

Read Write Inc.

Phonics

Making a strong start: a guide for Reception/Primary 1 teachers

Series developed by
Ruth Miskin



OXFORD

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP, United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford. It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship, and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries.

© Oxford University Press 2019

Acknowledgements

Illustrations: p.60 Aptara; p.19 Tim Archbold

Photographs: by kind permission of Ruth Miskin Training

Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and for information only. Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials contained in any third party website referenced in this work.

Oxford
OWL

For school

Discover eBooks, inspirational resources, advice and support

For home

Helping your child's learning with free eBooks, essential tips and fun activities



www.oxfordowl.co.uk

Contents

Letter from Ruth

Introduction to teaching phonics

SECTION 1: ORGANISATION IN RECEPTION/PRIMARY 1

- How to group your children for phonics lessons in Reception/Primary 1 6

SECTION 2: STARTING STRONG IN RECEPTION/PRIMARY 1

- Route through the first half-term – an overview 10
- Getting going in week 1 12

SECTION 3: TEACHING SET 1 SPEED SOUNDS AND WORD TIME

- How to use Handbook 1 and resources 14
- Assessing as you go 14
- *Read Write Inc. Phonics* through the day: Fred Talk and pinny time 15
- Daily handwriting practice 17
- How to help parents: practise the sounds 18

SECTION 4: STOPPING CHILDREN STRUGGLING – ONE-TO-ONE TUTORING

- Part 1: Learning Set 1 Speed Sounds – single-letter sounds 21
- Part 2: Blending sounds into words 23
- Part 3: Reading Phonics Green Word Cards: Word Time 1.1 to 1.5 24
- Part 4: Learning Set 1 Speed Sounds – Special friends 24
- Part 5: Reading Phonics Green Word Cards: Word Time 1.6 and 1.7 25

SECTION 5: PHOTOCOPY DITTIES, RED DITTY BOOKS AND STORYBOOKS

- How to use *Read Write Inc. Phonics* Handbook 1 and resources 26
- How to progress quickly from Ditties to Storybooks 28

SECTION 6: HOME READING

- Reading and re-reading *Read Write Inc. Phonics* books 30

SECTION 7: STORYTIME, PLANNED TALK AND TALK THROUGH STORIES

- Storytime 31
- Planned talk 34
- Talk Through Stories 34

Sound Blending Books – progression 36

Ditty Photocopy Masters – progression 40

Dear Reception/Primary 1 teachers,

I'm delighted that you've decided to make reading a priority in your school.

I hope this guide will help you get your children off to a speedy start in Reception/Primary 1. We've written it to go alongside *Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1* to meet the particular demands of a Reception/Primary 1 classroom. I'm sure that your Reading Leader will help you use this guide to organise your groups and ensure the teaching is the best it can be.



The most important starting point is to read to children. Reading to children is the best way of encouraging them to love books and reading.

By reading stories aloud to children every day, you are forming a link for them between reading, comfort and love. When you love a book, your children will want to hear it again and again! Children thrive on repetition, so when you've read *Room on the Broom* for the hundredth time, remember you are hardwiring their brains for success!

Children learn more rapidly at this age than at any other time in their lives so, once you start teaching phonics, you can teach a new sound every day. The important thing to remember is to always review any previously taught sounds, as well as teaching the new sound. The speed at which children read the sounds will make the biggest difference to their blending of sounds to read words.

Do keep the teaching of sounds to the phonics lessons. Please don't use other contexts to practise, for example in the outdoor area or the role-play area. Let children enjoy the integrity of each experience.

Remember that children can only be as good as your teaching. After you've been on the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* training, practise with your colleagues until you are confident you can make the lessons fun for both you and your children.

I would love to hear about your success.

Best wishes

Introduction to teaching phonics

Some of the most frequent questions I'm asked...

What if a child cannot articulate particular sounds?

Ask the child to repeat the sounds in the alphabet after you (sounds not letter names). Make a note of the sounds the child has difficulty pronouncing, for example, *t* instead of *c*, *d* instead of *g*, *w* instead of *r*, *sch* instead of *s*, *f* instead of *th*. You will then know when to accept their pronunciation of the sound; just because the child can't say the sound correctly doesn't mean they can't hear it correctly. With practice, they will soon start to pronounce the sounds correctly.

Should we make children learn the sounds?

You won't have to make children learn the sounds. You will make these lessons so much fun, they will want to join in.

What if a child doesn't want to join in?

Let the child watch from the sidelines to begin with. Once they see how much fun the lessons are, they will gradually join in. If they still seem reluctant to join in, you should teach them one-to-one.

Should we teach letter names?

Teach children the alphabet song, so they will know the letter names when Year 1/ Primary 2 class teachers use letter names for spellings. However, do not use the letter names in phonics lessons. When you show children a letter, you need them to react quickly by saying the associated sound and not the letter name. This will make blending sounds into words much easier.

SECTION 1: ORGANISATION IN RECEPTION/PRIMARY 1

Minimum expectations for your children's progress

- October: know most single-letter Set 1 Sounds and begin to blend (Set 1 Sounds Group B)
- December: know single-letter Set 1 Sounds and be able to blend orally (Set 1 Sounds Group C)
- February: reading Photocopy Ditties 1–20*
- April: reading Red Ditty Storybooks
- May: reading Green Storybooks
- July: reading Green/Purple Storybooks

How to group your children for phonics lessons in Reception/Primary 1

- Children should always be taught in homogeneous groups.
- Choose the best option from the three below based on the number of staff you can make available.
- Make the best use of teaching assistants (TAs) from other year groups to support YR/P1 in *Read Write Inc. Phonics* lessons: the sooner YR/P1 learn to read, the less work you will need to do later.
- This guidance is based on one-form entry so can be replicated for as many classes as needed. However, for two-form entry+ schools, consider grouping across classes from autumn half-term.
- The strongest reading teacher should teach the slowest progress group.

Top tips for organisation in YR/P1

- If YR/P1 don't attend assembly during the first half-term, utilise as many YR/P1 and Y1/P2 *Read Write Inc. Phonics* trained teachers and TAs as possible by teaching the daily Speed Sounds and Word Time Lessons (20 minutes) during assembly time.
- Teach YR/P1 at a different time to Y1/P2 so you can use staff and teaching spaces twice.
- Assess and group children at the start of YR/P1 if children were taught the Set 1 Sounds in nursery.

* These can be found in the *Ditty Photocopy Masters Handbook*.

Option 1 – class teacher and two TAs (best option)

Term 1: 20 minutes teaching per group

First four weeks

Whole class: 5 minutes (teacher and two TAs team-teach at the front)

- Teach Set 1 Speed Sounds.

Followed by:

Three progress groups: 15 minutes

- Teach letter formation and Word Time reading at tables.
- Play Fred Talk games.

After four weeks

Three simultaneous progress groups: 20 minutes each

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson, including letter formation and Word Time reading and spelling at tables.
 - Keep up group: teach in a group of four ([see p.9](#)) and/or daily one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes.

NB Once children begin the Photocopy Ditties, teach a 30-minute session.

Term 2: 30 minutes teaching per group

Three simultaneous progress groups

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson (10 minutes), Ditties/Storybooks (20 minutes).
 - Keep up group: teach in a group of four and/or daily one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes.

Term 3: 40–60 minutes teaching per group

Three simultaneous progress groups

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson (10 minutes), Ditties/Storybooks (at least 30 minutes).
 - Keep up group: teach in a group of four and daily one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes if any children are still learning Set 1 Sounds and blending.

