

Guide to the Key Phonics Terms:

As parents and carers, it's important to make sure that you understand the key terms in phonics so that you can carry on the good work your child has done at school at home!

1 Blend: this is when you say the individual sounds that make up a word and then merge or blend them together to say the word as used when reading.

2 Consonant: most letters of the alphabet are consonants, except for the vowels: a,e,i,o,u.

3 CVC Words: this is an abbreviation used for consonant-vowel-consonant words. It describes the order of sounds. Some examples of CVC words are: cat, pen, top, chat (because ch makes one sound).

Other similar abbreviations include:

- VC (Vowel Consonant) words e.g. on, is, it.
- CCVC (Consonant, Consonant, Vowel, Consonant) words e.g. trap and black.
- CVCC (Consonant, Vowel, Consonant, Consonant) words e.g. milk and fast.

4 Digraph: this describes two letters which together make one sound e.g. ee, oa, ea, ch, ay.

There are different types of digraph:

- Vowel digraph: a digraph in which at least one of the letters is a vowel: boat or day.
- Consonant digraph: two consonants which can go together: shop or thin.
- Split digraph (previously called magic e): two letters, which work as a pair to make one sound, but are separated within the word e.g. a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e. For example: cake or pine.

5 Grapheme: it's a written letter or a group of letters which represent one single sound (phoneme) e.g. a, l, sh, air, ck.

6 Phoneme: it's a single sound that can be made by one or more letters - e.g. s, k, z, oo, ph, igh.

7 Phonics: it teaches children to listen to and identify the sounds that make up words. This helps them to read and write words.

8 Pure Sound: it's the skill of pronouncing each letter sound clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end e.g. 'f' not 'fuh.'

9 Segment: it's the opposite of blending as it means splitting a word up into individual sounds when spelling and writing.

10 Red Words: they are the words that are difficult to sound out e.g. said, the, because, which don't follow phonics rules.

11 Trigraph: this is when three letters go together to make one sound e.g. ear, air, igh, dge, tch.

12 Vowel: the letters a, e, i, o, u.