Make Phonics Fun
Play, Practise, Test

Spring topics

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Acknowledgements

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**Introduction**

*Make Phonics Fun* sets out to make preparation for the Year 1 phonics screening check both effective and fun. Designed to complement your school’s phonics scheme, the three books in this practical, activity-based series offer all the resources you need to enable your pupils to apply their phonics knowledge across the curriculum and to develop their reading skills in a fun, meaningful and relevant context. There is one book for every school term, each covering six inspirational topics.

*Make Phonics Fun* is designed with the busy primary teacher in mind. Its flexible format and accessible presentation enables teachers – no matter what their level of experience – to select from a range of resources and activities and to use those materials straightaway, without needing to spend hours of preparation time.

### 18 great themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics available for the Autumn term</th>
<th>Topics covered in this book (Spring term)</th>
<th>Topics available for the Summer term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Starting school</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Holidays</td>
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<td>Weather</td>
<td>Colour</td>
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<td>Food</td>
<td>Transport</td>
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<td>Rhythm &amp; rhyme</td>
<td>Homes</td>
<td>Fairytales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night time</td>
<td>Dinosaurs</td>
<td>All about me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Teacher’s notes

For each topic covered there are two pages of practical teacher’s notes offering activity ideas to help you make the best use of the resources and texts provided. Activities are clearly signposted to indicate whether they are most suitable for shared, guided or independent reading sessions and, where relevant, opportunities for writing and for developing speaking and listening skills are also highlighted.

The book makes frequent references to the phases of *Letters and Sounds*, which can be downloaded for free from the Publications section of the Department for Education website ([www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)). To support schools using this scheme, references to grapheme-phoneme correspondences are kept in line with *Letters and Sounds*, rather than making use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols. Across the three books in the *Make Phonics Fun* series, there is some subtle differentiation in the level of the activities, to reflect a gradual progression in phonic understanding and decoding skills as the children move through Year 1, from the autumn to the summer term when they will be taking part in the June screening check. For example, the activities in this book for the Spring term introduce children to a wider range of Phase 5 graphemes and their alternative pronunciations, as well as words containing split vowel digraphs.

### Fiction, non-fiction and poetry

Each topic within *Make Phonics Fun* is supported by a range of lively and appealing pupil texts – including original stories, fascinating non-fiction and quality...
Introduction

Spring poetry. In line with Key Stage 1 requirements for literacy, a range of genres are covered, and all the texts are photocopiable so that you can use them with the whole class, for focused group and guided reading, for individual work or, if desired, as part of your reading progress checks.

Across the different genres, children are introduced through the fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts to a list of key words, enabling them to develop their decoding and blending skills. Real and pseudo words have been chosen to cover the grapheme-phoneme correspondences contained in Sections 1 and 2 of the screening check.

Picture prompts
As a fun way to introduce the children to the concept of pseudo words, many of the resources in Make Phonics Fun for the Spring term star a range of fantastical creatures, including monsters, trolls, giants, elves, goblins and fairies. Young readers can enjoy exploring their weird and wonderful homes and habitats and finding out what they like to eat.

Each topic is also supported by photocopiable, labelled picture scenes, providing visual cues for some of the key real and pseudo words to be tested. Care has been taken to ensure that the pictures representing the key pseudo words are of objects and items that are clearly meant to be imaginary. This should prevent the child from trying to match the picture prompt to a real word in their vocabulary.

Photocopiable activity sheets
There are two photocopiable activity sheets for each topic, providing a range of fun things to do – from games which involve spotting rhyming words, to following colour-mixing instructions and taking part in reading races, providing sounding out and blending practice.

Test cards
At the heart of each topic within this book is a carefully selected list of 40 real and pseudo words (20 words for Section 1 and 20 words for Section 2), building a word bank, from topic to topic and term to term, that will cover the broad range of grapheme-phoneme correspondences that the children should be familiar with by the time they approach the end of Year 1.

These words are introduced to the children within the context of the stories, non-fiction, poems, picture scenes and activity sheets provided for that topic. Having practised reading some of these words within a fun and meaningful context, you can then check and assess the children’s phonic knowledge and reading skills using the test cards provided.

Each test card is designed to match the look and feel of the official Year 1 screening check, so each card features a list of four real or pseudo words, and all the letters are in lower case. Picture prompts are provided when it is necessary to indicate to the child that they are being asked to read a pseudo word. Each set of ten test cards is followed by a photocopiable answer sheet, listing all 40 words for that topic. The teacher can use this sheet to assess and make notes on the child’s responses.