Option 2: class teacher and one TA

Term 1: 20 minutes teaching per group

First four weeks

Whole class: 5 minutes (teacher and TA team-teach at the front)

- Teach Set 1 Speed Sounds.

Followed by:

Three progress groups: 15 minutes (teacher takes two groups in succession, TA takes one)

- Teach letter formation and Word Time reading at tables.
- Play Fred Talk games.
- Set up an independent play activity for the third group for 15 minutes.

After four weeks

Three progress groups: 20 minutes each (teacher takes two groups in succession, TA takes one – or two if two keep up groups are required)

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson including letter formation and Word Time reading and spelling at tables.
 - Keep up group: teach in a group of four ([see p.9](#)) and/or daily one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes.
- Set up independent play activities for groups not being taught, for 20 minutes whilst teacher takes the other group.

NB Once children begin the Photocopy Ditties, teach a 30-minute session.

Term 2: 30 minutes teaching per group

Three progress groups

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson (10 minutes), Ditties/Storybooks (20 minutes) (teacher takes two groups in succession, TA takes one – or two if two keep up groups are required).
 - Keep up group: teach in a group of four and/or daily one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes.
- Set up independent play activities for groups not being taught, for 30 minutes.

Term 3: 40–60 minutes teaching per group

NB Teach at the same time as Y1/P2 and Y2/P3.

Three progress groups – two in class, one to Y1/P2 and Y2/P3 so children can be grouped across YR/P1–Y2/P3.

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson (10 minutes), Ditties/Storybooks (at least 30 minutes).
 - Speedy progress group to Y1/P2 and Y2/P3.
 - Teach in a group of four and daily one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes if any children are still learning Set 1 sounds and blending.

Option 3: class teacher only teaching phonics in YR/P1

Term 1: 20 minutes teaching per group

First four weeks

Whole class: 5 minutes

- Teach Set 1 Speed Sounds.

Followed by:

Three progress groups: 15 minutes (teacher takes three groups in succession or throughout the day)

- Teach letter formation and Word Time reading at tables.
- Play Fred Talk games.
- TA supports play activities.

After four weeks

Three progress groups: 20 minutes (teacher takes three groups in succession or throughout the day)

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson including letter formation and Word Time reading and spelling at tables.
 - Keep up group: teach in a group of four (*see below*) and/or daily one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes.
- TA supports play activities.

NB Once children begin the Photocopy Ditties, teach a 30-minute session.

Use Option 1 or 2 for Terms 2 and 3.

Keep up group

There are always three or four Reception/Primary 1 children who need extra attention to get off the starting block. These children are usually at different stages so it's hard to teach them as a group – particularly when it comes to sound blending.

In YR/P1, we need all of our children to 'keep up' from the very start through one-to-one teaching at *exactly the right level*. This is much more effective for these children than 30 minutes taught as a group.

With the keep up group of four children (no more):

- Teach Speed Sounds Lesson (10 mins) to whole group
- Teach blending one-to-one (5 mins per child)
- Organise independent play activities for the other three children
- Try teaching as a group once they can blend three- and four-sound words.
- Provide extra one-to-one practice in the afternoon.

SECTION 2: STARTING STRONG IN RECEPTION/PRIMARY 1

Route through the first half-term – an overview

Every day ...

- Identify children who haven't learnt to read the sounds and provide extra practice through one-to-one tutoring.
- Review Speed Sounds with pinny time ([see p.16](#)).
- Use Fred Talk and play Fred Talk games throughout the day ([see p.15](#)).
- Let all parents know which sounds to practise.
- Send home links to the Virtual Classroom films (VC films) on the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription.

Week	Focus for teacher
First half-term, week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the baseline for all YR/P1 children • Introduce and practise the silent signals: Team stop, My turn Your turn (MTYT), Turn to your partner (TTYP) and 1, 2, 3 signal (see p.12) • Use silent signals throughout the day • Teach children to name the pictures on the Sound-Picture Frieze • Play Fred Talk games
First half-term, week 2	<p>Whole class – 10 minutes a day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach reading: m, a, s, d, t <p>Small groups – 10 minutes a day per group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach letter formation: m, a, s, d, t • Play Fred Talk games
First half-term, week 3	<p>Whole class – 5 minutes a day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach reading: i, n, p, g, o <p>Small groups – 15 minutes a day per group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach letter formation: i, n, p, g, o • Learning to blend (Word Time 1.1) • Play Fred Talk games
First half-term, week 4	<p>Whole class – 5 minutes a day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach reading: c, k, u, b <p>Small groups – 15 minutes a day per group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach letter formation: c, k, u, b • Learning to blend (Word Time 1.2) • Play Fred Talk games

Week	Focus for teacher
First half-term, week 5	<p>Whole class – 5 minutes a day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach reading: f, e, l, h <p>Small groups – 15 minutes a day per group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach letter formation: f, e, l, h • Learning to blend (Word Time 1.3) • Fred Fingers: Teach ‘Learning to use Fred Fingers’ until routines established.
First half-term, week 6	<p>Children grouped by progress – 20 mins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach reading: r, j, v, y, w • Teach letter formation: r, j, v, y, w • Learning to blend/blending independently (Word Time 1.4) • Fred Fingers: Teach ‘Learning to use Fred Fingers’ until routines established.
First half-term, week 7	<p>Children grouped by progress – 20 mins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach reading: z, x • Teach letter formation: z, x • Learning to blend/blending independently (Word Time 1.5) • Fred Fingers: spelling one or two words that have been read that day

Getting going in week 1

Aim to complete the baseline for all YR/P1 children in the first week.

You can make the most of this first week in three ways:

1. Establish the silent signals (Team stop, **MTYT**, **TTYP** and the 1, 2, 3 signal)
2. Teach children to name the pictures on the Speed Sounds Cards.
3. Practise partner work.

Children respond well to an established routine right from the start to help them to settle in to school life.

1. Establish the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* silent signals

We use silent signals: to stop, to copy and to turn to talk to a partner. These signals work successfully when all staff practise until the signals become a habit for staff and children.

For further information on how to use these signals, see the [Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1, pp.18–22](#) and watch the training films on the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription.

Team stop signal

The Team stop signal helps us stop children in a calm manner, ready for what's next.

Use this signal to gain attention. It's a good idea to introduce it for times when all children are together, such as lunchtime or the end of the day. Practise until children respond in under five seconds and in silence.

My Turn Your Turn (MTYT) signal

Use this silent signal when you want the children to repeat something after you.

Turn To Your Partner (TTYP) signal

We want all our children to answer every question we ask, not just the few confident ones.

We do this by getting children to talk with a partner.

We call this the talk routine.

1, 2, 3 signal

Use this silent signal to move the children silently from the carpet to their table in under 15 seconds.

2. Teach children to name the pictures

Teach your children to name the mnemonic pictures using first the A4 Speed Sounds Cards, and then the small Speed Sounds Cards. This is particularly important for children who are new to English; if they don't know the name of the picture, the picture can't help them learn the sound later on.

For example:

- 's' is in the shape of a snake
- 'd' is in the shape of a dinosaur
- 'a' is in the shape of an apple
- 'm' is in the shape of two mountains.

The name of each picture is written on the back of the cards.

Using the **A4 Speed Sounds Cards**:

- Show and say the name of the first picture: mountain.
- Use **MTYT** for children to copy.
- Repeat with four more pictures.

Using the **Small Speed Sounds Cards**:

- Increase the speed that the children say the names of the pictures, until they can say the names without hesitation.
- Repeat with five new pictures a day until the children can name all the pictures.

