your child will bring home a book with words that use the sounds that they have been learning.

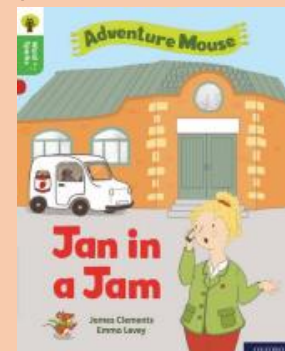
Use the prompts inside the front and back covers to enjoy the book together and help your child practice reading.

Practice reading the book with your child at least 4 times across the week. This gives your child the opportunity to work on the following skills:

decode

fluency

expression

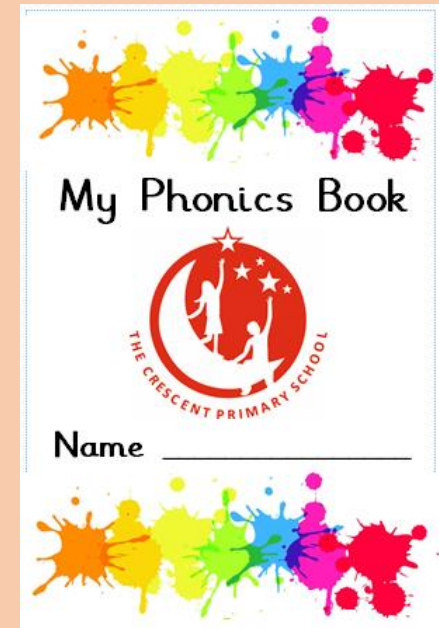


How can I help at home?

Working through your child's phonics book

Each week of teaching in school has a corresponding page in the phonics book. You can use this to help your child practice the sounds your child has just been taught and blend the sounds to read words.

The words that are shaded in purple are the Harder to Read and Spell words that have also been taught during phonics that week. Your child can not use their sounds and blending to read these. They just need to learn them by sight.



List 2b

l n m d

Phase 2	Parent	Teacher
sit		
pan		
mat		
dim		
I		
the		
no		

Date set _____ Date achieved _____

Useful websites to support your child

[Oxford Owl support for phonics at home](#)

[Phonics Play](#) – fun interactive games for your child to practice phonics.