

Can an 'actions' mnemonic system prove to be a valuable aid for young learners to recall a substantial body of letters and sounds?

Please note that the existing effectiveness of the Phonics International programme is not at all dependent on these optional actions. We would like to discover, however, whether actions would further help young children to engage with their learning by assisting them to 'recall' letters, letter groups and their associated sounds even more readily in their very earliest stages of learning.

Warning: Any form of mnemonic system has to be designed very carefully in terms of its appropriate DIRECT usefulness to aid teaching and learning. It is possible for mnemonic systems to detract teachers themselves from the teaching and learning objectives. The aim when teaching letter/s-sound correspondences is for the learners to 'see the grapheme' and to automatically 'say the sound' – and then to put this knowledge to immediate use for reading – and to reverse this process for spelling. **What is the most effective way of helping young learners to remember a growing bank of letter/s-sound correspondences?**

This OPTIONAL ACTIONS resource has been designed at the request of a number of people who have expressed an interest in mnemonic (aid-to-memory) 'actions' for introducing letters and sounds to young beginners as part of the Phonics International programme.

TRIAL: At the point of publication of this resource (Nov 2009), the actions will be made available to trial by a number of people requesting a direct link to the resource – which Debbie will provide on request. Following provision of this resource, we ask that people trialling the actions will keep in close contact with Debbie to feedback their findings and any results from the teaching and learning process - positive or negative – before we consider whether to make this OPTIONAL ACTIONS resource generally available as an optional part of the Phonics International programme! Contact Debbie at debbie@phonicsinternational.com.

The actions suggested in this resource are linked directly to the Phonics International **key words and pictures** in Units 1 to 5 and as shown on the full picture ALPHABETIC CODE OVERVIEW CHART (free in Unit 1). Thus, the actions also relate directly to other resources such as THE ALPHABETIC CODE FRIEZE POSTERS of the full Phonics International programme, the GRAPHEME FLASH CARDS WITH PICTURES and to the BOOKLETS in the EARLY YEARS STARTER PACKAGE.

Teachers may introduce the actions for the letter/sound correspondences of Unit 1 and possibly Unit 2, and then find that these are an 'extra' which are not necessary – especially when young beginners become familiar with being taught about letters and sounds and how to read, spell and write. In other words, they may be fun and effective at first, but the PI resources with their established routines are very rewarding to use in themselves and already effective. **What will people find?**

HAVING FUN: Please note that 'having fun' does not equate to effective learning – although learning can be enhanced when the learners have fun based in activities which are appropriate and well-designed!

PRINT THE ACTIONS DESCRIPTIONS IN HALF SIZE – THEY ARE FOR 'INFORMING' THE PARENTS

The OPTIONAL ACTIONS resource is designed to be 'half the size' of the published resource.

When printing the OPTIONAL ACTIONS resource (which staff of a pre-school setting or reception class might provide for the children's parents as each letter/s-sound correspondence is introduced), consider printing at half size (select 'multiple copies', '2 per page' on the printer facility).