

Teaching with *LCP* Phonics: using the activities

Step 1

LCP Phonics Step 1 is designed to be used as part of a themed approach to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum and is appropriate for Nursery or Reception settings.

Most settings will probably use one unit each week as a gentle introduction to focused work, and sing the alphabet song daily. The units can be used with groups or whole classes. Step 1 is entirely made up of adult-led activities.

Phonological awareness lessons teach word, sound, rhythm, rhyme and phonemic discrimination. They are listening activities with verbal instructions and require no written words or letters.

Alphabet sessions teach alphabetical order and letter names.

Phonological awareness sessions

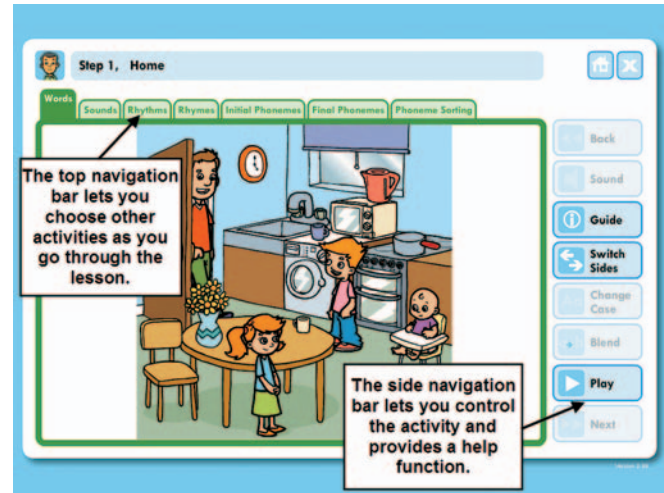
Phonological awareness lessons can be undertaken with a large or small group of children. In Step 1, such a session will last 10–15 minutes and include some of the following elements:

- Words – word discrimination;
- Sounds – sound discrimination;
- Rhythms – rhythm discrimination;
- Rhymes – rhyme discrimination;
- Initial Phonemes – phoneme discrimination;
- Final Phonemes – phoneme discrimination;
- Phoneme Sorting.

These activities become gradually more challenging for children and most children will only be able to do the phonemic discrimination some way into the programme.

If these activities take longer than 10–15 minutes it is much better to split the session into two shorter sessions than to expect the children to focus for more than 15 minutes.

Words



Pupil outcome

Pupils demonstrate they can distinguish one word from another in a sentence and match it to a picture.

Additional equipment

Small picture cards featuring the relevant images (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed in colour and laminated.

Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features a detailed picture of a particular bar setting.

When you click the play button the children hear an instruction: 'Find a baby', for example. The children have to spot the item. You (or a child helper) click on the item and, if correct, the word is said. If not, there is silence and the children can try again.

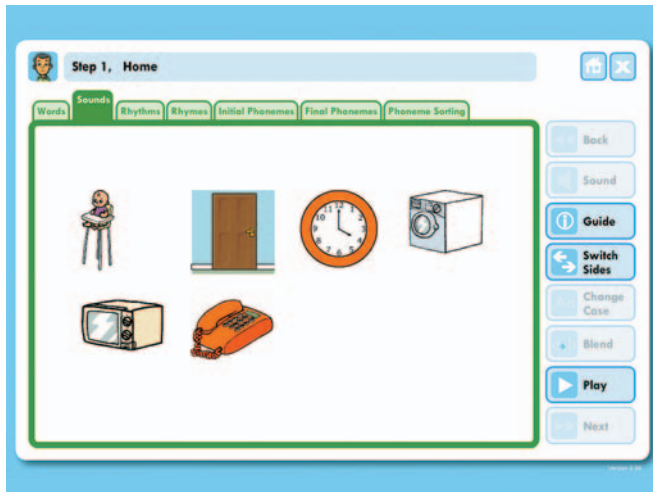
Teacher information

The picture screen gives you the opportunity to discuss the items and setting and to check children's knowledge of the everyday vocabulary associated with each of the themes.

This activity encourages children to discriminate a word from a stream of speech. As there are no temporal breaks between words when we speak, this is not as obvious as it sounds. This sort of auditory discrimination is an important part of early literacy and the first level of aural discrimination you would expect to see in young learners.

Monitor which children can hear and match the words.

Sounds



Pupil outcome

Pupils demonstrate they can distinguish one sound from another and match it to a picture.

Additional equipment

Small picture cards featuring the relevant images (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed in colour and laminated.

Narrative account

The screen contains pictures of a number of items. Discuss the items with the children and talk about what sounds they make. When you click the play button the children hear a sound. The children have to decide which item this sound is associated with. You (or a child helper) click on the item and, if correct, the sound is repeated. If not, there is silence and the children can try again.

Teacher information

This activity encourages children to listen to a range of sounds and match them to the pictures. Children can respond to the sound either by pointing or by using picture cards. Give out the picture cards and ask the children to hold up the correct picture to match the sound. This increases the interaction and activity level of the activity.

Monitor which children can hear and match the sounds. Using picture cards with this activity is a good way of assessing a small group.

Rhythms



Pupil outcome

Pupils demonstrate they can distinguish rhythm patterns and clap them.

Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features images of six items. Ask the children to say each item in turn, then show them how to clap the number of 'beats' – or syllables – in the word. (If you click on an item the right number of claps can be heard.)

When the children have said and clapped all the items, press the play button and an image of one or more items appears. Say and clap the pattern they make.

Teacher information

Syllables are the first sub-word unit of speech children are able to discriminate aurally, so recognising whether children can discriminate syllables is an important indicator of developing phonological awareness. It is important they can do this before they can move on to phonemic analysis.

Some screens show a number of items to form a pattern of beats. Children can clap this out with you, then you can clap it to them and they clap it back to you. This activity will take practice!

Monitor which children can syllabify and maintain patterns.

Rhymes



Pupil outcome

Pupils demonstrate they can recognise rhymes.

Additional equipment

Small picture cards featuring the relevant images (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed in colour and laminated.

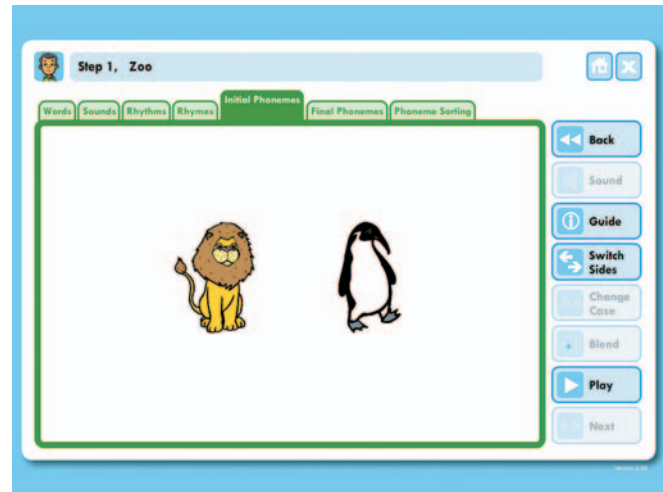
Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features images of five or six items. When you click the play button the children hear an instruction: 'Find something that rhymes with "toy"', for example. The children must recognise the (spoken) word then select an item with a name that rhymes. You (or a child helper) click on this item. If it is the correct choice the word is pronounced. If it is wrong, there is silence and the children can try again.

Teacher information

Because children learn to discriminate the beginning and ends of syllables before they learn to discriminate phonemes, rhyme is an important indicator of developing phonological awareness. When the children hear the instruction, ask them to say the rhyming word to themselves a number of times and then name all the items on the screen. Which one sounds like the rhyming word at the end? They can indicate their choice by pointing, naming or holding up picture cards. Monitor which children can hear and identify rhymes.

Initial Phonemes



Pupil outcome

Pupils demonstrate they can distinguish between simple words beginning with different initial phonemes.

Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features images of two items. When you click the play button the children hear an instruction: 'Find something that begins with "p"', for example. The children have to decide which item is the right one. You (or a child helper) then click on this item and, if correct, the word is said. If not, there is silence and the children can try again.

Teacher information

The ability to distinguish phonemes (the smallest units of speech sound) is learnt as children learn literacy. It usually follows syllabic discrimination and rhyme discrimination and it is not 'natural' learning; it comes through learning to read. This activity shows two pictures. Discuss the words associated with these pictures with the children. Then click the play button and the instruction identifies one phoneme. Get the children to say this phoneme, and then say the words again, stretching them out 'lllooonnnggg'. This helps to emphasise the individual phonemes. The children can then point to the word beginning with the selected phoneme. When discussing the phoneme, use the word 'phoneme' (for a sound in speech) right from the start to avoid confusion later. Monitor which children can distinguish initial phonemes.

