



# Teaching of reading and phonics



Department  
for Education



# The reading framework

Teaching the foundations of literacy

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Over the last two decades, there has been a deepening recognition of the fundamental importance of improving reading standards and

Increased reading fluency = improved chances of future success

Fluency of reading is also a key indicator for future success in further education, higher education and employment.

Every child at The Lea will leave our school as a confident and fluent reader who has a love of reading.



What does it mean to be a fluent reader?

When should a child be fluent?



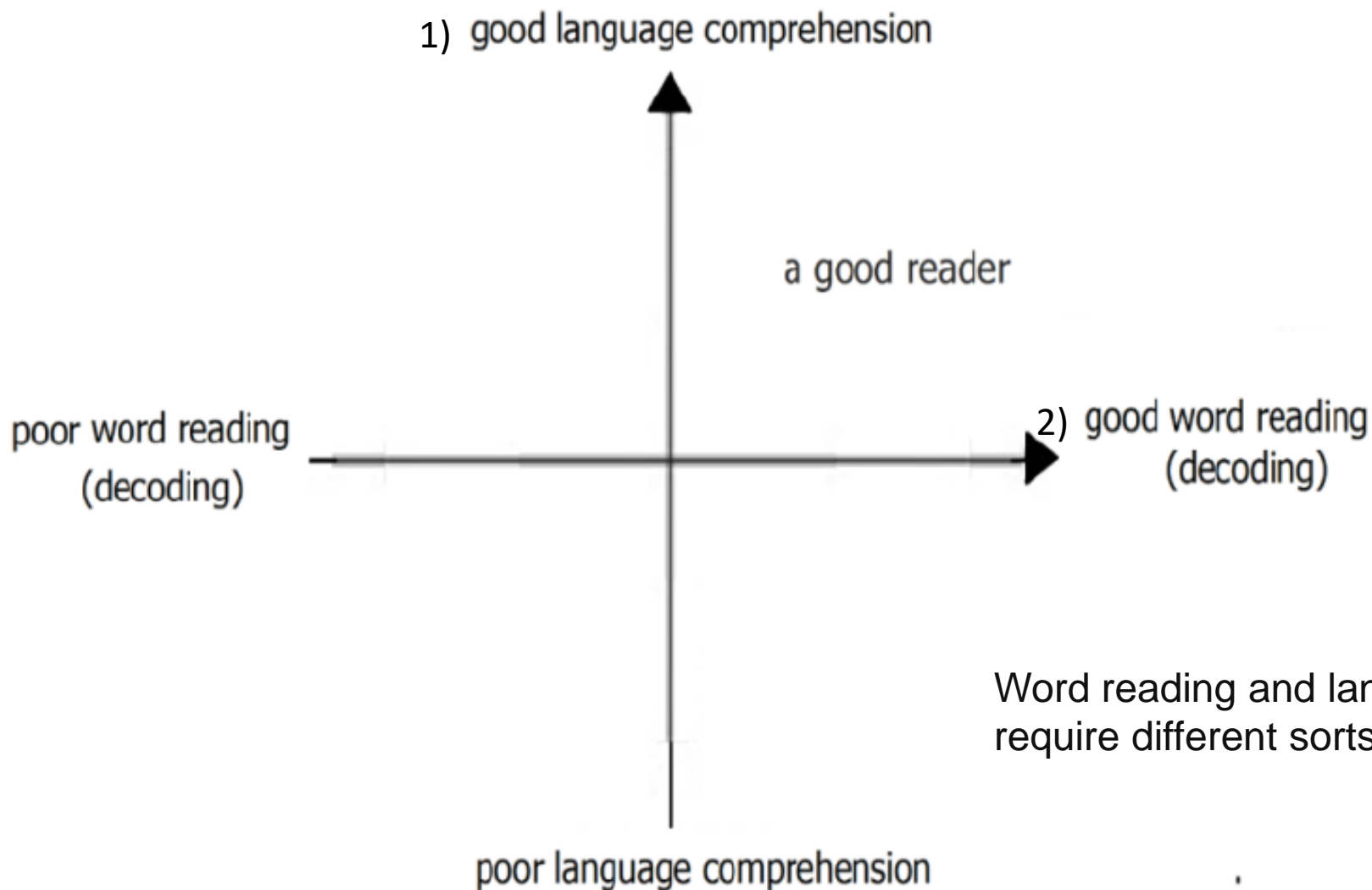
# What is a fluent reader?

- Reading fluency refers to the ability of readers to read the words in text effortlessly and efficiently (automaticity) with meaningful expression that enhances the meaning of the text (prosody).
- While many readers can decode words accurately, they may not be fluent or automatic in their word recognition. These readers tend to expend too much of their limited mental energy on figuring out the pronunciation and meaning of words, energy that is taken away from that more important task in reading comprehension — getting to the text's overall meaning. Thus, the lack of fluency often results in poor comprehension.