Display the Set 1 Speed Sounds from the Sound-Picture Frieze somewhere that children can touch it and refer to it, and use it to prompt children to name the pictures.

NB You should not be teaching the sounds at this point, just focus on asking the children to name the pictures.

3. Practise partner work

Before you start to use the **TTYP** talk routine, children will need plenty of practice in working with a partner.

1. Establish a special space for each child to sit with a given partner during 'carpet times'. Change all the partners every two weeks.
2. Establish a greeting routine:
Good morning (or afternoon) Mrs Green (looking at the teacher).
Good morning partner. How are you today? I'm fine, thank you.
3. Get partners to practise saying a familiar rhyme together. Choose partners who can keep together to perform to the class.
4. Teach simple partner clapping rhythms using rhymes children know (e.g. clapping the beats in their name, clapping a steady beat to familiar rhymes, clapping simple patterns that you create).

SECTION 3: TEACHING SET 1 SPEED SOUNDS AND WORD TIME

How to use Handbook 1 and resources

Before you begin teaching, ensure you have your own copy of *Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1* and that all resources are ready.

Handbook reference	Resources		
Lesson	Classroom teaching and practice	<i>Read Write Inc. Phonics</i> Online subscription on Oxford Owl	Home practice
Set 1 Speed Sounds Handbook 1, pages 33–49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple Speed Sounds Poster • Sound-Picture Frieze • Picture-Sound Cards • Speed Sounds Cards Set 1 • Fred Frog beanie toy • Desktop Speed Sounds Chart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound pronunciation guide (video) • Speed Sounds lists (slideshows) • Speed Sounds practice sheets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed Sounds Cards Set 1 • My Set 1 Speed Sounds Book • VC films: Set 1 and Fred Games
Word Time Handbook 1, pages 33–49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed Sounds Cards Set 1 • Phonics Green Word Cards for Set 1 • Magnetic Sound Cards Set 1 • Fred Frog beanie toy • Desktop Speed Sounds Chart • Sound Blending Books* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word Time Lesson 1.7 Word Cards • Multi-syllabic Word Cards • Nonsense Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Blending Book Bag Books* • VC films: learning to blend and Set 1 Word Time
Once children can read the single-letter Set 1 Sounds and Consonant-Vowel-Consonant (CVC) words, they can begin reading the Photocopy Ditties (see p.26).			

Assessing as you go

The Reading Leader will assess all of the YR/P1 children each half-term.

As the Reception/Primary 1 teacher, you should assess and regroup individual children every week, or as needed, throughout the half-term:

- Use the challenge step daily ([see Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1, page 37](#)) to progress children from learning to blend (using the magnetic boards) to blending independently (reading Phonics Green Words). Stop using the magnetic boards once children are in Set 1 Sounds Group C.
- Use the ‘How to progress quickly from Ditties to Storybooks’ guidance ([see p.28](#)) to move children reading the Photocopy Ditties to the Red Ditty books and then to the Green Storybooks quickly.

*Use these only once children can blend. For an overview of the Sound Blending Book progression, please [see p.36](#).

***Read Write Inc. Phonics* through the day: Fred Talk and pinny time**

Keep the teaching of sounds to the phonics lessons. Please don't use other contexts to practise sounds, for example in the outdoor area or the role-play area. Let children enjoy the integrity of each experience.

However, there are two important things you need to do throughout the day to help teach all children to read sounds and learn to blend quickly:

1. Use Fred Talk and play Fred Talk games
2. Pinny time.

Fred Talk + Speedy Sounds = reading

1. Use Fred Talk and play Fred Talk games

Speaking like Fred helps children to understand that words are made up of sounds. Use Fred Talk throughout the day to help children practise blending sounds together.

Fred Talk follows a consistent routine:

1. Say the word in sounds as Fred, e.g. *c-a-t*. Ask children to repeat.
Pause to allow children to 'jump-in' with the whole word.
 2. Say the word in sounds followed by the whole word, e.g. *c-a-t*, cat.
Ask children to repeat.
- Use Fred Talk for single-syllable words at the end of sentences throughout the day e.g. it is time for *l-u-n-ch...lunch*, come and sit on the *f-l-oor...floor*.
 - Fred Talk words at the end of the sentence and keep the words short and simple.
 - Organise 5-minute Fred Talk game group sessions with those children learning to blend. There are three games you can play using Fred, outlined below.

NB words below are spelt in a way to help you say them in Fred Talk.

Fred says...

1. Say: Fred says put your hands on your *h-e-d*. Ask children to repeat.
Pause to allow children to jump in with the whole word and do the action.
2. Say: *h-e-d*, *hed*. Ask children to repeat.

Repeat with: *b-a-k*, *t-u-m*, *l-e-g*, *h-a-n-d*, *f-oo-t*, *n-ee*, *r-u-n*, *s-k-i-p*, *h-o-p*, *s-t-o-p*.

Fred I spy

Say: Fred says 'I spy something *r-e-d*'. Ask children to repeat. Pause to allow children to 'jump-in' with the whole word and point to something red.

Say: *r-e-d*, *red*. Ask children to repeat.

Repeat with: *b-l-oo*, *g-r-ee-n*, *b-l-a-k*, *b-r-ow-n*.

Fred's house

Say: *Fred has found some items from different parts of the house. What did he find in e.g. the food cupboard?* Say each word in Fred Talk and pause to allow children to 'jump-in' with the whole word.

Food cupboard: t-i-n, s-oo-p, b-ee-n-s, b-r-e-d, c-ay-k

Fridge: m-i-l-k, j-oo-s, c-r-ee-m, e-g-s, c-or-n, p-air, p-ee-z, l-ee-k

*Kitchen: f-or-k, s-p-oo-n, n-igh-f, p-a-n, p-l-ay-t, b-ow-l;
c-u-p; m-u-g; ch-air; s-t-oo-l*

Bedroom: b-e-d, r-u-g, b-oo-k, l-am-p, m-a-t, l-igh-t, b-o-x

Bathroom: l-oo, s-i-nk, m-a-t, s-ow-p, b-r-u-sh, c-r-ee-m

Wardrobe: s-c-ar-f, h-a-t, c-ow-t, s-o-c-s, sh-or-t-s, d-r-e-ss, s-k-ir-t

2. Pinny time

Pinny time helps children practise reading the sounds taught so far speedily. It is quick and easy to get going, to make sure children 'keep up, not catch up'.

- Each teacher/TA should have their own apron or 'pinny' with pockets containing a set of Speed Sounds Cards.
- Timetable 5-minute pinny time sessions throughout the day. Target the children who need to increase their speed.
- Assign small groups of children for pinny time to YR/P1 staff.
- Decide on 'Speed minute' sessions throughout the day – children go to their pinny time adult when a bell rings. See how many sounds the group of children can read in one minute.
- Play 'Partner practice' – give the children a set of Speed Sounds cards to practise reading together quickly.
- Have set times every day for pinny time: before break, while waiting for the midday supervisors, waiting to go into assembly, as children go home (so parents can see what you're doing). Make this a habit.

Daily handwriting practice

Children practise correct letter formation as part of their daily Speed Sounds Lesson. We use the mnemonics to help children visualise the letter before they write it down. In the 'Write the letters' activity in the lesson, children practise saying the handwriting phrase and the sound as they form the letter in the air and then write the sound on paper.

Children need to practise handwriting under the guidance of a teacher so they do not develop habits that will be difficult to undo later.