Final Phonemes



Pupil outcome

Pupils demonstrate they can distinguish between simple words ending with different final phonemes.

Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features images of two items. When you click the play button the children hear an instruction: 'Find something that ends with "p"', for example is heard. The children have to decide which item is the right one. You (or a child helper) then click on this item and, if correct, the word is said. If not, there is silence and the children can try again.

Teacher information

Discriminating final consonants is more difficult than discriminating initial consonants.

This activity shows two pictures. As in the previous activity, discuss any words associated with these pictures with the children. Then press the play button and the instruction identifies one phoneme. Get the children to say this phoneme, and then say the words again, stretching them out 'lllooonnggg'. This helps to emphasise the individual phonemes. The children can then point to the word ending with the selected phoneme.

Monitor who can achieve the important skill of distinguishing final phonemes.

Phoneme Sorting



Pupil outcome

Pupils demonstrate they can sort items by initial phoneme.

Additional equipment

As children become more experienced at this game, the small picture cards featuring the relevant images can be used to increase interaction. Alternatively, objects can be given out.

Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features images of six items. When you click the play button the children hear an instruction: 'Find everything that begins with "p"'. These items can then be selected by clicking on them. If the children make a correct choice the item moves to the right hand side of the screen. When all the relevant items have been selected, the sound of a bell ringing can be heard.

Teacher information

This activity gives children practice at discriminating items beginning with the same phoneme. When the items appear ask the children to say each item in turn. Click the play button to hear the instruction. The children must recognise the phoneme then select all the items with that initial phoneme.

The revision and assessment unit

The revision and assessment unit draws on the resources of all ten units and should be used at the end of Step 1. When using this unit, you may want to use the printable assessment sheet (available in the assessment sheets section on this disk) to record the children's level of phonological awareness and, therefore, readiness for Step 2.

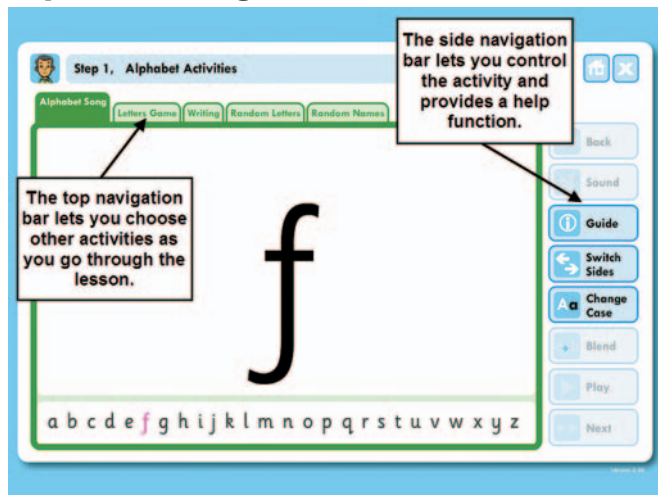
Adult-led alphabet session

It's recommended that you sing the alphabet song with the children every day. You might want to do this as a routine activity, for example when the children line up to go out, or after a break. This sort of repetition helps them to learn the letter names and order.

The alphabet session in Step 1 should be done as a class or group session lasting 5–10 minutes and includes five possible elements:

1. Alphabet Song;
2. Letters Game (or silent alphabet song);
3. Writing;
4. Random Letters;
5. Random Names.

Alphabet Song



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn the order of the alphabet, with a visual and aural mnemonic (the song). Pupils learn letter names.

Additional equipment

You may wish to print and laminate the letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) or use magnetic letters to increase the children's interaction.

Narrative account

When you click the play button the letters of the alphabet are displayed on screen in sequence and sung along to a catchy tune.

Teacher information

This is a basic letter name knowledge activity that appears in all the adult-led sessions.

Knowledge of letter names is the strongest early predictor of literacy success at age seven. Ensure you introduce the song in a way that emphasises to

the children that they are singing the names of the letters. When the children know the song it can be used less frequently, but it should be used daily in Step 1.

When you are confident that the children are familiar with the song you might want to use letter cards with this activity. Give one card to each child so that they can hold up the card or jump up when their letter appears. This helps children to use the sequence to anticipate their turn.

Letters Game (or silent alphabet song)

Pupil outcome

Pupils learn the order of the alphabet and respond actively. Pupils learn letter names.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated.

Narrative account

This is a silent version of the alphabet song. When you click the play button, the letters of the alphabet appear large and centre screen, one after the other and in order.

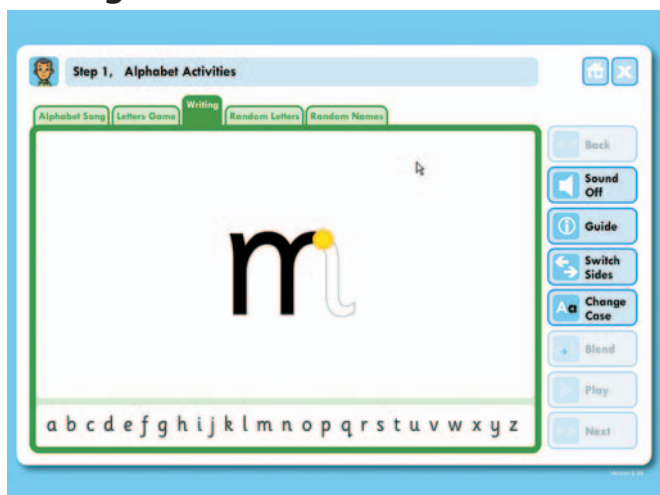
Teacher information

When you are confident the children know the alphabet song, you can use this activity to reinforce their knowledge. Give a letter card to each child, so that they can hold up the card, or jump up, and say the letter name when their letter appears. This helps children to use the sequence to anticipate their turn.

Ensure that children say the letter names, not associated phonemes.

When you start this activity, you may want to issue letter cards for only a few, known letters and increase the number of letters as the children learn more.

Writing



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn efficient formation of small letters, including starting points and exit strokes. Pupils use verbal prompts for correct letter formation.

Narrative account

When you select a letter from the alphabet bar at the bottom of the screen, it appears centre screen, enlarged and in outline. When you click the play button a dot appears at the starting point and then moves round the letter, filling in the outline, in time with the verbal prompt.

The verbal prompt can be turned off on the sidebar. Prompts are straightforward. Where a letter has two or more strokes, the second starting point appears automatically when the first is completed.

Teacher information

Letter formation is very important, not only for writing, but also for reading. If children learn the correct movements of letter shapes they will develop an efficient script with exit strokes, leading naturally to joined handwriting. This is very useful for good spelling and fluent composition later in their literacy development. Poor letter formation movements are very difficult to 'unlearn' and hinder fluency in handwriting.

This activity provides a kinaesthetic approach to letter formation, with children using their writing hands to make the movement in the air. This is reinforced with the visual and aural prompts.

Letter formation is introduced in Step 1 during initial letter name learning, and then linked to the phoneme being taught each day in later Steps.

If this is a new letter shape, ask the whole group to watch the movement of the dot and listen to the verbal prompt. When they have done this, ask them to raise their writing hands. Always check that left-handed children have raised the correct hand. Ask the children to 'air write' the letter while saying the words of the verbal prompt. This will help them to learn the movement.

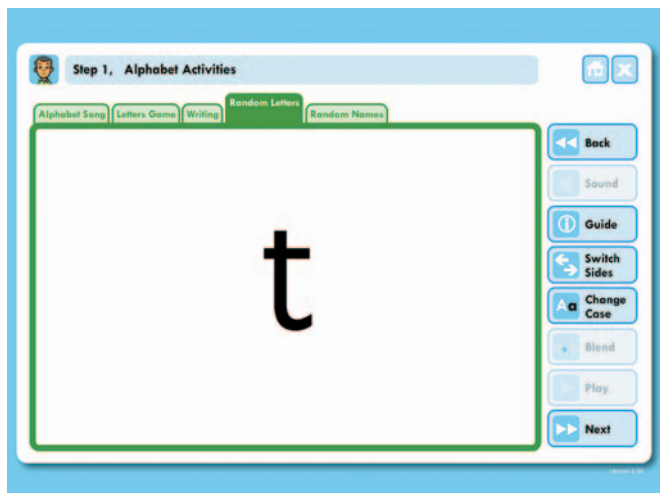
You may wish to do this activity several times and observe if any children are experiencing difficulties.

