

## Phonics

The final term in Pre School is when children typically cement the strands of their early phonic knowledge and create a springboard into learning to read and write more formally in school.

At Ladybirds we have taught, and your child has practised, all of the initial phonic sounds using a kinaesthetic approach. It is useful for parents to learn the actions to go with these sounds (see Jolly Phonic sheets in separate attachment). To ensure children maintain progress over the forthcoming weeks please encourage them to try some of the suggestions below. We suggest you pick 2 sounds per week to revise.

- Go on a phonic treasure hunt. Run round your house and bring back items beginning with that sound eg ball, bat, bread, banana. Who can find the most? Repeat outside.
- Spot the odd one out. Place 6 items on a tray, 5 beginning with the same sound. Can they say which is the odd one out and why? Get them to close their eyes whilst you refresh the items. Increase number of items.
- Make a pack of individual phonic cards from cutting up a cereal box and writing a lowercase letter on each one. Let your child show you how clever they are by pointing to a card and making the correct sound. Begin with 's', 'a', 't', 'i', 'p' and 'n' and gradually increase the number of cards.
- Say a sound for them to find the matching card.
- Say a sound and your child draws/paints a picture of something that begins with your sound.
- Make a second pack of phonic cards and play snap.
- Play matching games ie you place down a card and they have to find the identical one in their pack. This is particularly good practise for letters that are often confused eg 'b', 'd', 'p', 'qu'
- Play rhyming games eg you start a rhyming string and your child adds more word 'jam', lamb' Stress the final sound. Can they start the string for you to finish?
- Make up nonsense words/rhymes (heavily stress the final sound).
- Sound out a simple consonant/vowel/consonant word eg c-a-t = 'cat' can your child guess what word you are sounding out? The letters 's', 'a', 't', 'i', 'p' and 'n' will give lots of combinations,
- Play 'I spy' to encourage your child to link the initial sound to an object

- Slowly say a simple consonant/vowel/consonant word eg m-a-t = 'mat' – can your child find the card of the initial sound? Final sound? Middle sound? Blending is often tricky for young children, revert to the initial sound if difficulty occurs.
- Swap - ask your child to say a simple word that you 'spell' out.
- Take it in turns to make 3 letter rhyming words with your letter cards.
- Roll playdoh or pastry into a long sausage then twist it to make the 2 letter shapes you are revising each week.
- Use playdoh to model items beginning with same initial letter eg 'cup', 'cake', 'cat'
- Make your personalised phonic book with a page for each sound you know. Write the letter and draw pictures of things that begin with it. 'Read' it to other members of your family.
- Dribble glue on to paper to make the letter shape you are practising then sprinkle on glitter. Look through magazines, catalogues etc to find and cut out pictures beginning with that letter. Stick them around your glitter letter.
- Decorate a plain biscuit by icing on your letter(s) of the week. Ensure you say the sound.
- Dribble marmite or ketchup to make a letter shape on a sandwich. Ensure you say the sound.
- Practise forming letter shapes in response to hearing sounds. Always use lower case letters and start in correct place. There are many ways to practise eg
  - ⇒ Use large decorating brushes and buckets of water to 'write' letters in garden/ on fence/patio/driveway
  - ⇒ Write the letters in different sizes eg small for baby bear, medium for mummy bear and large for daddy bear. Say the letter formation in the bears' voices as you write them.
  - ⇒ Use cotton buds dipped in paint
  - ⇒ Use your finger in shaving foam/gel on a tray
  - ⇒ Use a dry, thin paintbrush in cornflour
  - ⇒ Use the edge of a trowel in soil
  - ⇒ Find a strong branch and use it as a writing tool outside
  - ⇒ Using pencils, chinks, crayons or felts draw a gigantic letter then surround it with smaller versions of the same letter
  - ⇒ 'Write' using your finger in different textures eg breadcrumbs, flour, sawdust, porridge oats, squashed rice krispies, glitter & glue

REMEMBER - phonics is only one element of your child's learning and should always be fun. If your child is reluctant to do any activities, don't insist they have to, instead leave it for another day.