

# Phonics Teaching Series (1): Enhancing Teachers' Knowledge and Skills in Teaching Phonics at Primary Level

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March 2021



# rundown

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- Phonics
- Sounds
- Teaching Phonics



# What is Phonics?

- a. Phonics = Pronunciation
- b. Phonics teaches sounds and letters
- c. Phonics sounds are not as accurate as IPA sounds
- d. Phonics is for young learners only

# Phonics

- a method of teaching people to read, based on learning the sounds that letters represent

Cambridge Dictionary

# Letter-Sound Relationships


- 26 letters but 44+ sounds
- not enough letters to cover the sounds



# Phonics doesn't work and English spelling is

...

- weird
- confusing
- so irregular
- a mess



'87% of English  
words follow  
common and  
consistent sound-  
spelling  
relationships'

- Wiley Blevins, 'Phonics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'

ɪ	I	ʊ	u:	Iə	eɪ	ɪ:	X
e	ə	ɜ:	ɔ:	ʊə	ɔɪ	əʊ	
æ	ʌ	ɑ:	ɒ	eə	aɪ	aʊ	
P	b	t	d	tʃ	dʒ	k	g
f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ
m	n	ŋ	h	l	r	w	j



# letter-sound relationships

simple code

<u>ee</u>	i	short <u>oo</u>	long <u>oo</u>	<u>ear</u>	<u>ai</u>		
e	<small>schwa /ə/</small> <u>er</u>	<u>ur</u>	<u>or</u>	<u>ure</u>	<u>oi</u>	<u>oa</u>	
a	u	<u>ar</u>	o	<u>air</u>	<u>igh</u>	<u>ow</u>	
p	b	t	d	<u>ch</u>	j	k	g
f	v	<small>unvoiced</small> <u>th</u>	<small>voiced</small> <u>th</u>	s	z	<u>sh</u>	<u>/zh/</u>
m	n	<u>ng</u>	h	l	r	w	y

# Underhill's proprioceptive approach

- proprioception
- also referred to as kinaesthesia (or kinesthesia, in American English), is the sense of self-movement and body position.
- 動覺（肌肉等的）運動感覺
- It is sometimes described as the "sixth sense".

# How do we produce sounds?

*'Reading in poor light gives you eyestrain.'*

Which sounds did your tongue tip touch the palate or roof of your mouth?

**Consonants**

**Vowels**

## Consonants

pronounced by stopping the air from flowing easily through the mouth, especially by closing the lips or touching the teeth with the tongue

## Vowels

produced when the breath flows out through the mouth without being blocked by the teeth, tongue, or lips

<u>ee</u>	i	short <u>oo</u>	long <u>oo</u>	<u>ear</u>	<u>ai</u>	
e	<small>schwa /ə/</small> <u>er</u>	<u>ur</u>	<u>or</u>	<u>ure</u>	<u>oi</u>	<u>oa</u>
a	u	<u>ar</u>	o	<u>air</u>	<u>igh</u>	<u>ow</u>

p	b	t	d	<u>ch</u>	j	k	g
f	v	<small>unvoiced</small> <u>th</u>	<small>voiced</small> <u>th</u>	s	z	<u>sh</u>	/z <u>h</u> /
m	n	<u>ng</u>	h	l	r	w	y

# 12 stationary vowels

high	high	high	high	high	
front		centre		back	
low	low	low	low	low	

<u>ee</u>	i	short <u>oo</u>	long <u>oo</u>	<u>ear</u>	<u>ai</u>		
e	<small>schwa /ə/</small> <u>er</u>	<u>ur</u>	<u>or</u>	<u>ure</u>	<u>oi</u>	<u>oa</u>	
a	u	<u>ar</u>	o	<u>air</u>	<u>igh</u>	<u>ow</u>	
p	b	t	d	<u>ch</u>	j	k	g
f	v	<small>unvoiced</small> <u>th</u>	<small>voiced</small> <u>th</u>	s	z	<u>sh</u>	/z <u>h</u> /
m	n	<u>ng</u>	h	l	r	w	y

i



er

/i/ + /er/  
= /ear/

a

oo

/a/ + /oo/  
= /ow/

# gliding vowels

$i \rightarrow er$	$e \rightarrow i$	
$oo \rightarrow er$	<small>shorter</small> $or \rightarrow i$	<small>short</small> $er \rightarrow oo$
$e \rightarrow er$	$a \rightarrow i$	<small>short</small> $a \rightarrow oo$

<u>ee</u>	i	short <u>oo</u>	long <u>oo</u>	<u>ear</u>	<u>ai</u>	
e	<small>schwa /ə/</small> <u>er</u>	<u>ur</u>	<u>or</u>	<u>ure</u>	<u>oi</u>	<u>oa</u>
a	u	<u>ar</u>	o	<u>air</u>	<u>igh</u>	<u>ow</u>

p	b	t	d	<u>ch</u>	j	k	g
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m	n	<u>ng</u>	h	l	r	w	y