- Fluent readers, on the other hand, are able to read words accurately and *effortlessly*. They recognize words and phrases instantly on sight. A minimal amount of cognitive energy is expended in decoding the words. This means, then, that the maximum amount of a reader's cognitive energy can be directed to the all-important task of making sense of the text.

Figure 1: The knowledge of a good reader



Word reading and language comprehension require different sorts of teaching.



# 1) Good language comprehension: children are taught to speak and listen

- The number of words a child has heard and can speak by the age of three is a predictor of later language development,
- Young children typically gain several new words a day. Yet by the time they start school, some children will have heard millions more words than others.





A language-rich environment is one in which adults talk with children throughout the day. The more children take part in conversations, the more they will understand once they can read and the more vocabulary and ideas they will have to draw on when they can write.

Speaking and reading to and with children directly influences language comprehension.



2) Good word decoding: children are taught to decode through phonics.

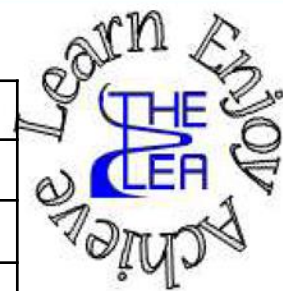
The National Curriculum published in 2013 required schools to teach reading using systematic phonics, and the Phonics Screening Check introduced in 2012 shows how many children are on track.



# What is phonics?

The method by which we teach children to read by recognising the connections between the sounds in spoken words (phonemes) and the letters used to write them down ( graphemes)

Phoneme	Grapheme	Blending	Oral Blending	Segmenting
Tricky Word	Alien Word	Digraph	Trigraph	Split Vowel digraph
Adjacent Consonants	Alternative Pronunciation	Mnemonic	Consonant Digraph	Vowel Digraph



The smallest unit of sound in a word	Phoneme
A letter or a group of letters used to represent a phoneme	Grapheme
Combining (by reading) individual Phonemes to make a whole word	Blending
Combining (orally) individual phonemes to make a whole word- Also known as sound talk	Oral blending
The process of separating a word into its individual phonemes	Segmenting
A grapheme using two letters to represent one phoneme	Digraph
A grapheme using three letters to represent one phoneme	Trigraph
A digraph representing a vowel sound where its two letters are split by a consonant (eg take)	Split vowel digraph
Two or more consonants that appear together in a word without an intervening vowel	Adjacent consonants
A different way of pronouncing a grapheme eg grapheme ow Crown (ow) snow (oa)	Alternative pronunciations
A learning technique used to help with memory and retention of information	Mnemonic
Words that cannot be decoded by children using the sounds they have been taught	Tricky Word
Two consonants that represent a single sound eg ch	Consonant digraph
Two vowels that represent a single sound eg ai	Vowel digraph
Also known as nonsense words	Alien words



## Blending (for reading)

To blend words, children are taught to look at graphemes in written words from left to right and to say each corresponding phoneme in turn. Then they blend the phonemes to say the whole word.

Children:

1. see the written word 'cat'
2. say the corresponding three phonemes /k/ /a/ /t/
3. blend the three phonemes to say the word 'cat'.

## Segmenting (for spelling)

To segment words, children are taught to separate a word into its phonemes and then choose the appropriate grapheme to represent the phonemes.

Children:

1. hear the spoken word 'dog'
2. identified there are three sounds ( clap, count on fingers)
3. Say/write the individual sounds d/o/g

**Children need to be secure with oral blending/segmenting and identifying the sounds in words before reading them.**

# Previous approach to teaching of phonics and reading



- We used phonics programmes including the government's own Letters and Sounds and incorporated aspects of Jolly Phonics in the early years.
- Children have been taking home books on coloured bands roughly matched to the progression of phonics sounds taught in class and tricky words. These books were from various schemes and could not be read fluently, containing many challenging words beyond the phonics progression taught in class.
- Children read with the teacher in small group guided sessions 1x weekly using a book matching their coloured band.



# Why have we changed our phonics scheme?

- We are passionate about research and improving practice to enable children to be successful learners
- A consistent approach enabling phonics to embed to early reading
- New decodable books based on phonics phases – no coloured bands
- Government guidance about validated phonics schemes, updates to Ofsted framework and research

# What is Little Wandle Letters and Sounds?



- An exciting, new DfE commissioned phonics scheme that puts emphasis on ensuring every child can read by the time they leave Year 1.
- New resources, decodable reading books, letter formation phrases, mnemonics
- Partnership with Harper Collins



Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised is a complete systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP) developed for schools by schools. Based on the original Letters and Sounds, but extensively revised to provide a complete teaching programme meeting all the expectations of the National Curriculum, the Ofsted Deep Dive into reading and preparing your children to go beyond the expectations of the Phonics Screening Check.