Verbal prompts for letters:

Letter	Small	Capital
a A	Round and round, up, down and flick.	Down and down, down and down, across the middle.
b B	Down and down, up, round and round.	Down, down and off. Round and round, round and round.
c C	Round and round.	Round and round.
d D	Round and round, up and down and flick.	Down, down and off. Round and round and round.
e E	Round and round, down and round.	Down, down and off. Across, across, across.
f F	Round, down, down and round. And cross.	Down and down and off. And across, and across.
g G	Round and round, up, down, down and round.	Round and round and up. And cross.
h H	Down and down, up round and down and flick.	Down, down and off. Down, down and off. Across the middle.

Letter	Small	Capital
i I	Down, flick. And dot.	Down, down and off. Across the top, across the bottom.
j J	Down and down and round. And dot.	Down, down and round. And across.
k K	Down and down, up, loop and long flick.	Down and down and off. Down to the middle, down and along.
l L	Down and down and flick.	Down and down and across.
m M	Down, up, round, down, up, round, down and flick.	Down and down and off. Down to a point, up, down and down.
n N	Down, up, round, down and flick.	Down and down and off. Down across, up and up.
o O	Round and round and round.	Round and round and round.
p P	Down, down. Up, up. Round and round.	Down, down and off. Round and round.
q Q	Round and round, up, down and flick.	Round and round and round, and across.
r R	Down and up and round.	Down and down and off. Round and round and across.
s S	Round and round then back round and round.	Round and round then back round and round.
t T	Down and down and round. And cross.	Down and down and off. And across the top.
u U	Down and round, up, down and flick.	Down and down, round, up and up.
v V	Down to a point and up again.	Down to a point and up again.
w W	Down to a point and up again, down to a point and up again.	Down to a point and up again, down to a point and up again.
x X	Across and off. Across and off.	Across and off. Across and off.
y Y	Down and round and up and down and down and round.	Down to a point and off. Down to a point and down.
z Z	Across, down and across.	Across, down and across.

Random Letters



Pupil outcome

Pupils can match letter names to letter shapes. They may also be able to match letter cards to the letter name and shape.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or plastic letters.

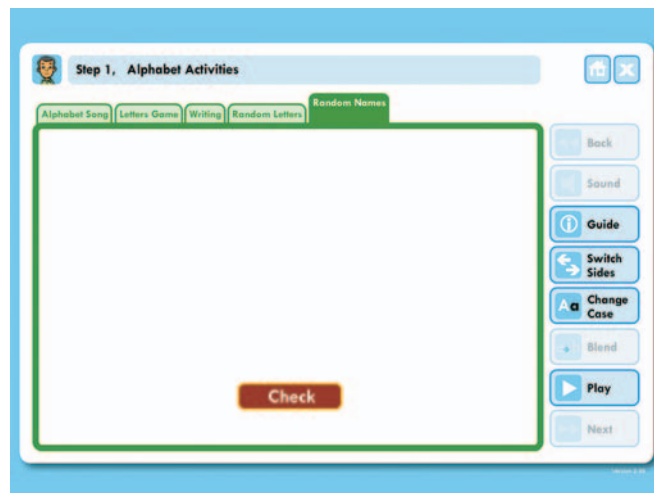
Narrative account

Letters of the alphabet appear, one after another, centre screen and the children speak the letter names in response. In cases of uncertainty each letter can be clicked on to play the name, but this function will not be used every time.

Teacher information

This is a short and fast paced, basic letter name knowledge activity. It's a fun way to practise matching letter names to their shapes. When children are seated in a circle or group in front of the screen, introduce the activity by reminding them to say the name (not the phoneme) of each letter they see as quickly as they can. Initially, it's a good idea to do this activity as a whole group, as hearing the (correct) responses from other children will help those who are unsure. As children become more proficient, distribute letter cards (or plastic letters) so that only the child with the relevant card (or letter) shouts out the letter name. Other children will soon prompt those who are slow. This is very useful as an assessment activity.

Random Names



Pupil outcome

Pupils can match letter cards to spoken letter names.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or plastic letters.

Narrative account

Clicking the play button (or subsequently the next button) plays a random letter name. The child with that letter card stands up. The check button can be clicked to reveal the correct letter centre screen.

Teacher information

This is a short and fast paced, basic letter name knowledge activity. It is a fun way to practise matching letter shapes to their names. When children are seated in a circle or group in front of the screen, introduce the activity by reminding them that they will hear the name (not the phoneme) of each letter. Then distribute letter cards (or plastic letters) and ask the child with the relevant card (or letter) to stand up with their letter as quickly as they can when they hear it.

Steps 2, 3 and 4

The phonics and alphabetic activities in Steps 2, 3 and 4 are structured in a similar way so that children do not have to re-learn patterns of activity. The content increases in complexity as children progress through the Steps.

Each unit includes five phonics lessons: four lessons introducing new grapheme–phoneme correspondences and a consolidation and assessment lesson. Most settings will probably use one unit each week, which sets a demanding but achievable pace for children, however, you may wish to adjust the pace to suit the needs of your children.

The units should be used with whole classes and groups of children. In Steps 2, 3 and 4 each unit includes adult-led activities and pupil-led activities, which can be completed by individuals or pairs of children.

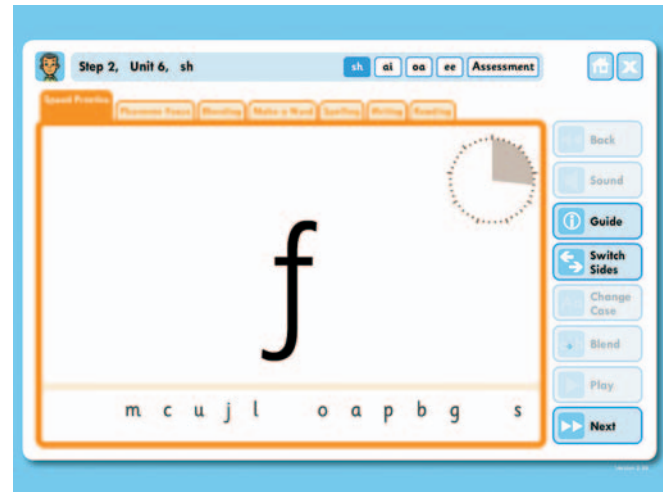
Adult-led phonics lessons

The phonics lessons are designed to be undertaken with a class or small group of children. A phonics lesson in Steps 2–4 will last approximately 15 minutes and include content from seven possible elements:

1. Speed Practice: for fast, essential revision;
2. Phoneme Focus;
3. Blending;
4. Make a Word: identifying a missing phoneme, inserting a grapheme and blending;
5. Spelling;
6. Writing;
7. Reading.

As you assess children's progress during lessons you will be able to identify those children who need to do small group, adult-led phonics work. In some classes, all children may do some group activity. In others, only those who are not making progress will do adult-led group work. Speed Practice, Phoneme Focus, Blending and Make a Word are particularly useful for group activities.

Speed Practice



Pupil outcome

Pupils can recognise graphemes quickly and pronounce the associated phoneme.

Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features a clock and a grapheme pool containing target graphemes. When you click the play button the children see a grapheme appear big and centre screen and have to say the corresponding phoneme. When they do, you click the next button, the first grapheme disappears and the next one appears. As each grapheme is recognised it disappears from the grapheme pool. The aim is to get rid of all the graphemes by naming them before the 45 seconds elapse.

Teacher information

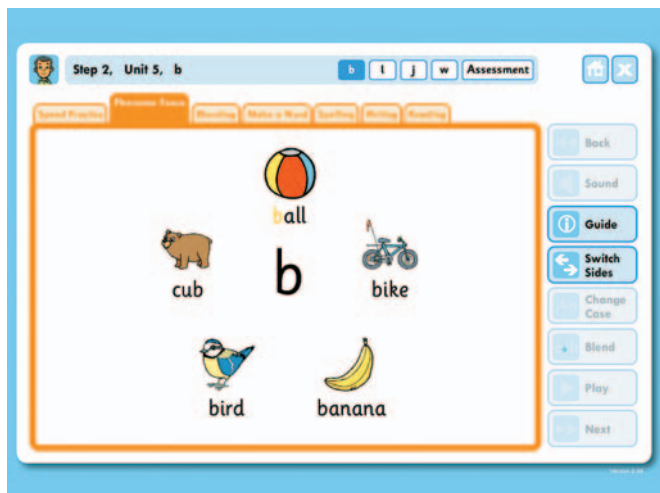
This is a quick practice activity which is played against the clock. It is designed to be used at the start of each lesson and to revise the phoneme–grapheme correspondences children have already done.

When children are seated in a circle or group in front of the screen, introduce the activity by reminding them to say the phoneme (not the letter name) of each grapheme they see as quickly as they can.

The grapheme–phoneme correspondences included increase incrementally through the programme.

This activity focuses attention on speed and automaticity and lets you assess how much children are retaining. As a daily revision activity, this is very useful for assessment.

