



Phonics Screening Check

What is the phonics screening check?

The phonics screening check is a short, simple assessment to make sure that all pupils have learned phonic decoding to an appropriate standard by the age of 6. All year 1 pupils in maintained schools, academies and free schools must complete the check.

The phonics check will help teachers identify the children who need extra help so they can receive the support they need to improve their reading skills. These children will then be able to retake the check in year 2.

The check comprises a list of 40 words and non-words, which the child will read one-to-one with a teacher.

Department for Education, 2013

How is the screening check structured?

The screening check is split into two sections of 20 words. Both sections contain real words and pseudo-words. The children call the pseudo-words 'alien words' and each pseudo-word has a picture of an alien next to it to give context.

The words in **section 1** will have a variety of simple word structures (for example CVC, VCC, CCVC and CVCC) using:

- single letters (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, I, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q(u), r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z)
- some consonant digraphs (ch, ck, ff, ll, ng, sh, ss, th, zz)
- frequent and consistent vowel digraphs (ar, ee, oi, oo, or)

The words in **section 2** will have a variety of more complex word structures (for example CCVCC, CCCVC, CCCVCC and two syllable words) with some:

- additional consonant digraphs (ph, wh)
- less frequent and consistent vowel digraphs, including split digraphs (a-e, ai, au, aw, ay, ea, e-e, er, ew, i-e, ie, ir, oa, o-e, ou, ow, oy, ue, u-e, ur)
- trigraphs (air, igh).

What support is in place in school?

All children have four dedicated phonics lessons per week as well as on-going support in class. In addition, your child is having 30 minutes daily phonics support delivered by their Pupil Progress Leader.

How can I support my child?

As well as reading with your child at home, you should also work with them to consolidate their phonics skills. Your child needs to confidently know all of the material in sections 1 and 2 above. To help with this, enclosed are a variety of materials and activities.

Real and alien-word cards

Use these to check that your child can pronounce all of the sounds in sections 1 and 2.

Children should segment difficult words into sounds and then blend them back together. For example: brown = b r ow n



Pirates Ahoy! game

In this game children have coins with words on them. They read the word and decide if it is real or an alien word. Real word coins are placed in the treasure chest. Alien words are placed in the barrel.

For example, if you wanted to teach spellings for 'ay' you may use these words on the coins:
 thray paint day clain say pay sail pake cake plate

Walk the plank! game

In this game children read out sentences containing words with target sounds in. If the sentence is true they hold their hand over their eye and say 'Aye, aye captain'. If the sentence is false they say hold out their arm and say 'Walk the plank!'

For example, if teaching 'aw' you may have the sentences:
 It is awkward to run backwards. (Aye, aye captain!)
 All boys have claws. (Walk the plank!)

Glossary

Diagraph A grapheme made up of two letters e.g. ay ee ch

Grapheme A grapheme is a letter or a number of letters that represent a sound (phoneme) in a word e.g. in l ea f. The sound 'ee' is represented by ea

Phoneme The smallest unit of sound, split into vowels and consonants, e.g. b t m

Trigraph A grapheme made up of three letters e.g. air igh

Supporting websites

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-2014-materials> 2014 past paper and supporting materials, including alien and real words

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-sample-materials-and-training-video> Sample materials and training video

http://www.familylearning.org.uk/phonics_games.html A wide variety of online phonics games

<http://www.stsavioursatholicprimary.co.uk/year-1/> The year 1 class page contains more information about phonics screening and an alien word PowerPoint

Thank you for your continued support. If you require further materials or have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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