# unvoiced and voiced consonants

p

b

t

d

ch

j

k

g

f

v

unvoiced

th

voiced

th

s

z

sh

/ zh /

b

d

f

g

h

j

consonants – bouncy or stretchy

- odd one out:

- b ch d k f g h j

- l m n ng p r

- s sh t unvoiced th voiced th

- v w y z /zh/

# unvoiced and voiced consonants

p

b

t

d

ch

j

k

g

f

v

unvoiced

th

voiced

th

s

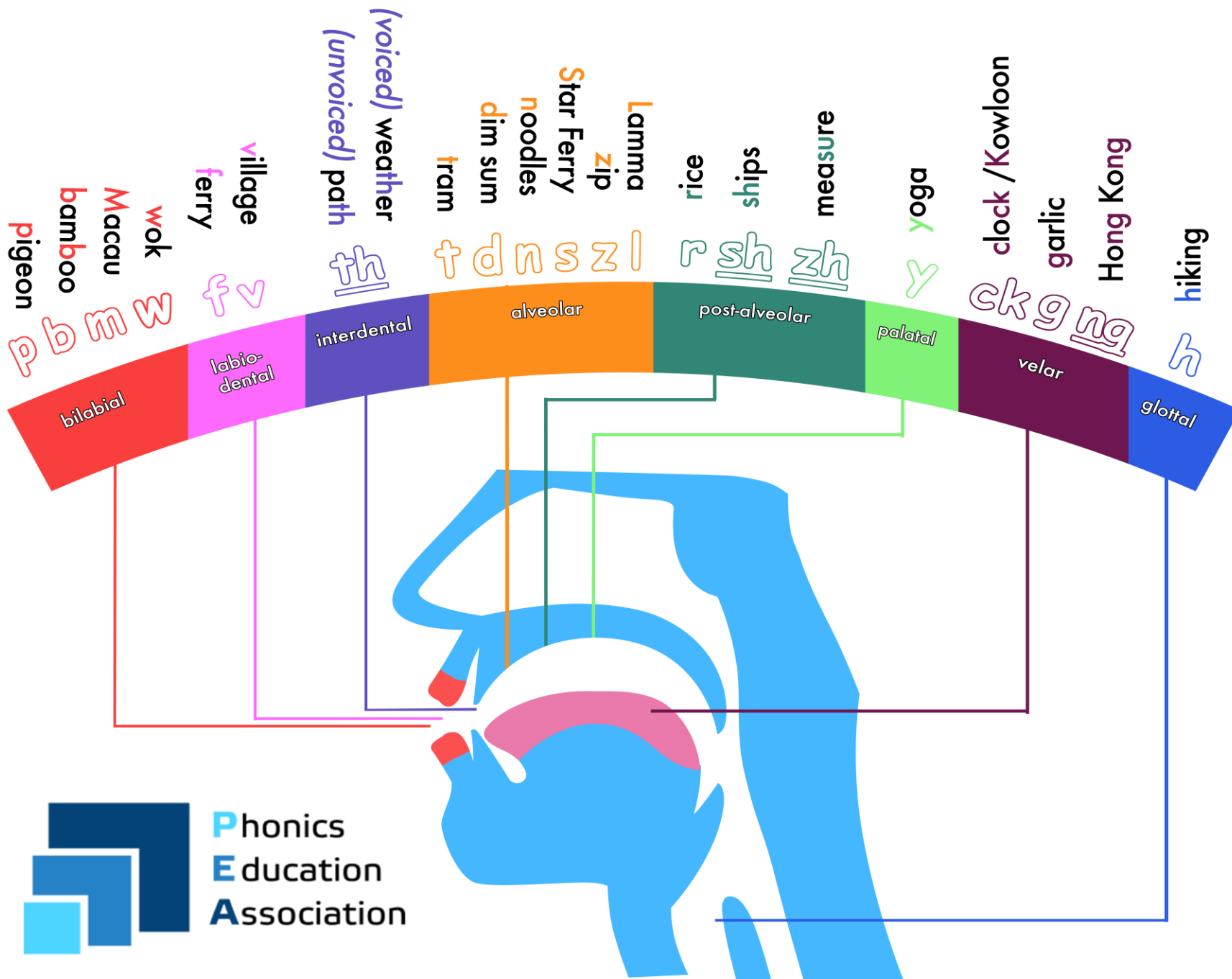
z

sh

/zh/

Why are these arranged in such a way?