Phoneme Focus



Pupil outcome

- Step 2 – pupils learn the main phoneme–grapheme correspondences;
- Step 3 – pupils revisit the main phoneme–grapheme correspondences and do more advanced blending of consecutive consonants;
- Step 4 – pupils learn the phoneme–grapheme correspondences for long vowel phonemes.

Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features the focus grapheme, enlarged and centre screen, with greyed-out images of items containing the focus phoneme displayed all around it. When you click on the big grapheme it plays the phoneme. In Step 3, you can click on each grapheme individually and then click blend to see and hear the blending of two or more consecutive consonants. Clicking on the images brings them into focus and makes the words appear beneath them. Clicking on each word pronounces the word, and the target grapheme in each word flashes.

Teacher information

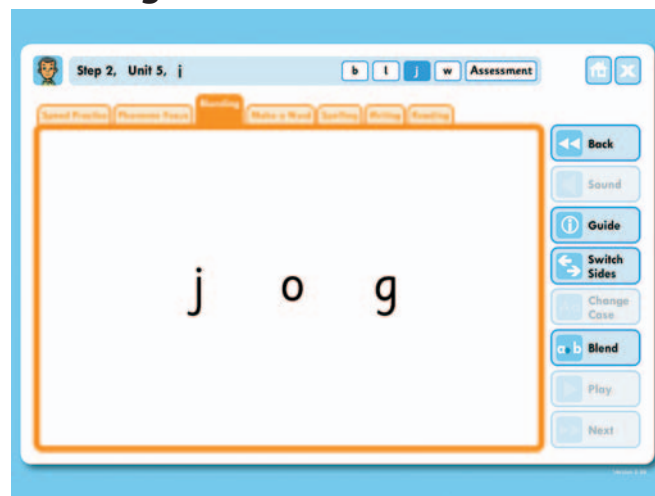
Begin the activity by introducing the grapheme on screen and asking the children if they know the letter name. Ask them what sound they think it represents.

Click the grapheme and listen to it repeatedly. In Step 3, click each grapheme, then click blend to hear the consecutive consonants blend. Then click on each of the pictures. Discuss the pictures and how they have the same phoneme in common, clicking on the word to see it flash. Look at whether the phoneme is at the beginning, middle or end of the words used.

This is a good screen to use for active games with small objects, such as jump-in-the-hoop or the tray

game. Full details of these games can be found in the Progression in Phonics (PIP) programme, published by the DfES.

Blending



Pupil outcome

Pupils can:

- recognise individual graphemes and match them to phonemes;
- blend sounds and pronounce words;
- see and hear blending taking place.

Additional equipment

Grapheme cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or small, magnetic whiteboards with magnetic letters.

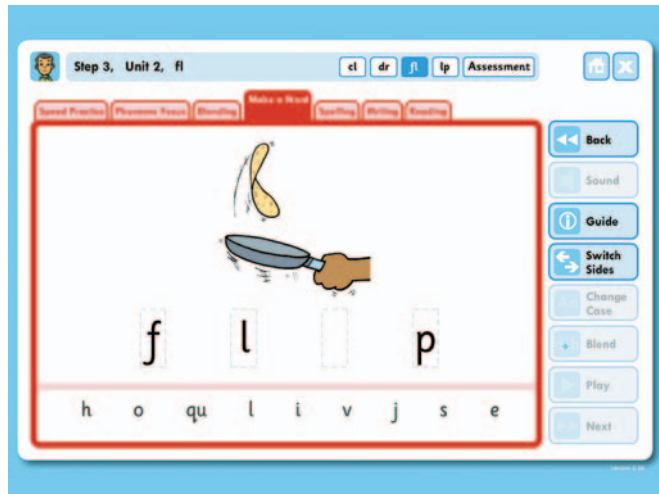
Narrative account

The starting screen for this activity features the graphemes in a word separated with a good space between them. The individual graphemes can be clicked on to hear the phoneme pronounced. Ask the children to try to blend the phonemes themselves. You can then click on the blend button and the graphemes visually blend together and the phonemes are pronounced 'lllooonnnggg', as they are blended. Finally click on the word to hear it pronounced normally. Press the next button for another example.

Teacher information

Ask the children to follow the example on the whiteboard by putting their grapheme cards or letters out and saying each phoneme. Check these. Then ask the children to move the graphemes together and blend the word. The physical activity helps to focus many of them.

Make a Word



Pupil outcome

Pupils can:

- recognise the given graphemes and match them to phonemes;
- identify the missing phoneme and grapheme;
- blend the phonemes to make a word.

Additional equipment

Grapheme cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or small, magnetic whiteboards with magnetic letters.

Narrative account

The starter screen shows a picture of an object with a grapheme frame below it. There is one grapheme missing from the grapheme frame. At the bottom of the screen is a grapheme pool.

The children identify and enunciate the two (or more) phonemes given. You can check they are right by clicking on the graphemes and the phonemes are pronounced. Children then identify the missing grapheme. Clicking on the empty box in the grapheme frame produces the missing grapheme. When you click on the blend button the graphemes move together and the word is pronounced 'lllooonnnggg'. Finally, clicking on the picture or the word causes the word to be pronounced normally.

Teacher information

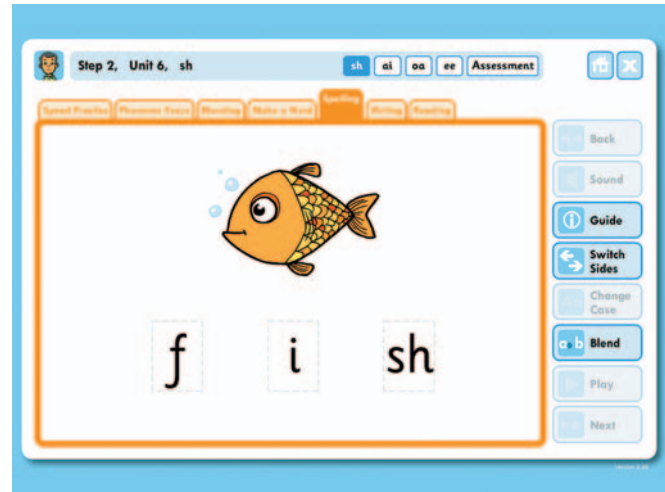
This activity engages the children in synthesis and analysis of familiar words.

Ask the children to work in pairs with their magnetic boards. Firstly they need to identify and enunciate the two (or more) phonemes given, and select the relevant magnetic letters (or grapheme cards).

Then ask the children to think about what is missing and add the missing grapheme to their boards and show you their attempts.

As a whole class, say the word, analyse the sounds in it again, and pronounce the missing phoneme. Click on the grapheme frame so that the grapheme appears. Pronounce the phonemes singly, then together.

Spelling



Pupil outcome

Pupils can:

- recognise individual graphemes and match them to phonemes;
- segment a word to identify phonemes;
- see and hear segmenting taking place.

Additional equipment

Grapheme cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or small, magnetic whiteboards with magnetic letters.

Narrative account

The starter screen shows a picture of an object with an empty grapheme frame below it. As the screen appears the word is pronounced. The grapheme frame has the correct number of boxes for the number of missing graphemes. You can click on the image to hear the word again.

The children try to identify the phonemes in the word and identify the corresponding graphemes. Clicking on each box in the grapheme frame produces the correct grapheme. When you click on the blend button the graphemes move together and the word is pronounced 'lllooonnnggg'. Finally, clicking on the picture causes the word to be pronounced normally.

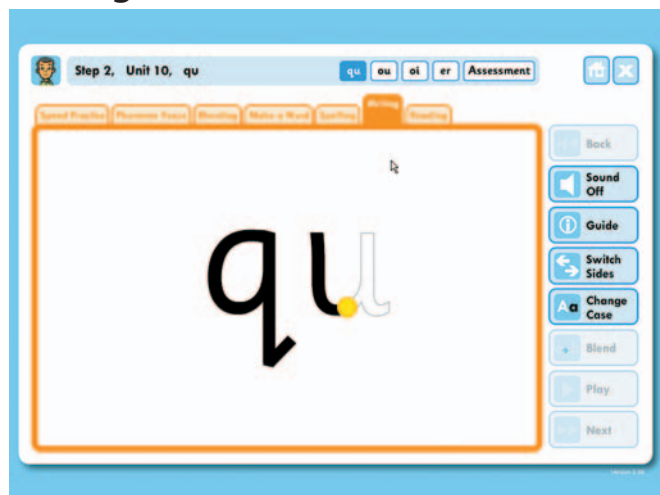
Teacher information

You will probably find it useful to click on the image a number of times to hear the word repeated. Ask the children to say the word themselves, then "ssstttrreeettccchhh" it to identify the phonemes.

