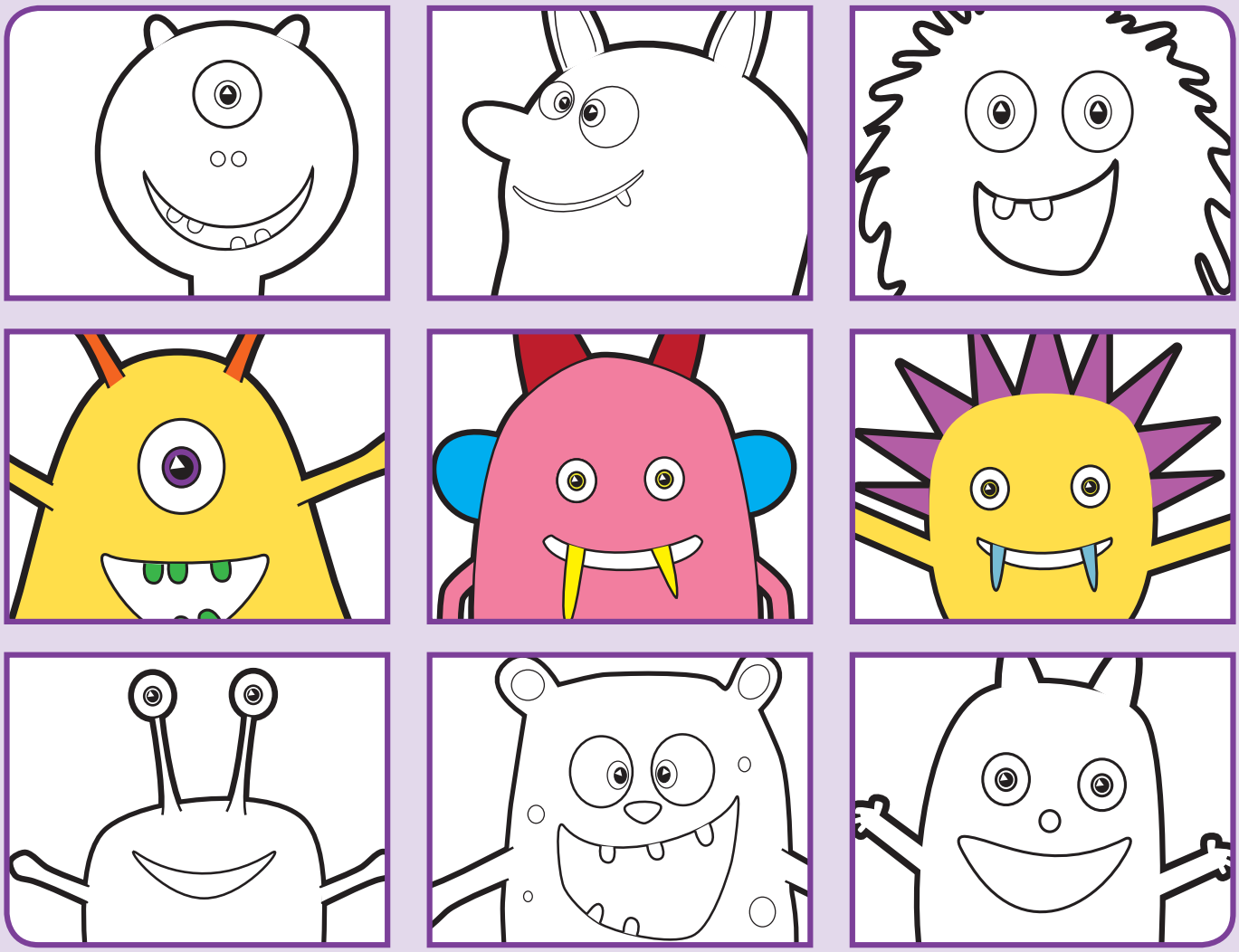
YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

ANALYSING AND RESPONDING TO RESULTS



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YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

1 | Introduction

Reading is a complex cognitive process that involves both learning to decode texts (**reading accuracy**) and learning to make meaning from texts (**language comprehension**).

The South Australian Phonics screening check (PSC) is a formative assessment tool used by teachers to ascertain how year 1 students are progressing in the development of their phonics knowledge and skills, one of the building blocks of reading. It is a simple 40-word check that follows the same structure each year (see Appendix 1). In order to be a reliable check of decoding skills, it uses both real and pseudo-words (see Appendix 2).

Using their professional judgement, and their knowledge of each learner, teachers analyse student's performance on the PSC and use this analysis to design further systematic synthetic phonics learning in response to each student's differentiated learning needs. The design of activities is informed by the sequence of phonic knowledge and word recognition outlined in the Australian Curriculum *National Literacy Learning Progression*[2] (see Appendix 3).

The term 'synthetic' refers to the process of synthesising, or blending, individual sounds together.

2 | The purpose of this document

'Phonics screening check: analysing and responding to results' is designed to help teachers meet the differentiated learning needs of students in explicit ways. It is a companion document to the 'Phonics screening check: administration guide'.

The activities in this resource can be used to support students in their phonics learning as well as assist in developing their accuracy and automaticity in the recognition of phoneme-grapheme correspondences. Activities are suitable for all students in reception to year 2.

Phonological information is essential for early reading and writing acquisition. It forms the basis for understanding the phoneme-grapheme correspondences needed for spelling and writing fluency.

3 | The importance of phonics

The development of phonics knowledge and skills is an integral part of learning to read, write and spell. Research evidence, detailed in the *Best Advice* papers[2] on reading, supports the use of a systematic, synthetic approach to phonics instruction.

Success in phonics depends on phonemic awareness, a prerequisite for learning the alphabetic code. If children cannot hear the separate sounds in words, they cannot relate these sounds to the letters of the alphabet and so cannot use decoding skills to analyse unknown words. This can be problematic for some learners, particularly those for whom English is an additional language.

To build confident letter-sound knowledge, students require explicit teaching that provides them with frequent opportunities to blend together and pull apart the sounds of words. Students also need to develop rapid decoding knowledge as fluency and automaticity will assist their reading comprehension. Students should have regular opportunities to read decodable words and connected texts, and apply their developing phonics knowledge in their writing.

Decodable texts will have some words that the student cannot decode using their current set of phonics skills. These words should be explicitly taught so that the student can recognise them automatically. Parts of these words may be decodable, eg the /s/ and the /d/ in 'said'. In such cases, focus attention on the 'tricky bits', eg /ai/ in 'said', until the word is mastered automatically. Automatic recognition of irregular, high-frequency words strengthens reading fluency. If the student recognises a bank of high-frequency and irregular words (sight vocabulary), their working memory is freed up to attend to comprehension.

[1] https://tiny.cc/LitLearnProgression

[2] https://tiny.cc/BestAdviceLit

4 | The rationale for a synthetic phonics program

Evidence, cited in *The 'Big 6' components of reading*[3] about the need for a synthetic phonics instruction is extensive. The English alphabetic code uses 26 letters individually and in combination to represent 44 sounds. It is unlikely that a child will learn the relationships between sounds and letter-symbols on their own. Phonics mastery requires recognition and understanding of a finite number of items in a short span of time for children to experience early success in reading. Therefore, it is crucial that phonics is taught early, explicitly, and regularly. Systematic teaching of synthetic phonics is essential and time must be set aside for deliberate practise so that all students can achieve mastery.

An effective synthetic phonics program contains 5 crucial elements:

1 It is **systematic**—students comprehend and fluently use each grapheme-phoneme correspondence before moving forward. These correspondences are mapped in a comprehensive scope and sequence from the 'basic' to 'extended' code.
2 It **introduces and teaches** single letter-sounds and common letter combinations in a discrete and **explicit** way.
3 **Letter-sound relationships are taught in an order** that facilitates their blending into simple, common words so children can immediately practise their new skills to build their automaticity and confidence.
4 It supports mastery by using **decodable texts** that are matched to students' phonic knowledge and students have been taught any irregular words that occur in the text.
5 It employs **regular assessment** to monitor student practice, inform educators about program effectiveness, and provide students with meaningful feedback about their progress.

5 | Analysing and responding to the results of the phonics screening check

The phonics screening check is a short, simple formative assessment that informs classroom teachers how students are progressing in phonics. Importantly it assists teachers to identify students who are progressing in line with, or exceeding, year level expectations and those who need additional support. School leaders and teachers can support all students to develop and strengthen their phonics knowledge and skills as an essential building block of reading by using aligned approaches across the school and by designing differentiated learning in classrooms.

5.1 | Whole-school planning and resourcing

5.1.1 | Whole-school planning and resourcing

Collaborative discussions, informed by data about student reading performance, leads to greater clarity about the strategy for explicit phonics instruction. A synthetic phonics program, beginning in reception, assures leaders and teachers that all the letter-sound relationships the students are expected to know are covered. (See Appendix 4 for a suggested sequence for a reception synthetic phonics program. Students who continue to struggle beyond year 1 should be supported with additional explicit teaching strategies. The PSC will pinpoint the specific letter-sound correspondences that the students have not mastered by term 3 of year 1.)

'The team conversation after the testing was amazing … The screening process provided insights we didn't have before: it made teachers evaluate what was working [in their phonics teaching] and what refinements were needed. It made us ask questions, for example, why there were scattered results for a student compared with other Big 6 areas, and why we hadn't picked it up before. It enabled us to hone in on an individual plan for individual students. Our teachers have good awareness of where their students are developmentally, but the phonics screening check gave us new insights.' (2017 phonics trial principal)

[3] https://tiny.cc/BestAdviceLit

Learning design and targeted teaching will be informed by explicitly mapping the grapheme-phoneme correspondences to be taught and using the PSC to assess growth. Specific learning goals can then be set for individual students.

The phonics screening check enables leadership to:

> '... track progress across the whole school site; establish if our work is translating into expected outcomes; compare how classes are performing; and put measures in place to equalise phonics learning opportunities across the whole early learning setting.' (2017 phonics trial principal)

5.1.2 | Decodable texts

Quality phonics programs provide opportunities for students to practise reading texts which contain a high proportion of words that conform to the letter-sound combinations they have been explicitly taught. Decodable texts should be engaging, encourage the students to read, and promote comprehension. High-quality decodable texts contain enough high-frequency, irregular and story words to make them sound as natural as possible and will sustain the student's interest while allowing them to feel successful as a reader. This promotes fluency and the development of confidence for beginning readers.

There are a number of commercially available series of decodable texts. Book boxes can be made up from a range of commercial and self-made decodable texts. Teachers should ensure that they align with the grapheme-phoneme sequence being taught in the classroom.

While students are learning the basic code (single sounds and basic digraphs, and the more common graphemes – usually covered in a Reception teaching program), it is important that when practising reading independently, students predominantly use decodable texts. Once students begin to be taught the more advanced code (less frequent and alternative digraphs) you can safely introduce a range of other literature.

5.1.3 | Commercial programs

Many schools elect to use a commercial resource as the basis of their synthetic phonics program. An effective resource will generally contain reference to the following 13 aspects:

1 phonological awareness
2 phonemic awareness
3 concepts about print
4 alphabetic knowledge
5 the alphabetic principle
6 sequence, rate and mode of phonics instruction
7 decoding
8 decodable texts
9 reading fluency
10 irregular/high-frequency words
11 spelling
12 writing
13 regular assessment and review of progress.

These 13 aspects should be a feature of any synthetic phonics program and may provide a way to evaluate the potential value of a particular commercial resource. A more detailed description of each aspect is provided in Appendix 5.

There are a number of commercially available resources to support phonics teaching. These have been listed by Dyslexia SPELD Foundation and can be found on the department's website at: http://tiny.cc/PhonicsPrograms. The Australian Council for Educational Research has provided an overview describing how the 13 elements appear in 5 popular commercial programs (see Appendix 6).

In conjunction with developing an agreed school plan, leaders and teachers could review the relevance and appropriateness of available computer-based resources. (Some of these have been identified in Appendix 7.)

The department's *Best Advice* paper 'Intervention to address literacy and numeracy difficulties' also provides some guidance about selecting and using commercial products – https://tiny.cc/Intervene.

5.1.4 | Parent involvement

Results from the PSC could be summarised as part of **school reporting processes to parents and families**. Analysis of the UK phonics screening check experience indicated that schools that reviewed each student's progress every half term tended to do well.

A general information leaflet about the phonics screening check is available on the intranet at https://tiny.cc/PSCinfo. Schools could offer parent workshops and provide information to raise awareness of the important role phonics plays in reading development. Further information could include suggestions about how parents can assist their children's reading confidence with some simple fun activities, such as 'I spy' and making up silly words. Teachers could also recommend lists of picture books, information texts, narratives and poetry books to be read aloud to children.

5.2 | Classroom analysis and learning design

The PSC results provide a starting point to evaluate students' current level of phonics understanding. When combined with other observation and assessment evidence, teachers can gain a more complete picture of their students' learning needs.

Analysing student errors allows teachers to see students' specific strengths and weaknesses in phonics and gives teachers a means for selecting their teaching strategies. A spreadsheet[4], available from the department's intranet, can be used to create a class score sheet (see Appendix 8). This may be particularly useful for grouping students as it incorporates a word analysis sheet to enable the easy identification of the most common phoneme errors for a particular class. If teachers are analysing their results in professional learning teams, Appendix 9 provides some guiding questions and a proforma to use when considering implications for practice.

Educators should carefully analyse students' PSC responses to investigate the skills and knowledge the students display so that differentiated teaching can be planned accordingly. Such teaching is designed to accommodate students with different levels of reading ability by differentiating at the point of practise and independent work. Differentiation strategies will sometimes involve the whole class and sometimes small groups or individuals. For example, in a whole class systematic synthetic phonics lesson, children can all progress through the phonics sequence of content but the tasks they are given to consolidate their learning can differ in complexity.

To begin with, some students may need to develop their phonological and phonemic awareness skills prior to further explicit instruction in particular grapheme-phoneme correspondences. However, other students may need specific instruction in blending sounds together. It is useful to include other observation and assessment evidence to gain a more complete picture of your students' learning needs.

Other factors may affect the learning of English letter-sounds (eg for students from EALD backgrounds). Students learning English as an additional language do not have a learning difficulty. The phonemes and morphemes used in English are different from those used in other languages. For example, in a tone language

[4] http://TLinSA.2.vu/PSC

(eg Vietnamese) tonal variations and stress patterns are used to communicate meaning. Learners, particularly from a non-alphabetic language background need to have the letter-sound correspondences explicitly introduced to assist their learning, as do all learners. They may also require additional time and considerable opportunities to practise and master the sounds of the English language. Ideally, explicit teaching should be in the context of classroom learning by teaching the essential knowledge and skills required to meet the language and literacy demands relevant to the learning area.

Students can make any number of errors in the year 1 phonics screening check. For example, during the check, a student may sound out each phoneme correctly but then fail to blend them accurately. They will say the word incorrectly. An analysis of the final word spoken may display 1 or more of the following features shown in the table below. Pay particular attention to the student's success in decoding the pseudo-words as these can act as an authentic assessment of the student's phonic knowledge and skills and provide useful information about how they apply their phonics skills to unknown words. As the check instructions do not ask students to sound out all letter-sounds, only errors in the pseudo-words give us insight into the students' knowledge of each phoneme in the event they read the whole words.

Noting student errors is the starting point for teachers in determining what phonics instruction they need. The table below summarises the 8 most common errors.

	Word checked	Teachers' records of student responses	Analysis	Common errors
1	Any word, any letter		Use of letter name for sound	
2	**mep**	mip	Unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for e, in this case	
3	**charb** **phope**	sharb phop	Unconsolidated consonant digraph – sound knowledge for the 'ch' OR 'sh' Doesn't know 'o_e' vowel digraph	ch/sh/th
4	**lig** **shup** **doil** **charb**	leg shop doily shard	Pronouncing a pseudo-word as a real word that bears resemblance	
5	**mep** **barst** **emp** **haps**	meq darst enp naps	Possible difficulty discriminating letters visually	p/q/b/d/ n/m/r/h v/w/y
6	**rird** **splam**	rrid spalm	Reversing the order of the letters in words, eg 'ir' becomes 'ri' (possible visual processing issue)	More common in words with 4 or more phonemes
7	**vus** **yop**	vuz eeop	Over generalisation or incorrect application of the less common sound a letter represents, eg 'z' for 's', reading y as the end of word 'y' (ee)	
8	**forest**	forest	Confusing voiced and unvoiced sounds, eg 'e' or 'i' for the unvoiced 'e' in forest	't' for 'd', 'p' for 'b'; 'z' for 's'; 'th' in 'both' and 'the'

There are certainly other the types of errors that students make, but this summary covers the most common errors. Having an awareness of the most common errors will help teachers focus their instruction. Please refer to Appendix 10 for more in-depth analyses of student results, especially in instances where students made a large number of errors and can be classified as Group 2: Developing or Group 3: Struggling decoders.

It should be noted that the phonics screening check focuses purely on decoding a list of words. However, 'to be effective readers students need to be able to use the six components of reading in combination' (DECD, 2016, p.1[5]). For beginning readers, all the components of the Big 6—oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension—need to be integrated throughout reading opportunities across the day, even though teachers may highlight these individual components at different times. Hence, while the focus of this document is on phonics, the other components of reading also need attention.

The simple view of reading (Gough & Tumner, 1986[6]; Hoover & Gough, 1990[7]) provides a useful framework for ensuring all aspects of the Big 6 are covered. Using the quadrant chart, and plotting students in each quadrant, will also help the teacher provide students with instruction that is differentiated according to their needs. Appendix 11 provides further information in *The simple view of reading*.

6 | Differentiated teaching for mastery learning

A useful first step for teachers is to group their students into 3 groups: fluent, developing or struggling.

Group 1: Fluent decoders: students who correctly respond to most words in sections 1 and 2 are displaying well developed decoding skills.

Group 2: Developing decoders: students who correctly respond to most words in section 1 but are challenged by some or much of section 2 are displaying basic decoding skills.

Group 3: Struggling decoders: students who experience high levels of challenge in section 1 are displaying minimal decoding skills.

For all 3 groups of decoders, the PSC will allow you to investigate various skills and knowledge in phonics:

- knowledge of letter-sounds or graphemes
- ability to blend the sounds accurately
- correct pronunciation of words
- speed at which the letter-sounds are recalled and blended (indicates whether this word is beginning to become 'automatic' or gaining fluency when reading)
- ability to identify then blend an increasing number of graphemes (eg from CVC to CCCVCC words)
- ability to decode and blend multisyllabic words
- the disposition and engagement level of students when word reading.

Students will demonstrate a range of abilities in these skills. The 6 case studies, consisting of annotated answer sheets and detailed responses to student results, will provide guidance for possible next steps for their own students.

[5] Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) (2016) The 'Big 6' components of reading, *Best Advice*, available from http://tiny.cc/BestAdviceLit

[6] Gough PB & Tunmer WE (1986) Decoding, reading, and reading disability, *Remedial and Special Education*, 7(1), 6–10, doi:10.1177/074193258600700104, available from http://TLinSA.2.vu/GoughTumner1986

[7] Hoover WA & Gough PB (1990) The simple view of reading, *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 2, 127–160, available from http://TLinSA.2.vu/HooverGough1990

6.1 | Fluent decoders

Fluent decoders display well developed decoding skills and correctly respond to most words in sections 1 and 2 of the PSC.