Please don't ask children to copy letters or words. We need their attention to be focused on their own formation of letters.

Teaching correct handwriting grip and writing position – right/write sitting

Teach writing at tables so you can set the habits for correct pencil grip and sitting position from the beginning.

Make sure the table and chairs are the right height and that left-handed children are sitting to the left of a right-handed child.

The children should be facing you when you model the writing – not at an angle.

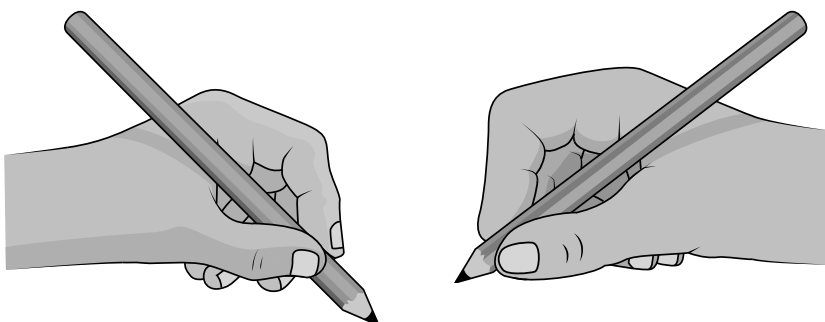
Teach children that when you use the handwriting signal (shown in the photograph, right) they need to get into the correct writing position at a table:

- feet flat on the floor
- bottom at the back of the chair
- body one fist from the table
- shoulders down
- non-writing hand holding the page
- writing hand ready in a tripod grip.



Do not start writing until the children are ready in the correct position. Soon you should be able to say 'right (write) sitting' and they will know exactly what to do.

Share the handwriting phrases with parents so they can support their child with correct letter formation at home ([see p.20](#)). These are also in the *My Set 1 Speed Sounds Book*.



How to help parents: practise the sounds

It is important that parents understand how you are teaching their child to read. Schools find it is best to run short but frequent 'bitesize' parent meetings and develop the habit for regular meetings throughout the year. See the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription (<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com>) for downloadable PowerPoint slides and documents to support your parent meetings.

Schedule these meetings 15 minutes before home time so parents don't need to come back later (while your Headteacher reads a story to your children).

In the first half-term:

- Meeting 1: Explain the benefits of reading stories to children every night. Share the 'Top tips for reading to your child' ([see p.19](#)).
- Meeting 2: Show parents how to practise reading the Speed Sounds Cards Set 1 with their children, using pure sounds rather than letter names (search 'Sound pronunciation guide' on the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* Online subscription on Oxford Owl for a useful video). Also show parents how to form the letters ([see p.20](#)) and how to use *My Set 1 Speed Sounds Book*. Provide parents with packs as part of their school kit – book bag, PE kit and Speed Sounds Cards Set 1.
- Meeting 3: Show parents how to practise blending using Fred Talk.
- Explain to parents the benefits of using the Virtual Classroom films on the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription. You might like to add a link to these on your school website.
- Give parents copies of the parent information booklets from the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* subscription on Oxford Owl (search for 'Parent information booklet').

Later on in the year, focus on:

- How to listen to their children read the Sound Blending Books and Storybooks.
- How to practise Set 2 Speed Sounds with their child.

Throughout the year:

- Organise class assemblies so children can show off to parents the sounds and stories they know.
- Teach demonstration lessons for parents to watch.
- Invite parents into school to see how you read stories to the children. Show them how to bring bedtime stories alive.

Ten top tips for reading stories to your child

- 1 Make reading to your child feel like a treat.
Introduce each new book with excitement.
- 2 Make it a special quiet time and cuddle up so both of you can see the book.
- 3 Show curiosity in what you're going to read:
Oh no! I think Arthur is going to get even angrier now.
- 4 Read the whole story the first time through without stopping too much. If you think your child might not understand something, model an explanation:
Oh I think what's happening here is that...
- 5 Chat about the story:
I wonder why he did that?
Oh no, I hope she's not going to...
I wouldn't have done that, would you?
- 6 Avoid asking questions to test what your child remembers.
- 7 Link stories to your own experiences (e.g. *This reminds me of...*)
- 8 Read favourite stories over and over again.
Get your child to join in with the bits they know.
- 9 Read with enthusiasm. Don't be embarrassed to try out different voices. Your child will love it.
- 10 Read with enjoyment.
If you're not enjoying it, your child won't.





Handwriting phrases for helping your child to form letters

This works best if your child practises for a short time every day.

1. Show the picture side and air-write as you say the phrase.
2. Ask your child to practise in the air with you.
3. Using a sharp pencil and sat at a table, encourage your child to have a go.
4. Praise your child for their efforts.

- m Maisie, mountain, mountain
a round the apple, down the leaf
s slither down the snake
d round his bottom, up his tall neck and down to his feet
t down the tower, across the tower
i down the body, dot for the head
n down Nobby, over his net
p down the plait and over the pirate's face
g round her face, down her hair and give her a curl
o all around the orange
c curl around the caterpillar
k down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg
u down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle
b down the laces to the heel, round the toe
f down the stem and draw the leaves
e lift off the top and scoop out the egg
l down the long leg
h down the head to the hooves and over his back
r down his back and then curl over his arm
j down his body, curl and dot
v down a wing, up a wing
y down a horn, up a horn and under his head
w down, up, down, up
z zig-zag-zig
q round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair
x down the arm and leg and repeat the other side



SECTION 4: STOPPING CHILDREN STRUGGLING – ONE-TO-ONE TUTORING

Some children find it hard to pay attention when they work in a group. This may be because they switch off when we're not directing our full attention on them or they're aware they can't do what others can do. However, these same children make rapid progress when the best reading teachers give them individual attention using the same *Read Write Inc. Phonics* programme but with smaller teaching steps. We call this 'keep up, not catch up'.

It's important that you identify these children from the beginning. Catching them in the first two weeks saves time later. Most one-to-one intervention is short-term.

How many children will need tutoring?

The number of children needing one-to-one tutoring is dependent upon two factors:

- 1) the quality of the teaching in the morning *Read Write Inc. Phonics* lessons – get this right and the numbers for tutoring fall dramatically
- 2) the number of children with definite special needs.

More advice on one-to-one tutoring, including the Fast Track Tutoring programme, is available from the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription.

Part 1: Learning Set 1 Speed Sounds – single-letter sounds

Start here if the child cannot read the first 16 Set 1 Speed Sounds.

Read the sound



Teach the single-letter Set 1 Speed Sounds in this order:

m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, r, j, v, y, w, z, x.

Follow the steps below for the Set 1 single-letter Speed Sounds the child does not know.

Review previously taught sounds and teach two new sounds each day.

1. Select a sound the child does not know (example: *a*).
2. Show the picture side of the card. Say 'Watch me copy our apple'. Draw a simple version of the picture on paper.
3. Trace your finger over the drawing (on the paper) as you bounce or stretch the sound (*a-a-a-a*) and say the picture name (apple) as you finish. Ask the child to copy.
4. Write the letter next to the picture on the paper.
5. Trace your finger over the letter (on the paper) as you bounce or stretch the sound (*a-a-a-a*) and say the sound (*a*) as you finish. Ask the child to copy.
6. Show that the picture side of the card matches your drawing, and the letter behind the

picture matches your letter – ‘same, same’.

7. Show the letter side of the card (a).
8. Flip the card from the picture side to the letter side as the child says the sound (a) when they see the letter and the picture name (apple) when they see the picture.
9. Mix the card with others the child knows and ask them to say the sounds speedily.