Help the children (working in pairs) to go through matching known phonemes to known graphemes. Ask them to put these magnetic letters or grapheme cards in order. Check them.

You can confirm the children's selection by clicking on each box of the grapheme frame and the graphemes will appear.

Writing



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn:

- efficient formation of small letters (including digraphs and trigraphs), with starting points and exit strokes;
- verbal prompts (mnemonics) for correct letter formation.

Narrative account

The letter appears enlarged and in outline on the screen with a dot at the starting point. When you press the play button the dot moves around the letter, filling in the outline, in time with the verbal prompt.

The verbal prompt can be turned off on the sidebar. Prompts are straightforward. Where a letter has two or more strokes, the second starting point appears as soon as the first is completed.

Teacher information

Letter formation is very important, not only for writing, but also for reading. If children learn the correct movements of letter shapes they will develop an efficient script with exit strokes, leading naturally to joined handwriting. This is very useful for good spelling and fluent composition later in their literacy development. Poor letter formation movements are very difficult to 'unlearn' and hinder fluency in handwriting.

This activity provides a kinaesthetic approach to

letter formation, with children using their writing hands to make the movement in the air. This is reinforced with the visual and aural prompts.

Letter formation is introduced in Step 1 during initial letter name learning, and then linked to the phoneme being taught each day in later Steps.

If this is a new letter shape, ask the whole group to watch the movement of the dot and listen to the verbal prompt. When they have done this, ask them to raise their writing hands. Always check that left-handed children have raised the correct hand. Ask the children to 'air write' the letter while saying the words of the verbal prompt. This will help them to learn the movement.

You may wish to do this activity several times and observe if any children are experiencing difficulties.

When they are ready, children can practise by watching the screen then trying the formation with chalks, pens, crayons or paints.

Reading



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn to read sentences.

Additional equipment

Grapheme cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or small, magnetic whiteboards with magnetic letters might be used.

Narrative account

A sentence appears on the screen with an accompanying illustration. Each word can be clicked and it will be pronounced. Clicking on the picture reads the whole sentence and causes the illustration to animate.

Teacher information

Ask the children to look at the sentence and identify any words they know (a good assessment

activity) and segment them. For many children it will be useful to use plastic graphemes, identify the phoneme associated with each and then blend them to make the word.

Then segment and read any remaining words as a class. Some words will not be phonically regular (sight words). Finally, read the sentence together as a class.

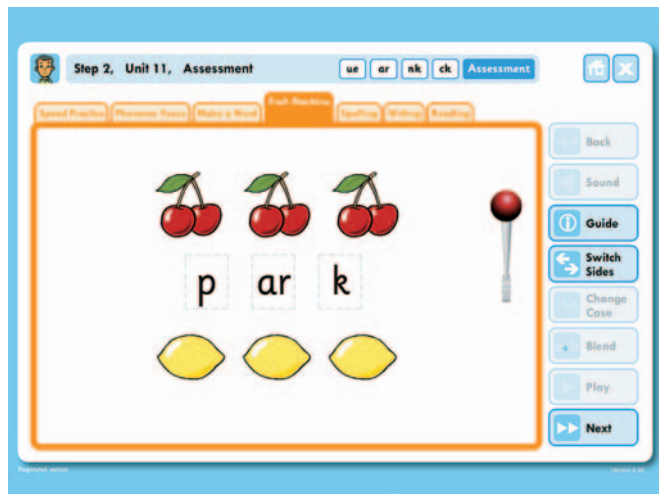
The consolidation and assessment lesson

This session is a very good opportunity to use the printable assessment sheets to assess children's knowledge and skills, or work with a colleague who will record during the session. Such assessments can underpin your differentiation the following week.

In the consolidation and assessment lesson:

- you revise the week's four phonemes in the Phoneme Focus activity;
- you access mixed content covered throughout the week in the other activities;
- you revise the week's sentences in the Reading activity;
- the Fruit Machine activity replaces the Blending activity.

Fruit Machine



Pupil outcome

Pupils can blend phonemes to say words. Pupils learn to distinguish between real and non-real words.

Narrative account

The starting screen features a set of grapheme boxes, or 'windows' with letters spinning. After a few seconds the letters stop spinning and graphemes for a word appear. These graphemes can be clicked to pronounce the phoneme, but this is not necessary in all cases.

The children match phonemes to the graphemes,

and then blend the phonemes to say the word. They have to decide if the word is real or not.

Clicking on the next button or the fruit machine handle causes the windows to spin again and creates a new word.

Teacher information

This activity is designed as a fun way to practise blending skills.

Sit the children in a circle or group in front of the screen, then introduce the activity by telling them that they are going to practise putting phonemes together to read words.

Initially you might want to ask the children to identify the individual phonemes and then blend them together to build the word. As they become more proficient they can be asked to blend the phonemes independently then put up their hand to say the word.

The children can then say whether they think they have created a real word or not. If it's a real word, ask them to orally put it into a sentence. They can do this in pairs so that everyone is involved, especially in cases where there is a dispute as to whether the word is real or not.

Adult-led alphabet session

The alphabet session in Steps 2, 3 and 4 should be done as a class or group session lasting 5–10 minutes.

It is recommended that you carry on singing the alphabet song with the children every day in Steps 2 and 3. When all the children know the song it can be used less.

The alphabet session in Step 2 re-uses the material from Step 1 as the intention is to use this particularly with those children who have not completed Step 1. It includes the same five elements:

1. Alphabet Song;
2. Letters Game (or silent alphabet song);
3. Writing;
4. Random Letters;
5. Random Names.

In Steps 3 and 4 there are two additional elements:

6. Letter Order;
7. Word Order.

In Step 3, the intention is to use the first five elements with those children who have not mastered Steps 1 and 2, and move those children who have on to alphabetical order. It is anticipated

that most alphabet lessons at Step 4 will focus on using the two alphabetical order activities and might use the alphabet song as a reference.

Alphabet Song



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn the order of the alphabet, with a visual and aural mnemonic (the song). Pupils learn letter names.

Additional equipment

You may wish to print and laminate the letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) or use magnetic letters to increase the children's interaction.

Narrative account

When you click the play button the letters of the alphabet are displayed on screen in sequence and sung along to a catchy tune.

Teacher information

This is a basic letter name knowledge activity that appears in all the adult-led sessions. Knowledge of letter names is the strongest early predictor of literacy success at age seven. Ensure you introduce the song in a way that emphasises to the children that they are singing the names of the letters. When the children know the song it can be used less frequently, but it should be used daily in Steps 2 and 3.

When you are confident that the children are familiar with the song you might want to use letter cards with this activity. Give one card to each child so that they can hold up the card or jump up when their letter appears. This helps children to use the sequence to anticipate their turn.

Letters Game (or silent alphabet song)

Pupil outcome

Pupils learn the order of the alphabet and respond actively. Pupils learn letter names.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated.

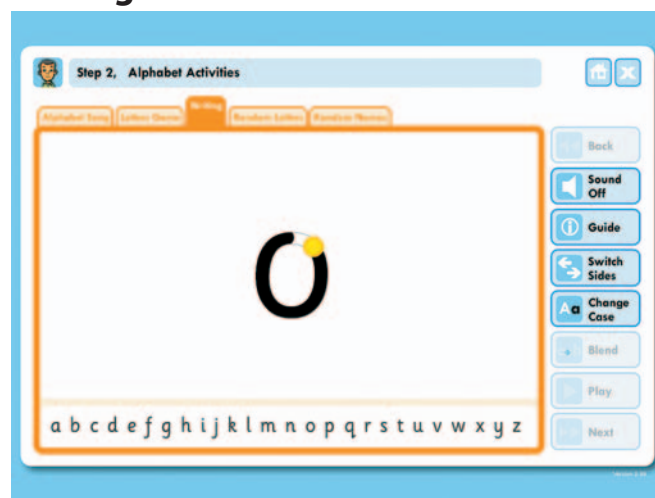
Narrative account

This is a silent version of the alphabet song. When you click the play button, the letters of the alphabet appear large and centre screen, one after the other and in order.

Teacher information

When you are confident the children know the alphabet song, you can use this activity to reinforce their knowledge. Give a letter card to each child, so that they can hold up the card, or jump up, and say the letter name when their letter appears. This helps children to use the sequence to anticipate their turn. Ensure that children say the letter names, not associated phonemes.

Writing



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn efficient formation of small letters, including starting points and exit strokes. Pupils use verbal prompts for correct letter formation.

Narrative account

When you select a letter from the alphabet bar at the bottom of the screen, it appears centre screen, enlarged and in outline. When you click the play button a dot appears at the starting point and then moves round the letter, filling in the outline, in time with the verbal prompt.

