



Getting Ready for Literacy

Exford Primary School

READ, READ AND READ SOME MORE WITH YOUR CHILD!

Information for Parents

As part of your child's first year at primary school, there will be a strong focus on the following skills in classroom literacy activities: phonological awareness and phonics. Other areas of your child's literacy development will also be targeted including, handwriting, reading comprehension, and reading words we see a lot, or off by heart, e.g. I, and, the, to, my, we, was.

What is phonological awareness?

Phonological awareness is about being able to:

- Count syllables in words
- Put sounds together to say a word
- Identify the first, middle and last sound
- Break up words into sounds
- Change, add or take away sounds to make a new word
- Appreciate and create rhyme

These are skills that Year Prep students will practise in classroom literacy activities. Children start primary school at different stages of their development in this area.

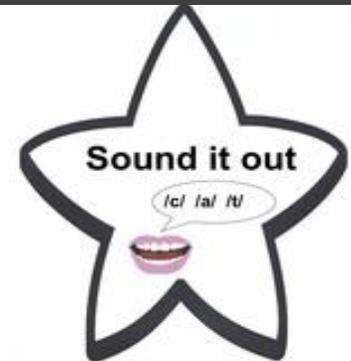
What is phonics?

Phonics has to do with learning the letters of the alphabet and the many sounds they can make. For example, the letter Aa, can make the following sounds in these words: apple, watch, lady, glass, ball, pizza.

Having strengths in both phonological awareness and phonics, as well as reading words we see a lot, are positive steps toward becoming a good reader and speller.

Did you know?

There are around 44 sounds in Australian English but only 26 letters of the alphabet.



Phonological awareness is...

about listening to and saying parts of words to help with reading and with spelling.



Phonics is...

about learning which letter or groups of letters match with the sounds we say for reading and with spelling.

Phonological awareness is FUN at home!

To help your child get ready for learning to read and to spell, and to continue to help him/her throughout his/her Prep year, you can:

- Give your child a fun challenge while out shopping. Give your child a sound, for example, 'b'. Have them find as many things as they can beginning with the sound (bananas, Barbie, books, biscuits, barbeque sauce, broccoli, beans, etc.).
- Make up silly sentences using words beginning with the same sound, e.g. 'Mum makes muffins on Monday morning.'
- when reading to your child (from a book, iPad, iPhone, etc.), choose a word on each page, after reading the book, and do the following: break up the word into sounds (e.g. 'f' – 'ar' – 'm') then put these sounds together to say the word ('farm'). Do this with small words; words with no more than 3-4 sounds.
- Make silly rhymes using the names of people in your circle of family and friends, e.g. 'Uncle Fred hit his head.' and 'My friend Sam, ate all the ham.' Read books written by *Dr Seuss* and *Pamela Allen* and emphasise the rhyming words.
- At dinner time, tell each other what you like eating by breaking up the favoured food into syllables. For example, 'I like eating po-ta-toes.' (3 syllables)

- When playing card games, such as 'Memory', 'Go Fish' and 'Snap', tell each other what the first sound in the pictured word is or break up the pictured word into syllables, as you win a matching pair.

Phonics is FUN at home too!

You can simply:

- Talk to your child about **letters** and **sounds**. For example, tell them that the word 'mum' starts with the 'm' sound and it is spelt with the letter, Mm. It is important that children learn that the concepts 'letters' and 'sounds' are *different*. We see (read) and write letters and letters have names (Aa, Bb, Cc, Dd, ...). We hear and make sounds with our mouth (e.g. 'p', 'sh', 'o', 'ee').
- Play an alternative version of 'I Spy With My Little Eye...' Instead of choosing a letter, choose the first sound of a word and say, 'I hear with my little ear something beginning with the '...' sound.' For example, choose the 'f' sound extending your child to not only think of words beginning with the letter Ff (frog, farm, finger) but also with the letters PH/ph (phone, photo, pharmacy). Talk to them about the different ways to spell a sound, as with Ff and PH/ph for the 'f' sound.
- Give your child many opportunities to name the **letters of the alphabet** by saying/singing the alphabet, looking in alphabet books,

using commercially available flash cards, making Alphabet soup and having them name the letters in their name. Have your child write their own name with a stick in the dirt, with their finger through shaving cream on a table or on a steamy shower screen and, of course, using crayons, textas and pencils on paper, such as in special occasion cards.

- Talk about letters and sounds using your **child's name**. For example, 'Ben starts with the 'b' sound and we use Bb for that sound.' or 'Amy starts with the 'ay' sound and we use the letter Aa for that sound.'"
- Using food and drink items you use daily (e.g. milk, cereal, bread, spreads, vegetables, fruit, dairy products), point to the first letter(s) on a label and give the letter(s) its sound. Over time, ask your child to have a go. Point out the letters in store names you visit, e.g. 'The first sound in *Target* is 't'. See the letter T?'

Thank you for attending this information session. We look forward to supporting your child's literacy journey in 2018 and anticipate your invaluable involvement to continue throughout your child's Prep year and beyond. We encourage you to visit your local library often and to ask your child's Teacher questions about what more you can do at home, in 2018. **We welcome all parents to visit Year Prep classrooms following an arrangement with the teacher to assist in literacy activities.**

Hazel Lekkas, Speech Pathologist and Nathan Jenner, Literacy Leader - 2017