These students should continue to be instructed systematically in letter-sound knowledge in the mapped and agreed sequence, alongside decoding skills crucial for word recognition. This can include increasing the complexity of phonemic awareness development (eg practising the more complex skill of substituting phonemes instead of simply identifying initial sounds) or increasing exposure to structurally more complex words to include multisyllabic words with larger consonant strings (eg CVC to CCCVCC).

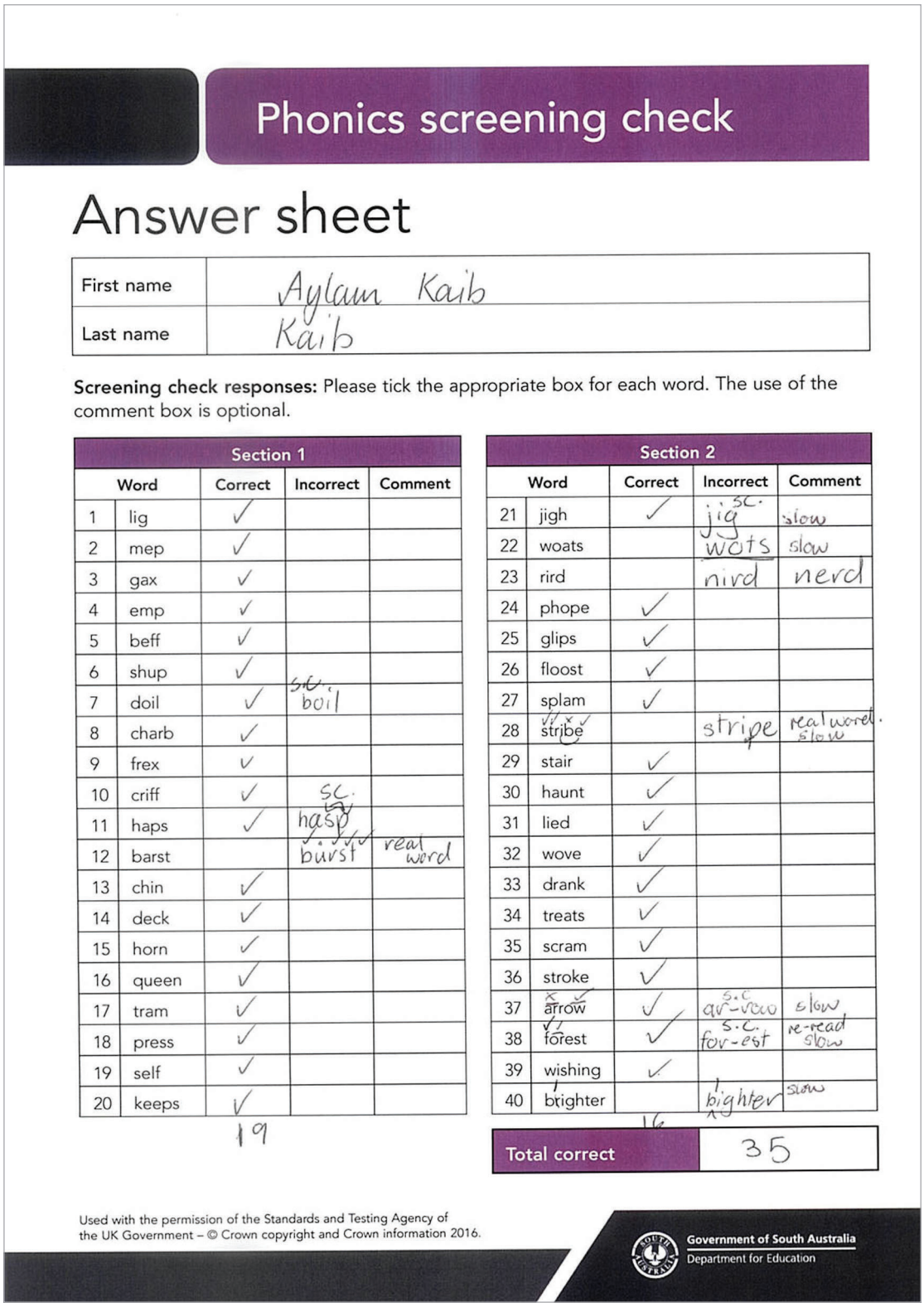
Any persistent errors may indicate that the sounds in particular words have yet to be taught or they need review and consolidation. Errors may also indicate the need for instruction in particular rules or exceptions in spelling and reading.

Fluent decoders are moving towards reading a wider range of more complex texts and will be learning to read and spell more complex words. Their vocabulary and comprehension will be developing to match their strengths in oral language development. Teachers need to ensure that these students have comprehension and vocabulary skills on par with the texts they can decode.

Two case studies, based on fluent decoders, are shown on pages 10–13. The results are interpreted by the teacher and some teaching notes are provided for the next steps in learning for each particular student. For example, Aylam needs specific instruction in r-controlled vowels (ar, ir, or, ur). He also needs practise with phoneme deletion and addition in order to build phonic skills in more complex words. Also continue to provide opportunities for him to develop his vocabulary and comprehension skills. Providing books and oral language activities that match his interests is a good way of developing vocabulary as research has shown reading volume is the prime contributor to differences in student's vocabularies (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998[8]).

[8] Cunningham AE & Stanovich KE (1998) What reading does for the mind, *American Educator*, 22(1–2), 8–15

Case study group 1: Fluent decoder – Aylam Kaib



Phonics screening check

Answer sheet

First name	Aylam Kaib
Last name	Kaib

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

Section 1

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
1	lig	✓		
2	mep	✓		
3	gax	✓		
4	emp	✓		
5	beff	✓		
6	shup	✓		
7	doil	✓	s.c. boil	
8	charb	✓		
9	frex	✓		
10	criff	✓	s.c.	
11	haps	✓	hasp	
12	barst		burst	real word
13	chin	✓		
14	deck	✓		
15	horn	✓		
16	queen	✓		
17	tram	✓		
18	press	✓		
19	self	✓		
20	keeps	✓		

19

Section 2

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
21	jigh	✓	s.c. jig	slow
22	woats		wots	slow
23	rird		nird	nerd
24	phope	✓		
25	glips	✓		
26	floost	✓		
27	splam	✓		
28	stribe		stripe	real word slow
29	stair	✓		
30	haunt	✓		
31	lied	✓		
32	wove	✓		
33	drank	✓		
34	treats	✓		
35	scram	✓		
36	stroke	✓		
37	arrow	✓	s.c. ar-row	slow
38	forest	✓	s.c. for-est	re-read slow
39	wishing	✓		
40	brighter		bighter	slow

16

Total correct	35

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YEAR 1

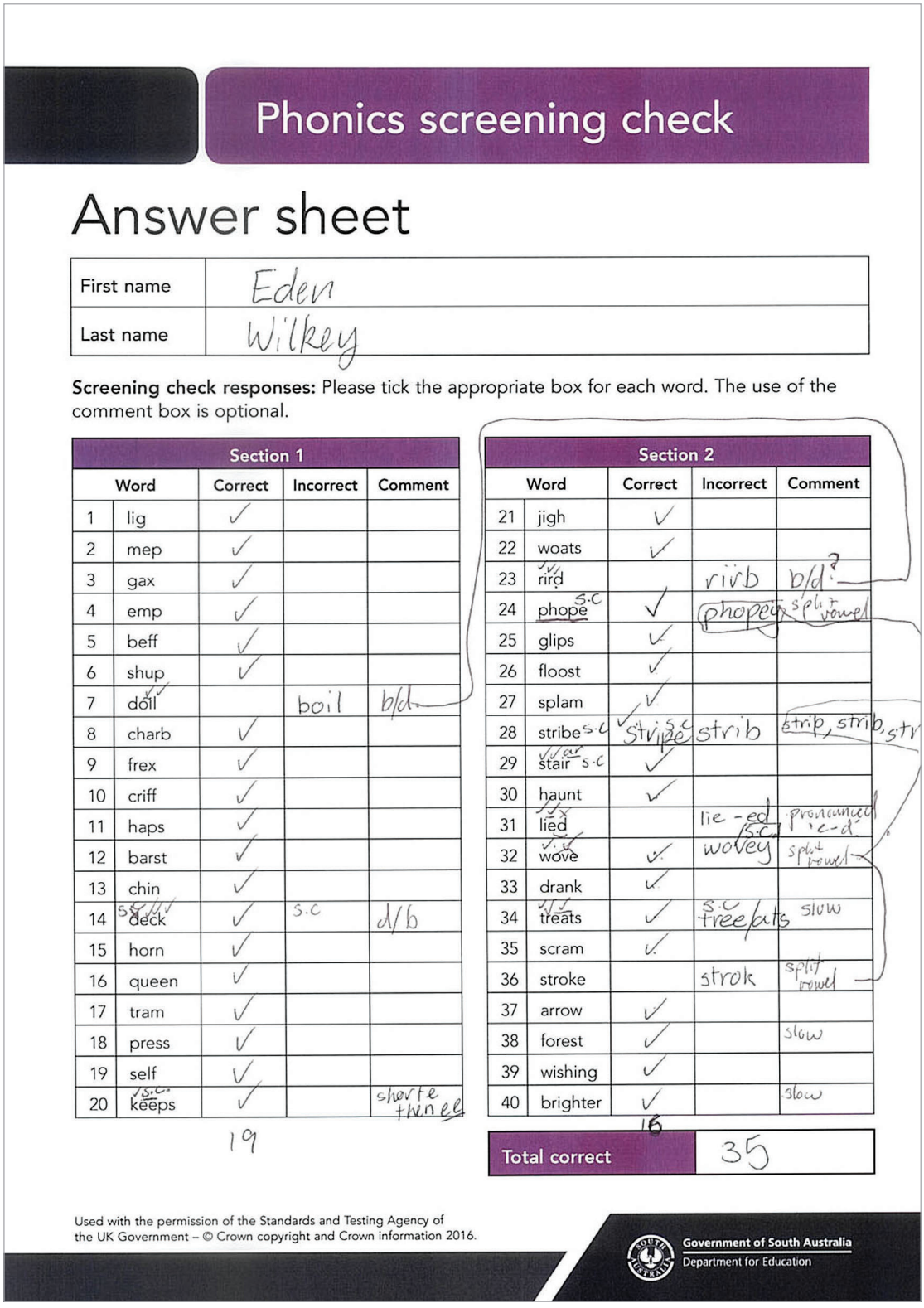
Phonics screening check

Analysis: Fluent decoder – Aylam Kaib

Score: 35/40	Interpretation	Teaching notes
Correct responses: l, i, g, m, e, p, g, a, x, b, ff, sh, u, d, oi, ch, ar, f, r, c, i, h, s, t, n, ck, or, qu, ee, ss, k, j, igh, w, ir (?), ph, o_e, oo ,i_e, air, au, ied, ea, rr, ow, sh, ng, er	Aylam knows most of the sounds in section 1 and 2 of the check. Where errors occur they indicate some use of phonic skills. Unfamiliar or complex words were read more slowly or with less confidence. Aylam scored 100 on PAT–EY so has a relatively high level of reading comprehension. Aylam's errors are mostly attempts to make real words. It is possible his reading for meaning is an ingrained skill, and that he therefore resists applying phonics concepts. There is some evidence in his phonics application that he knows most concepts, but he had varied pace when he made errors in section 2, indicating that Aylam's phonics blending requires revision and that some sounds in the words that he got wrong are teaching opportunities. For example, Aylam's errors with ur, ir arrow and forest indicate that he requires revision of r-controlled vowels to consolidate instances where they apply and where they do not.	Consolidate teaching of letter blending to build confidence. Double check knowledge of these sounds (igh, ir, ar, or). Use phoneme deletion and addition to build phonic skills in more complex words, eg turn 'will' into 'squelch' in 4 steps – will, well, swell, swelch, squelch. Include some focus on vocabulary and comprehension development.
Errors: ar in 'barst' replaced with 'ur' for real word r-controlled vowels: ar, ir, or, ur oa		

Phonics screening check

Case study group 1: Fluent decoder – Eden Wilkey



Phonics screening check

Answer sheet

First name	Eden
Last name	Wilkey

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

Section 1

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
1	lig	✓		
2	mep	✓		
3	gax	✓		
4	emp	✓		
5	beff	✓		
6	shup	✓		
7	doll		boil	b/d
8	charb	✓		
9	frex	✓		
10	criff	✓		
11	haps	✓		
12	barst	✓		
13	chin	✓		
14	deck	✓	s.c	d/b
15	horn	✓		
16	queen	✓		
17	tram	✓		
18	press	✓		
19	self	✓		
20	keeps	✓		shorte thneel

19

Section 2

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
21	jigh	✓		
22	woats	✓		
23	rird		rirb	b/d?
24	phope	✓	phopey	split vowel
25	glips	✓		
26	floost	✓		
27	splam	✓		
28	stribe	stripe	strib	strip, strib, str
29	stair	✓		
30	haunt	✓		
31	lied		lie - ed	pronounced 'i-e-d'
32	wove	✓	wovey	split vowel
33	drank	✓		
34	treats	✓	treekats	slow
35	scram	✓		
36	stroke		strok	split vowel
37	arrow	✓		
38	forest	✓		slow
39	wishing	✓		
40	brighter	✓		slow

16

Total correct	35

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YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Analysis: Fluent decoder – Eden Wilkey

Score: 35/40	Interpretation	Teaching notes
Correct responses: l, i, g, m, e, p, g, a, x, b, ff, sh, u, oi, ch, ar, f, r, c, i, h, s, t, n, ck, or, qu, ee, ss, k, j, igh, w, oa, ir, ph, oo, air, au, ied, ea, rr, ow, sh, ng, er	Eden knows most of the sounds in section 1 and 2 of the check. Where errors occur they indicate use of some phonic skills, or specific unconsolidated skills (eg split vowel digraphs). Some complex words were read more slowly or with less confidence in blending. Eden's knows most phonic concepts, but she slowed when she made errors, which can indicate that phonics blending and some sounds in the words that she got wrong are areas for teaching. Some of her errors demonstrate inconsistent recognition of similar looking letters (b/d), which can indicate that she has some trouble discriminating letters visually, or needs support with visual processing. Eden's blending pace for unconsolidated sounds indicates that she would likely gain confidence and speed with more practise, but it also indicates that Eden has determination and persists.	Consolidate teaching of letter blending to build confidence. Teach each specific sound and use as many example instances as possible. Teach blending to build fluency and confidence. Use phoneme deletion and addition to build phonic skills in more complex words, eg turn 'will' into 'squelch' in 4 steps – will, well, swell, swelch, squelch. Include some focus on vocabulary and comprehension development.
Errors: b/d– not consolidated ea/ee – not consolidated i_e, o_e – not consolidated lied – unfamiliar		

Further advice for working with fluent decoders

Teachers can extend students' knowledge of phonics concepts and improve their phonics automaticity as they explore increasingly sophisticated content, conceptual thinking and more challenging vocabulary. Some students can become expert decoders without necessarily developing their comprehension skills: for those students, teachers should consider employing more strategies to support comprehension development and to extend their functional vocabulary. The teaching and development of fluency becomes more of a focus as students read a wider range of lengthier texts.

Teachers can gain valuable insight by observing which letter patterns a student chooses to represent sounds in their writing. This will demonstrate how well they are applying their growing knowledge of correct letter-sound relationships. Research shows that writing activities can contribute to alphabetic knowledge, phonological awareness and reading capability. Consistent mistakes, such as 'grownd' for 'ground', provide evidence for the next teaching point in the spelling/writing program. In this case, the letter sequence for 'ground' has not been securely mapped in the student's long term memory and requires further practise.

Writing activities can also include a focus on the morphology of words to help students with spelling conventions. For example, the past tense of 'jump' is not 'jumpt' but 'jumped', where 'ed' is the morpheme used for past tense.

6.2 | Developing decoders

Developing decoders display basic decoding skills and correctly respond to most words in section 1 of the PSC, but are challenged by some or much of section 2.

Learners in this group are still consolidating their phonics learning and need targeted lessons to help them address specific gaps in phonics concepts and skills, such as blending and segmenting.

Teachers can examine their PSC results to identify the particular letter-sound relationships the students do not know. Some particular grapheme-phoneme correspondences may need further explicit teaching for many students in this group. These students may also need more regular planned reviews of phonic concepts and specific instruction in blending and segmenting. Pay close attention to the student's success in decoding pseudo-words. This acts as the authentic application of the student's phonic knowledge and skills.

Two case studies, based on developing decoders, are shown on pages 16–19. The results have been interpreted by the teacher and some teaching notes provided for the next steps in learning for each student. For example, both Khalid and Amy need activities which will help them consolidate their knowledge of vowel digraphs and less common sounds. Phoneme deletion and addition activities will help them build phonic skills using CCVC and CVCC words, prior to moving to more complex words.

Phonics screening check

Case study group 2: Developing decoder – Khalid Nouh

Phonics screening check

Answer sheet

First name	Khalid
Last name	Nouh

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

Section 1

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
1	lig	✓		
2	mep	✓		
3	gax	✓		
4	emp	✓		
5	beff	✓		
6	shup	sh/ch		Confusing ch/sh.
7	doil	✓		
8	charb		chrab	Not consolid
9	frex	✓		
10	criff	✓		
11	haps	✓		
12	barst		brast	ar
13	chin		shin	
14	deck	✓		
15	horn	✓		
16	queen	✓		
17	tram	✓		
18	press	✓		
19	self	✓		
20	keeps	✓	2 sound at end of word?	

16

Section 2

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
21	jigh		jig	
22	woats		whats	
23	rird		reard	
24	phope		phone	
25	glips	✓		
26	floost	✓	oo from book	
27	splam	✓		slow
28	stribe		stibe	slow
29	stair		stay	ai in paid
30	haunt		hunt	
31	lied		lid	
32	wove	✓		
33	drank	✓		
34	treats		teats	r = missing
35	scram		scam	
36	stroke		stoke	
37	arrow	✓		
38	forest	✓		
39	wishing	✓		
40	brighter		brigt	no trigraph

8

Total correct 24

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Government of South Australia
Department for Education

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Analysis: Developing decoder – Khalid Nouh

Score: 24/40	Interpretation	Teaching notes
Correct responses: l, i, g, m, e, p, g, a, x, b, ff, u, oi, ch, ar, f, r, c, h, s, t, n, d, oi, ck, or, qu, ee, ss, k j, w, ir, ph, oo, ea, rr, ow, ng, er **Errors:** sh, ch, ar, igh, oa, ir, air, au, ied, er consonant strings ending in 'r': stribe, treats, scram, stroke	Developing decoders respond correctly to most of section 1, but struggle with much of section 2. Khalid is a developing decoder because, although he scored 16/20 in section 1, most of his errors were very specific to digraphs ('ch/sh' and 'ar'). Khalid knows most common letter-sound combinations but gets caught up on longer, more phonically complicated words with 4 or more phonemes (eg CCCVCC) and he clearly fatigued by the end of the check, missing 'r' in 3 consecutive words. His blending was slow in section 2. Many errors in section 2 were real words which could indicate reading for meaning and not focusing on phonics. These errors also indicate that he needs to consolidate specific sounds as well as practising blending and segmenting to gain skill, pace and confidence. Khalid occasionally omits sounds all together, eg treats – teats, scram – scam, stroke – stoke. This could indicate that he has difficulty holding the image of each sound in his head as he attempts to blend it.	Consolidate teaching of vowel consonant digraphs. Consolidate blending and segmenting to improve confidence in blending. Build to blending and segmenting to more complex words with CCVCC and CCCVC patterns. Develop vocabulary. Consolidate teaching of less common sounds. Use phoneme deletion and addition to build phonic skills using CCVC and CVCC words.