The verbal prompt can be turned off on the sidebar. Prompts are straightforward. Where a letter has two

or more strokes, the second starting point appears automatically when the first is completed.

Teacher information

Letter formation is very important, not only for writing, but also for reading. If children learn the correct movements of letter shapes they will develop an efficient script with exit strokes, leading naturally to joined handwriting. This is very useful for good spelling and fluent composition later in their literacy development. Poor letter formation movements are very difficult to 'unlearn' and hinder fluency in handwriting.

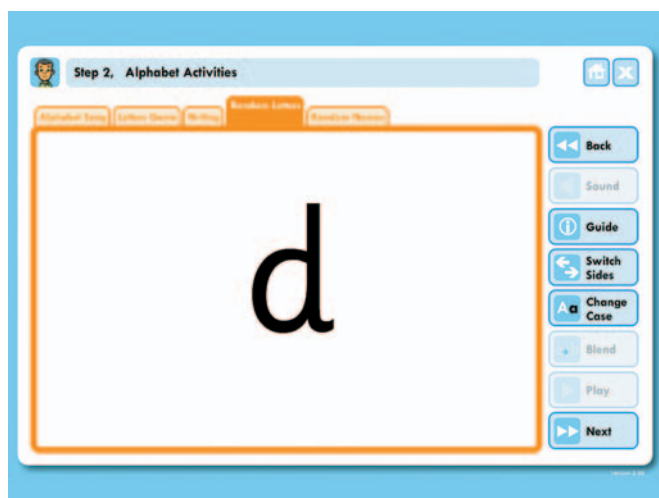
This activity provides a kinaesthetic approach to letter formation, with children using their writing hands to make the movement in the air. This is reinforced with the visual and aural prompts.

Letter formation is introduced in Step 1 during initial letter name learning, and then linked to the phoneme being taught each day in later Steps.

If this is a new letter shape, ask the whole group to watch the movement of the dot and listen to the verbal prompt. When they have done this, ask them to raise their writing hands. Always check that left-handed children have raised the correct hand. Ask the children to 'air write' the letter while saying the words of the verbal prompt. This will help them to learn the movement.

You may wish to do this activity several times and observe if any children are experiencing difficulties.

Random Letters



Pupil outcome

Pupils can match letter names to letter shapes. They may also be able to match letter cards to the letter name and shape.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials

section on this disk) printed and laminated, or plastic letters.

Narrative account

Letters of the alphabet appear, one after another, centre screen and the children speak the letter names in response. In cases of uncertainty each letter can be clicked on to play the name, but this function will not be used every time.

Teacher information

This is a short and fast paced, basic letter name knowledge activity. It's a fun way to practise matching letter names to letter shapes.

When children are seated in a circle or group in front of the screen, introduce the activity by reminding them to say the name (not the phoneme) of each letter they see as quickly as they can. Initially, it's a good idea to do this activity as a whole group, as hearing the (correct) responses from other children will help those who are unsure.

As children become more proficient, distribute letter cards (or plastic letters) so that only the child with the relevant card (or letter) shouts out the letter name. Other children will soon prompt those who are slow. This is very useful as an assessment activity.

Random Names



Pupil outcome

Pupils can match letter cards to spoken letter names.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or plastic letters.

Narrative account

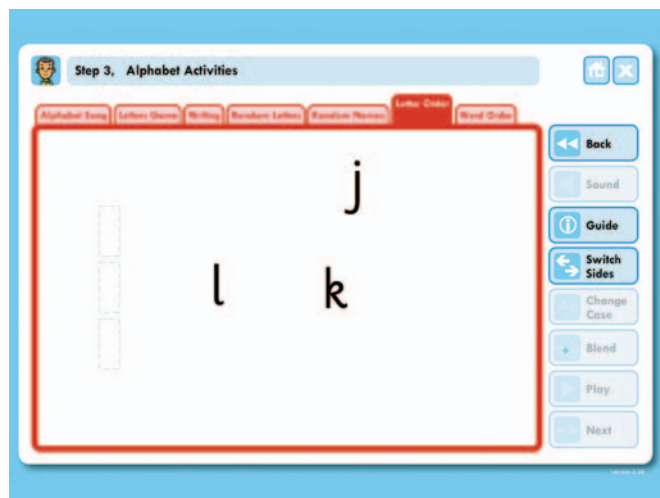
Clicking the play button (or subsequently the next button) plays a random letter name. The child with that letter card stands up. The check button can be clicked to reveal the correct letter centre screen.

Teacher information

This is a short and fast paced, basic letter name knowledge activity. It's a fun way to practise matching letter shapes to their names.

When children are seated in a circle or group in front of the screen, introduce the activity by reminding them that they will hear the name (not the phoneme) of each letter. Then distribute letter cards (or plastic letters) and ask the child with the relevant card (or letter) to stand up with their letter as quickly as they can when they hear it.

Letter Order



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn to arrange letters in alphabetical order, pronouncing the names.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or magnetic letters.

Narrative account

This is a simple activity where a set of letters is presented on screen with empty boxes down the left hand side. The children have to name the letters and then arrange them in alphabetical order. Clicking on each letter pronounces the letter name. Clicking on the letters in the correct (i.e. alphabetical) order causes them to move into the boxes as the names are pronounced. When all the letters have been moved into the boxes the sound of a bell ringing can be heard.

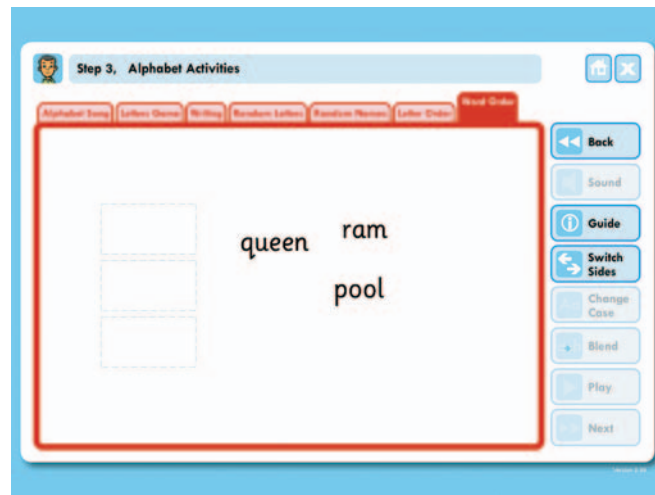
Teacher information

Alphabetical order is still the most commonly used ordering device. This activity gets children to use their knowledge from the alphabet song to arrange letters in alphabetical order.

To increase interaction, magnetic letters or cards can

be used with this activity. Give sets of cards or letters to small groups of children and ask them to put them in sequence before arranging the letters on the whiteboard. Children should say letter names, not associated phonemes.

Word Order



Pupil outcome

Pupils learn to arrange words in alphabetical order.

Additional equipment

Letter cards (available in the printable materials section on this disk) printed and laminated, or magnetic letters.

Narrative account

This is a simple activity where a set of words is presented on screen with empty boxes down the left hand side. The children have to pronounce the words and then arrange them in alphabetical order. Clicking on each word pronounces it. Clicking on the words in the correct (i.e. alphabetical) order causes them to move into the boxes as they are pronounced. When all the words have been moved into the boxes the sound of a bell ringing can be heard.

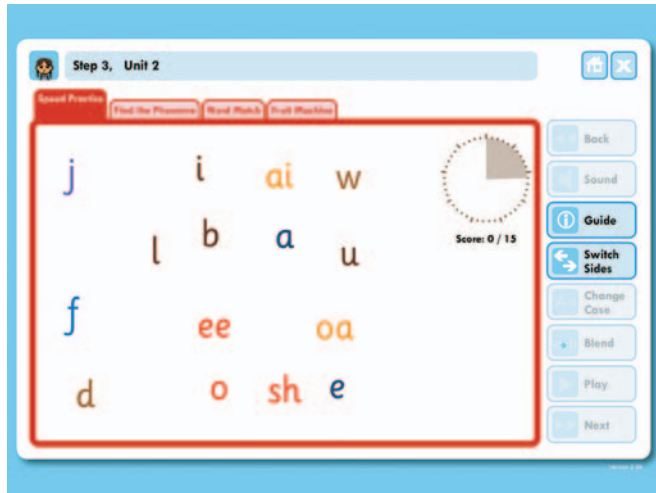
Teacher information

Alphabetical order is still the most commonly used ordering device. This activity gets children to use their knowledge from the alphabet song to arrange words in alphabetical order.

To increase interaction, magnetic letters or cards can be used with this activity. Give sets of cards or letters to small groups of children and ask them to put them in sequence before arranging the words on the whiteboard.

Pupil-led independent activities

Speed Practice



Pupil outcome

Pupils recognise phonemes and click on the associated graphemes.

