

Phonics for Parents

William Martin Infant School

September 2015

What is phonics?

- ▶ Learning about the sounds that letters make that words are made up of.
- ▶ Hearing the sounds - reading the sounds - writing the sounds helps children to read words and spell words

How is phonics different from the way I was taught to read and write?

- ▶ Lots of learning in the past was focused on learning to read and spell words through sight.
- ▶ This relied upon having a good memory and ability to recall words.
- ▶ Some teaching still uses this method but focuses more on teaching children the different sounds that different letters and groups of letters make.

What skills does my child learn first?

- ▶ To be able to successfully read and write the letter sounds correctly, they need to be able to hear them.

Hearing sounds in words

- ▶ Adults will say the sounds that a word is composed of and then children will say the sounds and then the word.
- ▶ Eg c-a-t = cat m-a-n = man
- ▶ This skill supports early reading

What games can I play with my child to help develop these skills?

- ▶ Collect different objects from around the house and put them in a pile. Ask - can you find me the egg s-o-ck and children have to listen to the sounds and choose the correct object.
- ▶ Give instructions to your child using 'sound speak' or 'robot talk' Can you put your coat o-n on?
- ▶ Do you want some ch-ee-se/ h-a-m?
- ▶ Play 'I spy' but do not say the name of the letter say the sound. This will encourage children to know the sound a word begins with.

Reading and saying the sounds

- ▶ Children will learn that every letter in the alphabet has a sound first before learning that it has a name.
- ▶ Knowing the sounds will help you to encourage your child to read words.
- ▶ s a t p i n m d g o c k e u r h b f l j v w
- ▶ x y z
- ▶ To help you know the sounds that the letters make, visit www.mrthorne.com
- ▶ Sounds taught in reception are accompanied by an action to help children to remember.

Reading words containing the sounds

- ▶ Once children can read some letter sounds on their own, they will be able to read short words like
- ▶ in, it, sat, tap etc.
- ▶ Children are encouraged to put their finger under each letter and then run finger along the word to read it.
- ▶ When supporting your child with reading at home, it helps to encourage them to do the same.

Writing the letter symbols that sounds make

- ▶ Alongside being able to look at a letter, children will need to know how to write the correct symbol to match the spoken sound.
- ▶ They will first write the individual letter (grapheme) and then be encouraged to say short words and chop them up into sounds to help them to spell words.
- ▶ In school we do this by getting children to say the word and pull it down with their hand and then say the sounds in order that are in the word.

How can I support my child with learning to write at home?

- ▶ Encourage them to form letters using different materials - can they write the letters of their name or a letter sound that you call out
- ▶ in shaving foam
- ▶ using a water spray bottle
- ▶ painting with a large paintbrush with water on fences, outside walls
- ▶ writing in chalk on the ground outside

Reading and writing tricky words

- ▶ At school, children will also be introduced to reading and writing 'tricky words'.
- ▶ They are called tricky words as they cannot be read or spelt by sounding out the letters in them.
- ▶ Eg the no go to the was are
- ▶ NB it is important that children are not encouraged to read these words using sounds as they will not be able to read them correctly.

How can I support my child with learning to spell tricky words?

- ▶ Encourage your child to look at the word, cover it up, say it, write it and check it. Children should be encouraged to do this until they can spell it correctly.
- ▶ Write the word correctly with two incorrect ways of spelling it, can they copy down the correct one?
- ▶ Look for words within a word - eg what has a w and the word 'hat' at the end
- ▶ Teaching a rhyme to remember the word eg
- ▶ Because - big, elephants, can't, always, use, small, exits.
- ▶ Make the word out of magnetic letters and then copy it.

What next?

- ▶ Your child is then taught about the sounds that two or three letters together can make. These begin to be learnt in reception.
- ▶ Two letters = one sound = digraph eg
 - ▶ th ch sh ai ee
- ▶ Three letters = one sound = trigraph eg
 - ▶ igh ear air ure
- ▶ They will learn to read words containing these sounds next.