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Case study group 2: Developing decoder – Amy Schleck

Phonics screening check

Answer sheet

First name	Amy
Last name	Schleck

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

Section 1

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
1	lig	✓		
2	mep	✓		
3	gax	✓		
4	emp	✓		
5	beff	✓		
6	shup	✓		
7	doil	✓		
8	charb	✓		
9	frex	✓		
10	criff	✓		
11	haps	✓		
12	barst	✓		
13	chin	✓		
14	deck	✓		
15	horn	✓		
16	queen	✓		
17	tram	✓		
18	press	✓		
19	self	✓		
20	keeps	✓		

20

Section 2

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
21	jigh	✓		
22	woats	✓		slowed
23	rird		r-ugh-d	unknown digraph
24	phope		pop	needs
25	glips		gilps	reassurance
26	floost		foolst	
27	splam		spam	
28	stribe		stib	
29	stair	✓		
30	haunt	✓		
31	lied	✓		
32	wove		wōvey	used long o
33	drank	✓		slow
34	treats		trats	slow
35	scram		scam	slow
36	stroke		strok	slow
37	arrow		ar-row	slow
38	forest		for-reest	slow
39	wishing	✓		Talked about birthday
40	brighter		N/A	"I'm tired."

Total correct	27/40

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Department for Education

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Analysis: Developing decoder – Amy Schleck

Score: 27/40	Interpretation	Teaching notes
Correct responses: l, i, g, m, e, p, g, a, x, b, ff, sh, u, d, oi, ch, ar, f, r, c, h, s, t, n, ck, or, qu, ee, ss, k, j, igh (in jigh), w, oa, oo, air, au, ie, ow, ng **Errors:** ir, ph, o_e, i_e, au, ea, rr, er, igh (in brighter) consonant strings with l: glips, floost, splam consonant strings with r: stribe, treats, scram, stroke	Amy is a developing decoder. Although she identifies all of the sounds in section 1, when those same sounds are repeated in more complex CCVCC combinations, she does not read them consistently or automatically. In section 2, her slower blending, and her need for reassurance indicate that she is aware that her learning is not consolidated in words with more complex phoneme combinations. Amy has trouble blending sounds when words become more complex. She skips and switches sounds in words as they become more complex. Amy is clearly determined – in spite of making many errors she is still making attempts right to the very end of the check. While her persistence is a strength, her results indicate that she is really consolidating the blending of complex words and digraphs.	Consolidate teaching of vowel digraphs. Consolidate blending by practising simple CVC words with known phonemes to build confidence. Once confidence is established, blend and segment more complex CCVC, CVCC and build to more complex combinations slowly. Use spelling strategies that focus on segmentation of words into sounds. Consolidate teaching of less common sounds. Use phoneme deletion and addition to build phonic skills using CCVC and CVCC words then building to more complex words with CCVCC and CCCVC patterns.

Further advice for working with developing decoders

Teachers should plan intentional regular practice sessions in blending sounds for the agreed grapheme-phoneme correspondences seen in section 2 of the phonics screening check to ensure all students are systematically introduced to, and become familiar with, each type of blend. Teachers should extend this intentional practice by providing students with opportunities to immediately practise their knowledge and skills using decodable texts.

Teachers provide modelled reading, such as big books and partner reading, to reinforce phonics as the first strategy to use for working out words. In this way they are demonstrating the decoding of 'target words' within the text. These 'target words' can be chosen to revise and consolidate the grapheme-phoneme correspondences that have been explicitly taught. Identifying morphemes (such as highlighting the use of 'ing', or adding 'ed', or adding an 's' to make a plural form) is a very useful technique to demonstrate when using the modelled reading strategy.

Students should experience multi-sensory activities which combine listening, speaking, reading and a tactile kinaesthetic activity as these developing decoders require additional strategies to consolidate their learning in phonics. These kinds of activities (such as magnetic letters and other visual-touch and visual-auditory tools like 'Scrabble' tiles) can be quite motivating and engaging to many children and can reinforce grapheme-phoneme correspondences and blending. Working in a group, students can each be given grapheme cards related to the phonemes they have been taught and asked to position themselves in front of the class to make a word. Students then blend the sounds in the order they have created. (If students get the order wrong, make it a teaching point by reading it out 'incorrectly').

Some literature uses nonsense words, eg Dr Seuss, Roald Dahl, etc. Nonsense words are designed to provide the reader with fun and entertainment. These provide opportunities for a fluent or a developing decoder to decode unfamiliar words, just as they do with the pseudo-words in the PSC. However, there is no need to 'teach' pseudo- words. They are best used for assessment purposes.

This group of learners also needs further phonemic awareness training. First, students need to master the basic skills of phoneme segmentation and blending, eg they can divide the word /clap/ into 4 phonemes /c/ /l/ /a/ /p/ and blend the phonemes back together to form the word /clap/. Then they are ready for the advanced phonemic awareness skills of manipulating phonemes. This includes:

- deleting phonemes, eg say /cat/. Now take off the /c/. The word is (pause for student response) – /at/.
- substituting phonemes, eg the word is /cat/. But instead of /c/ say /s/. The new word is (pause for student response) – /sat/.
- reversing phonemes, eg say /pat/. Now say /pat/ backwards (pause for student response) – /tap/.

Teachers will find Kilpatrick's one-minute activities[9] or Heggerty's phonemic awareness activities[10] invaluable as they can be easily implemented across the teaching day with little preparation time.

[9] Kilpatrick DA (2015) *Essential of assessing, preventing, and overcoming reading difficulties*, Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley

[10] Heggerty M (2020) *Phonemic awareness: the skills that they need to help them succeed* (3 versions – Kindergarten, Foundation & Primary), Queensland: Literacy Resources

6.3 | Struggling decoders

Struggling decoders display minimal decoding skills and experience high levels of challenge in section 1 of the PSC.

Students in this group may find it difficult to blend the sounds together, even though they can say the individual phonemes. This might indicate that the student needs some specific one-to-one support to develop blending skills. You may also find inconsistencies in their learning (identifying sounds in some words, but getting them wrong in others) which indicate that there needs to be further practice and consolidation of skills.

If any of your students fall into this category—and you are confident that good phonics teaching has been provided, including practise with decodable texts—decide whether there may be a pattern of errors that indicates a specific knowledge deficit. This can give teachers a specific place to start explicit instruction. A phonological screening test should be administered in order to determine exactly what the student needs. Kilpatrick's (2015) PAST (Phonological Awareness Screening Test) is very useful as it has 4 versions and this enables the student's progress to be tracked throughout the year. Further suggested activities to strengthen phonological and phonemic awareness can be found in Appendix 12.

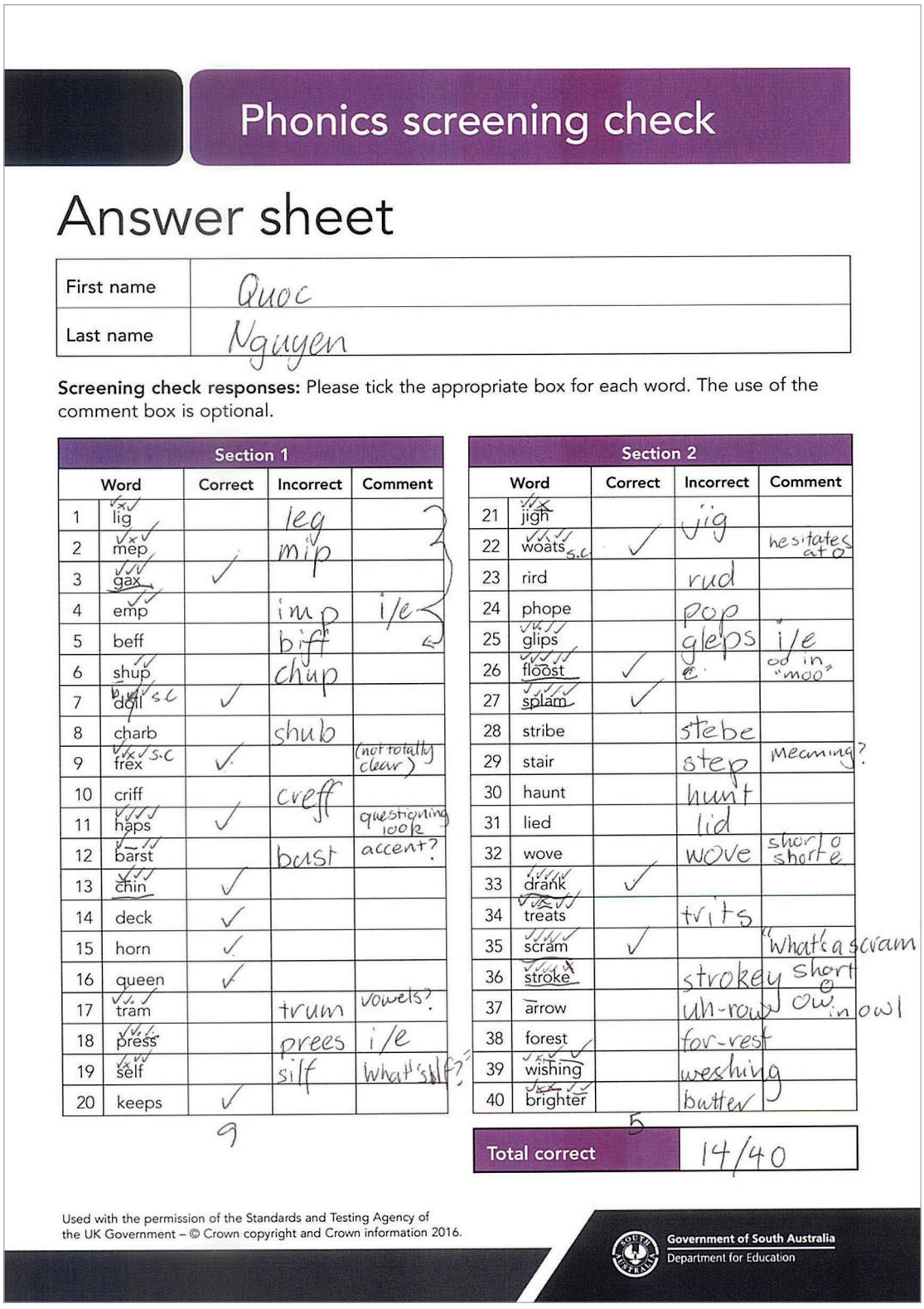
Additionally, consider whether the student:

- is in the process of learning English
- may have any visual or auditory acuity difficulties, including intermittent hearing loss
- has short-term memory difficulties and so need more opportunities to rehearse and consolidate grapheme-phoneme correspondences
- currently attends school on an irregular basis, and has done so in the past.

Two case studies, based on struggling decoders, are shown on pages 22–25. The results have been interpreted by the teacher and some teaching notes provided to indicate the next steps in learning for each student. For example, Quoc will benefit from revisiting the vowel sounds in Standard Australian English and from practise with blending and segmenting sounds. With Diedre, an assessment of her phonological awareness as well as her phonemic awareness needs to be checked as it may be that she is not able to distinguish the sounds of speech. The Phonological Awareness Skills Mapping (PASM)[11] screening tool will be a useful place to start.

[11] http://TLinSA.2.vu/PASM

Case study group 3: Struggling decoder – Quoc Nguyen



Phonics screening check

Answer sheet

First name	Quoc
Last name	Nguyen

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

Section 1

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
1	lig		leg	
2	mep		mip	
3	gax	✓		
4	emp		imp	i/e
5	beff		biff	
6	shup		chup	
7	doll s.c	✓		
8	charb		shub	
9	frex s.c	✓		(not totally clear)
10	criff		creff	
11	haps	✓		questioning look
12	barst		bust	accent?
13	chin	✓		
14	deck	✓		
15	horn	✓		
16	queen	✓		
17	tram		trum	vowels?
18	press		prees	i/e
19	self		silf	what's silf?
20	keeps	✓		

9

Section 2

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
21	jigh		jig	
22	woats s.c	✓		hesitates at o
23	rird		rud	
24	phope		pop	
25	glips		gleps	i/e
26	floost	✓	e	oo in "moo"
27	splam	✓		
28	stribe		stebe	
29	stair		step	meaning?
30	haunt		hunt	
31	lied		lid	
32	wove		wove	short o short e
33	drank	✓		
34	treats		trits	
35	scram	✓		"what's a scram
36	stroke		strokey	short e
37	arrow		uh-row	ow in owl
38	forest		for-rest	
39	wishing		weshing	
40	brighter		butter	

5

Total correct	14/40

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Department for Education

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Analysis: Struggling decoder – Quoc Nguyen

<table>
<tr><th>Score: 14/40</th><th>Interpretation</th><th>Teaching notes</th></tr>
<tr><td>Correct responses:
l, g, m, p, a, x, b, ff, u, p, d, oi, f, l, oo, r, e, c, h, s, t, ch, i (in chin), n, d, e, ck, or, qu, ee, k, j, w, oa</td><td rowspan="2">Quoc is a struggling decoder from an EALD background. In section 1, Quoc scored best on real words, indicating a keenness to read for meaning and a developing English vocabulary.

Quoc's errors show inconsistent use of and confusion with 'i' and 'e' sounds in particular and vowel sounds in general. This may be linked to pronunciation issues or issues with the teacher's understanding of his accent when he speaks. It could be that some of the sounds in English are not sounds he uses in his first language.

Quoc's errors also show that he struggles with a range of vowel digraphs and trigraphs. He also asks about a couple of words that he does not recognise in English (self, scram), indicating a real striving to read for meaning.

Quoc has trouble blending sounds when words become more complex, but this could be due to not having been taught blending or segmenting or having had insufficient practise.</td><td rowspan="2">Consolidate teaching of i and e and other vowel sounds.

Consolidate blending and segmenting by practicing on simple CVC words with known phonemes.

Use spelling strategies that focus on segmentation of words into sounds.

Consolidate teaching of less common sounds.

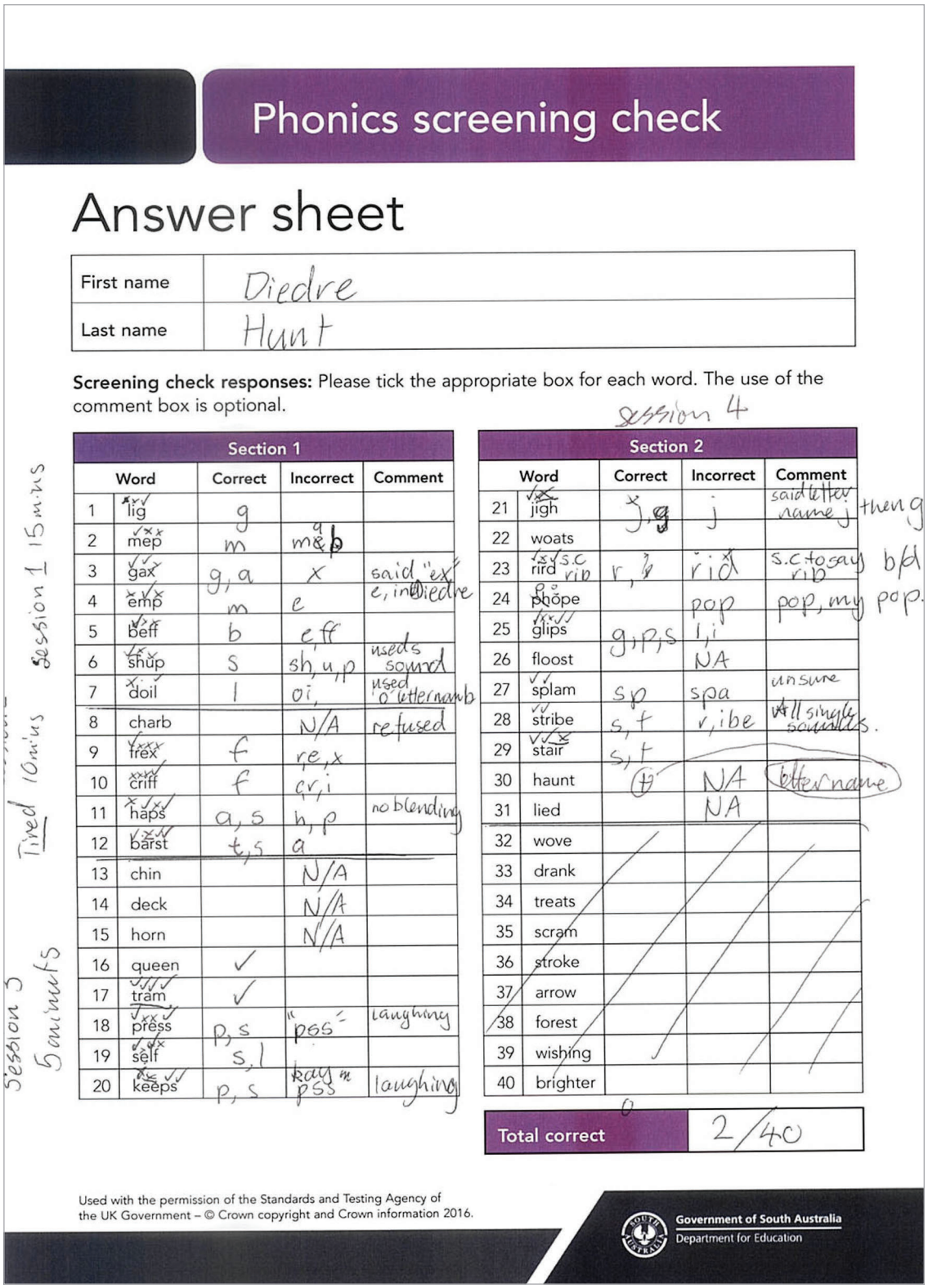
Use phoneme deletion and addition to build phonic skills using CVC words then building to more complex words with CCVC and CVCC patterns.

