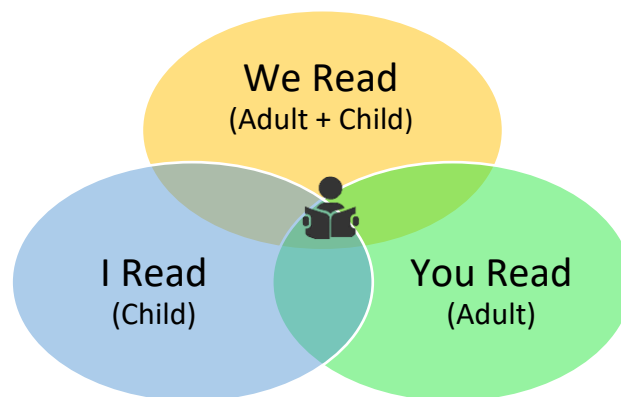


Parent's Guide: Understanding Phonics at Craneswater Junior School

At Craneswater, our aim is for pupils to become independent, fluent and enthusiastic readers who read widely and comprehend what they have read. Reading is an essential skill that underpins all other curriculum areas and ensures pupils have the ability to access lifelong learning and develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

We hope you find this document useful in understanding how reading is taught at Craneswater and ways you can support it at home. Please contact the class teacher if you have any further questions regarding reading.

In order to develop as a reader, pupils need to master a range of different skills which are taught in different ways (decoding, comprehension, vocabulary and reading for pleasure). Each way needs to have an appropriate book to best support that skill development. To help children remember this, we use the following saying: We read, I read and You read (these statements are from the child's perspective). When learning to read, we start with decoding through the use of phonics before we teach children comprehension skills.



We Read

What happens in school:

- We use Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) to teach phonics.
- These sessions happen every day for around 30 minutes.
- These are group sessions where children are introduced to a new sound (organised into phases). Pupils then practise these sounds and apply them to word reading.
- After verbally practising the sounds multiple times, children then practise writing these in their activity books.
- Children will use the following language to describe this: phoneme (each sound that you hear in a word) and grapheme (a symbol used to identify a phoneme; it's a letter or group of letters representing the sound).
- They will also use 'robot arms' to help them to segment and blend words.
- In these sessions, children will also be exposed to 'harder to read and spell words' which are not phonetically decodable. This means that pupils have to learn these words by sight recognition. A list of these can be found on the last page.

How to support at home:

- Help children with the pronunciation of pure sounds. Here is a useful video: <https://youtu.be/UCI2mu7URBc>
- Here is a useful video which explains other terminology used in the teaching of phonics: [Phonics - Portsmouth Education Partnership](#)

I Read

What happens in school:

- Children will have multiple sessions per week where they will be reading a book matched to the sounds they have been learning.
- Children should be able to segment and blend all of the words in these books.
- These books will also contain any 'harder to read and spell words' the children have learnt that week.

How to support at home:

- Pupils will be given an 'I Read' book to bring home each week.
- These books will contain phonetically decodable words linked to their phonics stage.
- The purpose of this book is for children to build their reading fluency and stamina.
- Reading this book multiple times at home will help children to develop their fluency and automaticity (reading without conscious effort or attention to decoding). Children should aim to reread this books 4 times over the week.
- These books contain pre and post reading guidance and activities for adults on the front and back covers of the books.
- To support independent reading at school and at home, we have access to an online ebook library through 'Oxford Owls'. Children will be set a range of books at their reading stage. A separate letter will be sent out explaining how children can access this website.

You Read

What happens in school:

- We use our Class Readers to expose children to a variety of high-quality texts. These will cover a range of topics, they are written in different styles and cover a range of authors.
- We read our class readers multiple times per week.
- You will receive a letter at the start of each half term to tell you what the Class Reader will be. You will be invited to purchase the book so that pupils have their own copy. We also provide copies in school for pupils to use. On our website, we have uploaded a PowerPoint linked to each Class Reader. This will give you a list of linked books, for example, books from the same author, books that cover a similar theme or information books where children can find out more about the topic.