Narrative account

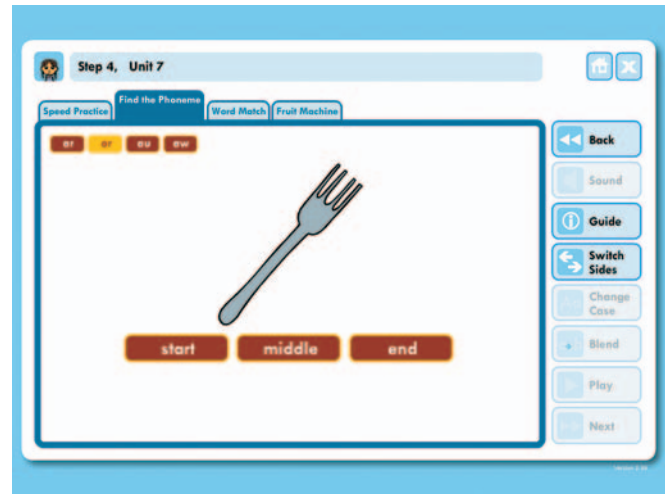
This is the reverse of the adult-led Speed Practice activity. The starting screen for this activity features a clock and a grapheme pool containing target graphemes. As each phoneme is pronounced the children have to click on the corresponding grapheme, which then disappears. If they make an incorrect selection the phoneme is repeated. The aim is to empty the screen before the 45 seconds elapse.

Teacher information

This is a quick practice activity which is played against the clock and is designed to develop automaticity in grapheme–phoneme recognition. The grapheme–phoneme correspondences included increase incrementally through the programme.

As a daily revision activity, this is very useful for assessment.

Find the Phoneme



Pupil outcome

Pupils will identify a given phoneme in initial, medial or final position within spoken words accompanied by a picture on the screen.

Narrative account

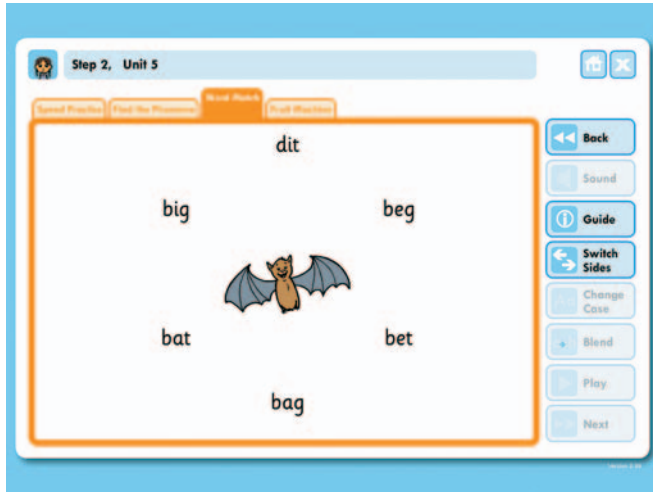
Children first select one of the focus phonemes for the unit. They are then presented with a screen showing a picture of an object containing the given phoneme. When the picture is clicked, the word is pronounced.

Beneath the picture are three buttons to indicate the start, middle and end of the word. The children have to identify whether the focus phoneme is in the start, middle or end position of the spoken word and click on the relevant button.

Teacher information

The activity is designed to develop children's aural discrimination.

Word Match



Pupil outcome

Children:

- recognise individual graphemes and match them to the corresponding phonemes;
- blend phonemes to pronounce the word;
- match the correct word to the picture.

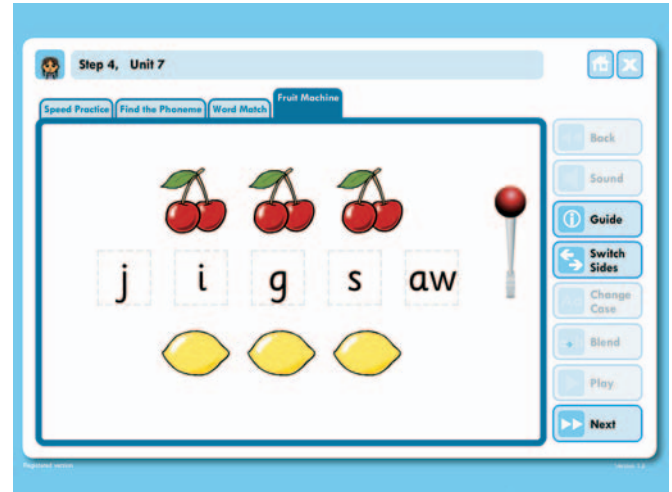
Narrative account

This activity shows a central picture with a series of words around it. Clicking on the picture pronounces the word. The children have to identify the correct word to match the picture by blending the phonemes in each word. When they have identified the word they click on it. If they are correct the word is spoken and a bell rings.

Teacher information

Word Match gives children the opportunity to recognise whole words by matching graphemes to phonemes and blending the phonemes.

Fruit Machine



Pupil outcome

Pupils can blend phonemes to say words. Pupils learn to distinguish between real and non-real words.

Narrative account

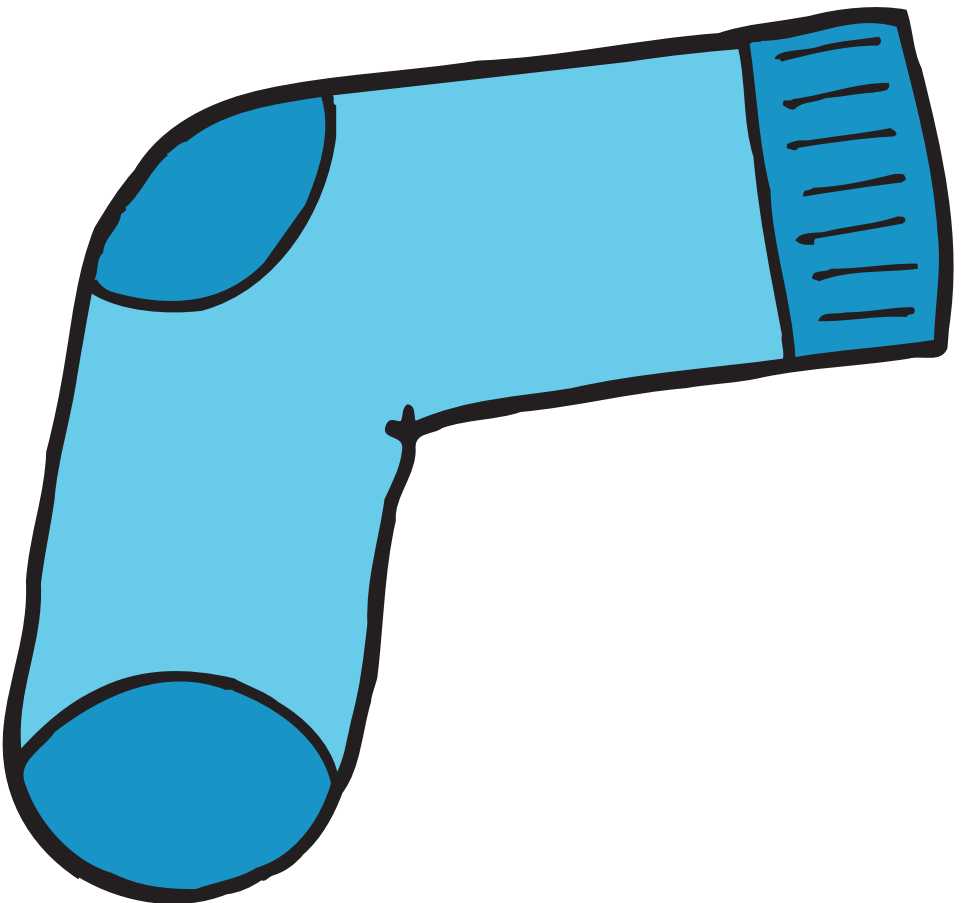
The starting screen features a set of grapheme boxes, or 'windows' with letters spinning. After a few seconds the letters stop spinning and graphemes for a word appear. These graphemes can be clicked to pronounce the phoneme, but this is not necessary in all cases.

The children match phonemes to the graphemes, and then blend the phonemes to say the word. They have to decide if the word is real or not.