Build vocabulary and comprehension through practical activities and curiosity.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Errors:
i/e – confused and inconsistent
ph
phoneme strings of 3 or more phonemes:
stribe, treats, stroke
AND
phoneme strings with 'r'
most vowel digraphs and trigraphs, eg igh, i_e, air, ar, au, ied, o_e, ea, or, ow, er</td></tr>
</table>

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Case study group 3: Struggling decoder – Diedre Hunt



Phonics screening check

Answer sheet

First name	Diedre
Last name	Hunt

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

session 4

Section 1

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
1	lig	g		
2	mep	m	m&b	
3	gax	g, a	x	said "ex"
4	emp	m	e	e, in Diedre
5	beff	b	e,ff	
6	shup	s	sh, u, p	used sound
7	doil	l	oi,	used 'o' lettername
8	charb		N/A	refused
9	frex	f	re, x	
10	criff	f	cr, i	
11	haps	a, s	h, p	no blending
12	barst	t, s	a	
13	chin		N/A	
14	deck		N/A	
15	horn		N/A	
16	queen	✓		
17	tram	✓		
18	press	p, s	"pss"	laughing
19	self	s, l		
20	keeps	p, s	kay m pss	laughing

Tired 10 mins session 1 15 mins session 3 5 minutes

Section 2

	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
21	jigh	j, g	j	said letter name j then g
22	woats			
23	rird s.c rib	r, b	rid	s.c to say b/d rib
24	phope		pop	pop, my pop.
25	glips	g, p, s	l, i	
26	floost		NA	
27	splam	sp	spa	unsure
28	stribe	s, t	r, ibe	all single sounds.
29	stair	s, t		
30	haunt		NA	letter name
31	lied		NA	
32	wove			
33	drank			
34	treats			
35	scram			
36	stroke			
37	arrow			
38	forest			
39	wishing			
40	brighter			

Total correct	2/40

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Department for Education

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Analysis: Struggling decoder – Diedre Hunt

Score: 2/40	Interpretation	Teaching notes
Correct responses: g, m, a, b, s, l, f, ff, a, s, t, qu, ee, n, p, r, j, d **Errors:** l, i, e, x, sh, u, oi, ch, ar, i, h, s, t, n, ck, or, qu, ee, ss, k, j, igh, w, oa, ir, ph, oo, air, au, ied, ea, rr, ow, sh, ng, er	Diedre is clearly a struggling decoder. She completed the check in 4 sessions and required over an hour to complete 31 items of the check. While Diedre recognises a number of single sounds in words she is broadly unable to decode any pseudo-words and struggles with all but 2 common real words (queen, tram). The word 'queen' appears in an alphabet chart in the classroom. Reading is a high energy activity for Diedre. She made no attempt at some words and attempted some letter-sounds. She does not know common digraphs, reads few vowels and baulks at most words with complex construction beyond CVC. In the presence of structured, explicit phonics instruction with decodable texts, results like this indicate: • inconsistent attendance in the first year of school • inconsistent instruction in phonics concepts; • developing phonemic awareness • limited exposure to aural English (having heard little English spoken) • learning difficulties.	Individualised intervention. Assess phonemic awareness and teach unknown sounds. Expose Diedre to as much spoken English in play-based settings with strong English language modelled by peers and staff. Use targeted teaching that deals with each unknown letter and give extended time for processing and repetition for consolidation. Use phoneme deletion and addition to build phonic skills using CVC words.

Further advice for working with struggling decoders

Particular students who have identified speech, language and communication needs, or other specific learning difficulties (including dyslexia), may not be able to process the sounds that are essential for acquiring phonic knowledge and skills. Dyslexia is a lifelong neurological disorder that primarily affects the phonological component of language. It presents itself through difficulties with:

- accurate and/or fluent word recognition
- spelling
- decoding.

In the classroom, students with these learning difficulties may struggle with remembering letter sounds, blending, and reading words with more complex letter strings. Additionally, students with dyslexia can have poor working memory, which affects organisation and following teacher instructions. These students are often articulate and have strong verbal skills. With the systematic synthetic phonics approach, dyslexic students can learn to read; however, this will take time and repeated practice. It is vital that teachers seek advice and support from leadership and support services.

Interventions for struggling decoders may need to focus on more than phonics, since they may also have significant difficulties with attention and listening; remembering sounds and words; discriminating between sounds; recall; and phonological awareness. It is important to provide multiple opportunities for struggling decoders to experience phonological awareness activities, such as rhymes, chants and songs; segmenting and syllabification activities; phoneme substitution and other phonemic awareness skills; and regular explicit practise.

Students who have reading difficulties may find short vowels harder to discriminate. Hence, students may find it easier to work first on blending long vowels, rather than short vowels. If students are struggling with blending, start with words that have continuous sounds (a, e, f, i, l, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, y, z). If the sound can be held continuously, hold the sound for 1–2 seconds and blend it smoothly into the next sound in the word. For example, for the word 'man', say 'mmmmmaaaaannnnn'. If the sound cannot be held continuously, say the sound once; pause briefly for 1–2 seconds; and then say the next sound in the word, elongating it for 1–2 seconds if possible. For example, for the word 'pin', say 'p [1 second pause] iiiinnnn'.

If students find it difficult to recall grapheme-phoneme correspondences, multisensory approaches could be beneficial, such as using magnetic letters; writing the letter at the same time as saying it; and using mnemonics that help them to recall the sound, such as a hissing snake for the sound /s/. Students may also benefit from practising grapheme-phoneme correspondences beyond the point at which they appear to have been mastered. Revision is helpful for all students.

Some students, with short-term memory difficulties, struggle to hold a sequence of sounds in their mind. If the student cannot hold more than, say, 3 phonemes in mind, they should be encouraged to sound and blend no more than 3 at a time to reduce the load on memory, for example blending /s/ /t/ /a/ in 'stand' and saying 'sta', then adding the /n/ and saying 'stan', then adding the /d/ and saying 'stand'.

Make parents and carers aware of these reading difficulties as early as possible and provide them with resources and support strategies that they can use at home to encourage children and to strengthen the home-school partnership.

Ensure that students are using decodable texts as their main reading material. Decodable texts are specially constructed short texts made up of words that the students can decode. These texts may also include high-frequency, irregular words that students have been taught. Decodable texts support these students to become more self-reliant readers.

Time-limited, sustained 1:1 or small group tutoring may be required for students who are easily distracted or who find it difficult to concentrate. Students may benefit from explicit support for listening and attention skills. Such problems may be associated with speech, language and communication needs or ADHD. Tutoring can commence by checking whether the student knows the fundamental concepts of print, such as the difference between a 'letter' and a 'word', as well as left to right reading at both the single word level and at the line level.

The links listed below can provide additional information:

- SERU provides a range of learning and teaching materials and specialised services which support children and students with disabilities and learning difficulties – http://web.seru.sa.edu.au/
- Speech pathology – http://tiny.cc/SpeechPathology
- Programs for students with additional needs – http://tiny.cc/AdditionalNeeds
- Learning difficulties – http://tiny.cc/LearningDifficulties
- Communication resources for teachers – http://tiny.cc/CommunicationResources
- DSF (Dyslexia SPELD Foundation) – https://dsf.net.au/
- SPELD SA – https://www.speld-sa.org.au/

Following the analysis

After analysing each student's errors, to determine what aspect of phonics they need to strengthen, teachers can refer to the appendices in this document to learn about a range of instructional strategies that can used to address the specific difficulties identified.

7 | Glossary

Term	Definition	Relevance to the phonics screening check
blending	Combining the individual sounds or phonemes to form whole words. Cued in by looking at letters in words in order.	The teacher determines the student's capacity to blend individual sounds as represented in print.
VC **VCC** **CV** **CVC** **CCVC** **CCVCC**	These expressions describe consonant (C) and vowel (V) patterns in simple English words: VC – eg of, it, an VCC – eg add, old, and CV – eg to, so, no CVC – eg tap, pat CCVC – eg trip, plan CCVCC – eg thick, plant	The teacher checks decoding of words with vowel and consonant patterns of increasing complexity. They build a systematic picture of the student's phonics understanding. Students who can manipulate letter-sound relationships of increasing complexity show more advanced skill and knowledge in phonics.
digraph	A combination of 2 letters, or graphemes, that represents 1 sound, eg the oo makes the 'oo' sound in 'boot' and 'look', and the 'sh' and the 'or' sounds in 'shorn'.	The teachers checks the reading of all the common digraphs used in early reading and writing, eg sh, ch, th, ee, oo, ar, and oi.
diphthong	A diphthong is a special kind of vowel sound. It refers to a sound that has two parts; beginning with one vowel sound and moving towards another, eg /oi/ as in coin, /oy/ as in toy, /ou/ as in cloud, /ow/ as in cow or arrow.	The teacher may find this useful background information when puzzling over the vowel sounds in some words. Is there just one vowel sound (mono – means 1)? Or does the vowel sound glide from one vowel sound to another vowel sound (di – means 2)?
grapheme	A letter or group of letters that represents a sound or phoneme. Graphemes are the letters in letter-sound relationships.	The teacher assesses the student's ability to identify common English graphemes and link them to the phonemes they represent.
phoneme	The smallest unit of sound that adds to a word's meaning. Phonemes are the sounds in letter-sound relationships.	The teachers checks the student's ability to link common English phonemes to the graphemes that represent them.
phonemic awareness	The ability to focus on the separate, individual sounds in words, the phonemes.	Students must be able to hear the sounds of language (phonemes) to link them to the letters that represent them (graphemes). The teacher checks to assess the student's level of phonemic awareness.
phonics	Phonics refers to the relationship between individual sounds (phonemes) and the letters that represent them (graphemes).	The teacher evaluates the extent to which the student can make the link between phonemes and graphemes.
trigraph	A group of 3 letters that represents 1 sound, eg 'igh' as in 'high', 'tch' as in 'match'.	The teacher uses the check to test reading of common trigraphs.
voiced and unvoiced sounds	Voiced sounds are consonant sounds that use the vocal cords, eg the 'z' at the end of 'bees'. Other consonant sounds are unvoiced links as in the 's' in 'snake'.	The teacher listens for errors that could indicate the student's confused phonemic awareness of voiced and unvoiced sounds.
vowel digraph	Digraphs that function as vowels. Split vowel digraphs are those that use a medial vowel and 'silent e' at the end of words.	The teacher checks the reading of common vowel digraphs, eg ee, oo, ar, ir, oi, and u_e.

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Appendix 1: The structure of the phonics screening check

The phonics screening check is organised in 2 sections.

Section 1

Simple word structures using single letters, some consonant digraphs and frequent and consistent vowel digraphs.

20 words in total; 12 pseudo-words and 8 real words.

Checks the letter-sound relationships for the sounds: p, i, b, v, u, s, y, o, e, l, t, d, sh, ch, a, oi, qu, ee, n, r, oo, m, ar, th, j, zz, f, or, and ck.

Section 2

More complex words, including 2 syllable words, additional consonant digraphs, less frequent and consistent vowel/split digraphs and trigraphs.

20 words: 8 pseudo-words and 12 real words.

Checks some of the previously checked phonic concepts and additional letter-sound relationships for the sounds k, igh, g, ir, ai, y, u_e, f, aw, air, oa, i_e, c, o_e, x, ur, w, ng, or.

The Dyslexia SPELD Foundation produces two A4 'Tune into the Sounds of English' documents that mirror the 2 sections of the phonics screening check. Each document has the consonant sounds on one side of the sheet and the vowel sounds on the other. The basic version generally provides 1 example of each sound, whereas the extended code version provides multiple examples (eg the short /oo/ sound has 'book' as the example in the basic version, but the extended code has /u/ as in 'push', /oul/ as in 'could', and /o/ as in 'wolf'). Laminated copies of these documents are available for purchase from www.dsf.net.au.

The Phonic Books website also provides a freely downloadable version of a simple phonic code table, for beginner readers, and a complex phonic code table, for catch-up readers (http://TLinSA.2.vu/PhonicCodeTable). These tables are more complex than those produced by the Dyslexia SPELD Foundation.

The tables on the following pages demonstrate the increasing complexity of the words checked in the PSC, providing a summary of the letter-sounds checked, in the order of checking, and the breakdown of phonic elements. Each year a new set of words are used in the check but they follow a similar pattern to the example that follows.

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Summary of the letter-sounds checked

Section 1 of the phonics screening check – example

Item	Pattern of phonic elements	Consonant/vowel patterns (Digraphs underlined)	Letter-sounds checked
lig	3 phoneme string	CVC	l, i, g
mep	3 phoneme string	CVC	m, e, p
gax	3 phoneme string	CVC	g, a, x
emp	3 phoneme string	VCC	e, m, p
beff	2 phoneme string consonant digraph	CVCC	b, e, ff
shup	common consonant digraph 2 phoneme string	CCVC	sh, u, p
doil	single phoneme vowel digraph single phoneme	CVVC	d, oi, l
charb	common consonant digraph r-controlled vowel single phoneme	CCVCC	ch, ar, b
frex	4 phoneme string	CCVC	f, r, e, x
criff	3 phoneme string consonant digraph	CCVCC	c, r, i, ff
haps	4 phoneme string	CVCC	h, a, p, s
barst	single phoneme r-controlled vowel 2 phoneme string	CVCCC	b, ar, s, t
chin	common consonant digraph 2 phoneme string	CCVC	ch, i, n
deck	2 phoneme string consonant digraph	CVCC	d, e, ck
horn	single phoneme r-controlled vowel single phoneme	CVCC	h, or, n
queen	common consonant digraph vowel digraph single phoneme	CVVC	qu, ee, n
tram	4 phoneme string	CCVC	t, r, a, m
press	3 phoneme string consonant digraph	CCVCC	p, r, e, ss
self	4 phoneme string	CVCC	s, e, l, f
keeps	single phoneme vowel digraph 2 phoneme string	CVVCC	k, ee, p, s

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Section 2 of the phonics screening check – example

Item	Pattern of phonic elements	Consonant/vowel patterns (Digraphs underlined)	Letter-sounds checked
jigh	single phoneme trigraph	CVCC	j, igh
woats	single phoneme vowel digraph 2 phoneme string	CVVCC	w, oa, t, s
rird	single phoneme r-controlled vowel single phoneme	CVCC	r, ir, d
phope	consonant digraph split vowel digraph single phoneme	CCVCV	ph, o_e, p
glips	5 single phonemes	CCVCC	g, l, i, p, s
floost	2 phoneme string vowel digraph 2 phoneme string	CCVVCC	f, l, oo, s, t
splam	5 phoneme string	CCCVC	s, p, l, a, m
stribe	3 phoneme string split vowel digraph single phoneme	CCCVCV	s, t, r, i_e, b
stair	2 phoneme string vowel trigraph	CCVVC	s, t, air
haunt	single phoneme vowel digraph 2 phoneme string	CVVCC	h, au, n, t
lied	single phoneme vowel digraph single phoneme	CVVC	l, ie, d
wove	single phoneme split vowel digraph single phoneme	CVCV	w, o_e, v
drank	5 phoneme string	CCVCC	d, r, a, n, k
treats	2 phoneme string common vowel digraph 2 phoneme string	CCVVCC	t, r, ea, t, s
scram	5 phoneme string	CCCVC	s, c, r, a, m
stroke	3 phonemes string split vowel digraph single phoneme	CCCVCV	s, t, r, o_e, k

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Phonics screening check

Item	Pattern of phonic elements	Consonant/vowel patterns (Digraphs underlined)	Letter-sounds checked
arrow	single phoneme consonant digraph diphthong[12]	V<u>CC</u>V<u>C</u>	a, rr, ow
forest	6 phoneme string	CVCVCC	f, o, r, e, s, t
wishing	2 phoneme string consonant digraph single phoneme consonant digraph	CV<u>CC</u>V<u>CC</u>	w, i, sh, i, ng
brighter	2 phoneme string vowel trigraph single phoneme r-controlled vowel	CC<u>VCC</u>C<u>VC</u>	b, r, igh, t, er

[12] A diphthong is a special kind of vowel sound. It refers to a sound that has two parts; beginning with one vowel sound and moving towards another, eg /oi/ as in coin, /oy/ as in toy, /ou/ as in cloud, /ow/ as in cow or arrow.

Appendix 2: Rationale for assessing pseudo-words

Highly skilled readers accurately recognise words extremely quickly. For beginning readers, the most efficient way to learn to read an alphabetic language such as English is to learn how to decode words using letter-sound correspondences. As students become more highly skilled, they recognise many words automatically. However, if students rely entirely on memorising words, they become dependent on someone repeatedly reading a word aloud for them until they remember and recognise it. They can then only recognise and read aloud the words that they have been taught. In addition, they have to hold words in their working memory as they learn to read. The more words they acquire, the more demand is placed on their working memory. They reach a threshold of how much they can retain and find it difficult to progress further with their reading.

When students learn how to sound out and blend letters into words, following the rules about letter-sounds in English, they develop a more efficient path to becoming an independent reader than they would through memorising every single word they encounter.

If students are given phonetically regular texts to read aloud, matched to what they know about letter-sound relationships, they can effectively practise and build their skills in sounding out letters, applying rules and blending, to make words, and move on to recognising those words automatically. They can teach themselves to recognise many phonetically regular words automatically.

If students know how to sound out the letters of a word, and the rules about sounds, then they can make a good attempt to read aloud any word they encounter in print, even words they have never seen before. Skilled readers use this strategy to decode unfamiliar words.

The challenge with learning to read in English is that it is not always phonetically regular. While there are only 44 sounds, there are quite a few rules to manage all letter-sounds, ambiguities and some exceptions. These rules need careful, explicit teaching until they are all recognised automatically. Words and patterns that appear frequently are more likely to be learnt quickly, but words with irregular patterns, that also appear frequently, will require further specific instruction so they can be read automatically. In the end, to be a good reader, you must recognise all letter and word patterns automatically.

Pseudo-words are included in phonics assessments because students have to sound out the letters and blend them. They cannot recognise the word from memory, because they have never seen it before.

Pseudo-words are the best way of finding out if students have mastered the critical skills of sounding out letters, applying rules and blending sounds to make a word.

When students read a real word aloud, we can't tell if they simply memorised the word, taught themselves to recognise the word automatically through practise, sounding it out and blending it, or they have just sounded it out in their head and said the blended word. However, pseudo-words are not easily memorised because they are not linked to meaning, allowing checking of phonic skills alone.

Pseudo-words allow us to check all of the common combinations of letters and sounds in English to see if students can sound out and blend every one. This does not mean students should be taught lists of pseudo-words. In a systematic synthetic phonics program, students practise reading real words that will be seen in a variety of contexts. This is more efficient than practising pseudo-words because the real words will be seen again.

Some literature, such as books by Dr Seuss or Roald Dahl, use pseudo-words playfully. These pseudo-words, used in the context of the story, reinforce the aim of reading to make meaning from texts. Teachers can have fun with the 'squifflerotter' and the 'grinksludger' from Dahl's *The BFG* or the parrot named 'Hooey', who said 'phooey' and ended up in St. Louis from Suess's *Oh Say Can You Say*. In other contexts, pseudo-words should be used sparingly and only for assessment purposes.

Appendix 3: Phonics and the Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum *National Literacy Learning Progression* identifies indicators of literacy development necessary to successfully engage with the literacy demands of the foundation to year 10 Australian Curriculum. It provides teachers with a conceptual tool to develop targeted teaching and learning programs for students who are working above or below year level expectations.

In the *National Literacy Learning Progression*, 'phonic knowledge and word recognition' (PKW) is 1of 3 sub-elements of 'Reading and viewing' and is closely related to phonological awareness. While the *National Literacy Learning Progression* provides a logical sequence, not all students will progress through every level in a uniform manner. The *National Literacy Learning Progression* is not intended to advise schools on how to teach, plan, program, assess or report, but it can be a valuable tool to design learning matched to each student's current developmental needs.