Fred Talk (oral)

Follow the steps below for each sound.

Ask the child to look at you so that they can see your mouth as you Fred Talk.

1. Select a word that includes the focus sound (example: sad).
2. Fred Talk the word in a slow, exaggerated manner (s--a--d). Show how you really ‘think about’ the sounds as you increase the pace of your Fred Talk and blend to say the whole word (s--a--d, s-a-d, sad).
3. Say the word in slow Fred Talk (s--a--d). Ask the child to copy.
4. Say the word in Fred Talk and the whole word (s-a-d, sad). Ask the child to copy.
5. Repeat the steps above for two more words that include the focus sound (e.g. man, jam).

Review previously taught sounds and teach two new sounds each day until the child can read the first 16 Set 1 Speed Sounds speedily.

Part 2: Blending sounds into words

Start here if the child can read the first 16 Set 1 Speed Sounds speedily.

All these steps are fluid – you may need to go back and forth between them until the child is confident.



Oral blending (no Speed Sound Cards)

Remember: only teach oral blending with sounds the child can read speedily.

Follow the steps below for the first 16 Set 1 Speed Sounds only. Note that this activity is without cards.

Ask the child to look at you so that they can see your mouth as you Fred Talk.

1. Select a consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) word (example: pot).
2. Fred Talk the word in a slow, exaggerated manner (p--o--t). Show how you really ‘think about’ the sounds as you increase the pace of your Fred Talk and blend to say the whole word (p--o--t, p-o-t, pot).
3. Say the word in slow Fred Talk (p--o--t). Ask the child to copy.
4. Say the word in Fred Talk and the whole word (p-o-t, pot). Ask the child to copy.
5. Repeat the steps above for two more words.



Blending with Speed Sound Cards

Remember: only teach blending with sounds the child can read speedily.

Follow the steps below for the first 16 Set 1 Speed Sounds only. Note that this activity is with cards.

1. Select a CVC word (example: pot).
2. Say the word (pot). Say each sound as you make the word with the cards on the table between you and the child.
3. Point to and say the sounds (*p-o-t*), then sweep your finger under the word and say the word (pot). Slide the cards towards the child for them to copy.
4. Show the child how you play ‘muddle, muddle’: Place the cards in a different order in front of you. Say the word (pot). Drag the first card into place to make the word as you say the sound, and repeat for the next two sounds. Point to and say the sounds (*p-o-t*), then say the word (pot). Slide the cards towards the child for them to play ‘muddle, muddle’.
5. Say the word (pot). Give the child the cards in their hands in mixed order. Ask them to make and then read the word.
6. Repeat the steps above for four more words. Once you have taught a few words, aim to start at step 5 each time.

7. Make the word **met** silently with the cards – on the child’s side of the table. Ask the child to say the sounds and read the word. Repeat with **dot**, **cub**, **pen**. If the child cannot read the words, repeat steps 1 to 6 until they can read the words without your help, starting at step 5 as soon as possible.

Next steps:

Once the child can sound blend, follow the steps for:

- Speed Sounds: Part 1: Learning Set 1 Speed Sounds – single-letter sounds
- Speed Sounds: Part 3: Reading Phonics Green Word Cards: Word Time 1.1 to 1.5

Part 3: Reading Phonics Green Word Cards: Word Time 1.1 to 1.5

Start here if the child can read all the Set 1 Speed Sounds and can blend sounds into words using the single-letter Set 1 Speed Sounds.

mat

Read Phonics Green Word Cards

Remember: only read words with sounds the child can read speedily.

1. Show the child how to read two or three Phonics Green Word Cards using ‘Fred Talk, read the word’. Use slow Fred Talk, and then speed up. Model until the child can jump in with you.
2. Give these cards and three others to the child. Ask them to read the words. If they need support, repeat step 1.
3. Muddle the cards and ask the child to re-read all the words.

Part 4: Learning Set 1 Speed Sounds – Special friends

Start here if the child can read all the single-letter Set 1 Speed Sounds speedily and can sound blend.

Please note: While the child is learning to read the Set 1 Special friends, they can start reading the Sound Blending Books.



Read the sound

Teach the Set 1 ‘Special friends’ Speed Sounds in this order: **sh**, **th**, **ch**, **qu**, **ng**, **nk**.

Follow the steps below for the Set 1 ‘Special friends’ Speed Sounds the child does not know.

Review previously taught sounds and teach two new sounds each day.

1. Select a sound the child does not know (example: *sh*).

2. Show the picture side of the card. Talk about the picture (the snake is making a nasty ssss noise and the horse tells the snake to shhhh), then say the sound and the picture phrase (*sh* – shhhh says the horse).
3. Ask the child to say the sound and the picture phrase (*sh* – shhhh says the horse).
4. Show the letter side of the card (*sh*).
5. Explain that the letters are Special friends: two letters, one sound.
6. Flip the card from the picture side to the letter side as the child says the sound (*sh*) when they see the letters and the picture phrase (*sh* – shhhh says the horse) when they see the picture.
7. Mix the card with others the child knows and ask them to say the sounds speedily.

Next steps:

Review previously taught sounds and teach two new sounds each day until the child can read the Set 1 ‘Special friends’ Speed Sounds speedily.

Part 5: Reading Phonics Green Word Cards: Word Time 1.6 and 1.7

Start here if the child can read all the Set 1 Speed Sounds and can read the Phonics Green Word Cards for Word Time 1.1 to 1.5.

Please note: While the child is learning to read the Phonics Green Word Cards, they can start reading the Red Ditty Books.

ship

Read Phonics Green Word Cards

Remember: only read words with sounds the child can read speedily.

NB: Some children may not be able to pronounce the second sound within some four-sound words (stop, pram). Do not correct the child or ask them to repeat.

1. Show the child how to read two or three Phonics Green Word Cards using ‘Special friends, Fred Talk, read the word’. Use slow Fred Talk, and then speed up. Model until the child can jump in with you.
2. Give these cards and three others to the child. Ask them to read the words. If they need support, repeat step 1.
3. Muddle the cards and ask the child to re-read all the words.

SECTION 5: PHOTOCOPY DITTIES, RED DITTY BOOKS AND STORYBOOKS

How to use *Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1* and resources

Before you begin teaching, ensure you have your own copy of *Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1* and that all resources are ready.

You will also need the *Ditty Photocopy Masters Handbook* to teach the Photocopy Ditties lessons. These have their own teaching notes.

For an overview of the Photocopy Ditty progression, please [see p.40](#).

Lesson	Timetable	Classroom teaching	<i>Read Write Inc. Phonics Online</i> subscription on Oxford Owl	Extra practice, if necessary	Home practice
<p>Once children can read the single-letter Set 1 Sounds and read CVC words, they can begin reading the Photocopy Ditties.</p> <p>Photocopy Ditties 1–20 <i>Ditty Photocopy Masters Handbook</i> Handbook 1, pages 68–71</p>	1 day, 30 minutes*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ditty Photocopy Masters • Simple Speed Sounds Poster • Sound-Picture Frieze • Speed Sounds Cards Set 1 • Red Word Cards • Fred Frog beanie toy • Desktop Speed Sounds chart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ditty Photocopy Masters Green Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ditty Photocopy Masters • Sound Blending Books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ditty Photocopy Masters • Sound Blending Book Bag Books • VC films: Set 1 at home, Set 1 Word Time at home, Red Words
<p>Red Ditty Books Handbook 1, pages 68–71</p>	1 day, 30 minutes, building up to 1 hour*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Ditty Books • <i>Get Writing!</i> Red Ditty Books • Story Green Word Cards • Red Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive teaching file for each book • Story Green Word Cards • Speedy Green Word Cards 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black and white Red Ditty Books • Red Ditty Book Bag Books • VC films: Set 1 at home, Set 1 Word Time at home, Red Words

Once children have completed the Red Ditty Books, they will begin learning the Set 2 Sounds while reading the Green and Purple Storybooks.

