



Phonics

Phonics is the ability to understand the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent. This includes:

- Recognizing print patterns that represent sounds
- Syllable patterns
- Word parts (prefixes, suffixes and root words)

Common Consonant Digraphs and Blends:

bl, br, ch, ck, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gh, gl, gr, ng, ph, pl, pr, qu, sc, sh, sk, sl, sm,
sn, sp, st, sw, th, tr, tw, wh, wr

Common Consonant Trigraphs

nth, sch, scr, shr, spl, spr, squ, str, thr

Common Vowel Digraphs

ai, au, aw, ay, ea, ee, ei, eu, ew, ey, ie, oi, oo, ou, ow, oy



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Reading Activities for the Home

- Make blend-sounds and have your child write the letters that match the sounds (for example, /sh/, /tr/, /th/).
- Play word games that connect sounds with syllables and words (for example, if the letters “l-a-t-e-r” spell later, how do you spell hater? How many syllables are in later?).
- Write vowel and consonant digraphs, trigraphs and blends on cards. Hold up the cards one at a time and have your child say the sounds (for example, the long e sound /ē/ for the vowel digraphs ea and ee).
- Writing words:** Many children love to send and receive notes, and writing is a great way to reinforce phonics skills. Send your child notes in his/her backpack or place notes on the pillow. Have a relative or friend send a letter or email to your child. Whenever your child receives a note, have him/her write back. Don't be concerned about spelling. Instead, have your child sound out the words to the best of his/her ability.
- Hunting for words:** Choose a blend and have your child hunt for five items beginning with that sound. As each object is found, help your child write the word on a list. For example, if the target sound is “bl,” the child might find and write blanket, blood, blue, blizzard, blast.
- Hints for helping your child sound out words
 - First Sound - Have your child say the first sound in the word and make a guess based on the picture or surrounding words. Double-check the printed word to see if it matches the child's guess.
 - Sound and Blend - Have your child say each sound separately (sss aaa t). This is called “sounding it out”, and then say the sounds together (sat). This is “blending”.
 - Familiar Parts - When your child starts reading longer words, have him notice the parts of the word that he already knows. For example, in a word such as “presenting,” your child may already know the prefix pre-, the word “sent,” and the word ending -ing.
- Play “Memory” or “Go Fish” using consonant and vowel digraphs, trigraphs and blends.