Phonics screening check	AC English F–1	AC Progressions
Phonics screening check section 1: simple word structures (eg CVC, CCVC & CVCC) using ...		
Single letters	**F:** Recognise and name all capital and lower case letters (graphemes) and know the most common sound that each letter represents ACELA1440 **F:** They recognise the letters of the English alphabet, in capital and lower case and know and use the most common sounds represented by most letters. They read high-frequency words and blend sounds orally to read consonant-vowel-consonant words Achievement Standard **Year 1:** Manipulate phonemes in spoken words by addition, deletion and substitution of initial, medial and final phonemes to generate new words ACELA1457 **Year 1:** Understand how to spell 1 and 2 syllable words with common letter patterns ACELA1778 **Year 1:** When reading, they use knowledge of the relationship between sounds and letters ... Achievement Standard	PKW3 (F) VC, CVC PWK4 (F–Yr1) VC, CVC
Some consonant digraphs (ch, ck, ff, ll, ng, sh, ss, th, zz)	**Year 1:** Segment consonant blends or clusters into separate phonemes at the beginnings and ends of 1 syllable words ACELA1822	PKW5 (Yr1) CCVC, CVCC
Frequent and consistent vowel digraphs (ar, ee, oi, oo, or)	**Year 1:** Use short vowels, common long vowels, consonant digraphs and consonant blends when writing, and blend these to read single syllable words ACELA1458 **Year 1:** Understand that a letter can represent more than 1 sound and that a syllable must contain a vowel sound ACELA1459	Some PKW5 (Yr1) Some PKW6 (Yr1) Some PKW7 (Yr2)

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Phonics screening check

Phonics screening check	AC English 2	AC Progressions
Phonics screening check section 2: variety of more complex word structures (eg CCVCC, CCCVCC & 2 syllable words) with some ...		
Additional consonant digraphs (ph, wh)	Not mentioned specifically	Not mentioned
Less frequent and consistent vowel digraphs, including split digraphs	**Year 2:** They...self-correct using knowledge of phonics ... and use knowledge of a wide variety of letter-sound relationships to read words of 1 or more syllables with fluency ... They accurately spell words with regular spelling patterns and spell words with less common long vowel patterns Achievement Standard **Year 2:** Use most letter-sound matches including vowel digraphs, less common long vowel patterns, letter clusters and silent letters when reading and writing words of 1 or more syllable ACELA1824 **Year 2:** Orally manipulate more complex sounds in spoken words through knowledge of blending and segmenting sounds, phoneme deletion and substitution in combination with use of letters in reading and writing ACELA1474	Some PKW5 (Yr1) PKW6 (Yr1) Some PKW7 (Yr2)
Trigraphs (air, igh)	Not mentioned specifically	Not mentioned
Not in check—silent letters **Other**	**Year 2:** Understand how to use knowledge of digraphs, long vowels, blends and silent letters to spell 1 and 2 syllable words including some compound words ACELA1471	PKW5 (Yr 1) PKW6 (Yr 1) PKW7 (Yr 2) PKW 8 (Yr 2 and 3)

According to this analysis, it is reasonable to expect year 1 students to decode 28 items correct out of the 40 items in the PSC. This would involve decoding all items with simple structures, most items with frequent and consistent structures and some more complex items. The terms (all, most, some) are defined in the UK document, The *Assessment framework for the development of the year 1 phonics screening check* (p.6, 2017)[13].

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[13] http://tiny.cc/UKframework

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Children who have achieved the expected standard at the end of year 1 will have experience of decoding all of the types of words that appear in the year 1 phonics screening check. They will know the grapheme-phoneme correspondences and be able to blend phonemes in words with the orthographical structures that have been included in the phonics screening check. However, children at the minimum expected standard will **not necessarily** score full marks.

In particular this means that in the phonics screening check, a child working at the minimum expected standard should be able to decode:

- **all items** with simple structures containing single letters and consonant digraphs
- **most items** containing frequent and consistent vowel digraphs:
  - 'frequent' means that the vowel digraph appears often in words read by children in year 1
  - 'consistent' means the digraph has a single or predominant phoneme correspondence
- **all items** containing a single 2-consonant string with other single letters (ie CCVC or CVCC)
- **most items** containing two 2-consonant strings and a vowel (ie CCVCC)
- **some items** containing less frequent and less consistent vowel digraphs, including split digraphs
- **some items** containing a single 3-consonant string
- **some items** containing 2 syllables.

It should be noted that where items contain a number of the different features listed above, decoding will become more difficult. It will become less likely that a child working at the minimum expected standard will be able to decode such items appropriately. For example, a child will be less likely to decode an item containing both a consonant string and a less frequent vowel digraph, than an item with a consonant string but a frequent, consistent vowel digraph.

The most valuable use of phonics screening check data will be at the classroom level. This 'expected achievement' is provided to give teachers a sense of what it is reasonable to expect, given the time of year and the requirements of our curriculum. Please note that this is not a pass/fail mark – it is an indication of the score a student might achieve if their phonics learning is progressing as expected.

Appendix 4: A suggested sequence for a reception synthetic phonics program

RECEPTION				
Word blending	**Week**	**Knowledge and skills**	**Special words**	**Support activities**
Term 1				
Blend sounds in VC, CVC, and VCC words from week 1	1	s a t i p Learn and practise letter-sounds Blend sounds in short regular words, eg p-i-t > pit, orally and for reading		• Nursery rhymes • Phonemic awareness activities Teacher story/ big book reading Literacy games and activities • Daily drill of letter-sounds • 1-1 assessment of letter-sounds 2x/wk • 1-1 assessment reading regular words and special words 2x/wk • Students read phonic books • Segmenting simple, regular words: teacher says a word eg pit, stop, coach. Students hold up a finger for each sound: p-i-t (3 sounds, 3 fingers); s-t-o-p (4 sounds, 4 fingers); c-oa-ch (3 sounds, 3 fingers) • Dictation of letter-sounds and short regular words on dry wipe boards and immediate self-correction • Write simple sentences
	2	n c k e h r Learn to write first name		
	3	m d g o u Begin dictation of letter-sounds and simple regular words Segment simple regular words		
	4	l f b ai j Begin teaching special words for reading and writing	*I, was, the*	
	5	oa ie ee or z w	*he, me, we, be*	
	6	ng v oo oo y x Introduce beginning and end blends	*to, do*	
	7	ch sh th th qu ou	*she, are*	
	8	oi ue er ar Teach sounds of capital letters	*all (ball, call, fall, hall, tall, wall)*	
	9	Revision	*Revise 12 special words*	
	10	Assessment		

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Phonics screening check

RECEPTION				
Word blending	**Week**	**Knowledge and skills**	**Special words**	**Support activities**
Term 2				
Blend sounds in VC, CVC, VCC, CCVC, CVCC and CCCVC words	1	Teach formation of capital letters: **ABCDE** Teach full stop <y> for /ee/ sound and double letters to keep preceding vowel short	*you, your*	• Literacy games and activities • Daily drill of letter-sounds • Daily letter formation practise • 1-1 assessment of letter-sounds 2x/wk • 1-1 assessment reading regular words and special words 2x/wk • Read sentences, using blending for unknown words • Segmenting simple regular words • Dictation of letter-sounds, short regular words and special words on dry wipe boards and immediate self-correction • Independent writing
	2	Teach capital letters: **FGHIJKLM** Short vowels	*come, some*	
	3	Teach capital letters: **NOPQRS** ll, ff, ss, zz, ck	*said, here*	
			there, they	
	4	Teach capital letters: **TUVWXYZ** 'magic e' a_e, e_e, i_e, o_e, u_e	*go, no, so*	
	5	<u_e> for /oo/ ai as a_e; ee as e_e, y ie as i_e; oa as o_e ue as u_e; oo as u_e, ue	*my, by*	
	6		*one*	
	7		*only, old*	
	8		*like, have*	
	9	Revision	*Revise T1 and T2 special words*	
	10	Assessment		

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Phonics screening check

RECEPTION				
Word blending	**Week**	**Knowledge and skills**	**Special words**	**Support activities**
Term 3				
Blend sounds in VC, CVC, VCC, CCVC, CVCC and CCCVC words	1	<ay> for /ai / <oy> for /oi/	*live, give*	• Literacy games and activities • Daily drill of letter-sounds • Daily letter formation practise, lower case and capitals • 1-1 assessment of letter-sounds 2x/wk • 1-1 assessment reading regular words and special words 2x/wk • Read sentences, using blending for unknown words • Dictation of words and sentences (including regular words and special words) on dry wipe boards with immediate self-correction • Independent writing
	2	<ea> for /ee/ <wh> for /w/	*little, down*	
	3	<y> for /ie/	*what, when, why*	
	4	<ow> for /oa/	*where, who, which*	
	5	<ir> & <ur> for /er/	*any, many*	
	6	<ew> for /ue/ & /oo/	*more, before*	
	7	<ow> for /ou/	*other, mother, were*	
	8	<igh> for /ie/ <aw> for /or/	*because, want, saw, put*	
	9	Revision	*Revise T1, T2 and T3 special words*	
	10	Assessment		
Term 4				
Blend sounds in VC, CVC, VCC, CCVC, CVCC and CCCVC words	1	Teach <a> for ai Revise ai ay a a_e Teach <wh> for /w/	*could, should, would*	• Literacy games and activities • Daily drill of letter-sounds • Daily letter formation practise, lower case and capitals • 1-1 assessment of letter-sounds 2x/wk • 1-1 assessment reading regular words and special words 2x/wk • Read sentences, using blending for unknown words • Dictation of words and sentences (including regular words and special words) on dry wipe boards with immediate self-correction • Independent writing
	2	Teach <e> for ee Revise ee ea e e_e	*right, two, four, goes*	
	3	Teach <i> for ie Revise ie y igh i i_e	*does, made, their*	
	4	Teach <o> for oa Revise oa ow o o_e	*once, upon, always*	
	5	Teach <u> for ue Revise oo ue ew, u_e, u	*also, of, eight*	
	6	Teach <au> & <al> for /or/	*love, cover, after*	
	7	Revise er ,ir, ur	*every, father*	
	8	Revise or aw au al	*Revise all 72 special words*	
	9	Assessment		

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Appendix 5: Thirteen important aspects of a systematic synthetic phonics program

1 | Phonological awareness

Having a broad awareness of the sounds of language

Phonological awareness involves being able to hear all sounds in language. It involves for example, the ability to recognise and use rhyme; break words into syllables; blend phonemes (sounds) into syllables and words; identify beginning and ending sounds in a syllable; and see small words in larger words (eg cat in catalogue). Phonological awareness is both oral and aural and does not need a knowledge of written letters.

Tasks that involve phonological awareness include:

- identifying and making same sounds
- identifying and making alliteration and assonance (sing, song, sung)
- identifying and making rhymes
- dividing sentences into words
- dividing words into syllables
- segmenting and blending onsets and rimes.

2 | Phonemic awareness

Knowing how to manipulate the separate sounds in words

In the strictest sense, phonemic awareness is a subset of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness only deals with 1 aspect of sound: the phoneme. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound which can make a difference to the meaning of a word.

For example, if we change the first phoneme in man from /m/ to /b/, we change the word from man to ban. This also changes the meaning of the word. Learning to hear separate sounds in words allows students to relate the sounds to the letters of the alphabet and supports their ability to read and write words they have not seen before.

As with all phonics strategies, phonemic awareness involves a sequence of instruction progressing from easier to more difficult tasks and from larger to smaller units of spoken language, for example:

- identifying beginning, final, and medial phonemes in spoken words
- segmenting and blending individual phonemes in spoken words
- inserting, substituting and deleting individual phonemes in spoken words.

Ideally, the phonemic awareness component of a high-quality synthetics program uses tactile, auditory and visual cues to help children understand how to identify, segment, and blend the sounds in spoken words. It will usually start with continuous sounds that are easier to blend and it will advise teachers to 'stretch out' and blend (or 'sing') sounds rather than separating them. As students' understanding develops, it will include activities to teach the relationship of letters to sounds.

3 | Concepts about print

Understanding the forms and functions of printed language

Students will not always come to school with an awareness of print. Some students may come from a particular culture or home environment where reading print is not a regular daily practice, so they may not understand that print has meaning or purpose. Good instructional programs will involve the introduction and discussion of a range of print texts and a discussion of their purpose.

Environmental print of the classroom, as well as magazines, newspapers, recipes, instructions, menus and street signs, are all sources relevant to the classroom discussions that build students' print awareness. Elements of an instructional program that develops print awareness include learning to differentiate letters from numbers; recognising English letters from different community languages; and reading signs that incorporate non-print messages (such as road signs or warning signs).

4 | Alphabetic knowledge

Knowing the shapes and names of letters of the alphabet

English has a 26-letter alphabet with upper and lower case letters. Any systematic approach to teaching English provides activities for students to learn this. Handwriting lessons that teach upper and lower case letter forms provide an ideal opportunity to teach students how to form letters and support letter-shape recognition. A high-quality program provides students with the opportunity to experiment with and manipulate letters to make words and messages, using a sequence of letter introduction that can be adjusted to student need. The teaching sequence should consider the visual appearance of each letter and avoid teaching letters that are too similar in appearance in close succession. In many programs, lower-case letters might be taught before upper-case equivalents.

5 | The alphabetic principle

Understanding the relationship between sounds and written letters

Programs that effectively teach the alphabetic principle teach letter-sound relationships explicitly and in isolation and are also known as phonics programs. They provide daily opportunities for students to practise letter-sound relationships, and include new letter-sound relationships, as well as cumulatively reviewing previously taught relationships. Such programs give students opportunities early and often to apply their expanding knowledge of letter-sound relationships to the reading of phonetically spelled words that are familiar and to words that are new to them.

6 | Sequence, rate and mode of phonics instruction

Adopting a systematic sequence, rate and mode to support learning

Good synthetic phonics programs recognise that students learn letter-sound relationships at different rates. They introduce letter-sound relationships at a measured pace and allow teachers time to review unconsolidated learning. High-quality programs place common letter-sound relationships early in the teaching sequence by introducing common consonants and vowels so students can learn to read words quickly. Importantly, high-quality phonics programs avoid the simultaneous introduction of letter-sounds that sound or look too similar, eg b/d/p/q are not taught in close succession. Single consonant sounds and consonant blends or clusters are taught in separate lessons. Blending instruction occurs with words that contain the letter-sound relationships that students have learned. Phonic concepts are taught using multisensory means that cue students to methods of sound production for voiced and unvoiced sounds.

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

7 | Decoding

Knowing how to read each letter or letter pattern in a word

Quality synthetic phonics programs provide children with opportunities to use their knowledge of letter-sound relationships to practise decoding. They help students use context to confirm the meanings of words they have identified by applying their knowledge of letter-sound relationships. They also support students by teaching them word morphology (meaningful parts of words, ie prefixes, suffixes, linguistic word roots and etymology), especially in multisyllabic words.

8 | Decodable texts

Applying knowledge of letter-sound relationships to decodable texts

Quality phonics programs provide opportunities for students to practise reading texts that contain a high proportion of words that conform to letter-sound relationships they have been taught, particularly through the first stages of the program. High-quality decodable texts contain enough high-frequency, irregular, and story words to make them sound as natural as possible so they can sustain the students' interest while allowing them to feel successful as a reader. The sequence of texts in such programs should closely match the teaching sequence of letter-sound relationships and contain phonic concepts that are cumulatively reviewed in subsequent texts. The program must be engaging, encourage the students to read, and promote and reinforce comprehension – the ultimate purpose of reading. To develop fluency and confidence, students must have opportunities to repeatedly read decodable texts.

9 | Reading fluency

Using a variety of texts to support easy, accurate, and expressive reading

Fluency aids comprehension and so students need opportunities to read and reread a range of stories and informational texts by reading independently, with a partner, or in choral reading situations. Effective programs provide these opportunities. They also pre-teach new or difficult words and provide students with practise in reading these words before expecting them to be read independently in a text. Students also benefit from hearing a range of texts read fluently and with expression. The regular assessment of students' oral reading fluency allows teachers to track individual students' reading rate and accuracy and, most critically, to check their reading comprehension. Take-home readers and in-class parent reading can support teachers to provide students with repeated opportunities to read texts and build their accuracy, fluency and comprehension.

10 | Irregular/high-frequency words

Recognising frequent words that are not readily decodable

Irregular/high-frequency words are best learned quickly to allow access to the broadest range of early reading texts. Effective programs acknowledge this and have specific instruction in how to read such words that makes the process enjoyable and rewarding for students. Teachers often support students to recognise these words by referring to them by a particular term such as a 'tricky word' or a 'red word.' Teachers also encourage students to identify the 'tricky' part of the word but decode the other parts, eg /said/ the tricky part is /ai/, which makes a short /e/ sound, whereas the beginning /s/ and the closing /d/ are easily decodable.

The goal of identifying these specific words is to develop automaticity. Automaticity indicates that students' short-term memory, often called working memory, immediately processes such words so that they can move on to reading other parts of the text to make immediate sense of what they read.

11 | Spelling

Translating letter-sound relationships and spelling patterns into written communication

Ideally, a good phonics program involves teaching spelling strategies that thoroughly cover the most common spelling for each sound, and then systematically introducing the advanced spelling alternatives for each sound. When assessing for spelling, students will not be expected to write words, sentences and stories independently before being taught how the writing system works. When encouraging students to express themselves in writing, teachers should make the distinction between lessons where correct spelling is the focus (eg in dictation) and lessons where self-expression and communication of ideas is the focus.

12 | Writing

Encoding sounds into letters to create words in texts to convey meaning

Integrated into good reading programs are multiple opportunities for students to apply their phonics skills to encode (or write) relevant and purposeful texts. Students should be supported to write increasingly sophisticated phonically structured words and apply their knowledge of writing conventions. Educators need to be intentional when setting writing tasks and include opportunities for students to explore and experiment with text structures, words and language features. Targeted and accurate feedback to students is vital to ensure students always apply their developing knowledge of letter-sounds and patterns.

Students who have spelling ability that limits their expressive range need added encouragement for writing even though they may lack consolidated spelling skills. Even for students whose spelling may impede clear expression, writing opportunities still assist them to develop their other writing skills, such as personal voice, the capacity to plan and organise texts, and the production of particular text types (eg characterisation and description in narratives; organising phrases in recounts). These students should be given enough time to edit their writing for meaning and not just spelling.

13 | Regular assessment and review of progress

A quality teaching and learning phonics resource will provide information about how to gather and interpret information about student progress and growth in line with the department's Learning Design, Assessment and Moderation (LDAM) strategy. Teachers then can make decisions about the next instructional steps. This information also forms the basis of feedback that teachers regularly provide to learners that will deepen their engagement in their phonics learning and assist them to move forward. Regular reviews of progress also support students to act as learning resources for one another in the classroom, eg as peer tutors.

Appendix 6: Examples of commercial programs

This is not an exhaustive list of available programs, but describes a number of programs that are in circulation in schools across Australia. A cross (X) indicates that this particular element is present in the program. ACER prepared this table for the Department for Education in 2018.

These programs rely on faithful and complete implementation of the suite of strategies and materials included in them to be effective.

By providing training and resources, program developers ensure high-quality implementation is maintained for program effectiveness. Partial, piecemeal or otherwise incomplete implementation of any of the listed programs interferes with its optimum effectiveness and reduces the cost-benefits of such programs.