<u>ee</u>	i	short <u>oo</u>	long <u>oo</u>	<u>ear</u>	<u>ai</u>		
e	<small>schwa /ə/</small> <u>er</u>	<u>ur</u>	<u>or</u>	<u>ure</u>	<u>oi</u>	<u>oa</u>	
a	u	<u>ar</u>	o	<u>air</u>	<u>igh</u>	<u>ow</u>	
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m	n	<u>ng</u>	h	l	r	w	y

# other consonants

odd-one-out

h

nasals

m

n

ng

pair

l

r

semi vowels

w

y

# Semi Vowels

oo

er

w

i

er

y

no obstructions

# Sounds



reading

# Scarborough's Reading Rope



# Reading Rope

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- language comprehension
- word recognition
  - phonological awareness
  - decoding
  - sight recognition





# Phonics

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- word recognition role
- language comprehension limitations
- must be taught in context



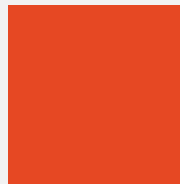
# Teaching Phonics



show the benefits of  
LSRs



provide fun and  
meaningful practice



encourage application

# Phonics Activities

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Activity Name

Outcomes

Materials

Targets

Procedures

Variations

Extensions

# sounds - word chain drilling

- practise difficult single sounds
- differentiate pairs of initial sounds - /l/ /r/; /f/ /th/
- differentiate pairs of ending sounds - /t/ /d/; /m/ /n/
- use the words to make a sentence / tongue twister / story
- extensions: find more words from a page / an article / a poster

# letters - unseen dictation

- /-ad/
- bad had dad mad sad glad - 1 point@
- fad lad pad - 2 points @
- cad rad clad chad - 3 points @
- 'experts' - show & tell new words
- extensions: -ed -od -ud -id
- variations: students as Ts - group/pair work

# What to adapt

- from sound to morpheme to word level
- from one word to pairs and more
- from recognition to production
- from production to differentiation

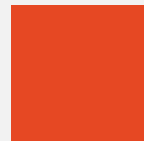
# blending & segmenting



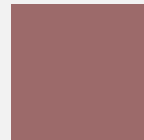
reversible & complementary



text to sound - reading  
aloud (read then speak)



sound to text - spelling  
(listen then write)



sounds to onset & rime to  
syllables to compound  
words



# Blending known words

- context - classroom objects
- learning outcomes - blend known words; more fluent/accurate
- materials - PPT slides
- prep time - 10 min.
- online - unmute





- e d k s

- d t u s e r

- s e r e r a

- s s c a o o l r m

- d t w h b i \_ e o a r



# Blending new words

- context - holiday / travel
- learning outcomes - blend new words; more confident; fluent/accurate
- materials - PPT slides
- prep time - 10 min.
- online - unmute