It may not be necessary or appropriate to use every test card with any one child. It is expected that teachers will use their own judgement as to when, and if, to assess each child and it is hoped that the test cards provided will not just be used for formal assessment but also in a fun way that will support the child and help them to revise and consolidate the reading skills they have acquired. For example, the cards could be used during your discrete phonics sessions to revisit and review or practise and apply new decoding and blending skills. Alternatively, a teaching assistant could use the answer sheet, when observing a group of children reading, to record how well they are doing.

To turn the cards into a game, why not make two sets of each test card and try playing pairs, inviting the children to blend each word as they play while you record their attempts on the answer sheet. No doubt you will have your own creative ideas for using the cards in other ways.
Spring poems
Two rhyming poems on the same theme.

Speaking and listening
- Ask the children to discuss how they know that it’s spring. Go outside and look and listen for signs of spring. Encourage the children to tell and show each other what they find. Make a list.
- Choose one of the spring poems (page 13) to read aloud. Compare the things mentioned with the items on your list. Then repeat with the other poem.
- Re-read the poems and identify the rhyming words.
- Learn one of the poems by heart, focusing on the rhythm as it is repeated aloud.

Woodland trolls
‘Woodland trolls’ (pages 10-11) is an information text about two types of fictional troll who live in the woodlands. The text is complemented by picture scene 1 ‘Spring harvest’, which shows the trolls during their spring harvest.

Picture scene
- Discuss the activities, objects and pseudo words in the picture, using it either alongside the non-fiction text or alone.
- Set up a woodland role-play area, outside if possible, allowing children to discuss and make decisions about what to include. Encourage them to use subject-specific vocabulary.
- Provide the pseudo word test cards as labels and ask pairs of children to read them and discuss where they might belong in the role-play area.

Reading the text
- Children familiar with split vowel digraphs and some new graphemes and pronunciations in early Phase 5, should find this text accessible but still sufficiently challenging. It offers a number of opportunities to explore blending, depending on the children’s needs – for example, split digraphs within two-syllable words, graphemes to represent /ee/ and their position in the word, and a range of alternative pronunciations (see table).

Guided reading
- Reinforce any previous work on text type and layout features. Discuss why the text has been organised in chunks and boxes (it helps the reader access the information). Remind the children that, beyond the introduction, the text doesn’t have to be read sequentially like a story. Encourage them to make deliberate choices about the order.
- Recap on your blending focus, modelling strategies as needed.
- Ask the children to look out for something interesting or odd about the trolls to tell a partner.
- Listen to children reading individually. Keep praise tightly focused on your identified blending focus. Ensure that they blend all through new decodable words, particularly two-syllable words.
- Invite the children to discuss in pairs what they found out about the trolls. Ask simple AF2 questions to check understanding and information retrieval. For example: What are the different trolls called? Which ones are the biggest? Which have fluffy hair on their chins? What do they eat for breakfast?
- Use AF3 questions to help children make inferences about the trolls’ lives. For example: Why do you think the trolls only work in spring or autumn and not both? Why

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Split vowel digraph</th>
<th>Two-syllable words</th>
<th>Alternative spellings for /ee/</th>
<th>Known graphemes (alternative pronunciations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e-e</td>
<td>ee</td>
<td>ea</td>
<td>i, y, y, ea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>line</td>
<td>woodland</td>
<td>these trees</td>
<td>clean, very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>size</td>
<td>biggest</td>
<td>leaves</td>
<td>itchy, things</td>
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<tr>
<td>side</td>
<td>smaller</td>
<td>eaten</td>
<td>ready, kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make</td>
<td>collect</td>
<td>spiky</td>
<td>spiky, ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holes</td>
<td>wooden</td>
<td>fluffy</td>
<td>fluffy</td>
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<tr>
<td>blade</td>
<td>blossom</td>
<td>sticky</td>
<td>sticky</td>
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<tr>
<td>stone</td>
<td>willow</td>
<td>crusty</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>dry</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
do you think woodland trolls’ skin gets itchy? Why do you think they need to smell each other when they go hunting?

‘Spring harvest’ photocopiable
● There are various ways to use the photocopiable activity on page 17:
  ● within the discrete phonics session as part of a ‘Best Bet’ activity (Letters and Sounds, page 147);
  ● as a stand-alone activity for reinforcement;
  ● as an interactive activity, by cutting out the leaves and sorting/grouping them physically;
  ● as part of the strategy check in a guided reading session.