	Letters and Sounds[14]	Jolly Phonics and Jolly Grammar[15]	Read Write Inc.[16]	Sounds Write[17]	InitiaLit[18]
phonological awareness	X	X	X	X	X
phonemic awareness	X	X	X	X	X
print awareness	Necessary across any program that identifies printed letters as units of meaning in English.				
alphabetic knowledge	X	X	X	X	X
the alphabetic principle	X	X	X	X	X
a systematic process or sequence of phonics introduction	X	X	X	X	X
decoding (segmenting, blending and manipulation of words)	X	X	X	X	X
reading practise with decodable texts	X	X	X	X	X
instruction in reading fluency in connected text			X		X
identification of irregular/high-frequency words	X	X	X	X	X
spelling instruction linked to phonological understandings	X	X	X	X	X
writing	X	X	X	X	X
assessment and review	X	X	X	X	X
cost	Handbook resource (free) Materials (varied cost)	**$1,049** (more for grammar resources)	Contact Oxford University Press for information	**$600-800** (4-day training) **Texts** (varied cost)	**$1660** (kit) **$1475** (class set 6x60 readers) **$1020** (2-day training)
online availability	X	X	X	X	X
mapped to Australian Curriculum		X[19]	X		X[20]

[14] http://tiny.cc/LettersSounds
[15] http://tiny.cc/JollyPhonicsBuy
[16] http://tiny.cc/ReadWriteIncBuy
[17] http://tiny.cc/SoundsWriteBuy
[18] http://tiny.cc/InitiaLitBuy
[19] http://tiny.cc/SPELDcompareJollyPhonics
[20] http://tiny.cc/InitiaLitLinkAC

Appendix 7: Digital resources

Name of resource and website	Computer-based or hands-on activities
Letters and Sounds[21] http://tiny.cc/LettersSounds	Hands-on activities and teaching strategies. Phonic teaching sequence. Good background information on phonics. Has lesson ideas and resources is play and hands-on-focused. Fantastic resource if a teacher has little understanding of the sequence of teaching phonics.
Florida Center for Reading Research http://TLinSA.2.vu/Florida	A range of activities based on the Big 6 of reading from the early years to middle primary years. The activities can be downloaded as PDF documents.
Spelfabet https://www.spelfabet.com.au	'The Spelfabet materials were designed by an Australian Speech Pathologist for non-experts to use in teaching struggling spellers/readers how to sound out words. They are carefully-sequenced, easy-to-use, affordable, downloadable and reproducible resources, which should be used with decodable books.' The website also provides useful links to resources and videos that are consistent with systematic, explicit, synthetic phonics principles.
Reading Doctor http://www.readingdoctor.com.au	Reading Doctor provides computer software and tablet apps designed to support the teaching of synthetic phonics. The software and apps strengthen skills crucial for literacy learning such as phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, blending, segmentation, decoding and sight word recognition. A network licence can be purchased or the apps can be purchased individually.
Five From Five http://TLinSA.2.vu/5from5Resources	Provides a range of resources including videos that support the effective teaching of reading.
Resources for students with specific learning difficulties	
Name of resource and website	**Computer-based or hands-on activities**
SPELD SA (Specific Learning Difficulties Association of South Australia) https://www.speld-sa.org.au/	SPELD SA provides a range of resources for students with specific learning difficulties. The website also includes assessment checklists. There are activities for all students: oral language, phonemic awareness, reading, writing, phonics and spelling. Plus there are examples of well-known synthetic phonics programs and free downloadable decodable texts.
Dyslexia SPELD Foundation https://dsf.net.au/resources	The Dyslexia SPELD Foundation provides access to free information and evidence-based resources to support people with specific learning difficulties.
Ozphonics http://ozphonics.com	Ozphonics is an iPad phonics reading system designed for reception students. Five separate apps, containing 67 practical exercises, are available for purchase. The games and activities incorporate Australian animals and use an Australian accent. Speech pathologists also use Ozphonics.
OG Card Deck http://TLinSA.2.vu/OGcardDeck	The Orton-Gillingham electronic card deck, developed for the Mayerson Academy, can be freely downloaded to an iPhone or iPad. This app provides students with specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, with many opportunities to practise the grapheme-phoneme correspondences that they need for reading and spelling. The multi-sensory grapheme cards allow students to hear phonemes, paired with key words, and to watch videos showing the articulation of the phoneme.
Nessy http://TLinSA.2.vu/Nessy	Nessy is an online site providing assessment tools and activities matched to students' needs. It is particularly useful when working with dyslexic students.

[21] Department for Education and Skills (2007) *Letters and Sounds: Principles and practice of high quality phonics*, Government of the United Kingdom, available at http://tiny.cc/LettersSounds

Appendix 8: Phonics screening check spreadsheet overview

The phonics screening check spreadsheet is designed to support the recording and analysis of student results.

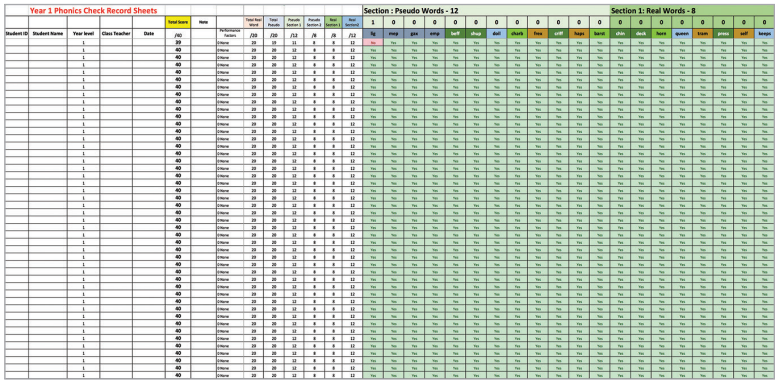
The spreadsheet for the current year can be accessed from the department's intranet at: http://TLinSA.2.vu/PSC

Class scores sheet

Note: Columns A–G are designed to align with EDSAS data entry. You can fill in this spreadsheet, then copy and paste it straight into the EDSAS sheet.

Enter your class data onto the 'class scores' sheet. We suggest you do this in order of score from lowest to highest, to save you having to sort it later.

- The scoring cells are preset to 'Yes', making it quicker to change cells to 'No' using the dropdown menu, rather than entering every correct response.
- Student names will remain visible as you enter your data because under the View tab in Excel's ribbon we have turned on 'freeze panes'.
- The words in the phonics screening check will also remain visible.
- Performance factors can be included using the dropdown menu.
- Student results will be populated automatically in columns D–J.



0	0	0	0	0
vus	yop	elt	desh	chab
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

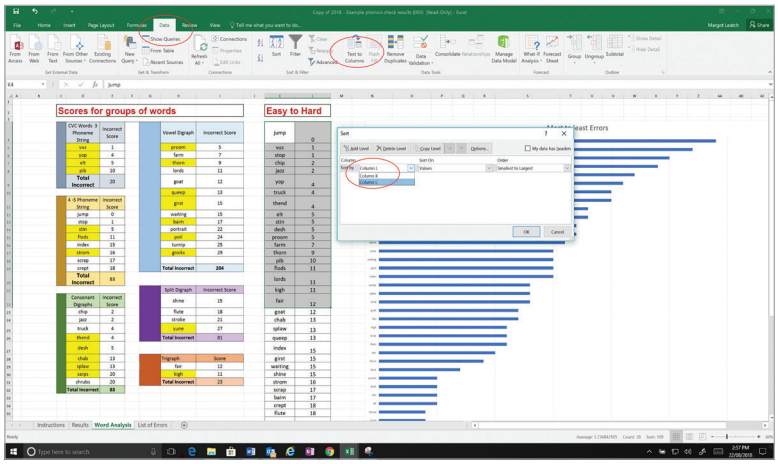
Continued on page 47

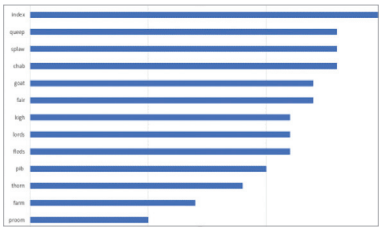
Phonics screening check

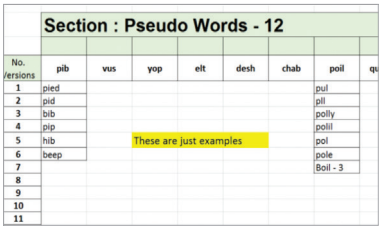
Word analysis sheet

The 'word analysis' sheet is a separate tab within the spreadsheet and will automatically populate the different phoneme groups.

- Sorting the tables from smallest to largest is useful. Highlight the score table, select 'data', then 'sort', and select the 'incorrect score' column. This makes interpreting the graph easier. You will receive the question 'Expand the selection?' – answer 'Yes'.
- A graph will be created automatically from the 'incorrect word tally' table. This will collate your class results.







Error types

The 'error types' sheet is also a separate tab within the spreadsheet and is for listing incorrect student responses, which will be useful for further error analysis.

Produced by the Literacy Guarantee Unit – for support phone 8463 5812.

Making lists of the error types may be helpful in identifying patterns of error for teaching points

	Section : Pseudo Words - 12												Section 1: Real Words - 8							
No. Versions	lig	mep	gax	emp	beff	shup	doil	charb	frex	criff	haps	barst	chin	deck	horn	queen	tram	press	self	keeps
1	lij	nep	jex	eemp	beef	chup	boil	sharb	trex	seeriff	aitch-aps	bee-arst	see-aitch-in	dee-eck	haitch-or-n	cue-you-een	tee-ram	pee-ress	es-elf	kay-eeps
2	lip	wep	pax	imp	deef	hsup	dee-oil	cha-rb	T-rex	c-ar-iff	h-ay-ps	darst	hc-in	beck	h-oh-ar-n	qu-e-en	fram	par-ess	seelf	eeps
3	lige	meep	gayx	e-em-p	deaf	s-h-up	do-il	charbee	f-ar-ex	sriff	ha-pee-s	parst	chine	d-e-see-kay		queem	t-are-am	pness	seif	keepees
4	leeg	mekw	gak	enp	beft	sh-you-p	doiel	chard	freex	cr-eye-f	harquees	kwqarst	cheen	deek			traym	pmess	selt	keebs
5	leg		gas		bef-f	shud	d-oi-eye	charp	frek	crift	hap-es	ba-rst	chen				tran	pre-ess		keeds
6			ga-ex			shub		charkw	fres	crif-f	hapz	bar-es-t	chien					pre-s-s		keeks
7									fre-ex			barstee	chim							keepz
8													chir							
9			These are just examples.																	
10																				
11																				
12																				
13																				
14																				
15																				
16																				
17																				
18																				
19																				
20																				

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Phonics screening check

Printing instructions

These instructions help you view and print your results on a single A3 sheet.

Print settings can vary from printer to printer. However, as a general rule, the following procedure should print your results on one A3 sheet.

1 Highlight the cells you wish to print, eg class and scores. Otherwise, the printer will print all cells.
2 Go to 'file – print'. In the 'settings' section, change 'print active sheets' to 'print selection'.
3 Select 'landscape orientation', then 'A3 size'.
4 Change 'no scaling' to 'fit sheet on one page'. The printing will be formatted to 1 page.

For further support ring the Literacy Guarantee Unit.

Phone: 8463 5581

Email: education.literacyguarantee@sa.gov.au

Appendix 9: Phonics screening check analysis – guiding questions

These prompts are designed to support discussion in your professional learning teams.

What do you see in the data?
Are there any surprises?
What are the students doing well?
What are the gaps in students' knowledge?
What trends did you notice in the data?

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Phonics screening check

What are the implications for your practice?	
Fluent decoders:	
Developing decoders:	
Struggling decoders:	

Planning for differentiated learning: Wave 1, Wave 2, Wave 3

Appendix 10: In-depth analysis to support intervention for developing and struggling decoders

This resource provides more in-depth analyses of student results. This will be most useful when intervention is required. It is especially helpful in instances where students made a large number of errors. Typically, these will be students classified as 'Group 2: Developing decoders' or 'Group 3: Struggling decoders'.

This resource is also helpful for examining inexplicable errors. There are many ways that students will make errors. It is particularly hard to interpret errors if an incorrect response displays a variety of difficulties.

Error analysis example

To understand how difficult, it can be to distinguish between errors consider this example for the word 'jazz'. Students can make errors when they:

- are unaware of the sound of 'j'
- confuse the look of 'j' with the look of 'g'
- confuse the name of the letter 'g' and the sound and look of 'j'
- read 'a' like an article as in 'a hard word' OR as the letter name
- read the digraph 'zz' as 2 separate sounds
- read 1 'z' as a sound and say the letter name
- read jazzy due to poor awareness of the digraph 'zz'.

Responses	Interpretations of responses
Read as 'jazz'	Identifies the graphemes j/a/zz, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
j read as letter name – 'jayazz' j read as g – 'gazz or geeazz'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge of 'j' • possible j/g confusion (visual or auditory discrimination issues) due to knowledge of 'g' as in gentle
a read as letter name or a read as long 'ay' the article (indistinguishable)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'a' • overgeneralising the sound of 'a' the article
zz read as letter names – 'ja-zee-zee' or 'jazzy'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'zz' consonant digraph • mistaking letter name 'z' for letter 'y' sound at the end of words • meaning of 'jazzy' potentially interfering with phonics decoding

Should student errors be numerous and hard to distinguish, in spite of explicit, systematic teaching then it is likely that the student will require further assessment by specialists.

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Phonics screening check

In-depth analysis (section 1)

S1 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
1	**lig**	'l' from 'leg' and rhymes with 'pig'	Identifies the graphemes l/i/g, knows the phonemes and correctly blends them to read the word correctly.
		any partially correct responses	Identifies 1 or 2 graphemes. Teacher notes which are correct and incorrect.
		g read as the letter 'j', 'g' or 'p'	• g/j confusion common in the early years • ongoing persistently poor discrimination of similar shaped letters may suggest learning difficulties
		i read as letter 'i' – 'lige' i read as long 'ee' – 'leeg'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'i' • poor phonemic awareness of sound length for short 'i'
		read as 'leg'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'i' • reading for meaning possibly interfering with phonological awareness
2	**mep**	'm' from 'mat' and rhymes with 'step'	Identifies the graphemes m/a/t, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		any partially correct responses	Identifies 1 or 2 graphemes. Teacher notes which are correct and incorrect.
		m read as letter name – 'em-ep' m read as 'n' or 'w'	• unconsolidated knowledge of 'm' sound • m/n/w confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		e read as letter name – 'meep'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the short 'e' • poor phonemic awareness of sound length for short 'e'
		p read as 'q' – 'mekw' p read as 'd' or 'b'	• unconsolidated knowledge of common 'p' sound • p/q/b/d confusion (visual discrimination issues)
3	**gax**	'g' from 'get' and rhymes with 'fax'	Identifies the graphemes g/a/x, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		g read as the letter – 'j', 'g' or 'p'	• g/j confusion common in the early years • ongoing persistently poor discrimination of similar shaped letters may suggest learning difficulties
		a read as letter 'ay' sound	• possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound • unconsolidated knowledge of short 'a' sound • poor phonemic awareness of sound length for short 'a'
		x partially sounded – 'gak', 'gas' x read as letter 'ex' – 'ga-ex'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'x' • partial recognition of the 'ks' from 'x' • possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound

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Phonics screening check

S1 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
4	**emp**	'e' from 'end' and the 'mp' from 'amp'	Identifies the graphemes e/m/p, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		e read as letter 'e' or e read as long 'ee' (indistinguishable) e read as short 'i' – 'imp'	• unconsolidated knowledge of short 'e' sound • possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound • phonemic awareness deficit (short 'e' as distinct from short 'i' sound)
		m read as letter name 'em' (hard to distinguish) m read as 'n' – 'enp'	• 'em' sound in the middle of the word (e-em-p) • possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound • m/n confusion (visual discrimination issues)
5	**beff**	'b' from 'bill' and rhymes with 'chef'	Identifies the graphemes b/e/ff, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		b read as letter sound 'bee' b read as 'd' – 'deff' or 'beff' read as 'deaf' (indistinguishable)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'd' • possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound • b/d confusion (visual discrimination issues) • making a meaningful word (deaf) interfering with phonics checking
		e read as letter sound or as long 'ee' (indistinguishable)	• unconsolidated knowledge of short 'e' sound • possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound • poor phonemic awareness of sound length for short 'e'
		ff read as 'ft' – 'beft' ff read as 2 phonemes 'f-f'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 'ff' consonant digraph • f/t confusion (possible visual processing issues) • failure to recognise common digraph
6	**shup**	'sh' from 'shop' and rhymes with 'up'; regional pronunciations of 'u' are acceptable	Identifies the graphemes sh/u/p, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		sh read as 'ch' sh read as 'hs' sh read as 2 phonemes 's-h'	• confusion of common digraphs • reversal of letter order in digraph (possible visual processing issues) • failure to recognise common digraph
		u read as letter name 'you' – 'sh-you-p'	• possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound • unconsolidated knowledge of short 'u' sound • poor phonemic awareness of the common short 'u'
		p read as letter name p read as 'q', 'd' or 'b'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'd' • possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound • p/q/d/b confusion (visual discrimination issues)

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Phonics screening check

S1 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
7	**doil**	'd' from 'deal' and rhymes with 'boil'	Identifies the graphemes d/oi/l, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		d read as 'b' – 'boil' d read as letter name 'dee' – 'dee-oil'	• d/b confusion (visual discrimination issues) • making a meaningful word (deaf) interfering with phonics checking • mistaking letter name for letter sound.
		oi read as 2 phonemes 'o-i' oi read as letter names	• unconsolidated knowledge of the 'oi' digraph • mistaking letter name for letter sound
		l read as letter name 'el' 'l' read as capital 'I' as in 'I am' – 'd-oi-eye'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge of 'l' • ignores inappropriate capital letter at the end of a word
8	**charb**	'ch' from 'chain' and rhymes with 'garb'	Identifies the graphemes ch/ar/b, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		ch read as 'sh' ch read as 2 phonemes 'c-h'	• sh/ch confusion (visual discrimination issues) • unconsolidated knowledge of the 'ch' digraph
		ar read as 2 short phonemes – 'a-r'	• unconsolidated knowledge of vowel digraph 'ar' • poor phonemic awareness of the 'ar' digraph
		b read as letter name – 'charbee' b read as 'd', 'p' or 'q'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'b' • b/d/p/q confusion (visual discrimination issues)
9	**frex**	'fr' from 'frog' and the 'ex' from 'rex'	Identifies the graphemes fr/e/x, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		f read as letter name f read as 't' – 'trex' OR 'T-rex'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge of 'f' • poor phonemic awareness of common consonant 'f' • f/t confusion – possible visual processing or discrimination issues • attempt to make meaning (T-rex) interfering with phonics checking
		r read as letter name – 'f-ar-ex'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge of 'r'
		e read as letter name – 'freex'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'e'
		x partially sounded – 'frek', 'fres' x read as letter 'ex' – 'fre-ex'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'x' • partial recognition of the 'ks' from 'x' • possibly mistaking letter name for letter sound