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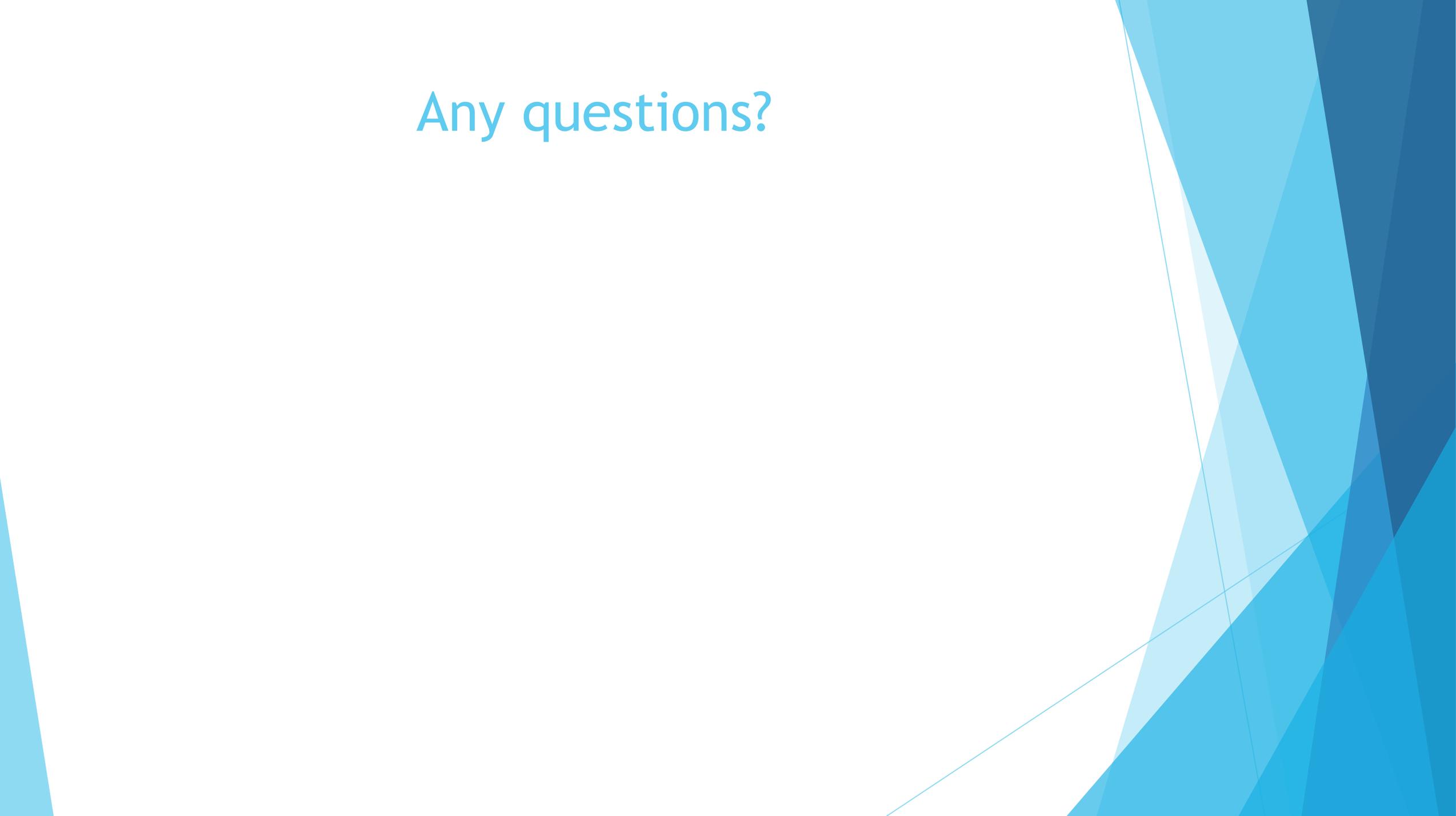
How do I know which letters and words my child is being taught each year?

- ▶ On the school website we will put the lists of letters and sounds and words that children are working on throughout the year and should be able to read and spell by the end of the year.

What will I be asked to do to support my child in learning phonics?

- ▶ In reception, children will on a regular basis, bring home a list of a few sounds they have been learning and some tricky words they have been learning.
- ▶ Practise reading and writing them with your child.
- ▶ Hear your child read their reading book regularly supporting them to sound out words and recognise tricky words.
- ▶ Work with them on reading and writing the sounds that different letter patterns make - use the website to refer to the list of sounds for the different year groups

Any questions?

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The overall composition is clean and modern, with the text 'Any questions?' centered in the upper left quadrant.