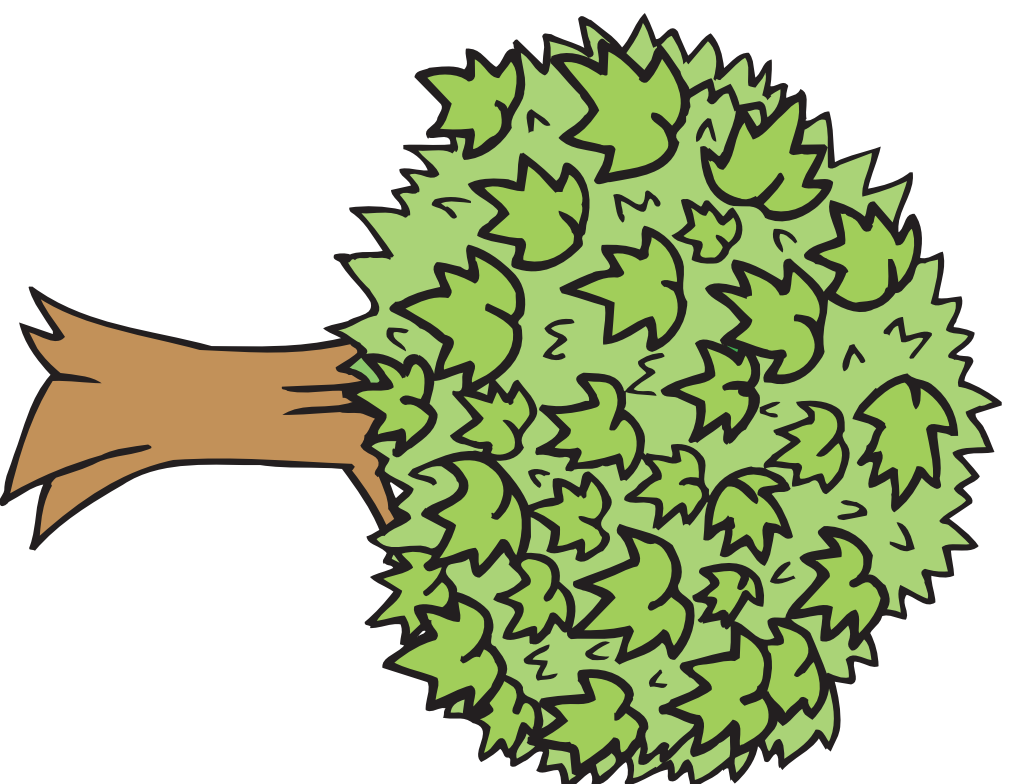
Clicking on the next button or the fruit machine handle causes the windows to spin again and creates a new word.

Teacher information

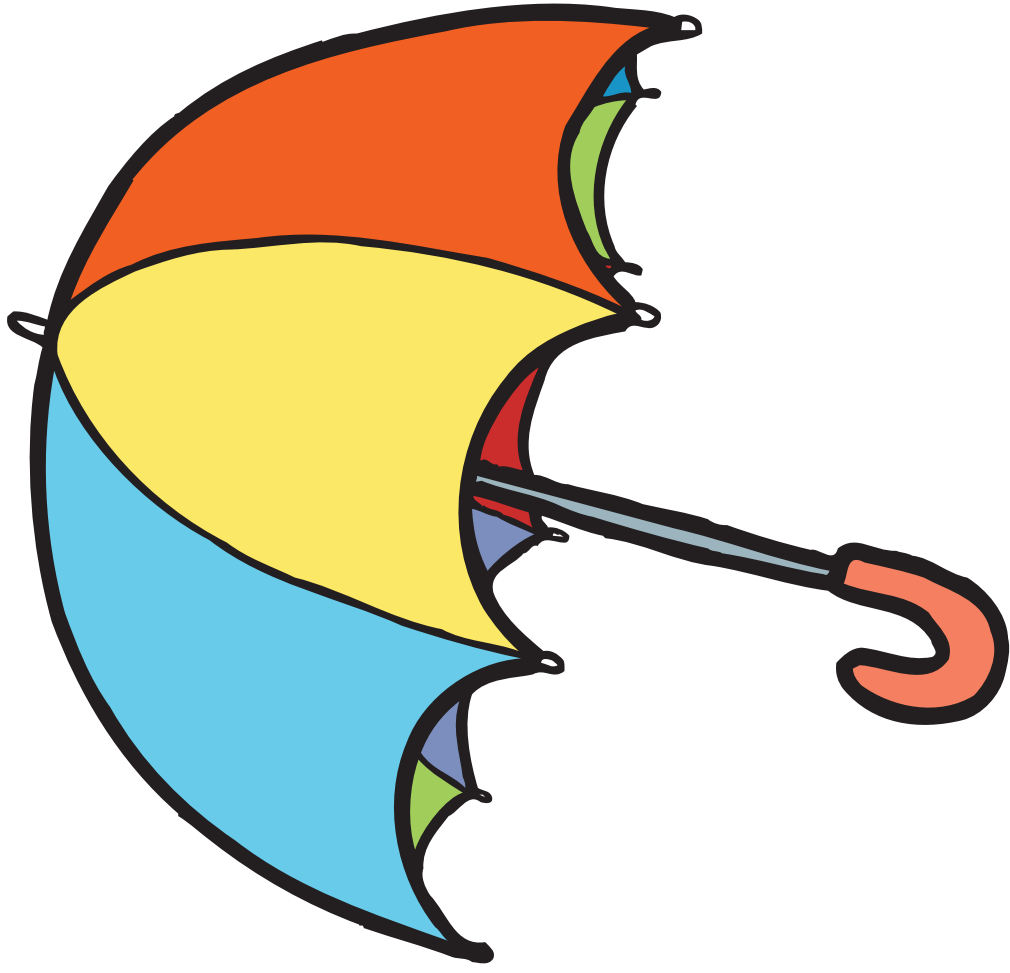
This activity is designed as a fun way to practise blending skills. You might want to use it with pairs of children, asking them to record words in two lists: real words and non-real words. The children could then read their words back to you or another adult at the end of the session. This will provide useful assessment information.



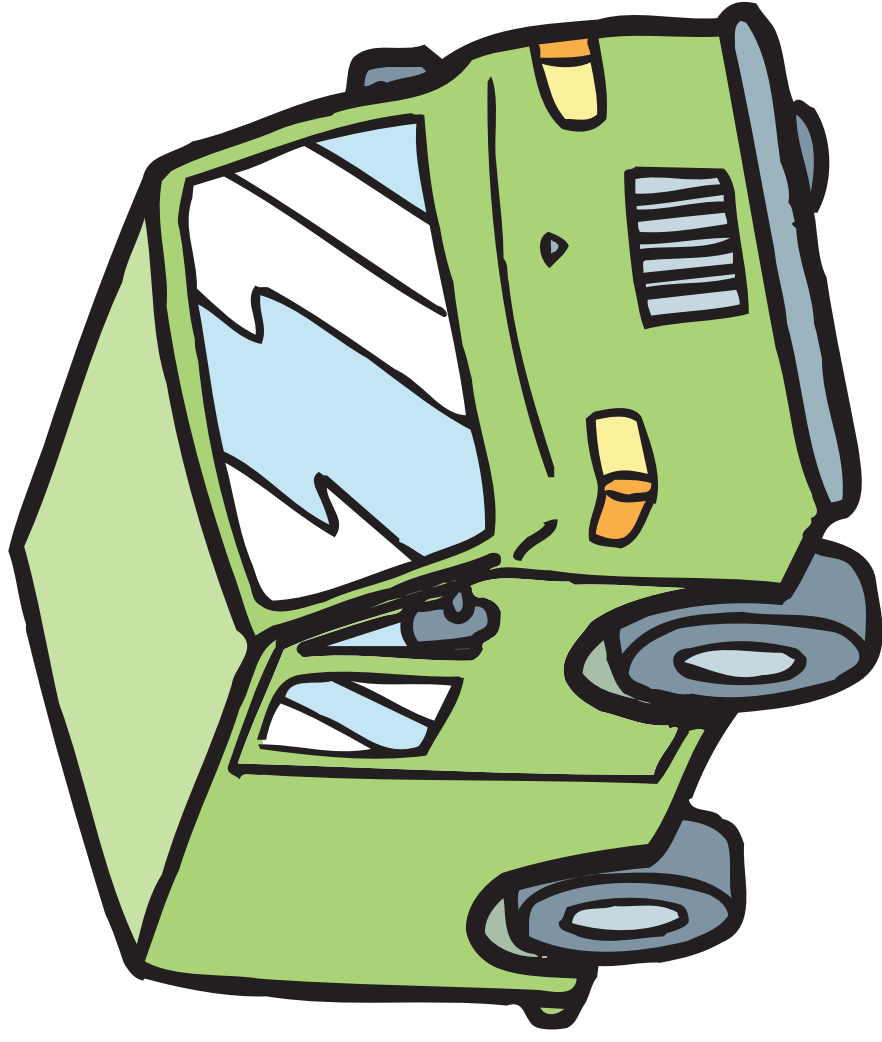
S s



T t



U u



V v