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Phonics screening check

S1 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
10	**criff**	'cr' from 'cramp' and rhymes with 'tiff'	Identifies the graphemes c/r/i/ff, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		c read as letter name – 'seeriff' c read as 's' as in 'city' – 'sriff'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'c' • incorrect application of 'ci'/'ce' rule
		r read as letter name r read as 'n' or 'm'– 'cniff'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • r/n/m/ confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		i read as letter names	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'i' sound • poor phonemic awareness of common vowel sound 'I'
		ff read as 'ft' – 'crift' ff read as 2 phonemes 'f-f'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 'ff' consonant digraph • f/t confusion (possible visual processing issues) • failure to recognise common digraph
11	**haps**	'h' from 'hits' and rhymes with 'maps	Identifies the graphemes h/a/p/s, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		h read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'h'
		a read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common vowel short 'a'
		p read as letter name – 'ha-pee-s' p read as 'qu' or 'q' – 'sarquees'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'p' • p/q confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		s read as letter name s read as 'z' (voiced 's' word ending)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 's' • overgeneralisation of a less common 's' sound
12	**barst**	'bar' from 'barn' or the 'st' from 'wrist'	Identifies the graphemes b/ar/s/t, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		b read as letter name – 'bee-arst' b read as 'd', 'p' or 'q'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'b' • b/d/p/q confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		ar read as 2 short phonemes – 'a-r'	• unconsolidated knowledge of vowel digraph 'ar' • poor phonemic awareness of the 'ar' digraph
		s read as letter name – 'bar-es-t'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 's' • poor phonemic awareness of common sound 's'
		t read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't'

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S1 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
13	**chin**	Read as 'chin'	Identifies the graphemes ch/i/n, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		ch read as letter names ch read as 2 phonemes ch read a 'hc'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common digraph 'ch' • letter order confusion (visual processing issues)
		i read as letter name – 'chine' i read as long 'ee' – 'cheen' i read as short 'e' – 'chen'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'i'
		n read as letter name – 'chien' n read as 'm' or 'r' – 'chim', 'chir'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'n' • n/m/r confusion (visual discrimination issues)
14	**deck**	Read as 'deck'	Identifies the graphemes d/e/ck, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		d read as letter name – 'dee-eck' d read as 'b' – 'beck'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'd' • possible b/d confusion (visual or auditory discrimination issues)
		e read as letter name or e read as long 'ee' (indistinguishable)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'e'
		ck read as letter names – 'd-e-cee-kay'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'ck' consonant digraph • mistaking letter name for 'k' sound at the end of words • meaning of 'decay' potentially interfering with phonics decoding
15	**horn**	Read as 'horn'	Identifies the graphemes h/or/n, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		h read as letter name – 'haitch-or-n'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'h' • poor phonemic awareness of 'h' sound
		or read as letter names – 'oh-ar' or read as 2 unblended phonemes or read as 'air'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for vowel digraph 'ar'
		n read as letter name – 'hor-en' n read as 'm' – 'horm'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'n' • n/m confusion (visual or auditory discrimination issues)

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Phonics screening check

S1 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
16	**queen**	Read as 'queen'	Identifies the graphemes qu/ee/n, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		qu read as letter names qu read as 2 incorrect phonemes qu read as partially correct – 'k-w'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common consonant digraph 'qu' • poor phonemic awareness of the 2 sounds in the 'qu' digraph (k and w)
		ee read as letter names ee read as 2 unblended phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'ee' • poor phonemic awareness of vowel digraph 'ee'
		n read as letter name– 'quee-en' n read as 'm' – 'queem'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'n' • n/m confusion (visual discrimination issues) OR confusion of n/m letter-sounds (auditory discrimination issues)
17	**tram**	Read as 'tram'	Identifies the graphemes t/r/a/m, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		t read as letter name t read as 'f'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • poor phonemic awareness of a common sound • visual discrimination issues (t/f)
		r read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r'
		a read as letter name – 'traym'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common short vowel sound 'a' • poor phonemic awareness of a common sound
		m read as the letter 'n'	• m/n confusion common in the early years
18	**press**	Read as 'press'	Identifies the graphemes p/r/e/ss, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		p read as letter name – 'pee-ress'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'p'
		r read as letter name – 'par-ess' r read as 'n' or 'm'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • r/n/m/ confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		e read as letter name – 'prees'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short vowel sound 'e' • poor phonemic awareness of a common vowel sound
		ss read as letter names ss read as 2 phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the consonant digraph 'ss'

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S1 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
19	**self**	Read as 'self'	Identifies the graphemes s/e/l/f, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		s read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 's' • poor phonemic awareness of a common sound
		e read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short vowel sound 'e' • poor phonemic awareness of a common sound
		l read as letter name l read as capital 'I' as in 'I am'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'l' • unconsolidated understanding of correct letter position for capital letters
		f read as the letter 't'	• poor visual discrimination of common letter
20	**keeps**	Read as 'keeps'	Identifies the graphemes k/ee/p/s, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		k read as letter name k read a silent	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'k' • overgeneralisation of a rule (indicates unconsolidated knowledge for silent 'k')
		ee read as letter names ee read as 2 phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for vowel digraph 'ee'
		p read as letter name p read as 'q', 'b' or 'd'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'p' • p/q/d/b/ confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		s read as letter name s read as 'z'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 's' • overgeneralisation of a less common 's' sound

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

In-depth analysis (section 2)

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
21	**jigh**	'j' from 'jump' and rhymes with 'high'	Identifies the graphemes j/igh, knows the phonemes and correctly blends them to read the word correctly.
		any partially correct responses	Identifies 1 or 2 graphemes. Teacher notes which are correct and incorrect.
		j read as the letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'j'
		igh – read as letter name/s igh read as 'ig' – kig igh read as 3 unblended phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 'igh' trigraph
22	**woats**	'w' from 'warns' and rhymes with 'coats'	Identifies the graphemes w/oa/s/t, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		w read as 'v'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'w' • w/v confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		oa read as letter names oa read as short 'o' ao read as 2 phonemes 'w-o-a-t-s'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'oa' vowel digraph
		t read as letter name – 'w-oa-tee-s' t read as 'd' ts read as 'st'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • t/d phonemic confusion (voiced and unvoiced sounds) – subtle • unconsolidated blending
		s read as letter name s read as 'z' – 'woa-tz'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' sound • overgeneralisation of unvoiced 's' sound at the end of words
23	**rird**	'r' from 'rail' and rhymes with 'bird'	Identifies the graphemes r/ir/d, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		r read as letter name – 'ar-ird'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r'
		ir read as letter names – 'r-eye-ar-d' ir read as 2 unblended phonemes – 'r-i-r-d' ir read as 'i' (r omitted)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the r-controlled vowel in 'ir'
		d read as 'b'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'b' • possible b/d confusion (visual discrimination issues)

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
24	**phope**	'ph' from 'photo' and rhymes with 'scope'	Identifies the graphemes ph/o_e/p, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		ph read as letter names – 'pee-haitch-ope' ph read as 2 phonemes 'p-h-ope' ph read as 'p' (h omitted)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'ph' consonant digraph • possibly mistaking the letter names for the letter sounds
		o_e read as letter names o_e read with correct medial vowel and voiced final 'phopee'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'o_e' split vowel digraph • possibly mistaking letter names 'e' and 'o' for sound
		p read as letter name– 'fopee' p read as 'q' – 'fokw', 'kwokw'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'p' • p/q confusion (visual discrimination issues) OR confusion of p/q letter-sounds (auditory discrimination issues)
25	**glips**	'gl' from 'glows' and rhymes with 'ships'	Identifies the graphemes g/l/i/p/s, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		g read as letter sound 'gee'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'f'
		l read as letter name 'el' – 'g-el-ips' l read as capital 'I' as in 'I am' l omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'l' • unconsolidated understanding of correct letter position for capital letters in a word • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		i read as letter name i read as short 'e'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short vowel sound 'i'
		p read as letter name p read as 'q',' b' or 'd' p read as 'b' sound	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'd' • d/b/p/q confusion (visual discrimination issues) • confusion of p/b letter-sounds (auditory discrimination issues)
		s read as letter name ps read as 'sp'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' at the end of words • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
26	**floost**	'fl' from 'flake' and rhymes with 'boost'	Identifies the graphemes f/l/oo/s/t, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		f read as letter name f read as 't'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'f' • possible f/t confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		l read as letter name 'el' – 'f-el-oo-ps' l read as capital 'I' as in 'I am' l omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'l' • ignores inappropriate capital letter in a word • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		oo read as 2 phonemes oo read as letter names	• unconsolidated knowledge for the 'oo' vowel digraph • mistaking letter name for letter sound
		s read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' sound • poor phonemic awareness of common sound
		t read as letter name st read as 'ts'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 't' sound • poor phonemic awareness of common sound • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
27	**splam**	'spl' from 'split' and rhymes with 'scram'	Identifies the graphemes s/p/l/a/m, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		s read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' sound • poor phonemics awareness of a common sound
		p read as letter name p read as 'b' p read as 'q' p omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'p' • p/b phonemic confusion (voiced and unvoiced sounds) – subtle • p/q visual discrimination • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		l read as letter name 'el'- l read as capital 'I' as in 'I am' l omittted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'l' • ignores inappropriate capital letter in a word • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		a read as letter name a read as 'o'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the short vowel sound 'a' • poor phonemic awareness of a common sound
		m read as letter name m read as 'n'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'm' • n/m confusion (visual discrimination issues) OR confusion of n/m letter-sounds (auditory discrimination issues)

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
28	**stribe**	'str' from 'stroke' and rhymes with 'scribe'	Identifies the graphemes s/t/r/i_e/b, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		s read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' sound
		t read as letter name t omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • t/d phonemic confusion (voiced and unvoiced sounds) – subtle
		r read as letter name r omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		i_e read as short 'i'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'i_e' split vowel digraph
		b read as letter name b read as 'd' b read as 'p'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'b' • poor visual discrimination b/d • poor phonemic awareness of b/p (voiced and unvoiced sounds) – subtle
29	**stair**	Read as 'stair'	Identifies the graphemes s/t/air, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		s read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' sound
		t read as letter sound 'tee' t omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • poor phonemic awareness for the common consonant 't' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		air – read as letter name/s air read as 'ar' – far air read as 3 unblended phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 'air' trigraph
30	**haunt**	Read as 'haunt'	Identifies the graphemes h/au/n/t, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		h read as letter sound – 'haitch'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'h'
		au read as letter names au read as 2 phonemes au read as 'a'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'au' vowel digraph • poor phonemic awareness of a common sound
		n read as letter name n read as 'm' n omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'n' • n/m confusion (visual discrimination issues) OR confusion of n/m letter-sounds (auditory discrimination issues) • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		t read as letter name t read as 'd'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • t/d phonemic confusion (voiced and unvoiced sounds) – subtle

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
31	**lied**	Read as 'lied'	Identifies the graphemes l/ie/d, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		l read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'l'
		ie read as letter name/s ie read as 2 unblended phonemes ie read as 'e' (i omitted)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for vowel digraph 'ie'
		d read as letter name d read as 't'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • t/d phonemic confusion (voiced and unvoiced sounds) – subtle
32	**wove**	Read as 'wove'	Identifies the graphemes w/o_e/v, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		w read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge 'w'
		o_e read as letter names o_e read with correct vowel and voiced e – 'wov-ee'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'o_e' split vowel digraph
		v read as letter name v read as 'w'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'n' • v/w confusion (visual discrimination issues) OR confusion of v/w letter-sounds (auditory discrimination issues)
33	**drank**	Read as 'drank'	Identifies the graphemes d/r/a/n/k, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		d read as letter name d read as 'b'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'd' • poor visual and auditory discrimination of d/b
		r read as letter name r omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		a read as 'a'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'a'
		n read as the letter m n read as phonemes for 'm' n omitted	• m/n confusion common in the early years • poor auditory discrimination of n/m • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		k read as letter name k read as silent	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'k'

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
34	**treats**	Read as 'treats'	Identifies the graphemes t/r/ea/t/s, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		t read as letter name t read as 'd'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • t/d phonemic confusion (voiced and unvoiced sounds) – subtle
		r read as letter name r omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		ea read as letter names ea read as 2 phonemes ea read as 'e' or 'a'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for vowel digraph 'ea'
		s read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' sound
35	**scram**	Read as 'scram'	Identifies the graphemes s/c/r/a/m, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		s read as letter names	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 's'
		c read as letter name c read as 's' as in 'city' c omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'c' • overgeneralisation (ignoring rule) of a less common phoneme (cat, cot, cut – city, centre) • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		r read as letter name r omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		a read as letter name a read as 'o'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short vowel sound 'a'
		m read as letter name m read as 'n'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'm' • possible m/n confusion (visual and/or auditory discrimination issues)

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
36	**stroke**	Read as 'stroke'	Identifies the graphemes s/t/r/o_e/k, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		s read as letter names	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 's'
		t read as letter name t read as 'd' sound	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't' • overgeneralisation of a less common phoneme (voiced and unvoiced sounds confusion)
		r read as letter name r omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		o_e read as letter names o_e read with correct vowel sound and 'e' o_e read as short 'o'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'o_e' split vowel digraph
		k read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'k'
37	**arrow**	Read as 'arrow'	Identifies the graphemes a/rr/ow, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		a read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'a'
		rr read as letter names rr read as 'm' sound	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'n' • possible rr/m confusion (auditory discrimination issues)
		ow read as letter names ow read as 2 phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'ow' diphthong
38	**forest**	Read as 'forest'	Identifies the graphemes f/o/r/e/s/t, knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly. Note the 'or' does not function as a digraph in this instance and that the 'e' is unvoiced.
		f read as letter name f read as 't'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge 't' • t/f confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		o read as letter name o read as long 'o' phoneme (indistinguishable)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'o' • mistaking 'or' for a digraph
		r read as letter name r read as 'n' sound	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' and 'n' • possible r/n confusion (visual discrimination issues) • mistaking 'or' for a digraph
		e read as letter name e read as long 'e' phoneme (indistinguishable)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'e' • may notice this is unvoiced or that it is an unusual presentation of 'e'
		s read as letter name s read as 'z' s omitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the common 's' sound • poor phonemic awareness of 's' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		t read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 't'

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

S2 #	Word checked	**Correct responses** (score 1) **Partially correct and incorrect responses** (score 0 and note the error type)	Interpretations of responses
39	**wishing**	Read as 'wishing'	Identifies the graphemes w/i/sh/i/ng knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		w read as letter name w read as v	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge 'w'
		i read as letter name i read as long 'ee'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for short 'i' • poor phonemic awareness of sound length for short 'i'
		sh read as letter name/s sh read as 2 phonemes sh read as 'ch' or 'th'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'sh' consonant digraph
		ng read as letter names ng read as 2 unblended phonemes ng read as 'g' (n omitted)	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'ng' consonant digraph • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
40	**brighter**	Read as 'brighter'	Identifies the graphemes b/r/igh/t/er knows the corresponding phonemes and blends them to read the word correctly.
		b read as letter name	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'b'
		r read as letter name r ommitted	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for 'r' • unconsolidated blending of phoneme strings
		igh read as letter name/s igh read as 3 unblended phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'igh' trigraph
		t read as letter name t read as 'f'	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge 't' • t/f confusion (visual discrimination issues)
		er read as letter name/s er read as 2 phonemes	• unconsolidated letter-sound knowledge for the 'er' digraph • unconsolidated phonemic awareness of 'er' sound

This resource is designed to assist classroom teachers to understand how the simple view of reading supports the teaching of the Big 6.

Appendix 11: The simple view of reading

What is the 'simple view of reading'?

The simple view of reading provides teachers with a tool to understand how students are progressing with the 2 key factors of success: reading accuracy and language comprehension. This understanding means that individual learners can be better supported in differentiated ways to become successful readers.

Reading is a complex cognitive process. It involves reading accurately and with understanding. The simple view of reading (SVR) takes both of these factors into consideration. The developers of the model, Gough and Tumner (1986)[22], call it the simple view of reading, not because reading is a simple process, but rather their model is a conceptually simple representation of what a beginning reader needs to master.

Gough and Tumner expressed their model as an equation:

R = D x LC

Where R is reading comprehension, D is decoding and LC is language comprehension.

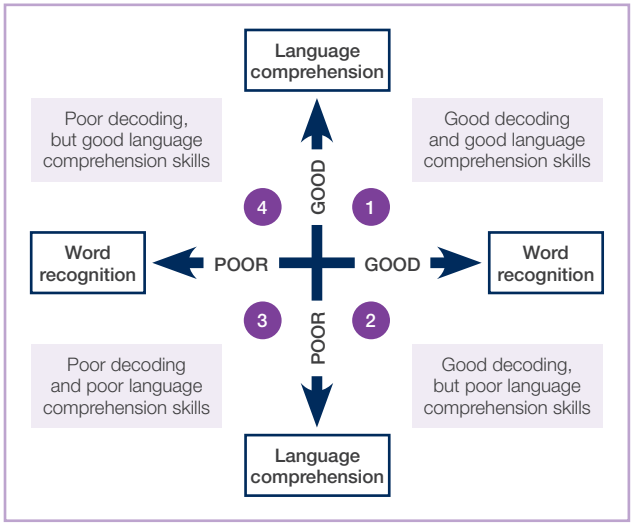
Decoding means accurate word recognition. This involves phonological awareness and phonics (see the Big 6). Knowing letter-sound correspondences, the English code, is essential for decoding words.

Language comprehension means the ability to understand, or comprehend, spoken language and refers to oral language and vocabulary. As skills in both word recognition and language comprehension develop, students also develop reading fluency and reading comprehension (see the Big 6).

Reading comprehension is the *product* of both decoding and language comprehension rather than decoding being added to language comprehension. If one aspect is missing then reading comprehension is not occurring (just as zero multiplied by anything is still zero). The simple view of reading ensures both decoding and language comprehension are taken into account when assessing a child's ability to comprehend written text. If one aspect is low, then reading comprehension is also low. If only one aspect is well-developed—for example, a student who can decode words accurately, but their understanding of language is low—then reading comprehension will be deficient.

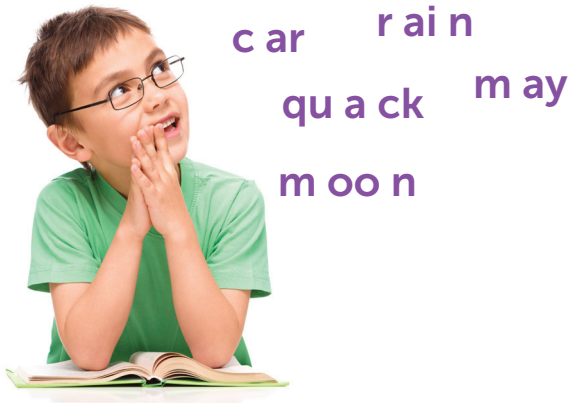
The SVR quadrants

The simple view of reading can also be plotted on a quadrant chart, with accurate word recognition (decoding) on one axis and language comprehension on the other (Rose, 2006)[20].



Simple view of reading quadrant chart (adapted from Rose, 2006[23])

Students who both recognise words quickly and have a good comprehension of language would be in quadrant 1. Students who have both poor word recognition skills and poor comprehension skills would be in quadrant 3.



[22] Gough PB & Tunmer WE (1986) Decoding, reading, and reading disability, *Remedial and Special Education, 7*(1), 6–10, doi:10.1177/074193258600700104, available from http://TLinSA.2.vu/GoughTumner1986

[23] Rose J (2006) *Independent review of the teaching of early reading*, available from http://TLinSA.2.vu/Rose2006

Word recognition (decoding): the horizontal axis

Teaching phonics

Schools are expected to teach synthetic phonics in a systematic manner. Phonics teaching allows students to master letter-sound correspondences so that they can accurately decode words. While these letter-sound correspondences are progressively learned during the first 2 years of schooling some **high-frequency words** also need to be taught, such as *the*, *said*, *because*.

