Phonics Level 3 Parent Pack

What is phonics?

Phonics is the process of learning to read and spell using specific letters or sounds. These letters and sounds combine to create words that can be broken down or blended together in order to read or spell them.

Glossary

Within Twinkl Phonics, children will learn the correct phonics terminology. We recommend that children are exposed to this terminology as much as possible. It may be helpful for you to familiarise yourselves with these terms to use with your child.

Blending

building up of words from individual phonemes for reading

CVC Words

stands for consonant-vowel-consonant, e.g. 'cat'

Digraph

when a single sound is represented by two written letters, e.g. 'th' or 'er'

GPC

stands for 'grapheme/phoneme correspondence' - the relationship between sounds and the letter or letters that represent that sound

Grapheme

the symbol (written letter) used to represent a sound

Mnemonic

an illustration that is designed to support children's recognition of GPCs

Phoneme

the shortest unit of sound in a word - usually represented by a single letter

Segmenting

breaking down words into individual phonemes for writing

Trigraph

when a single sound is represented by three written letters

Tricky words (common exception words)

words that are not decodable at the child's current phonic level of understanding. Also called 'sight words' because children are taught to memorise them so they can be recognised by sight

VC words

stands for vowel-consonant, e.g. 'at'

What do children learn in Level 3?

By Level 3, children should already be able to recognise Level 2 GPCs and use them to read and spell CVC words. Within Level 3, children will be introduced to the remaining individual letter graphemes, including j, v, w, x, y and z. They will also learn new digraphs and trigraphs and will learn to read and spell these within words.

Level 3 GPCs are taught in the following order:

j
v
w
x
y
z
zz
qu
ch
sh
th
ng
ai
ee
igh
oa
oo (long sound)
oo (short sound)
ar
or
ur
ow
oi
ear
air
ure
er

Blending and Segmenting

In Level 3, children will use the previous GPCs that they have learnt in Level 2, along with new GPCs to read CVC words. By this stage, many CVC words will include digraphs or trigraphs, e.g. m-oo-n or 'n-igh-t'. It is important for children to identify digraphs and trigraphs within a word so that they read them as one sound, e.g. 'n-igh't' instead of 'n-i-g-h-t'.

By this stage, children should be familiar with using sound buttons and sound bars to differentiate between individual letter sounds and digraphs/trigraphs.

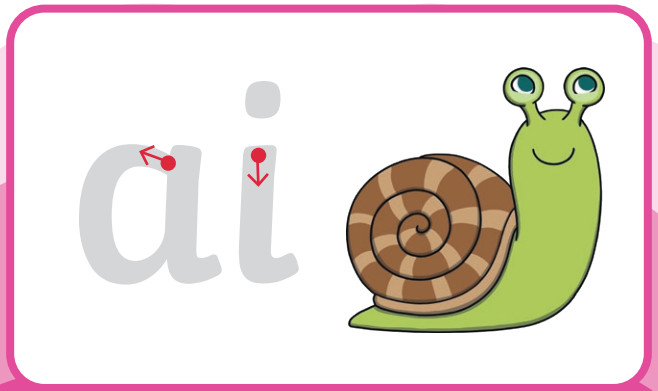
Tricky Words (Common Exception Words)

Tricky words or common exception words do not fit the regular spelling rules that have been taught, therefore children can not segment and spell them like regular words.

Children are taught to recognise and spell tricky words by sight (to memorise them) and to point out the tricky part of the word.

Letter Formation

In Level 3, children will learn to form the remaining individual graphemes, as well as new digraphs and trigraphs. Although children will have already learned how to form these letters individually, it is beneficial to practise writing the letters together - this will help children become familiar with identifying them within words when reading and spelling.



How can you help support your child at home?

To support your child at home, you can practise recognising Level 3 GPCs, by:

Identifying written graphemes by sight - point out written graphemes as you see them in different settings, such as on TV shows, games, toys or posters.

Practise forming graphemes correctly - give your child plenty of opportunities to practise forming graphemes correctly. You can do this in fun ways, such as writing letters in the sand, painting large letters or using chalk in your yard. It is also important for children to practise forming letters using a pencil so that they can improve their fine motor skills and pencil grip.

Recognising and identifying phonemes in words - identifying initial sounds or ending sounds in words by playing 'I Spy' or breaking down words for spelling, such as 'Look at the r-ai-n'.

Blending and reading CVC words containing Level 3 GPCs - practise reading stories together containing CVC words or matching words with pictures.

Segmenting and spelling CVC words containing Level 3 GPCs - practise spelling words in fun ways, such as using magnetic letters or writing words in foam or sand.

Practise reading and spelling Level 3 tricky words - hide the words on flashcards and make your own treasure hunt for children to find and read the tricky words.