

# How we teach children to read

## What is synthetic phonics?

When we speak of synthetic phonics, we are referring to the process of synthesising (or blending) the sounds of a word together.

There are 26 letters in the alphabet and each letter has its own sound. For example:



However, there are more than 26 sounds in English - there are 46 in fact! We use combinations of letters to make these sounds.

A **digraph** uses two letters to make one sound. In Anima Phonics, digraphs are coloured green to make them easier to identify.



With synthetic phonics, we teach children the relationship between sounds and letters. This needs to be taught in a systematic and clearly defined, incremental sequence, so that children have time to consolidate and apply their new knowledge.

## Why learn phonics?

Children need a clear and consistent method to use when reading and writing. Learning to read with phonics is much easier and simpler than trying to memorise thousands of words!

Decades of research tells us that teaching children the **phonic code** is the quickest way to unlocking the English language.

Synthetic phonics is the proven method to achieve success for every child, regardless of their age, gender, background, language profile or additional learning needs.

## How children learn to read

c a t



In the beginning stages of reading, children will need to sound out each word and then blend those sounds together.

To sound out a word, read each sound in the word individually from left to right.

cat



Then, blend the sounds together to hear the full word.

## How children learn to spell

d o g



To start writing words, children must learn to orally segment a word into its individual sounds.

First, say the word aloud slowly, so that you can hear each sound. Use your thumb and fingers to tally each sound in the word.

Write each sound from left to right. Then, blend the sounds together to hear the full word.

## How is phonics taught in school?



**Picture** → **Poem**

**t**

**Tap Tap Tiger**

Time is ticking on the clock.  
Tiger's tapping on his watch.

t t t t t t t t

Hurry up, we're very late  
No time at all to hesitate

t t t t t t t t

Tick tock! There's the chime!  
Tiger likes to be on time.

t t t t t t t t

Time is ticking on the clock.  
Tiger's tapping on his watch.

t t t t t t t t

Tap on your wrist.

**Action**

To help children to form strong bonds between the sound and the letter, we use memorable animal characters and mnemonics.

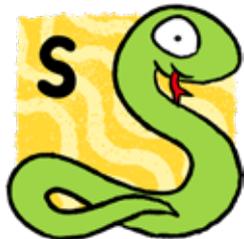
Each sound is introduced with a picture, poem, song and action.

Use the action to help remember the sound!

You will find all the sounds and actions over the next few pages.

# Our Mnemonic System

Each sound has its own animal mascot and easy-to-remember mnemonic action. The *Anima Phonics* actions are integral to the programme: simply jog a child's memory with a silent action. This ensures the process of blending is smooth and uninterrupted.



s for snake

ACTION:



Wiggle your hand like a slithering snake.



a for ant

ACTION:



Pretend to take a bite from an apple.



t for tiger

ACTION:



Tap on your wristwatch.

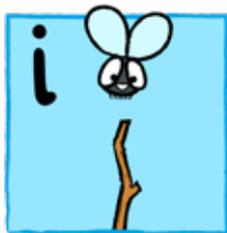


p for pig

ACTION:



Pop bubbles in the air.



i for insect

ACTION:



Use your fingers to show how Insect lands on the stick



n for newt

ACTION:



Make a pillow with your hands and take a nap.



m for meerkat

ACTION:



Hold up your meerkat paws, and smell the mangoes.



d for dog

ACTION:



Dig like a dog.



g for gorilla

ACTION:



Beat your chest like a gorilla.



o for octopus

ACTION:



Draw a circle in the air with your finger.



c for crab

ACTION:



Make crab claws with your hands.



k for kangaroo

ACTION:



Make crab claws with your hands.



ck as in back

ACTION:



Make crab claws with your hands.



e for elephant

ACTION:



Raise your hands to your mouth and call out an echo.



u for umbrella

ACTION:



Use your arms to make an umbrella above your head.



r for rat

ACTION:



Raise your rocket hands up into space.





b for bear

ACTION:



Bounce a ball.



h for hen

ACTION:



Fan your mouth as if you have eaten a hot chilli.



f for frog

ACTION:



Use your fireman's hose to put out the fire.



l for lion

ACTION:



Rub your wrist on your chin, as if licking your paw.



j for jellyfish

ACTION:



Juggle balls in the air.



v for vulture

ACTION:



Play a violin.



w for worm

ACTION:



Roll your hands over each other like a washing machine.



x as in fox

ACTION:



Make a cross with your arms like Agent Fox.



y for yak

ACTION:



Hold your nose to block out the yucky smell.



z for zebra

ACTION:



Fasten your zip.



qu for quail

ACTION:



Place a queen's crown on your head.



ch for cheetah

ACTION:



Give yourself a cuddle as you chatter in the chill.



sh for sheep

ACTION:



Put your finger to your lips and say 'sh'.

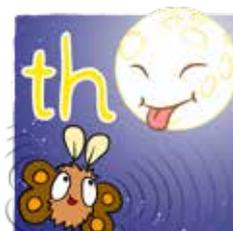


th as in moth

ACTION:



Gently flap your hands like the wings of a moth in the day.



th as in the

ACTION:



Quickly flap your hands like a moth's wings at night.



ng as in lemming

ACTION:



Pull the rope to ring the bell.



ee as in eel

ACTION:



Press your car horn to make the sound 'ee'.



ar as in alarm

ACTION:



Shake your hands above your head like an alarm clock.



oa as in goat

ACTION:



Row a boat.



or as in tortoise

ACTION:



Pull the cord to sound the horn.



oo as in rook

ACTION:



Look through your binoculars and shrug.



oo as in goose

ACTION:



Look through your binoculars and lean forward.



ai as in alien

ACTION:



Take your aim, and throw an acorn.



igh as in aye-aye

ACTION:



Rest your finger on your cheek and point to your eye.



ear for earwig

ACTION:



Tug one of your ears.



ow as in owl

ACTION:



Rub your head as if you've had a bump.



ur for urchin

ACTION:



Twist the cap to free Urchin from the bottle.



oi as in oyster

ACTION:



Hide behind your arms, like an oyster's shell, then pop out!



air as in aeroplane

ACTION:



Fly your hand through the air like an aeroplane.



ure as in cure

ACTION:



Give a thumb's up for finding the cure!



er as in beaver

ACTION:



Tap your chin like you're trying to remember something.



ue as in unicorn

ACTION:



Put your finger on your head to make a unicorn horn.