The phonics screening check helps teachers to assess if their students are gaining mastery over letter-sound correspondences and the English alphabetic code. Some students will sound out every letter of each word in the check. As long as they blend these sounds together to say the word they can be marked as correct. The phonics screening check only checks the student's ability to: decode letters, groups of letters and recognise words.

Some students will be able to say the word immediately, indicating they recognise that particular word. These students are developing decoding automaticity. Once they have a degree of automaticity, the cognitive load required to decode words is reduced, freeing up space in their working memory to attend to other aspects of meaning making from the written text. Research shows that rapid automatised naming (RAN) is a reliable predictor of reading success (Norton & Wolf, 2012)[24].

Students practise the letter-sound correspondences they are being taught by reading **decodable texts**, which include some high-frequency words in order to make meaningful sentences. Sounding out becomes their first 'reading reflex', building their confidence that English is a logical language that can be read, and preparing students to learn words that have a more complex morphology or etymology.

However, students with poor word recognition skills (eg they do not attempt many words in the check or they sound out but do not blend the sounds into words) are developing or struggling decoders and could be placed in quadrant 3 or quadrant 4 on the SVR chart, even if their language comprehension is good. These students will need more explicit phonics teaching, or more time to master decoding and build up the neural pathways needed to be a successful reader.

Language comprehension: the vertical axis

Not only do students need accurate word recognition skills (decoding) but they also need to have good language comprehension skills. If a student performs well on the phonics screening check ('fluent decoder'), they might be in quadrants 1 or 2.

This can be narrowed down to one quadrant by considering the student's language comprehension skills. For example if a student can read the text accurately, but gives little indication of understanding, they would be placed in quadrant 2. The teacher would then design learning to develop their language comprehension by engaging them in a range of rich children's literature and vocabulary building experiences to improve their reading comprehension.

Teachers also need to consider how well the student understands spoken language. If the struggling reader shows a good understanding of stories when they are read to them, this would demonstrate placement in quadrant 4 and the learning focus would concentrate on mastering the alphabetic code. However, if the student also has poor language comprehension, then the focus has to be on both decoding and language development (quadrant 3).

SVR and the Big 6

Firstly, it is important to consider the effectiveness of your systematic, synthetic phonics program. Are you confident that your students have had every opportunity to develop their letter-sound correspondences and practise them using decodable texts? Also consider how your reading program addresses the Big 6 components of reading. Do you address all of the components in an integrated way? How often are your students engaged in open-ended, explanatory conversations that help them expand their vocabulary and syntax choices? How often do you read and discuss high-quality children's literature and information texts with your students? This is important for developing the language capabilities of your students.

Scarborough's (2001)[25] reading rope indicates the complexities of learning to read by displaying the aspects of word recognition and language comprehension as strands of a rope that need to be woven together through instruction and practise (IDA, 2018)[26]. The reading rope articulates aspects of word recognition (including phonological awareness, decoding and sight recognition) that need to become increasingly automatic and the many aspects of language comprehension that a reader needs to learn to use strategically.

Language comprehension includes background concepts, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning and literacy knowledge. Consequently, many synthetic phonics programs recommend spending half the literacy teaching time on developing decoding and accurate word reading, and the other half on reading quality literature to students and discussing it with them (Parker, 2018)[27].

Through discussion, students become more aware of the structure of the English language, including its grammar and syntax. Student's literacy knowledge is developed as they are read a range of text genres, including information texts and narratives, and they hear a much wider range of vocabulary within a book context than they would through everyday conversations. They can develop their verbal reasoning skills as they discuss inferences and unpack metaphors. The Big 6 components of oral language and vocabulary can be developed in this way.

[24] Norton ES & Wolf M (2012) Rapid automatized naming (RAN) and reading fluency: Implications for understanding and treatment of reading disabilities, *Annual Review of Psychology, 63*, 427–452, available from http://TLinSA.2.vu/RAN2012

[25] Scarborough H (2001) Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis) abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice, in S Neuman & D Dickinson (eds), *Handbook for research in early literacy*, pp 97–110, New York: Guilford

[26] International Dyslexia Association (IDA) (2018) Scarborough's reading rope: a ground breaking infographic, available from http://TLinSA.2.vu/IDArope

[27] Parker S (2018) *Reading instruction and phonics: theory and practice for teachers*, available at http://TLinSA.2.vu/Parker2018

Using SVR to identify student needs

The placement of students in the SVR quadrants helps to inform the design of the classroom reading program. Teachers could use the phonics screening check, running records and other data to inform this placement (eg PAT–EY). Some students will need particular, specific interventions in order to develop their reading comprehension.

To determine appropriate interventions for struggling readers, the first diagnostic question to ask is: 'If I read this passage to this student, would s/he understand it?' (Kilpatrick, 2015). If the answer is 'yes', then any reading comprehension problem is likely to be due to a weakness in word-level reading (decoding), placing them in quadrant 4. Intervention will then focus on practising decoding skills. However, if the answer is 'no', then the struggling reader is likely in quadrant 3 as they have not only difficulty with decoding, but may also have language comprehension or listening comprehension difficulties.

In either case, if the student is struggling with reading, they may also have an issue with decoding. Consequently, ask, 'What is this student's oral reading like?' If it is fast and accurate, this suggests the student is a good decoder (quadrant 2), but if they are struggling with reading, they may need intervention focused on the development of language comprehension. However, if they struggle with oral reading, this suggests they are in quadrant 3 and the focus will then be on both word recognition and language comprehension skills.

The following questions can be used to identify where each student's reading ability lies in the SVR quadrant chart:

1 **Can the student quickly and accurately identify (decode) words?**

Yes – quadrant 1 or quadrant 2

No – quadrant 3 or quadrant 4

2 **Does the student have a good understanding of spoken language?**

Yes – quadrant 1 or quadrant 4

No – quadrant 2 or quadrant 3

Using SVR to differentiate student learning

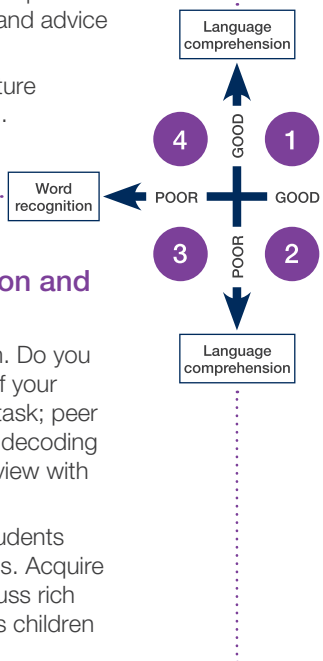
Once you have identified where students sit on the quadrant, you can consider how to address their differentiated learning needs. The following recommendations are provided for each of the quadrants:

Students with poor word recognition but good language comprehension skills

- Assess the effectiveness of your phonics program. Do you need to adjust the coverage, frequency or pace of your program? Do these students require further instruction with the teacher in decoding? These students may require multiple exposures and extra time to consolidate word recognition skills. It is possibly that these students may have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia. Seek support and advice from relevant professionals.
- Continue to read and discuss rich children's literature and information texts within the classroom setting.

Students with both good word recognition and good language comprehension skills

- Engage students in activities involving the extended alphabetic code.
- Encourage free choice reading in the area of the student's interest.



Students with both poor word recognition and poor language comprehension skills

- Assess the effectiveness of your phonics program. Do you need to adjust the coverage, frequency or pace of your program? Do these students need more time on task; peer tutoring; further instruction by the teacher in both decoding and language comprehension; and/or periodic review with an SSO?
- Explore the language comprehension skills the students bring to the classroom. Address any special needs. Acquire expert help if required. Continue to read and discuss rich children's literature within the classroom setting as children often learn from each other.

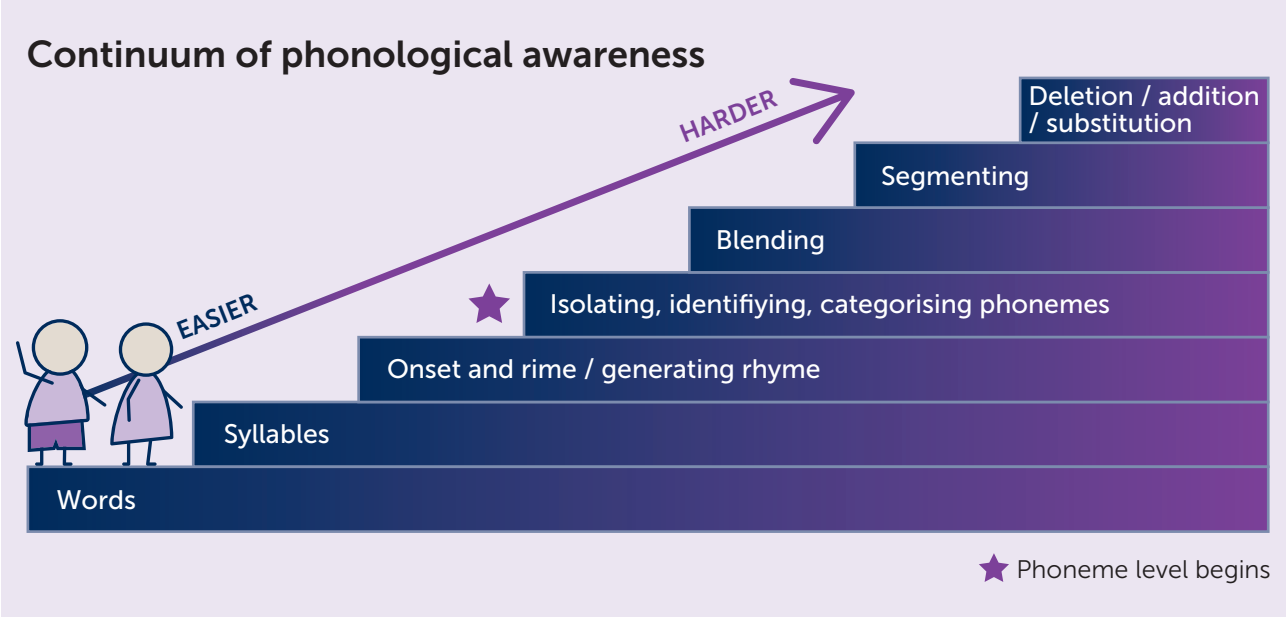
Students with good word recognition but poor language comprehension skills

- Engage the students in oral language activities that involve dialogic talk.
- Read high-quality literature and information texts to students, accompanied with discussion incorporating shared, sustained interactions.

Appendix 12: Further suggested activities for phonological and phonemic awareness

Phonological awareness is the first component of language learning. Students have to be able to hear distinct sounds before they can hear the sounds in words. These are oral and aural language games. It is essential that students have an excellent grasp of oral language before written language and reading is introduced.

The continuum of phonological awareness, available at https://www.tools4reading.com/, under the Tools 4 Teachers tab, provides direction for helping students move from the easiest to the hardest skills. See further details below the diagram.



Adapted from Tools 4 Reading. The original diagram is available from https://www.tools4reading.com.au/members-only – membership is required but is free under the Tools 4 Teachers tab.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

Words

Students need to be able to identify and manipulate words in phrases and sentences. They also need to understand compound words. Compound words are formed when two words are put together to form a new word with a new meaning, eg cow + boy = cowboy.

Manipulating words | Students play with language

Start with as simple sentence, eg 'I went to the shops.' Point out 'I' is one word and point to yourself. Ask, 'Who else could go to the shops?' Encourage students to put their own name into the sentence, eg Maya went to the shops. Nick went to the shops. Point out Maya is one word, Nick is another word, and in the sentence there are other words.

Continued on page 71

The next step would be to move on to place. Point out that 'shops' is one word. Ask, 'What else could we say? Where else could we say we went?' Ask students to think of one place. Then the teacher says, 'I went to the (pause)' and gestures for the student to add the place, eg oval, paddock, house. No doubt students could say – 'I went to the class next door', which is 3 words. In such cases, the teacher would discuss the phrase, eg 'Which class? We needed more words to say exactly where … so there are 3 words – class-next-door.'

Segment and blend compound words | Students practise segmenting and blending compound words

Compile a list of compound words such as classroom, butterfly, and playground. Explain to the students that words can be broken up and we are going to break these words into 2 separate words. Model using two fists stuck together to show how 'butter' and 'fly' are together. Then model how to break the words into 'butter' and 'fly' by separating the fists to show segmentation. Practise the reverse skill of blending by providing students with two separate words that can be blended into one compound word.

Syllables

A syllable is a unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants, forming the whole or a part of a word.

Syllable sort | Students identify the number of syllables in a word

The teacher has real objects or pictures of them. Draw a chart on the carpet or mark it with tape. Put the numbers 1, 2, 3 into the chart. Ask the students to sort the objects based on how many syllables they can hear in each of the words.

Bumble Bee, Bumble Bee | Students clap the beats (syllables) in their name

The teacher asks the students to sit in a circle. The teacher walks around to a child saying the rhyme, 'Bumble Bee, Bumble Bee, will you say your name for me?' They stop at a child and hand them a toy bee. The child responds by saying their name. The teacher asks the class to say the name clapping out the syllables. The teacher can then get the students to whisper the name clapping out the syllables. The teacher and class then chant 'Bumble Bee Bumble Bee, thank you for saying your name for me!' Repeat with another student. As students become familiar with the game, you can allow students to take on the 'teacher' role. As they get used to the game, the teacher can start using other words with more syllables.

Onset and rime

Onset and rime is the natural division of a syllable into 2 parts. Onset is the beginning sound in a syllable before the vowel; rime is the vowel and all the letters after it in a syllable.

Deletion and substitution | Students orally practise deleting and substituting onset units

Orally practise deletion of onset units in a word with students regularly. 'Say /dill/. Now say /dill/ but don't say /d/.' The answer is /ill/. Challenge students to substitute onset units as well. 'Say /wood/. Now say /wood/ but instead of the /w/, say /g/.' The answer is /good/.

Sounds switch (or sound out) | Students segment words into onset and rime and manipulate the onset to make new words

The teacher sits the students in a group where they can all see the board. They place a card of a cat on the board and ask the students what they can see. They then ask the students what sound they would need to change to turn the word from 'cat' to 'hat'. Repeat with other CVC words.

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Rhyme

Rhyming words sound the same at the end of words. They do not need to have the same spelling to rhyme.

In my box (rhyming game) | Students find and match words that rhyme

Get a small box and place some pictures in it that represent familiar words that have familiar rhymes (like box/socks, cat/hat, or chair/bear). Sit in a circle with the students. Hold the box and choose a picture. If the picture shows a cat, say 'In my box, there's a cat'. Call on a child to come up with a rhyming word. The child might say, 'In my box, there's a hat' or 'In my box, there is a mat' (or some other rhyming word). After they answer with a rhyming word, hand them the box. Now they get to choose a card.

Odd one out (rhyming game) | Students recognise sets of rhyming words in songs, speech and poetry

Say 3 words to students, 2 of which rhyme. Ask students to determine which word does not rhyme.
For example: What does not rhyme: stop mop cake (cake); night ball light (ball)?

Regularly include rhyming books as part of your daily read-aloud. Encourage students to join in with repetitive rhymes.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Isolating and identifying phonemes

In order to support students' skill in identifying phonemes in all positions in a word, focus on one position at a time. As students' skills develop, they will become aware that it takes two letters to make one sound in some words, eg there are 5 letters in the word 'train' but only 4 phonemes because the 'ai' in train makes one sound, the long /ā/ sound. Teachers understand there are categories of phonemes, eg digraphs (2 letters make one sound) and trigraphs (3 letters make one sound, eg 'igh' in 'sigh' makes the long /ī/ sound).

Alliteration snakes | Students listen for initial sounds in words and say other words that start with the same sound

The teacher asks the students to sit in a circle and then hands each a picture (all the picture should start with the same sound). If the initial sound is 's', the teacher makes the sound 'sss' in a silly way and says 'silly'. The teacher asks the students to stand in a circle and chooses a student to start. The teacher asks the student to say the teacher's word 'silly' and their word 'sand'. The student then stands behind the teacher. The next child says the words 'silly sand' and then their word 'stick' and stands behind the teacher. Repeat till all the students are standing in a snake. Then everyone in the group says all the words 'silly sand stick snake sun soup'. This game can be repeated with any letter sound.

Pick it out | Students identify sounds in varying positions

Look at five pictures. Students need to pick out the picture with a different beginning/medial/final sound.

Blending

Blending is the skill of joining separate speech sounds (phonemes) together to make a word.

Puppet talk | Students practise blending sounds prior to segmenting them

Introduce the students to the class puppet who can only speak in 'sound talk'. Make the puppet whisper to you a word; relay the segmented word to the students, eg /ch/ /ee/ /z/. Now ask the students to blend the sounds into the word 'cheese'. Then ask students to imitate the puppet by segmenting words themselves.

YEAR 1

Phonics screening check

Segmenting

Segmentation is the skills of splitting words up into their separate speech sounds (phonemes).

How many sounds in the word | Students count the individual sounds they hear in a word

Teachers can provide each student with tokens and 2 or 3 'phoneme frames' drawn on a sheet of paper. The children place a token in each box from left to right as they hear each sound in a word.

Bead slide | Students practise segmenting words into phonemes

To support concept development and phonemic skill of segmentation, use concrete materials such as beads on a string to scaffold learning. Ask students to touch and slide a bead for every sound heard in a word.

Deletion/addition/substitution

The ability to manipulate phonemes has a 'substantial long-term impact on reading' (Kilpatrick, 2015, p.156). In order to manipulate phonemes, students need to be able to use the skills of segmenting words into phonemes and blend phonemes together. Thus, deleting, adding and substituting phonemes in words is dependent on the ability to segment and blend. This, in turn, is dependent on the ability to isolate and identify phonemes.

Deletion | Students practise deleting sounds in varying positions

Ask students to delete sounds from words in different positions:
Say the word /stop/. Take away the first sound. What do you get? (top)
Say the word /goat/ take away the final sound. What do you get? (go)
Say the word /bread/. Take the /r/ sound out. What do you get? (bed)

Addition | Students practise adding sounds in varying positions

Ask students to add sounds to words in different positions:
What word do you get if you add /s/ to the beginning of *park*? (spark)
What word do you get if you add /s/ to the end of *park*? (parks)

Substitution | Students practise substituting sounds in words

Substitution is the most complex skill in phoneme manipulation.

Ask students to substitute phonemes and say a new word:
Say the word /blue/. Now say /blue/ but instead of /b/ say /k/. (clue)
Say the word /cry/. Now say /cry/, but instead of /k/ say /t/. (try)
Say dad/. Now say /dad/, but instead of /a/ say /i/. (did)
Say /spy/. Now say /spy/, but instead of /p/ say /k/. (sky)

Word chaining | Students change sounds as directed or identify where changes are made

Select a word and track the changes in the word as you change sounds, eg tat – sat – rat – ran – fan. You can either direct students to change particular positions or sounds, or you can challenge your students by asking them where the change can be made.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

David Kilpatrick's, *Equipped for reading success* (2016) has one-minute activities to reinforce phonemic manipulation skills. They can be implemented across the teaching day.

Michael Heggerty's, *Phonemic awareness: the skills that they need to help them succeed* (2020) also provides teachers with easy to implement activities to further develop students phonological and phonemic awareness skills.

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Excluded from NEALS
February 2020