Summary of main features of phonics reading and spelling/writing instruction

Simple View of Reading – official model in England:

USA: Five Pillars of Literacy

1. Phonemic awareness
2. Phonics
3. Vocabulary enrichment
4. Fluency (repeat reading)
5. Comprehension

A high-quality phonics programme includes the 'big five'.

The Alphabetic Principle:

- The Alphabet Poster
- The Alphabetic Code Chart

Display: (main walls, breakout areas, phonics folders)
- *Permanent* (Alphabet, Alphabetic Code Chart)
- *Cumulative* (Code Frieze, Tricky Words, Spelling Word Banks, planned grammar, punctuation)
- *Incidental* (code as required, unusual code, unplanned grammar, punctuation)

Change of perception of phonics from 'baby stuff' to 'adult stuff':

- Adults use phonics for reading and spelling.
- Use 'code' language not infant language (These letters *are code for* the sound /ai/...).
- *'Two- pronged systematic and incidental phonics teaching'* addresses differentiation, phonics in the wider curriculum, and caters for all ages and needs.
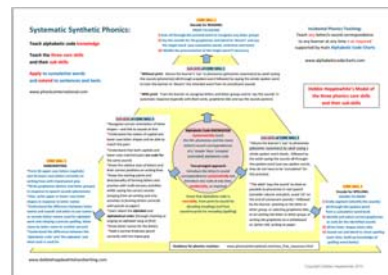
The Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles:

- Alphabetic Code KNOWLEDGE
- Phonics SKILLS (and *sub*-skills)

No multi-cueing reading strategies for guessing words.

Apply and extend phonics knowledge and skills to cumulative, paper-based resources per learner.

The three core phonics skills and their sub-skills:

The Phonics (Hand) Routines:

Print-to-sound for reading (point)
Sound-to-print for spelling (tally)
Handwriting: correct grip and letter formation on lines

The Teaching and Learning Cycle (always complete):

Time:

- Allow enough time – don't underestimate.
- Complete the full 'Teaching and Learning Cycle' per learner.
- Use time efficiently.
- Provide sufficient time for learners to practise – and 'little and often' for slower-to-learn pupils.
- Avoid 'extraneous' or time-consuming games.

The maths of the phonics:

- Provide ample shorter and longer words for individuals to blend, segment and write.
- For 'revisit and review', consider the quantity of letter/s-sound correspondences, and words/sentences, repeated to build fluency.
- Quantify what 'little and often' means in your setting.

What Science and Experience Tells Us About Reading and Reading Instruction

- Learning to speak is a natural process but learning to read is not.

- A competent reader should be able to read and understand what he or she can talk about and understand.

- To be a reader in the full sense is dependent upon two main processes:
  i) the ability to *decode the words* [What **ARE** the words?]
  ii) the *language comprehension* to understand the words that have been decoded [What do the words **MEAN**?]
  This can be illustrated by the '**Simple View of Reading**' diagram:
  http://www.phonicsinternational.com/The_Simple_View_of_Reading_model.pdf

- Scientific evidence from the past half-century confirms that the most effective approach for *teachers to teach reading (and spelling)* includes direct instruction in the '**Five Pillars of Literacy**':
  http://www.nichd.nih.gov/research/supported/Pages/nrp.aspx/

1) **Phonemic awareness** (awareness of the 44 smallest sounds, or phonemes, identifiable in English speech – most effectively taught alongside print)
2) **Phonics** (includes teaching the letters and letter formation of the '*alphabet'*, and systematically teaching knowledge of the '*alphabetic code'*, that is, the170+ letters and letter groups which represent the 44 sounds, alongside the phonics skills of blending all-through-the-word for decoding/reading; and segmenting all-through-the-spoken-word, then allotting letters and letter groups, for encoding/spelling)
3) **Vocabulary** (new words explicitly taught to enrich spoken language)
4) **Fluency** (ample reading practice and repeated reading)
5) **Comprehension** (including specific techniques for comprehension of literature)

Parents can provide the best support for their children by routinely engaging them in high-quality conversations and by sharing experiences of a wide range of books (read to the children and talk about the nature of the books and their contents).

- All readers need to know and understand the '*alphabetic principle'* but English writing consists of the most *complex alphabetic code in the world* and so it is best taught explicitly and systematically:
  http://alphabeticcodecharts.com/One_side_ACC_with_IPA_symbols.pdf

  'It cannot be left to chance, or for children to ferret out, on their own, how the alphabetic code works.'
  (*Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading*, Sir Jim Rose, March 2006):
  http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://education.gov.uk/publications/eorderingdownload/0201-2006pdf-en-01.pdf

- Teachers need to know and understand the **Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles**:
  http://www.rrf.org.uk/pdf/Final_03_ The_Synthetic_Phonics_Teaching_Principles%2011-2-10.pdf

  Plan the teaching based on a **Teaching and Learning Cycle**:
  http://www.phonicsinternational.com/Reflecting%20on%20the%20Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Cycle.pdf

- Teachers should be aware of the dangers of teaching children to read using multi-cueing reading strategies which amount to guessing words from cues such as picture cues, word shape, first letters and context. Teaching learners to *guess* words can lead to bad reading habits that can be damaging in the long-term. (Note: 'Context' is required, however, to ascertain meaning of words and, on occasions, to indicate the correct pronunciation of words such as 'read' and 'wind'.)