*Follow the one-day timetable for the Photocopy Ditties (see the *Ditty Photocopy Masters Handbook*) and the Red Ditty Books (see Handbook 1).

If you teach only the activities marked in bold in the timetable then this will comprise a 30-minute Ditty lesson. This will focus on accuracy but not fluency. The full timetable is for a one-hour session, focusing on both accuracy and fluency. You should expect children to be able to manage a full one-hour session as you progress through the Ditty Books.

Lesson	Timetable	Classroom teaching	Read Write Inc: Phonics Online subscription on Oxford Owl	Extra practice, if necessary	Home practice
Set 2 Speed Sounds Handbook 1, pages 50–55		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple Speed Sounds Poster • Sound-Picture Frieze • Speed Sounds Cards Set 2 • Phonics Green Word Cards for Set 2 • Desktop Speed Sounds Chart • Fred Frog beanie toy • Speed Sounds Cards Set 1 • Phonics Green Word Cards for Set 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound pronunciation guide (video) • Speed Sounds lists (slideshows) • Speed Sounds practice sheets • Multi-syllabic Word Cards • Nonsense Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photocopy Ditties 21–40 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed Sounds Cards Set 2 • My Sets 2&3 Speed Sounds Book • VC films: Set 2 Reading and Spelling at home
Green Storybooks Handbook 1, pages 74–113	3 days, 1 hour, see Handbook 1, p72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Storybooks • <i>Get Writing!</i> Green Books • Story Green Word Cards • Red Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive teaching file for each book • Story Green Word Cards • Speedy Green Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green non-fiction books • Green Set A books • Photocopy Ditties 41–50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black and white Green Storybooks • Green Book Bag Books • VC films: Red Words
Purple Storybooks Handbook 1, pages 114–153	3 days, 1 hour, see Handbook 1, p72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purple Storybooks • <i>Get Writing!</i> Purple Books • Story Green Word Cards • Red Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive teaching file for each book • Story Green Word Cards • Speedy Green Word Cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purple non-fiction books • Purple Set A books • Photocopy Ditties 41–50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black and white Purple Storybooks • Purple Book Bag Books • VC films: Red Words

How to progress quickly from Ditties to Storybooks (focus for Speed Sounds and Word Time Lessons)

Ditty Group – Photocopy Ditties*

To progress quickly, the child needs to:

- Read all Set 1 Sounds speedily, including Special friends.
- Read Word Time 1.6 words with Fred Talk.
- Read 3-sound nonsense words with Fred Talk.

Sounds to teach

Set 1 Speed Sounds Lesson – Special friends. See [Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1, p36](#).

Focus for Word Time

Follow the steps for blending independently in the [Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1, p.38](#).

Read the Phonics Green Word Cards (Special friends, Fred Talk, read the word)

Use the Green Words listed in Word Time 1.5–1.6.

Review the words

Use the Green Words listed in Word Time 1.1–1.4. Add those from Word Time 1.5–1.6 once taught.

1. Special friends, Fred Talk, read the word
2. 'Fred in your Head' to speedy reading

Reading assessment

Read 3-sound nonsense words.

Spelling

Spell two or three words that they have read. See [Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1, p.38](#).

Pinny time

Target the children who need to increase speed-reading Set 1 Special friends.

Fred Talk games

Use CCVC words, e.g. Fred says *c-l-a-p*, *s-p-i-n*, *s-k-i-p*.

*These can be found in the *Ditty Photocopy Masters Handbook*.

Red Group – Red Ditty Books

To progress quickly, the child needs to:

- Read Word Time 1.6–1.7 (4- and 5-sounds) Phonics Green Words with Fred Talk.
- Read 3- and 4-sound nonsense words with Fred Talk.

Sounds to teach

Teach unknown Set 1 Sounds: Read the sound, Review the sounds.

Focus for Word Time

Follow the steps for blending independently in the [Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1, p.38](#).

Read the Phonic Green Word Cards (Special friends, Fred Talk, read the word)

Use the Green Word Cards listed in Word Time 1.6–1.7.

Progress through Word Time 1.7 in this order:

1. words with double consonants
2. 4-sound words
3. 5-sound words
4. multi-syllabic words.

Review the words

Use the Green Words listed in Word Time 1.1–1.5. Add those from 1.6–1.7 once taught.

1. Special friends, Fred Talk, read the word
2. 'Fred in your Head' to speedy reading.

Reading Assessment

Read 3- and 4-sound nonsense words.

Spelling

Spell two or three words that they have read. See [Read Write Inc. Phonics Handbook 1, p.38](#).

Pinny time

Target the children who need to increase speed-reading Set 1 Special friends.

Fred Talk games

Use CCVC words, e.g. *Fred says c-l-a-p, s-p-i-n, s-k-i-p.*

SECTION 6: HOME READING

Reading and re-reading *Read Write Inc. Phonics* books

It is important that pupils are given sufficient practice in reading and re-reading books that match the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they know, both at school and at home.

There are several ways you can do this.

Last *Read Write Inc. Phonics* Storybook read (essential)

Put this in their reading bag once they have read the story three times in class. Do explain to parents that they can read this story very well because they have practised and it is being sent home to show parents how well their child can read it. Please ask parents not to say, “This book is too easy for you!”

You can purchase the black and white paper copies of the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* Storybooks especially to send home.

Past *Read Write Inc. Phonics* Storybook (optional)

Children enjoy re-reading stories they know well. Their fluency improves on every reading.

***Read Write Inc. Phonics* Book Bag Books (optional)**

You may wish to purchase the Book Bag Books especially for home reading. They are matched to the Sound Blending Books, Red Ditty Books and Storybooks and provide practice of the same graphemes. They include many of the same reading activities with guidance for parents. These books should be sent home only once the corresponding Storybook has been sent home and the *Get Writing!* activity has been completed in class. Ensure you read the story to the children first.

SECTION 7: STORYTIME, PLANNED TALK AND TALK THROUGH STORIES

Storytime

Why storytime matters

Reading to children is the best way of encouraging them to love books and reading. By reading stories aloud to your children every day, you are forming a link for them between reading, and comfort and love. When you love a book, your children will want to hear it again and again! Children thrive on repetition, and so by reading the same much-loved stories over and over, you are hardwiring their brains for success! The more you read, the more the story ‘belongs’ to the child. When they know the story well, they will want to ‘read’ it over and over again, joining in with the actions and expressions that you’ve used. We need to do everything we can to ensure children get the reading habit while they are very young – before technology gets a foothold in their lives. By reading aloud, we take children into a world that goes well beyond our typical everyday spoken language.

Authors have done the work for us. Their stories teach children to:

- sustain attention
- learn thousands of new words
- deepen their knowledge of words on every retelling
- hear exaggerated patterns in words and phrases – discrete sounds, rhyme and alliteration
- link thoughts from one part of the story to another
- become familiar with complex and compound sentences
- understand the emotions of others
- build pictures in their minds from the words on the page
- find out about new places, people and things
- understand the nuance of humour
- follow a plot with all its twists and turns
- understand suspense and predict what’s about to happen next.

And the list goes on...

