



Phonics Glossary

Phoneme - The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words.

Grapheme - A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g. ough.

GPC - This is short for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.

Digraph - A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Split Digraph – a _ e, i _ e, u _ e, o _ e, e _ e

Short vowel sound – a, e, i, o, u

Long vowel sound – A, E, I, O, U

Trigraph - A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Oral Blending - This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

Blending- This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

Consonant Blend – Adjacent consonant phonemes which can both be heard when you say the word making them different from a digraph where there are two letters that make just one sound e.g. **tr** - u – **ck** (*CCVCC words*)

Oral Segmenting - This is the act hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

Segmenting - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.

Alphabetic Code – 44 sounds making up the English Language

Simple Code – common grapheme used to represent sound

Complex Code –graphemes, or spelling alternatives used to represent sounds

Decode - the process of translating a printed word into a sound; seeing a written symbol and being able to say what sound it represents.

Encode - the process of hearing a sound and being able to write a symbol to represent that sound.