# Sonic-Control Spaceship

e

ee

igh

th

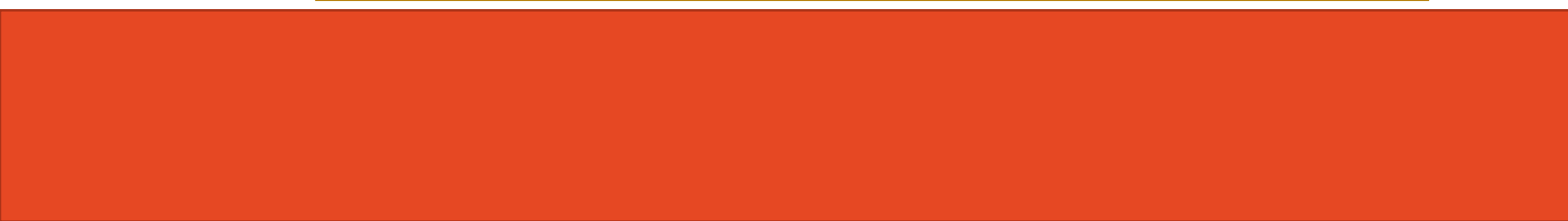
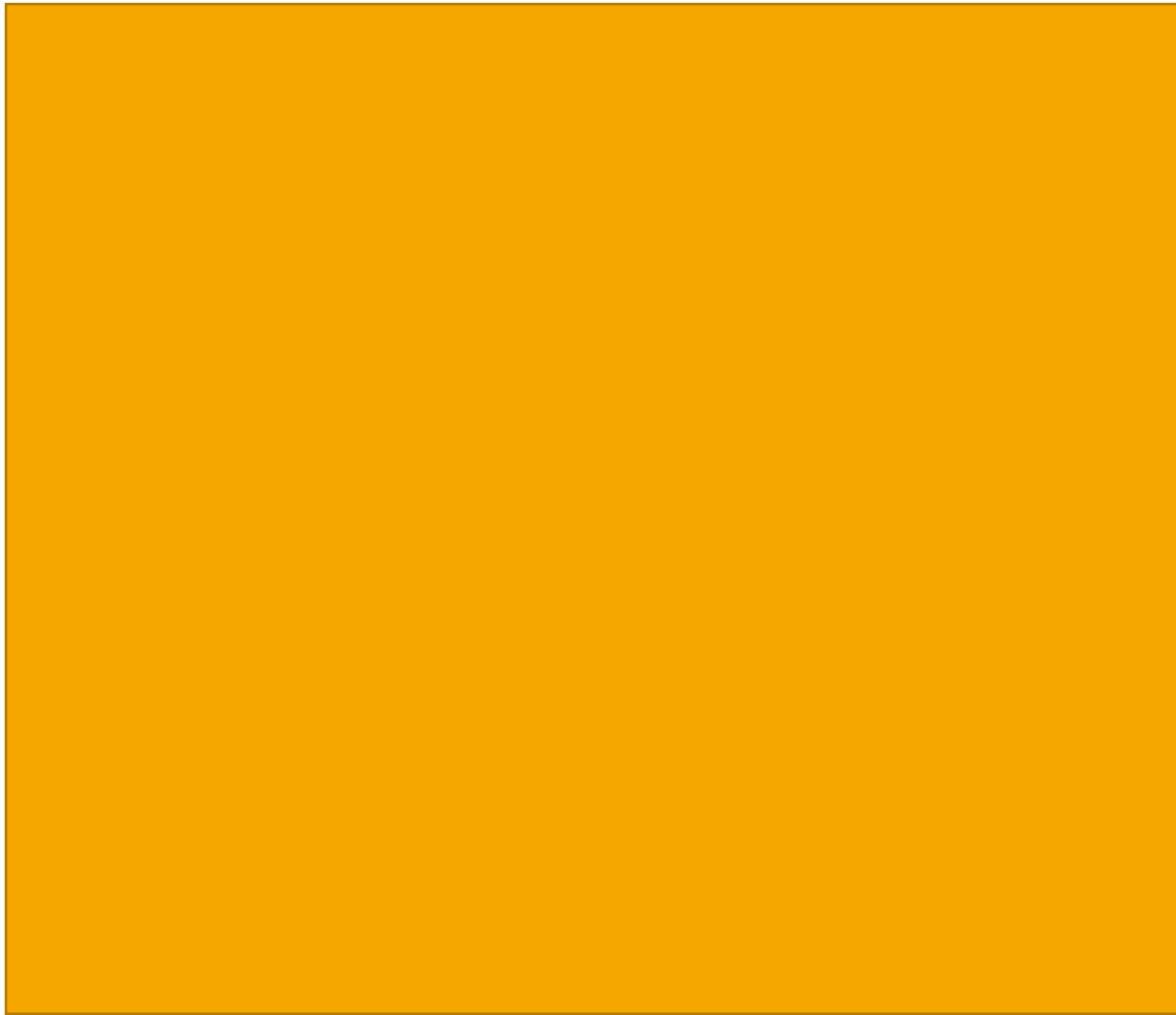
f

j

shr

dr

ang



# Dictation as MCs – known words

- context – vocab sets – words with similar/same sounds/spelling
- learning outcomes – distinguish/produce sounds; identify alternative spelling/pron
- materials – poll
- prep time – 10 min.
- online – Poll tool on Zoom / Google Forms / Zeetings; Chat

# Dictation – known to new words

- /-ad/
- bad had dad mad sad glad - 1 point@
- fad lad pad - 2 points @
- cad rad clad chad - 3 points @
- extensions: 'experts'; -ed -id
- variations: group/pair work



Tricky or Common Exception Words



magic 'e' or  
split vowel  
digraphs

long 'a' / 'a\_e' - game

bake late lane name

long 'o' / 'o\_e' - home

bone throne cone hole



alternative  
spelling

/ai/ - mail able stay lake  
great weight prey sundae

## alternative pronunciation

'ear' - dear beard /ear/; bear,  
pear /air/

'ch' - chain, church /ch/;  
chemistry, ache /k/; chef,  
machine /sh/

'ough' - enough, tough /uf/;  
cough /of/; thorough /er/;  
through long /oo/

## silent letters

silent **b** - climb, comb,  
dumb

silent **h** - hour, honest,  
rhyme

silent **k** - knee, knock, know,  
kneel



# breakout sessions

- key stage 1
- key stage 2



# Scavenger Hunt

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magic 'e' or  
split vowel digraphs



# Grouped dictation

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silent letters

# Dos and Don'ts

- Do use games/activities in context
- Do integrate Phonics activities into the English curriculum
- Do focus on letter sounds suitable to the level of students and provide meaningful contexts for them to apply the knowledge and skills
- Don't use games / activities to teach many letter sounds in the same lesson
- Don't spend a fixed amount of time on Phonics games/activities in every English lesson as a formal system
- Don't assign regular lesson time on activities to implement a separate Phonics programme





# Thanks for your participation!

- evaluation (link)
- Enjoy using Phonics with your students!