Learning songs and rhymes by heart

- Children need lots of opportunities to develop familiarity with stories, poems, rhymes and songs.
- As children chant the exaggerated patterns in the rhymes or songs, they develop a strong sensitivity to rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. On each repetition, they deepen their familiarity with the words and phrases.
- The more children know the rhyme, the more they ‘own’ it.
- As a team, decide which poems, nursery rhymes and songs you would like children to know by heart. Chant/sing these together every day.

Stories for storytime

See the storytime and vocabulary resources on the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription (<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com>)

- Choose 20 to 30 books **a year** that you will read again and again.
- Start the year with a ‘favourite five’ stories. Help children develop a deep familiarity with the ‘favourite five’ stories every half-term.
- Once children know these five well, introduce a new ‘favourite five’.
- Keep building up this bank of well-known stories for the year.
- Use the storytime lists on the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription to help you choose the stories your children will love, including picture books with the main protagonist from a minority ethnic background.

How to read with your children

Practise reading the story before you read it to the children. Think about the exact actions and expressions you will use so children can join in with you. Show your love for books as you read – enthusiasm is catching!

1. Make reading to your children feel like a treat. Introduce each new book with excitement.
2. Make it a special quiet time away from the hustle and bustle of the rest of the day. If in a small group, sit closely so the children can see the book easily.
3. Show curiosity in what you’re going to read: *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*. *Ooo, I wonder if they will find a real bear.*
4. Read the whole story the first time through without stopping too much. If you think the children might not understand something, model an explanation.
Oh, I think what’s happening here is that...
5. Chat about the story:
I wonder what they’re going to do now?
Oh no, I hope he’s not going to...
I wouldn’t have done that, would you?
6. Whatever you do, avoid asking questions to test what they remember.
7. Link stories to your own and the children’s experiences and link these experiences to other stories: *This story reminds me of when I had to squelch through lots of sticky mud when I went camping.*
8. Read favourite stories over and over again. Get the children to join in with the bits that they know. Build the suspense each time, hesitating so they can jump in before you say the word.
9. Read with enthusiasm. Don’t be embarrassed to try out different voices. Your children will love it.
10. Read with enjoyment. If you’re not enjoying it, they won’t.

Organising your story corner

It is likely that children sit on your large carpeted area for storytimes. This is the time that you introduce stories to the children that you will then display in your special story corner. The story corner is a quiet space where children can retell the stories you have read to them, on their own, with friends or with an adult.

- Make it safe, quiet and comfortable.
- Display chosen books and make them centre stage.
- Avoid displaying too many books at once.
- Display the books with their covers facing outwards.
- Refresh books every few weeks.
- Avoid organising books into book-banded boxes – both for decodable books and storybooks.
- There is further guidance on the best book corners on the Ruth Miskin Training Portal.

Reading at home

Children will make the best possible progress if they read as often as possible. It is vital that they take home the Storybook they have read in class to practise reading what they can already read.

Ensure that children take books home they can read to their parent or carer, or share with a sibling.

The children should take home a *Read Write Inc. Phonics* Storybook and a picture book at least every three days. Make sure that every book that goes into the reading bag is a well-loved book.

Picture books

Children should choose picture books to take home to read with a parent. Encourage the children to choose books from the selection that they already know well. This means that if their parents are too busy, they can retell the story by using the pictures to remember the words.

Planned talk

The number and range of words parents use to speak to their children predicts their success at school (Hart and Risley, 1995). ‘Talk a lot’ parents chatter with their children about everything, from different foods to feelings. They connect present with past experiences, encourage them to ask questions and build on what they say. By the time the children are three, they’ve had over a thousand hours of story time, know rhymes by heart and use an extensive vocabulary, often in elaborate sentences. Most of school learning will be icing on the cake for these children (as long as they learn to read).

For children who have not benefited from the same start in life, we must use our time strategically. This means planning small group sessions throughout the day to ensure children talk as much as possible. We cannot lose precious time by observing them at play and collecting ‘evidence’ of their learning. No parent would waste time doing this.

Talk Through Stories

Talk Through Stories supports teachers in sharing stories with their class. The films and documents can be found on the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription. Talk Through Stories is for all children, but especially those who do not come from a language-rich home.

It is designed to extend and deepen children’s vocabulary so that they can understand the books they will soon be able to read for themselves. Time is not on their side. That is why it has been so important to plan specifically and systematically – step by step – to develop their vocabulary.

How Talk Through Stories works

In **Story week**, we help children to get to know the story really well: the plot, the characters, and their actions and motives.

In **Vocabulary week**, we explore eight words from the story.

These words have been specifically selected to develop children’s understanding of each word in the context of their everyday lives.

How the stories were selected

We have chosen stories that we believe are worth reading and re-reading – stories that children will love. We began with old favourites that many teachers are likely to know, such as *Dogger* by Shirley Hughes, *Burglar Bill* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg, *Can’t You Sleep, Little Bear?* by Martin Waddell and *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak.

We then moved on to more recent literature, such as *Hugless Douglas* by David Melling, *Perfectly Norman* by Tom Percival, *I’m in Charge* by Jeanne Willis, *Billy and the Beast* by Nadia Shireen, and *Anna Hibiscus* by Atinuke.

The eight Vocabulary week words

The eight words selected for focus in each of the stories are what Isabel Beck et al, in *Bringing Words to Life*, call 'Tier 2' words. These are words that children are unlikely to hear in everyday conversation but are likely to come across in stories. In *I'm in charge* by Jeanne Willis, for example, we chose:

bellowed startled barged sneaked grinned dreadful stomped refused

and in *Ruby's Worry* by Tom Percival:

explore discovered wondered enormous barely unexpected shrink tumble

For more resources for Planned Talk, Talk Through Stories and Closing the Word Gap, please visit the Ruth Miskin Online Training Subscription (<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com>).

Sound Blending Books – progression

Sound Blending Book	Speed Sounds covered	Read after Word Time lesson	Word list – Sound Blending Books (classroom)	Word list – Sound Blending Book Bag Books
Sound Blending Book 1	m a s d t i n p g o	Word Time 1.2	pat	dad
			sit	pit
			man	mat
			pan	sad
			tap	dip
			pin	pat
			tip	dig
			map	dot
			dig	sit
			dog	pop
			pot	tin
mop	pip			
Sound Blending Book 2	m a s d t i n p g o c k u b	Word Time 1.3	cat	cap
			can	mum
			cot	cat
			sun	cup
			mud	bag
			mug	sun
			bat	pup
			bag	big
			bin	cub
			bus	bib
			bun	bug
bug	fog			
Sound Blending Book 3	m a s d t i n p g o c k u b f e l h	Word Time 1.4	fan	fin
			pen	tug
			peg	men
			net	fat
			bed	bed
			leg	hut
			lid	lid
			log	hop
			hen	rip
			hop	hug
			hat	beg
hug	rub			

Sound Blending Book	Speed Sounds covered	Read after Word Time lesson	Word list – Sound Blending Books (classroom)	Word list – Sound Blending Book Bag Books
Sound Blending Book 4	m a s d t i n p g o c k u b f e l h r j v y w	Word Time 1.5	rat	dog
			run	nut
			red	den
			rug	rag
			rod	hip
			jam	run
			jug	jog
			jet	wag
			van	vet
			vet	win
			web	wet
			wet	yes
Sound Blending Book 5	m a s d t i n p g o c k u b f e l h r j v y w z x g g s s l l	Word Time 1.6	zip	bus
			fox	zip
			mix	tell
			box	mix
			fix	hiss
			egg	hot
			kiss	till
			mess	fix
			doll	sell
			bell	fill
			yell	buzz
			hill	well
Sound Blending Book 6	CVC digraphs (3 sounds) sh-v-c c-v-sh c-v-ck	Word Time 1.6	ship	sack
			duck	fish
			shop	hush
			sick	pack
			fish	cash
			sock	lock
			dish	rush
			shell	ship
			rock	back
			kick	pick
			shed	shed
			lick	peck

