

Year 1 General Phonics/Reading book levels

Phase 1: Early phonics teaching in **pre-school/nursery** focuses on developing children's listening skills:

- Environmental sounds
- Instrumental sounds
- Body percussion (e.g. clapping and stamping)
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting (e.g. hearing that d-o-g makes 'dog')

Typical activities for teaching Phase 1 phonics include 'listening' walks, playing and identifying instruments, action songs, learning rhymes and playing games like I Spy. This phase is intended to develop children's listening, vocabulary and speaking skills. This level correlates to **Lilac** book band.

Phase 2: children begin to learn phonemes. There are 44 sounds in all. Some are made with two letters, but in Phase 2, children focus on learning the 19 most common single letter sounds. By the end of Phase 2 children should be able to read some vowel-consonant (VC) and consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words, and to spell them out. They also learn some high frequency 'tricky words' like 'the' and 'go.' This level correlates to **Pink** book band.

Phase 3: introduces the remaining, more difficult and/or less commonly used phonemes. There are around 25 of these, mainly made up of two letters such as /ch/, /ar/, /ow/ and /ur/. They learn the names of the letters, as well as the sounds they make. Activities might include learning mnemonics (memory aids) for tricky words, practising writing letters on mini whiteboards, using word cards and singing songs like the Alphabet Song.

By the end, they should be able to say the sound made by most, or all, Phase 2 and 3 graphemes, blend and read CVC words made from these graphemes, read 12 new tricky words and write letters correctly when given an example to copy. This level correlates to **Red** book band.

Phase 4: By now, children should be confident with each phoneme. 'From here on, phonics teaching is about consolidating and refining their knowledge, introducing more spelling patterns and tricky words, and increasing vocabulary. In Phase 4 phonics, children will;

- Practise reading and spelling CVCC words ('such,' 'belt,' 'milk')
- Practise reading and spelling high frequency words
- Practise reading and writing sentences
- Learn more tricky words, including 'have,' 'like,' 'some,' 'little'

Children should now be blending confidently to work out new words. They should be starting to be able to read words straight off, rather than having to sound them out. They should also be able to write every letter, mostly correctly. This level correlates to **Yellow** book band.

Phase 5 generally takes children the whole of Year 1. It introduces alternative spellings for sounds, like 'igh'. Children master these in reading first, and as their fluency develops, they begin to use them correctly in spelling. They learn new graphemes (different ways of spelling each sound) and alternative pronunciations for these: for example, learning that the grapheme 'ow' makes a different sound in 'snow' and 'cow'. They should become quicker at blending. They learn about split digraphs. They'll start to choose the right graphemes when spelling, and will learn more tricky words, including 'people,' 'water' and 'friend'. By the end of Year 1, children should be able to:

- Say the sound for any grapheme they are shown
- Write the common graphemes for any given sound (e.g. 'e,' 'ee,' 'ie,' 'ea')
- Use their phonics knowledge to read and spell unfamiliar words of up to three syllables
- Read all of the 100 high frequency words, and be able to spell most of them
- Form letters correctly

This level correlates to **Blue/Green** book bands.