How to support at home:

- Pupils will choose a 'You read' book to take home.
- This book will contain words beyond what the child might be able to decode and understand independently.
- The purpose of this book is to promote an enjoyment of reading, to access texts and vocabulary above independent decoding ability and support development of comprehension.
- Ideally, this book will be read to children so that they can concentrate on understanding and enjoying the story.
- Audio books are a great way for children to listen to books. These can be accessed through the Portsmouth ebook platform (a separate letter will explain this with pupil login details).

Top Tips to support reading at home

1 Concentrate on reading quality (it isn't all about reading lots!)



Don't worry too much about the 'what' and 'how' of reading each day. Books are great—but leaflets, comics, recipes and instructions on a webpage can all be great too. Following a recipe to make some cupcakes is valuable reading. Be on the lookout for reading, wherever it is!

2 Ask your child lots of questions



All reading matters. Shared reading is about 'reading with', not just 'reading to' (even for older children). So, ask lots of 'Wh' questions, such as Who? What? When? Where? Why? Try them when talking about books: for example, 'what do you think Harry is feeling?'

3 Ask your child to make predictions about what they have read



If it is a book, look at the front cover—or the last chapter—and talk about what might happen next. Look for clues in the book and be a reading detective! For example, 'can you see the bear on the front cover? Where do you think he will go?'

4 Ask your child to summarise what they have read



When you've finished reading, talk about what happened. Acting out the things that happened in the story or describing the big idea of a chapter is really fun and maximises learning. For example, 'can you remember all the things that happened on the bear hunt?'

5 Ask your child to write about what they have read



Write, or draw pictures, from anything you've read! Big writing and pictures are even more fun. For example, use an old roll of wallpaper to make a treasure map with clues from the stories you've read together.

6 Read and discuss reading with friends or family



Make books a part of the family. Encourage your child to share them with a relative or friend, over a video call. Laugh about them when you are making meals together. For example, 'I hope the tiger doesn't come to tea today!'

7 Maintain the motivation to read



Talk about the joy of reading whenever you can. Your child is on an amazing journey to becoming a reader. Put them in the driving seat and have fun on the way! For example, 'choose your favourite story for bedtime tonight.'

Harder to Read and Spell Words

These are words that will appear in pupil's books that are not phonetically decodable. Pupils will learn these word by sight recognition.

Phase 2 & 3

I	the	no	put	of
is	to	go	into	pull
as	his	he	she	buses
we	me	be	push	was
her	my	you	they	all
are	ball	tall	when	what
said	so	have	were	out
like	some	come	there	little
one	do	children	love	oh
their	a	people	Mr	Mrs
your	ask	should	would	could
asked	house	mouse	water	want
very				

Phase 5

please	once	any	many
again	who	whole	where
two	here	sugar	friend
because			

Key terms:

Automaticity: Reading without conscious effort or attention to decoding.

Background Knowledge: Forming connections between the text and the information and experiences of the reader.

Blending: the process of combining sounds together to create a word. For example, the word cat is made up of three sounds /c/-/a/-/t/ together these sounds produce the spoken word cat.

Comprehension: Understanding what one is reading, the ultimate goal of all reading activity.

Decodable Text: Text in which a high proportion of words (80%-90%) comprise sound-symbol relationships that have already been taught. It is used for the purpose of providing practice with specific decoding skills and is a bridge between learning phonics and the application of phonics in independent reading.

Decodable Words: These words contain phonic elements that were previously taught.

Decoding: The ability to translate a word from print to speech, usually by employing knowledge of sounding it out strategies.

Fluency: Ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression. Fluency provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.

Grapheme: A symbol used to identify a phoneme; it's a letter or group of letters representing the sound)

Independent Reading Level: The level at which a reader can read text with 95% accuracy (i.e., no more than one error per 20 words read). Independent reading level is relatively easy text for the reader.

Phoneme: each sound that you hear in a word.

Segmenting: Segmenting is the process of breaking a word down into its individual sounds. For example the word cat is made up of three sounds. You can break it down into its three sounds /c/-/a/-/t/. These sounds are referred to as phonemes, which are individual sounds. For example, the word cat is made up of 3 phonemes. Children may use 'Robot Arms' to help them do this.