Sound Blending Book	Speed Sounds covered	Read after Word Time lesson	Word list – Sound Blending Books (classroom)	Word list – Sound Blending Book Bag Books
Sound Blending Book 7	CVC digraphs (3 sounds) th-v-c c-v-th ch-v-c c-v-ng c-v-nk	Word Time 1.6	king	path
			thin	thin
			chop	chat
			wing	bang
			moth	chin
			sing	bath
			tank	bank
			ring	chip
			pink	rink
			chin	hang
			sink	sing
wink	junk			
Sound Blending Book 8	CCVC words (4 sounds)	Word Time 1.7	trip	flap
			swim	drum
			frog	snap
			grin	spin
			drum	twig
			crab	snip
			clap	drop
			slug	slip
			step	swim
			flag	drip
			pram	step
skip	plug			
Sound Blending Book 9	CVCC words (4 sounds)	Word Time 1.7	sand	mend
			vest	fist
			pond	bend
			nest	pond
			jump	dust
			band	camp
			lamp	milk
			milk	mask
			hand	bump
			desk	desk
			tent	lump
belt	melt			

Sound Blending Book	Speed Sounds covered	Read after Word Time lesson	Word list – Sound Blending Books (classroom)	Word list – Sound Blending Book Bag Books
Sound Blending Book 10	More complex formations – CCVC/CVCC digraphs (4 sounds); 5 sounds	Word Time 1.7	dress	spill
			chick	clock
			shock	spell
			truck	smash
			stick	crack
			black	cloth
			swing	block
			drink	swing
			brush	plank
			chest	stuck
			shelf	trunk
			stamp	chimp

Ditty Photocopy Masters 1–20 – progression

Use these Ditties before reading the Red Ditty Books.

Ditty	Speed Sounds covered	Teach after Word Time lesson	Green Words	Red Words
1: sit	m a s t i n p o h	Word Time 1.4	mat on sit hat pin	
2: get a hat	a t n p g c e h	Word Time 1.4	pen cat hen hat get	
3: get up	m a s d t i n p g u e	Word Time 1.4	dad mum get up sun Sam is	<u>the</u>
4: bad dog	a d i n p g o c b r y	Word Time 1.5	dog bad yap rip dig can	
5: a cat	a d t i n c f e h r	Word Time 1.5	cat red fat in hat	
6: hot	m a d t n o u f e l h r	Word Time 1.5	red hot run am if	I
7: cat	m a t i n c e l w	Word Time 1.5	in am cat wet let	I me
8: in my box	a s d t i n p g o c b f r x <u>th nk</u>	Word Time 1.6	sit fat <u>thin</u> big <u>pink</u> dog rat cat fox box in	

Ditty	Speed Sounds covered	Teach after Word Time lesson	Green Words	Red Words
9: sick	m a s d t i n p u b f e <u>ll</u>	Word Time 1.7	fed am up bed in is <u>ill</u> tum	I
10: a dog and a log	m a s d n p g o c u l j	Word Time 1.7	can jump dogs logs	
11: run and hop	a s d t n p o c u h r	Word Time 1.7	can run hop stop and	I
12: mud	m s d t i n g k u r <u>ck</u>	Word Time 1.7	<u>kick</u> mud run sit grin in	<u>the</u>
13: yum list	m a s d t i n p g o u e h r j <u>ch</u>	Word Time 1.7	red hot mint jam gum pop <u>chips</u>	
14: sip	m a s d i p o c k u l	Word Time 1.7	mud milk cup pop sip	of
15: the shop	m a s d t i n p o c f h r <u>sh ch</u>	Word Time 1.7	hot pop can <u>shop</u> from and <u>chips</u>	<u>the</u> of
16: a list to shop with	m a s d t o c e h r v <u>ss ck</u>	Word Time 1.7	hat red vest <u>dress</u> mac <u>socks</u>	

Ditty	Speed Sounds covered	Teach after Word Time lesson	Green Words	Red Words
17: wet and fed up	m a s d t i p o c e h r v w ck	Word Time 1.7	vest wet hat mac drip drop socks	
18: on a bench	a s d t i n o u b e h ch	Word Time 1.7	bench sit on sun hat in sand	my I the head
19: hands	a s d t i n p c u e h r th ck	Word Time 1.7	that pick hunt stick rest cut hands	
20: a black bin	m a s d t i n p g o c b f e l r w th ng ck	Word Time 1.7	man flat black in long bin red cap and get with lad dog legs socks	

Ditty Photocopy Masters 21–40 – progression

Use these Ditties for further practice after the children have read the Red Ditty Books.

Ditty	Speed Sounds covered	Green Words	Red Words
21: big hot sun	u m t a c x b o i g d t h n s	mat cat box man big hat sun hot dog	
22: cat in a hat	b c n m e d t g f a o p h i s r	frog pen hen hat cat bat and men dogs	
23: an ant and a bug	o b a t d n x f e b m r s i u g	box dog man fox red big ant bug and frogs	
24: a man	u s t r d n a m g i p b o e c	cup bug den dog pup man and bats rats	
25: a dog	th ng ss p c a g t d h w i r e n s o	that sing hen cat cap dog dress rat ring with can	
26: a kid in his cot	th n v a d s b r e t p i k o g u m c w h x	van bus red pan with cot kid his man six and pot bugs	
27: a gull	nk ll ff m ng b r s h u c l i a d o e	gull cliff sand men drink rug hand bugs	the my
28: an ant on my hand	ch l t b h o e n i p d s j m r a	hand ant jam red drip chin belt lips hips	my
29: a zip	kn ss ng ll nk th w t i e b a p h s r d o z n	ding pink dress string that knot zip hat bell will	
30: a fish that can swim	th sh ck m o i n p s l a t h c w f d u	mop splash that duck hop cat swim fish can	
31: cats run	ck p m j h n c a r u t s g e d o	peck jump run can grunt cats dogs hens	
32: a man on a log	m l g t c d o r n i a b f s h	man log dog fat big crash and	
33: I am sick	ch ck qu u i g d o n s p t a m b e l	quick mum tum neck chin sick bed get spots legs	I my head
34: pick it up	ck ll th m p u e t i n d o s b r a	pick them doll pen bricks	
35: hop to the shop	gg sh ck k p n o b l m i j s h a r u y d t g e f	back shop milk hop skip run yum and jam get from eggs	the to
36: sing along	ng o a l m k s i t p h u d r	sing song tap stamp skip hum drum long along	

Ditty	Speed Sounds covered	Green Words	Red Words
37: a big mess	th ss ll ck e l f c t g d r u w a p o n s i m b	mess big bed with doll truck felt cab ted legs tips pens	the no head
38: fish	y (ee) nk sh ck th pp r d a p f b i o l t s e w n g	pink fish black red with and flat big floppy splashy splishy spots dots fins	
39: a cat that can sing	ng th b i r k c t a s n d p o g w	bring king sing spring dog rat cat that can with things wings	said the
40: wink clap	nk ng m l a r b h p w d i u s c n	wink blink bang clap drum hands	my the