Woodland plants in spring
A non-chronological report giving information about plants that can be found in spring time. Each section answers two key questions: What does it look like? and Where can it be found?

Guided reading
● The text on page 12 contains graphemes from early Phase 5, reinforcing the graphemes from page 134 of Letters and Sounds and introducing alternative pronunciations for graphemes (page 136). As split vowel digraphs are a common area of weakness for children in Year 1, this text deliberately contains a high number of words containing these graphemes. Some examples are included in the chart below. There are also a number of two-syllable words, including: bluebell, primrose, woodland, hawthorn, blossom, catkins.
● The text may be challenging for children to read independently. However, there are a number of sentences that use predominantly Phase 2 to 4 vocabulary. The following AF2 and AF3 questions are suitable for children who have been taught early Phase 5 graphemes and the question words: What, Where, When, Which and Why.
  ● What do bluebell bulbs look like? Where can you see a snowdrop? When will you see dog rose flowers? Which flower has jagged leaves? Why is woodland a good spot to look for bluebells?
  ● Write the plant names on cards and use to teach alphabetical order.
  ● Use picture scene 2 (page 15) to reinforce woodland vocabulary and practise reading the words. The picture scene also features some new wildlife words that children will encounter in the next activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Phase 5</th>
<th>Phase 5 alternative pronunciations</th>
<th>Words pupils may need support to read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a-e (shade, shape, base, name, same, male)</td>
<td>y (probably, sticky)</td>
<td>colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-e (white)</td>
<td>o (yellow, grow, narrow, flower)</td>
<td>hedges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o-e (rose)</td>
<td>(clig. wild)</td>
<td>climbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-e (blue)</td>
<td>(what, daffodil, April)</td>
<td>scented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wh (white, when)</td>
<td>o (often, only, so, soft)</td>
<td>lambs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ow (law)</td>
<td>ou (ground, you)</td>
<td>horseshoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ea (leaves, each)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spring treasure hunt
● Give each child a copy of the photocopiable activity sheet on page 16 which features pictures of six things to find. In advance, hang six corresponding cards, giving the words only, around your outside area or playground: daffodil, nest, catkins, chick, leaf and twig. Next to each word card, attach a marker pen, providing a different colour for each word. The aim is for the children to find the word cards and use the marker to place a tick next to the correct picture on the card.
● Once they have found all the cards, the children return to the adult who can check that the correct colour tick is next to each picture.

Role-play
● Build an indoor den close to a window. Use camouflage to make it look like a bird watcher’s hide. Provide binoculars, clipboards, bird-watching guides and other nature books, along with stories that have a woodland setting. You may be fortunate and have trees outside your classroom window. If not, hang bird feeders. Make the surrounding display boards into a forest with characters from traditional tales hidden among the trees, alongside forest plants and animals. The children can use the role-play area to research and observe nature or retell traditional tales.

Useful websites
www.naturedetectives.org.uk
www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/Spotting-sheets
www.forestry.gov.uk
Woodland trolls

There are two kinds of woodland trolls and both sorts look a bit like trees. But they are easy to tell apart.

The biggest trolls are called gless and they have theeg – a kind of fluffy hair on their chins. They collect the autumn harvest.

The grax are smaller trolls, about half the size of a person. They have paunt or tufts of spiky hair behind their ears. Grax collect the spring harvest.

Trolls use plants for all kinds of things. It will amaze you.

Making tools

The grax use a sharp stone blade they call a splie, to make a woift. This is a kind of wooden hook with three prongs. It looks like a claw and they use it to help them scoot up hawthorn trees. They collect the hawthorn thorns and the blossom.

The thorns are glued side by side on a flat stone to make a clede. They need this to scrape bark from willow trees. The grax make all kinds of baskets out of willow bark, like a chult or a thrizz.
Collecting and making food
Gless children collect bluebell and fern leaves, primrose petals, horse chestnut sap and insects from the woods and fields. Grown-ups mix these with spices called thup, juck and hesp to make a thick soup. It smells awful but the grax and gless love it.

Hazel catkins are eaten for breakfast. First, strips of dog rose thorns are twisted into a ring called a phube. The catkins are hung in a sunny place to dry out. A few weeks later, they are mixed with bluebell juice in a spid – a kind of bowl and lid. Then they are ready to eat.

Children use sticky bud sticks to dip into holes in trees and under logs. Insects stick to the buds. Then the children lick them off like lollipops.

