

Appendix One: a glossary of phonics terms

- Adjacent consonants. Two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds. E.g. the first three letters of strap are adjacent consonants. Previously known as a consonant cluster.
- Blending. The process of using phonics for reading. Children identify and synthesise/blend the phonemes in order to make a word. E.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap.
- Consonant digraph. Two consonants which make one sound. E.g. sh, ch, th, ph
- CVC, CCVCC etc. The abbreviations used for consonant-vowel-consonant and consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant words, used to describe the order of sounds. E.g. cat, ship and sheep are all CVC words. Black and prize could be described as CCVC words.
- Digraph. Two letters which together make one sound. There are different types of digraph – vowel, consonant and split.
- Grapheme. A letter or group of letters representing one sound (phoneme) E.g. ck, igh
- Phoneme. The smallest unit of sound in a word.
- Segmenting. The process of using phonics for writing. Children listen to the whole word and break it down into the constituent phonemes, choosing an appropriate grapheme to represent each phoneme. E.g. ship can be segmented as sh-i-p.
- Split digraph. Two letters, which work as a pair to make one sound, but are separated within the word. E.g. a-e as in make or late; i-e as in size or write.
- Synthesising The process of using phonics for reading. Children identify and synthesise/blend the phonemes in order to make a word. E.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap.
- Trigraph Three letters which together make one sound. E.g. dge, igh
- Vowel digraph A digraph in which at least one of the letters is a vowel E.g. ea, ay, ai, ar