- Even learners who have difficulty learning to read require the same teaching as described above but they may need more 'little and often' and intensive practice of phonics and/or language comprehension. Teachers can use the Simple View of Reading (link above) and specific assessments as appropriate to identify the language needs and the phonics needs of individual learners: http://www.phonicsinternational.com/Triangle_sub_core_skills.pdf

- The aim is for foundational skills, including knowledge of the main letter/s-sound correspondences, to be largely mastered in the first two to three years for most learners. Initially it is desirable to provide cumulative and decodable texts consisting of code already introduced to increase reading fluency and to build confidence. This is followed by the use of increasingly more complex texts to further increase vocabulary, comprehension skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. Phonics continues for building up *'code' spelling word banks*.

- Alongside teaching children to read well, teachers and parents can encourage and inspire them to love reading and to appreciate literature:
  https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-action-plan-to-inspire-thousands-more-pupils-to-read

All learners need to learn the same alphabetic code, and the same phonics skills, but they need age-appropriate resources and plenty of guaranteed, personal practice. Paper-based personal resources presented within a routine Teaching and Learning Cycle contribute significantly to all the 'Five Pillars of Literacy'.

Teacher-led:
'Revisit and review'
Whole class 'interactive' or whole class, each learner re-reads own resources: words, sentences and texts

Pupil-practice:
'Independent reading'
Use cumulative, decodable books at first, support as necessary with wider reading.

Teacher-led:
'Introduce' focus letter/s-sound correspondence
Include reference to the main Alphabetic Code Chart.
Model the three core skills quickly, simply, interactively.

Pupil-practice:
'Apply and extend' new learning with sentences/texts
Use personal, paper-based resources per learner. Annotate, collate, value.

Pupil-practice:
'Learn' focus code and apply all phonics skills at word level
Use personal paper-based resources per learner. Annotate, collate, value.

Phonics Routines

Teach the **knowledge** of the alphabetic code
(the letter/s-sound correspondences)
and the **three core skills** and their **sub**-skills

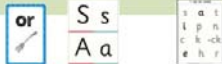## I. Decoding (blending or synthesising)

Sub-skill **without** print:

Adult says the separate sounds "/f/ /r/ /o/ /g/".

Learners 'discern' or 'hear' the whole word 'frog'
and then say the whole word "frog".

Sub-skill **with** print:

Point to pre-printed graphemes
that have been taught to date:
"See the graphemes *[letters or letter groups]*
and say the sounds."

Core skill for decoding:

- Glance at (scan) the printed word
  from left to right to 'recognise' any letter groups.
- Use the index finger to point directly under **each**
  grapheme whilst saying the sounds
  as close to real speech as possible
  from left to right of the printed word.
- Say the whole word whilst running the index finger
  left to right beneath the whole printed word.
- Modify the pronunciation of the blended sounds into the
  real word's pronunciation if necessary.

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2. Encoding (oral segmenting, spelling-with-editing)

Sub-skill **without** print:

Say the whole word "soap" very slowly and naturally so
that the separate sounds become evident *[oral segmenting]*.

Repeat the separate sounds as close to real speech sounds as
possible "/s/ /oa/ /p/".

Do not repeat the whole spoken word after that !

Sub-skill **with** print:

Listen to sounds as close as possible to real speech sounds.

1. "Hear the sounds, point to the graphemes."
2. "Hear the sounds, select the graphemes."
3. "Hear the sounds, write the graphemes."

Core skill for encoding:

- Use the left hand, palm facing,
  to tally the sounds identified
  all-through-the-spoken-word
  onto thumb and fingers.
- Write a 'sound dash' for every sound identified
  which also act as 'writing lines'. ___ ___ ___
- Select grapheme tiles, magnetic letters
  or write graphemes, to spell the word.
- Sound out and blend the selected
  graphemes to check the spelling. s oa p ✓

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3. Handwriting (linking graphemes to sounds)

Sub-skill:

Hold the pencil correctly
with the tripod grip.

"Froggy legs *[thumb and index finger]* grip the pencil at the
end of the painted part *[not on the sloping cone part]*
with the log under *[the middle finger]*".

Sub-skill:

"ch"
as in chick

ch

Establishing 'directionality' of
writing letter shapes whilst saying the sounds.

Finger-tracing: Use the index finger of the writing hand
to trace pre-printed letter shapes.
Pencil-tracing: Trace pre-printed grey or dotted letter shapes
with a pencil.
Copying: Copy letter shapes with finger or pencil.

Core skill for handwriting:

- Correct tripod pencil grip
- Correct posture sitting at a desk
- Slightly slanted paper, use free hand to hold steady
- Write under the letters and words – avoid hooking hand
  and wrist around
- Say the sounds whilst writing graphemes as part of the
  spelling process
- Write on writing lines frequently as appropriate

www.phonicsinternational.com   www.debbiehepplewhitehandwriting.com

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