Keeping clean and warm
Woodland trolls have thick, crusty skin, a bit like bark. It gets very itchy so they make scratching cloths called thrukes. First they dry toothed hawthorn leaves. Next they stick them together (the hooks on the outside) with slices of sticky buds. Then they rub these all over their skin. Sometimes they put the thrukes on sticks to make back scratchers.

Trolls rub soft pussy willow with a nork to make a kind of padding to line the inside of their jackets. Grax even have their own perfume! It’s called shing. They mix hawthorn blossom and tree sap. This helps them smell each other if they are hunting.
Spring – Non-fiction

Woodland plants in spring

Can you find these plants?

Bluebell
Where to look: If it is April or May and the ground is covered in blue flowers, they are probably bluebells. Bluebells prefer moist ground and shade.
What to look for: Each flower looks like a little bell. The bell-shaped flowers hang from a stem. Bluebells grow from white bulbs. It is against the law to dig up bluebell bulbs.

Daffodil
Where to look: Wild daffodils grow in woodlands and grasslands.
What to look for: Daffodil flowers have pale yellow petals with a brighter yellow trumpet. The leaves are long and narrow. They grow from the base of the stem.

Dog rose
Where to look: This is a scrambling shrub so it climbs over other shrubs.
What to look for: It has long stems with curved thorns. The first flowers appear in May. They are pink or white.

Hawthorn blossom
Where to look: Small hawthorn trees or shrubs are often found in hedgerows.
What to look for: The jagged or ‘toothed’ leaves start to appear from March. After they have grown, a lot of scented blossom appears. The branches have thorns.

Hazel tree catkins
Where to look: Catkins are male flowers that grow on hazel trees before they get leaves.
What to look for: Catkins hang down from the twigs and look a bit like lambs’ tails. The female flowers look like small buds with red tufts sticking out from the tip.

Primrose
Where to look: This flower grows best in moist soil that has a bit of shade. It grows to be 10–30cm tall.
What to look for: This ground-covering plant usually has pale yellow flowers. Its name means ‘first rose’. The leaves are soft and green.

Snowdrop
Where to look: Snowdrops are found in damp woods. They grow well in the shade.
What to look for: Snowdrops flower from January to March. They have drooping white flowers. There is only one flower on each stem. The long, thin leaves are a blue-green colour.

Sticky horse chestnut buds
Where to look: Horse chestnut trees grow to be 30m tall, so you will need to look up.
What to look for: New horse chestnut leaves are protected in sticky buds. When the leaves have burst from the buds, flowers appear. There are 20 to 50 flowers on each long stem.
In the air

Spring is in the air, 
buds on trees that once were bare.

Spring is in the air, 
new leaves uncurling everywhere.

Spring is in the air, 
celandines opening here and there.

Spring is in the air, 
esting birds with songs to spare.

Spring is in the air, 
sun, then rain, so what to wear?

Spring is in the air, 
take time out to stand and stare.

Moira Andrew

Spring Song

Daffodils growing, 
Leaves on trees, 
Flowers smelling sweet 
And the buzzing of bees.

Birds eating worms, 
Grass growing tall, 
Sun in the sky 
And us playing ball.

Kevin McCann
Spring harvest

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baw
ufit
phube
thup
juck
thruke
nork
spred
hesp
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thrizz
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1_Spring.indd   14
05/12/2012   21:01:29
Spring

Spring – Picture scene/Real words

1_Spring.indd   15
05/12/2012   21:01:30
# Spring treasure hunt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things to find:</th>
<th>Find the word then use the pen to tick the box next to the right picture.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Daffodil" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Bird" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Nest" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Eggs" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Buds" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Leaf" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Flowers" /></td>
<td><img src="image8.png" alt="Branch" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spring harvest

The trolls need to make soup but they can only use leaves with words that have the /ee/ sound in them. Put a circle round the right leaves.

Be careful: the /ee/ sound doesn’t always look the same nor is it always in the same part of the word.

- ready
- harvest
- itchy
- fluffy
- crusty
- claw
- bluebell
- leaves
- these
- scrape
- there
- very
- clean
- spiky
- dry
- outside
- thorns
- wooden
- sticky
thup

juck

nork

shing
theeg

uft

spid

grax
gless

hesp

woift

chult
with
long
march
twig
nest
moist
chin
thick
thrizz  
splie  
thruke  
spreld
fern
soup
stone
thorn
field
burst
male
white
place

woodland

primrose

catkins
Spring – Screening check: Answer sheet

First name ____________________________  Last name ____________________________

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

Section 1

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Total correct: ____________________________