



Listening and Attention

Understanding

Speaking



Young children need multiple opportunities to have conversations and to hear adults modelling language and introducing new words. They learn language when they are engaged with things that fascinate, challenge and excite them and they need to hear and say new words often to strengthen the connections in their brains and to keep building their vocabulary. Listening and attention, understanding and speaking activities will help your child take the first important steps towards reading and writing.

Phonics

A phonics teaching programme called 'Letters and Sounds' is used to support the teaching of Language and Literacy in settings and schools. All of our local pre-schools and our John Hampden School Nursery follow the Phase 1 section and in July 2019 received joint refresher training, enabling us at school to continue with your child's phonics journey, ensuring consistency and progression.

Letters and Sounds – Phase 1

In this ongoing phase, your child will be learning to:

Have fun with sounds, listen carefully, develop their vocabulary, speak confidently to you, other adults and other children, tune into sounds, listen and remember sounds, talk about sounds, understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds. There are three strands: Tuning into sound, listening and remembering sound, talking about sound.

Phase 1 consists of seven interlinking parts:



environmental sounds



instrumental sounds



body percussion



rhythm and rhyme



alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)



voice sounds



oral blending and segmenting.

Here are some example activities that are offered to the children at pre-school, nursery and at the start of school. We continue to play phase 1 games even when children move onto Phase 2.

Environmental Sounds

Listening Walk - listen to different sounds: cars revving, people talking, birds singing, dogs barking. Try to reproduce the sounds, use your voices or instruments.

Make Sounds - use a range of props, such as running a stick along a fence or tapping a bin lid. Play 'sound lotto'.

Instrumental Sounds

Make musical instruments- use cardboard rolls, tins, dried peas, beans, stones and shake these loudly, softly, while marching, skipping or stomping.

Play 'Guess what's inside the instrument'.

Sing known songs loudly and then softly, adding in new words or sounds.

Listen to a range of music, from rap to classical. Encourage children to move in response to the variety of musical styles and moods.

Body Percussion

Learn some action rhymes, such as 'Wind The Bobbin Up'.

Clap along with familiar rhymes and learning new ones.

Listen to the sounds - feet make when walking, running or skipping: slowly, softly, fast, stomping hard, in flipflops, boots, heeled shoes.

Clapping: clap your hands softly, quickly and make patterns for children to follow. Clap thighs or stamp feet., tap fingers and click tongues.

Rhythm and Rhyme

Bounce along to the rhythm of a song or nursery rhyme; march or clap to a chant or poem.

Read poems, songs, nursery songs and rhyming stories as often as possible

Use gestures, tap regular beats and pause to emphasise the rhythm of the piece.

Add percussion to mark the beats using hands, feet or instruments.

Rhythmic chanting - 'two, four, six, eight, hurry up or we'll be late' or 'bip bop boo, who are you?'

Alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)

Children's names - 'Jolly Jessie jumped', Gurpeet gets the giggles', 'Carl caught a cat', 'Mummy munches muffins', 'Daddy is doing the dishes'.

Emphasise alliteration in songs and stories. Make up little nonsense stories using alliteration

Play around with familiar song, such as 'Old MacDonald had some sheep, shoes, shorts, with a sh sh here and and sh sh there', to emphasise alliteration.

Collect items that start with the same sound. Identifying the odd one out, for example, cat, cup, boy, car.

Voice Sounds

Repeat vocalisations. Making fun noises and nonsense words.

Say words in different ways (fast, slowly, high, low, using a funny voice)

'Sing' known songs using only sounds (e.g., 'la, la, la') and asking children to guess the song.

Vary tempo and pitch when reading stories.

Oral Blending and Segmenting

This is all oral (spoken). Children will not be expected to match the letter to the sound at this stage.

The emphasis is on helping children to hear the separate sounds in words and to create spoken sounds. Oral blending and segmenting is a skill that is crucial to the success in reading and writing.

Being able to hear the separate sounds within a word and then blend them together to understand that word is really important. Blending is a vital skill for reading. The separate sounds (phonemes) of the word are spoken aloud, in order, all through the word and are then merged together into the whole word. This merging is called blending. For example, the adult would say c-a-t = cat.

Segmenting is a vital skill for spelling. The whole word is spoken aloud, then broken up into its separate sounds (phonemes) in order, all through the word. For example, the adult would say cat = c-a-t.

Useful Websites and Leaflets For More Information

www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk

Information for parents and carers of babies and young children as well as suggestions for activities, features, DVD-roms, books and events that are both useful and fun. You can have their free newsletter emailed to you directly.

www.ican.org.uk

Information for parents and teachers on the importance of speaking and listening skills for young children's development. Although it is aimed at early communication development, there is a great deal of very useful information and material, such as Chatter Matters, that can be downloaded from the website; some free materials can be ordered.

www.wordsforlife.org.uk

Includes tips for getting boys to read and songs and rhymes for sharing with young children.

www.parentscentre.gov.uk/foragegroup/3to5years/readandwritetogether

Really good ideas about how you can enjoy sharing books with your child and tells you a bit more about phonics.

www.parentscentre.gov.uk/foragegroup/5to7years/alittlereadinggoesalongway

Ideas about how to help you child as they are learning to read. www.read-count.org/index.asp A website for you and your child to explore together. It will give you some ideas about reading with your child and online games for young children to play, both with you and on their own. It also has ideas for games to play away from the computer.

www.basic-skills.co.uk

The Basic Skills Website will keep you updated on a range of literacy developments.

www.bookstart.co.uk

Provides information about the national Bookstart scheme and the Bookstart packs that your child will receive as a baby, a toddler and at age three to four. It also gives information about sharing books with your child. You can find out about Bookstart events in your area, which you can attend with your child.

<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>

In July 2018, the Secretary of State for Education announced the government's ambition to halve in ten years the proportion of children who finish reception year without the communication, language and literacy skills they need to thrive. As a result, the Department for Education launched Hungry Little Minds – a three-year campaign to provide ideas and activities that support early communication, language and literacy learning.

Links To Phonics Games on You Tube:

Dear Zoo Animal Listening Game

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JA2yR8ZMzc>

Eye Spy Initial Sounds – s a t p i n

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzUz41TjAmg>

Environmental Sounds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OotUxlesQBM>

Oral blending

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWn-qxUddqo>

Oral blending

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2hazzQ5bSs>