




Phonics Glossary



Term	Meaning	Example
Alliteration	A group of words that begin with the same sound.	Simon says sing
Alphabet	A set of letters or symbols in a fixed order, used to represent the basic set of speech sounds of the English Language	a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
Blend	To say the separate sounds in a word and merge them to make the word.	c – a – t cat
Blending	Blending for reading involves looking at a word, recognising the graphemes, saying the sounds and blending them.	ch – o – p chop
Common Exception Words	Words that do not follow the common phonetic spelling rules that children learn in the EYFS and KS1.	friend, because, beautiful
Compound Word	Where two or more root words are merged into a new and different word.	play + ground = playground rain + bow = rainbow
Consonant Digraphs	A digraph consisting of two consonants.	sh, th, ch, ng, wh
Consonants	21 letters of the alphabet.	b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z
Contraction	A shortened form of a word (or group of words) that omits certain letters or sounds. In most contractions, an apostrophe represents the missing letters.	would + not = wouldn't she + will = she'll is + not = isn't
CVC words	Words consisting of a consonant, vowel and consonant	bag, lip, pop, ban, peg
Decoding	The ability to apply your knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words.	ch – o – p chop
Dictation	Verbally saying words, phrases or sentences for others to write down.	
Digraph	A grapheme consisting of two letters that represent one sound	ch, th, sh, ee, ai, ng, ff, wh
Encoding	The process of hearing a sound and being able to write a symbol to represent that sound.	shut sh – u – t
Floppy's Phonics	A systematic synthetic phonics programme written by Debbie Hepplewhite.	
Font	A set of printable or displayable text characters in a specific style and size.	font font font font
Grapheme	A letter or group of letters representing a phoneme in written form.	/ch/ = ch or tch
Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs)	The relationship between sounds and letters that represent them.	ghost /g/ /oa/ /s/ /t/
Helpful words	Common or high-frequency words that are useful for early reading and writing.	does, cry, Mr, Mrs
High-frequency words	Words frequently found in children's books and used in their own writing.	to, the, when, that

Homophones	Two or more words that have the same pronunciation, but different spellings and meanings.	to/too/two steal/steel
Letters	A character or symbol in the alphabet that represents one or more spoken sounds.	a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
Near-homophones	A word which is pronounced almost the same as another word, but has a different spelling and meaning.	affect/effect our/are
Mnemonics	A technique to aid remembering the spelling of tricky words.	could, should, would ould – oh you lucky duck
Phonemes	The smallest unit of sound in spoken language.	/a/ /ee/ /air/ /ough/
Phonics	A teaching method to learn the correlation between phonemes and graphemes, in order to learn to read and spell.	Floppy's Phonics uses phonics as its prime approach to teaching decoding and encoding.
Prefixes	A group of letters placed before the root of the word to change its meaning.	do / undo like / dislike
Pseudo words	Non-words used to assess phonics skills.	cov, frem, skray, blimper
Pure Sounds	Pronouncing sounds clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end.	'f' not 'fuh' 'd' not 'duh'
Rhyme	Words that have the same ending sounds.	cheese and please say and weigh
Root Word	A basic word with no prefix or suffix added to it. Sometimes called 'base words.'	touch untouchable
Segmenting	To break a word into separate sounds in order to spell it.	chop ch-o-p
Sound buttons	Dots or lines written underneath graphemes, in order to aid decoding skills.	
Sound talk	A process of saying, in the correct order, each phoneme in a word.	/c/ /u/ /t/ cut
Split digraph	A long vowel sound created by a vowel and the letter e, separated by a consonant	a_e, e_e, i_e, o_e, u_e make, scene, hide, rose, cube
Suffix	A letter or group of letters added to the end of a word to change its meaning.	swim swimming swimmer
Syllable	One part of a word, usually containing one vowel sound.	Sister sis - ter
Systematic synthetic phonics (SSP)	The direct teaching of a set of letter-sound relationships in a clearly defined sequence.	Floppy's Phonics is a DFE approved systematic synthetic phonics programme.
Tricky Words	Words with graphemes that make unusual or unfamiliar sounds.	of, again, one, two
Trigraph	A grapheme containing three letters that make one sound.	igh, ear, air, ure
Vowel Digraph	A digraph consisting of two vowels.	ee, oo, ou, ie, oa
VC words	Words consisting of a vowel and a consonant.	in, at, on, up
Vowels	6 letters of the alphabet	a, e, i, o, u
Word	A single distinct meaningful element of speech or writing.	and, car, house, she