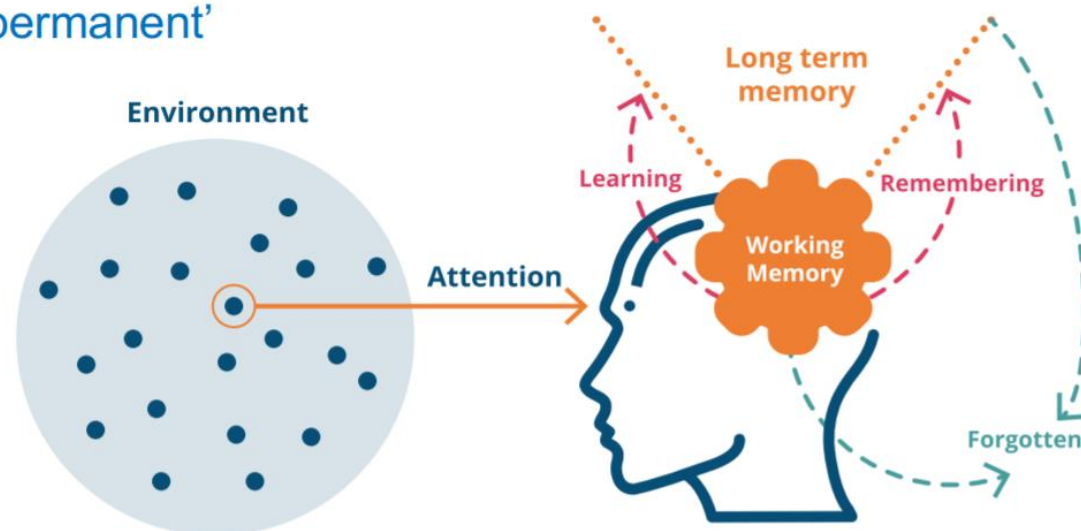
# How do children learn to read in our new approach?



- Daily phonics sessions for 10-30 min starting in Reception and continuing throughout Year 1, following the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds phonics programme.
- Reading practice sessions in small groups with the class teacher 2-3x weekly, looking at the same reading practice book they will take home which is matched to the sounds they know and/or need to practise.
- Children will take home their reading practice book for use across the week and bring it into school everyday, along with their sharing book to read with their families.
- The reading practice book will be changed 1x weekly to enable them to develop their fluency through lots of practice with the same text.

## Providing repeated practice

'Practice makes permanent'



Children require 95% word understanding in order to have meaningful, comfortable comprehension









# Phonics lessons structure

- Revisit and review – looking at sounds taught previously, practising tricky words taught previously and practising reading words with familiar digraphs/spelling patterns.
- Teach and practise – Children practise oral blending, are introduced to a new GPC including its pronunciation/formation phrases, and have lots of practise together looking at words with the new GPC, reading aloud. New tricky words are also introduced.
- Practise and apply – Children practise reading a sentence with familiar tricky words and GPCs as a class and also apply their knowledge to independently spell words practising taught GPCs.

# Phonics lessons









- Children will learn the sounds using these pictures to prompt them (this can be found on the Little Wandle website)
- Each grapheme has a pronunciation phrase (e.g. show your teeth and let the s hiss out, sssss) and a formation phrase (e.g. under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail)

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card
 	 snake
 	 astronaut

# Phonics lessons

They will read and write words and sentences with the new sound in.  
To apply their knowledge, they will read books including their recently taught sounds.

Catchphrase	Grapheme	Catchphrase	Grapheme
 tail in the rain	ai	 sheep in a jeep	ee
 a light in the night	igh	 soap that goat	oa
 zoom to the moon	oo	 hook a book	oo

# Reading practice sessions



- The children read the same text in small groups led by the class teacher 2-3x weekly in focused sessions.
  - Decoding – the children practise reading the book aloud, support individually by the teacher to decode new words and read fluently.
  - Prosody – as a group with the teacher leading, the text is read again with a focus on reading with expression using clues from punctuation, word choices and the characters' feelings. This session may be combined with the decoding session.
  - Comprehension – the text is read again independently before re-reading as a group, answering questions about the text to develop their comprehension now that they can read it fluently.
- This book is matched to your child's phonic ability and should be fluent and automatic. The aim is that the children read at a 95% fluency. This means that the children should need little to no support reading the words.

# Sharing books



- Your child will not be able to read this on their own. This book is for you both to read and enjoy together. In order to encourage your child to become a lifelong reader, it is important that they learn to read for pleasure. The sharing book is a book they have chosen for you to enjoy together.
- Please remember that you shouldn't expect your child to read this alone. Read it to or with them. Discuss the pictures, enjoy the story, predict what might happen next, use different voices for the characters, explore the facts in a non-fiction book. The main thing is that you have fun!
- Your child is welcome to return this book and take a different one home whenever they like throughout the week.



# Support at home

- Ensure your child reads from their reading practice book daily to develop their fluency and confidence. They should be able to read it with 95% accuracy so it doesn't feel like a chore. Offer lots of praise for their brilliant independent reading and **only** when they are confident with the text, start asking questions to check their understanding.
- This book must be in their book bags and come to school **every day** for use in their reading practice sessions with the teacher.
- Enjoy the sharing book together to encourage reading for pleasure and remind your child to change this book whenever they like!